The History & Literature of THE GAUDIYA VAISHNAVAS and their Relation to other Medieval Vaishnava Schools

Complete work of

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Bhakti-Shāstri, M.A. (Cal), Ph.D. (Lond), Bar-at-Law

SREE GAUDIYA MATH

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Sambidananda Das was born in a prosperous Vaishnava family in a small village called Chachuri, Purulia in the District of Jessore, now in Bangladesh, in the year 1904. His parents named him Ganapati and later his Gurudeva His Divine Grace Prabhupada Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakura renamed him as "Sambidananda" after obtaining Pancharatric Diksha Mantra in his early twenties.

During his childhood he was brought up and looked after by his elder brother Umapati who was named Kunja Bihari Vidyabhushan by Srila Prabhupada after Diksha Mantra. After taking his Tridanda Sannyas Kunja Bihari was known as Tridandiswami Srimad Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Goswami Maharaj, the former President-Acharya of Sri Chaitanya Math and its branches Sri Gaudiya Maths all over India, and the illustrious founder of Sri Chaitanya Research Institute, Kolkata.

Dr. Das was a very affectionate and loyal disciple of his Gurudeva Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada was pleased to allow him to cook and serve food for the deities and other disciples of the Math beside Srila Prabhupada. Both Dr. Das and his brother used to be with Srila Prabhupada as inmates of the Math leading pure ascetic life. His Gurudeva gave him learning at Town School, Calcutta St. Xaviers' College at Calcutta and later admitted him in Calcutta University for his M.A. degree in Ancient History. Gurudeva Srila Prabhupada had extreme confidence in his disciple "Sambid" about his learning and vast concept over Vaishnava Philosophy.

In order to preach the Gaudiya Vaishnava Movement and Philosophy to Western countries the author was sent to London in the year 1934 by his Gurudeva along with other two Swamijis where at the instance and inspiration of his Gurudeva he extensively worked on the Life of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His teachings and made comparative research with other Vaishnava Schools. While in London he worked on the thesis entitled "**The History and Literature of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas and their relation to other Medieval Vaishnava Schools**" under the guidance and supervision of eminent Sanskrit Scholar Dr. L.D. Barnett, M.A. D.Litt, keeper of the oriental section of the British Museum. He got valuable materials for studying at two famous Libraries of London namely, India Office Library and the British Museum Library. He obtained his doctorate degree from the London University and simultaneously he studied law and was called to the Bar from the prestigious Lincons Inn, London and became an utter Barrister.

During his stay in London Dr. Das religiously followed Vaishnava practice in accordance with Vaishnava *Panjika* sent by his Gurudeva Srila Prabhupada from Calcutta, observing strictly *"Ekadashi"* and all other *"Vratas"*. He was a true Vaishnavite in the real sense of the word. While in London Dr. Das lost the most precious thing in his life being the demise of his Gurudeva His Divine Grace Prabhupada Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakura who passed away on 1st January, 1937. Demise of his Gurudeva created vacuum in his life and brought about certain changes in his life style.

He returned to India in 1939 and joined Calcutta High Court as Barrister (Bar-at-Law). He was also very much involved and associated with Sri Chaitanya Math and Sri Gaudiya Maths all over India having contributed for the welfare of the Maths in many ways. Dr. Das attained the abode of Transcendence on 11th February 1983.

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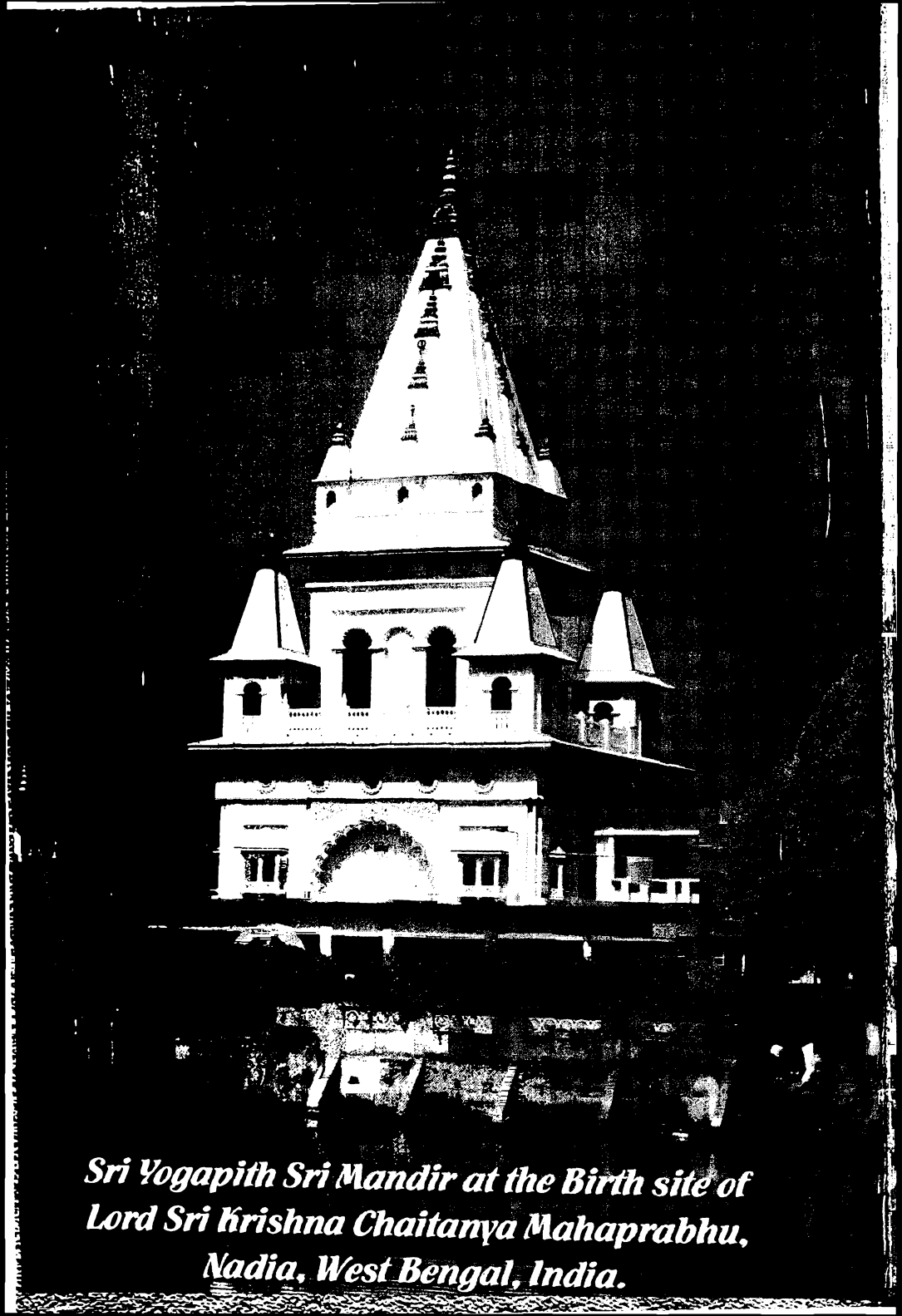

Sri Yogapith Sri Mandir at the Birth site of Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nadia, West Bengal, India.

All Glory to Sri Guru & Gauranga

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(in 15 Chapters)

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PREFACE

Dr. Sambidānanda Dās, was an affectionate disciple of His Divine Grace Prabhupāda Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Goswami Thākura, the illustrious founder of Sree Chaitanya Math, the parent organizasation of the present Gaudiya Vaishnava Movement, Sree Māyāpur and its branches Sree Gaudiya Maths all over India and abroad. He was sent to London in the year 1934 by his Gurudeva along with a preaching party. At the behest of his Gurudeva he carried out research on Gaudiya Vaishnava Movement and based on the study he submitted a thesis to the University of London for which he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The voluminous content of his thesis could not be published by Dr. Sambidānanda Dās. Realizing the value of his contribution to the Vaishnava literature, his wife Smt. Mirā Dās handed over the manuscripts to the Math for publishing after his demise. She also graciously donated a munificent amount towards the expenses. In 1991 Sree Gaudiya Math, Chennai had published first few chapters of his work as Part I; a second edition of which was published recently. Earlier in 1958 "The Life of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu" with some modifications made by Dr. Sambidānanda Dās, was published separately by the Math. His complete work was not published. Since very valuable information available in the manuscripts on Gaudiya Vaishnava Movement and its resurgence during the life time of Srila Bhakti Vinode Thākura, the pioneer of Bhakti cult of 19th century, and Srila Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Goswami Thākura were not published previously. It was thought appropriate to publish the whole work of Dr. Dās based on original manuscript in a combined volume as a tribute to the author.

Starting with a general conception of Bhakti, the author gives sources and background of Gaudiya Vaishnavism and the socio-religious and philosophical background of medieval Vaishnava Schools. Apart from giving an account of the life of Sree

Chaitanya, and brief discussions on various biographies of Sree Chaitanya, the activities of His ardent companion, Sri Nityānanda and other important followers, six Goswamis of Vrindāvan, His followers in Bengal and Orissa in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century are described. The concluding chapter describes the Gaudiya Movement in the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. Specifically the author has given a bird's eye-view of the important concepts of Sri Chaitanya's religious philosophy.

Readers will find this work of value for many reasons. For those interested in comparative philosophy and religion, this book offers a penetrating view into the meaning of Vaishnava spiritual heritage. Although the information provided in this monumental work by Dr. Sambidānanda Dās is only upto 1934 they are very valuable for students of Gaudiya Vaishnava Movement. It gives the meticulous impetus provided by the great Achāryas and followers of the Gaudiya Movement. References given in this book are numerous and there is likely to be inadvertent errors.

The interest evinced by Dr. Sambidānanda Dās's son Sri Krishna Renu Dās, Attorney-at-Law & Advocate, Kolkata gave immense encouragement to publish this combined volume. Dr. C. M. Lakshmanan, a long time devotee of the Math has taken immense care and pain by going through the proof and giving valuable suggestions. The Layout and wrapper done by Graphic Artist Mr. N. Malaiselvan. The publisher is thankful to them. The Proprietor of the Sri Bhagavathi Offset Works did not grudge giving every help towards the early publication of the work. The finish of the work both as regards print and binding has been truly admirable and exceeds even the very high record of this famous establishment. The publisher accordingly takes this opportunity of offering his gratitude to the Proprietor and the management of the Sri Bhagavathi Offset Works for their valuable help in bringing out this exquisitely printed volume in time and at a concessional rate.

The Publisher

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.B. — Anubhāshya on Krishnadās Kavirāj's Chaitanya Charitamrita by Vārshabhānavi Dayita Dās
Ait Br. — Aitareya Brahmana
A.K. — Alamkara Kaustubha by Kavikarnapur
A.M.C. — Anu Madhva Charita by Hrisikesha Tirtha
Arch. Surv. Ind. — Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India
Bh. — Bhāgavata
Bh. Kar. — Bhakti Ratnākar by Narahari Chakravarti
Bh. R. S. — Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu by Rûpa Gosvāmi
Bh.T.P. — Bhāgavata Tātparya by Sri Madhava
Br. S. — Brahmā Samhita
C. Bh. — Chaitanya Bhāgavat by Vrindāvandās Thākur
C.C. — Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krishnadās Kavirāj
C.& C. — Chaitanya and His Companions by Dr. D.C. Sen
C.C.M. — Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya
C.C. N. — Chaitanya Chandradaya Nātaka by Kavikarnapur
Ch. Up. — Chandogya Upanishad
C.M. — Chaitanya Mangal by Lochanadās
Eip. Ind. — Epigraphia Indica
Farquhar's — Outline of the religious literature of India
G. — Gita
G.G. — Gaura Ganoddesadipika by Kavikarnapur
G.P.T. — Gaurapada Tarangini
Gultav's — Oppert Gultav's Notices of the Sanskrit Manuscript in the private Libraries of Southern India
In. H. Q. — Journal of the Indian Historical Quarterly
M.Bh. — Mahābhārata
Mitra's Notices — Rāja Rājendra Lāl Mitra's Notices of the Sanskrit Manuscript
M.T.P.N. — Mahābharat Tatparya Nirnaya
P.V — Premavilās by Nityananda Dās
R.C's — Early History of the Vaishnava Sect by H.C. Roy Chaudhari
S.N. — Sakha Nirnayamrita by Yadunandan Dās
S.P.P. — Sāhitya Parishad Patrika
V.L.M.B. — Vaishnava Literature of Medieval Bengal by Dr. D.C. Sen
V.M. — Vaishnava Manjusa
V T.S. — Vedānta Tattvasāra by Rāmānuja

CHAPTER ONE

A GENERAL CONCEPTION OF BHAKTI

The guiding principle of the VAISHNAVA MOVEMENT of SRI CHAITANYA is passionate devotion (*Bhakti*) to Krishna or to be more precise, Krishna of Vraja. It is true that Sri Chaitanya was not the founder; nevertheless, its new philosophy and psychology owe much to Him and His disciples. A few words on the general conception of *Bhakti* as understood by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas must be added before we begin the history of the Movement, in order to appreciate how much the idea of *Bhakti* has been borrowed and assimilated from other Vaishnava sects.

The term *'Bhakti'* comes from the Sanskrit root, *'Bhaj,* plus the suffix *'Kti'* meaning to serve. The loving service of the most beautiful personal God is *Bhakti*. Quoting a verse from Nārada Pancharātra, Rūpa Gosvāmi defines it as the single-minded devotion to the Lord of the senses, with all the senses free from the adjuncts of *Māyā. (Sarvopādhi vinirmuktam*[1]*)*. Both the object and subject of *Bhakti* are supposed to possess the spiritual body of the senses, to enjoy bliss in consequence of communion with each other in fellowship. *Bhakti* is both the means *(Sādhanā)* and the end *(Prayojana)*. There is no end to its activities even after it has passed the stage of *Mukti* (Salvation), when *Bhakti* is at its highest, and bears the name of *'Prema'*. For this reason, the Bhāgavata Purāna calls it "uninterrupted *(Apratihatā)* and causeless *(Ahaituki)*"[2]. In other words, its sole aim is the pleasure of God, without any reference to that of the devotee; otherwise it would have been *Kāma*

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[1] Bh. R.S. Purva I.10 [2] Bh. III.29.12-14.

(lust) in contradistinction to *Prema*, which is the final object or *summum bonum* of *Bhakti*. *Kāma* is as "dense darkness whereas *Prema*, is the brightest sun". One is iron and the other is gold.[1] *Bhakti* is full in itself and independent uninterrupted by *Karma* or *Jnāna*, or by any other adjunct. The aim of the *Karmins* is gross enjoyment and that of the *Jnānins* is the delusion of the 'self' into the unqualified *Brahman*. So *Bhakti* is fundamentally different from them. The *Bhakta* does not ask anything in return for the service so ardently rendered to God, not even satisfaction at the acceptance of his service, should the pleasure of God be obstructed by the overwhelming joy of the devotee.[2] Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi tells us that pure devotion' (*Bhakti*) consists in the service of Krishna, free from all *Karma*, *Jnāna* and other beliefs.[3] We find throughout the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature a very vehement protest against *Karma* and *Jnāna*; Sri Rūpa expressed himself strongly on the subject, saying that *Bhakti* will not spring forth so long as the inclination towards the wicked *Bhukti* (Object of *Karmins*) and *Mukti* (object of *Jnānins*) remains in the heart of the neophyte.[4]

Krishnadās Kavirāj compares *Karma* and *Jnāna* to weeds and advises his readers to root them out from the heart, otherwise they may hinder the growth of *Bhakti*-creeper.[5] Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi gives the six characteristics of the effect of *Bhakti*:

(1) It is destructive of all kinds of suffering; (2) It is the mainspring of all well-being; (*Subhadā*); (3) It sets little value on *Moksha*; (4) It is the rarest of the rare; (5) It is the embodiment of concentrated Bliss; and (6) It is attractive to Sri Krishna.[6]

Bhakti in itself is sufficient to enable its votary to purge himself of all the adjuncts of *Māyā*, and enter the spiritual land of God, for His love and service. For it requires no help from *Karma* or *Jnāna*, it considers them hindrances to its growth. Māthara Sruti also strongly emphasizes that

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[1] C.C. Adi IV. 164-171 [2] C.C. Adi IV. 201 [3] Bh.R.S.Purva I. 9
[4] Bh.R.S. Purva II. 15 [5] C.C. Madhya XIX. 158-161 [6] Bh. R. S. Purva I.12

it is *Bhakti* alone that can lead us to God and can show Him. God is submissive to *Bhakti*.[1]

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KARMA, JNĀNA AND BHAKTI

The meaning of *Karma* is to engage in some fruitful occupation. We should accept its philosophical meaning. What we do, we do to enjoy its consequences, for the sake of pleasure and the preservation of our body and mind. A man is a willing agent: whenever he wills, he manifests his cognitional faculty, in order to produce fruitful works on the physical and intellectual planes. This function of the manifestation of cognitions is known as his work, or *Karma*. This work of ours is actuated by the three objects of, *Dharma* (ordinary piety); *Artha* (wealth or acquisition); and *Kāma* (desire, or sensual pleasure). More or less, we all look to pleasure for our body and mind in this world, and yearn to prolong and augment the same in the next. The Cause and Effect, theory guides the principle of *Karma*. To sacrifice, to a certain extent, with a view to deriving more enjoyment, is the principle of *Karma*. It is this interest in return, which prompts us to work. The Hindus believe in the existence of *Svarga* (Paradise)-where the Devatas or persons in their subtle bodies, live a carefree life in excessive pleasure and joy. They are said to have control over the physical world. We may go to *Svarga* by satisfying them by sacrifices offered in their honour, and good works done for the public welfare, by means of ethical or pious undertakings. We would live there, by virtue of our works, till their benefit or efficacy is exhausted.

This is somewhat analogous to the theory of the conservation of energy. Our energy now spent is really reserved in *Svarga*, for our future benefit. A considerable portion of the Vedas is devoted to *Karma*. Jaimini gives a systematic treatment of it in his *Purva Mimāmsā*, and the first six chapters of the Gitā dwell upon it. These *Karmakāndins*, or Elevationists, cannot eternally enjoy pleasure in *Svarga*. They are bound to come down to this

[1] *Quoted by Madhva in his commentary on the Vedânta Sutra III. 3,53*

world of pain and misery, on the expiration of the term allotted for their *Karma*.[1] There cannot be any eternal peace, whether in *Svarga* or in this world. The former is nothing but a higher world, subject to change and transformation-the invariable conditions of this world. The difference between our so-called heavenly and worldly life is a question of the degree of enjoyment in gross and subtle bodies, apart from our true and eternal selves. What we enjoy in this gross physical body here is enjoyable in our subtle body in *Svarga* for a limited period though on a higher scale so *Svarga* is not our eternal home, because of the fact that we are obliged to leave it. What is spiritual is eternal, and not liable to transformation with its drawbacks. Our eternal 'self', is something other than this tabernacle made of earth, water, etc; and the subtle body of mind intellect and ego *(Ahamkāra.)* It is this subtle body, which causes our birth according to its desires for the fulfilment of our aims. Our eternal realities *(Atmā)* lie dormant and make use of our vital function by outward transformation - as water becomes frozen into snow or ice, while its original property is not altogether lost but merely remains latent: its solidity is occasional and foreign to water.

To enjoy the world through the senses is occasional and unnatural to our soul, which takes no active interest in this sort of enjoyment, whether here or in *Svarga*. Unless we can shake off these foreign elements, the outer garments of body and mind, we have no chance of communion with God who is absolutely spiritual; so what is spiritual in us never feels sorrow or want, in sympathy with our bodies and our mind.[2] Soul is not born nor does it die. It is ancient yet it is fresh.[3] What we call our body and mind is the property of our real self, which is spirit pure and simple. It is not affected by this sort of elevation of the subtle body to the so-called 'heaven' (*Svarga*) and its fall from it. The intelligent members of the Hindu population, being tired of the cycle of births and deaths, promotion to *Svarga* and degradation to this world-seek to find out what we essentially are, and the cause of the

[1] 1. G. IX. 21 [2] G. II. 23-24 [3] G. II.20

miseries invariable concomitant with our life. This attitude gives rise to various thinkers, who generally go by the name of Salvationists (*Jnānins*) who denounce *Karma* as the cause of these difficulties. They say that our desires in *Karma* are responsible for our successive births caused in fulfilment of these desires. But *Karma* has its efficacy, in its own sphere, in our civic and moral life, for the working of the world. Without being attached to *Karma*, the people would have led a horrible life, detrimental to public morality, and the world would have been full of indolent people. It cannot be ignored unless the people rise high above the common run. The culture of *Jnāna* is reserved for those who are no longer inclined towards the ordinary joys of life.

The *Jnānins* or Salvationists, finding our desires to be at the root of all misery and pain, try to do away with *Karma* by the cultivation of *Jnāna* or absolute undifferentiated knowledge. The Jains and Buddhists form a considerable section of the Salvationists. Spiritual *Chetana* or life cannot remain inactive. It must do something, and by doing so is sure to suffer or enjoy the harvest; so the Salvationists practise various sorts of severe privation, in order to prevent the action of the senses.

The Jaina-Buddhist section of Salvationists seems to prefer *Jada* (Inanimation) to *Chetana* or lively activity. Their efforts are more or less directed to annihilate the individual soul and to lose their reality in the vacuum of Nothingness, which is called *Nirvana* or *Sunya*.

Another School headed by Shankara, rose possibly in the 8th century. Now the Hindus in general are more or less the followers of this great Āchārya. According to Shankara, the individual scattered souls who are subject to pain and misery may divest themselves of themselves by merging their distinctive realities in one undifferentiated reality, which is styled *'Brahman'*. His philosophy is mainly based on several great sayings of *Shruti*, such as *"Sarvam khalvidam Brahman;"*[1] *"Tattvamasi"; "Aham Brahmāsmi"; "Prajnānam Brahman"*, etc.

[1] Ch. Up. III. 14.1

According to Shankarite philosophy, the distinctive entity of individuals is nothing but the working of illusion. There is only one Brahman, apart from which there is no existence of the second. The very idea of the second existence of so many individuals will vanish in our merging into *Brahman*. Salvation *(Moksha)* consists in losing individuality.

It is very difficult to reconcile this theory with our strong consciousness of individuality. There must be either two realities (the one is *Brahman*, and the other individual souls) or one *Brahman*, liable to be degraded to the status of the individual. According to the Shankarite doctrine, the former must be denied; only the second alternative is possible. What is the cause, which must exist, of the one being split into the many? There cannot be any other cause, either superior or inferior to *Brahman*, which is only one cause and second to no other. Shankara has introduced the theory of *Māyā* under the adjunct of which *Brahman* degrades itself into *Isvara* and *Jiva*.

The later Shankarite scholars have used *Avidyā*, which gives rise to the conception of *Jiva* (individuals), and *Māyā* to that of *Isvara*, as the transformation of *Brahman*. He seems to say that there is something more powerful than *Brahman*, which undergoes transformation by its influence; in other words, that there are two entities; one is *Brahman* and the other is greater than the *Brahman*, under the power of which the latter becomes many; but Shankara seems to contradict his theory that there is no second to, or greater than, *Brahman*.[1] *Brahman* cannot be so called if it is liable to transformation under the influence of others. How can we accept the view of Shankara, without bringing the position of *Brahman* into question? We can certainly not deny the stubborn fact of the individual entities. Shankara opposed both the *Karmakāndins* and the Buddhists. *Karma* is activity, which leads to the continuance of existence in the world, and this is opposed to true Shankarite knowledge. His theory may be termed

[1] Ch. Up. III. 14.1

Chinmatravāda or undifferentiated spirituality, which admits no distinction of individuality; while the Buddhist *Sunyavād* or *Nirvāna* may be called *Achinmātravāda* or the loss of individual in Nothingness, which cannot be adequately described.

Moksha, or Liberation, means oneness with *Brahman*, in which there is no room for the knowledge, which the individual cultivates to attain *Moksha*. So long as there is knowledge, *Moksha* is not reached, because *Moksha* means oneness without any distinction; but knowledge implies the knower and the object of knowledge; and until we obtain the knowledge of *Brahman* there can be no *Moksha*,[1] Shankara sometimes recommends the worship of *Saguna Brahman*.[2] The people in bondage, having a separate existence, give a form to Brahma, in order to comprehend the incomprehensible, for the purpose of accommodating it to their senses; and they worship it as a means to the destruction of the separate entity, by merging themselves in it (*Brahman*). Their ultimate purpose is to destroy the difference between the person worshipping and the object worshipped. This kind of cultivation of knowledge or worship is meaningless. It starts with a sense of the finite and ends with becoming one with the infinite. It is nothing more than a false alliance with God; to destroy His position and that of his own 'self'. It is said Shankara on his deathbed prayed for forgiveness for having frequented the temple,[3] which facts suggests that he did not attain the all-destroying *Moksha*, otherwise he would not have had occasion to go to any temple. Shankara makes infinite, finite, by giving it a temporary or false form, of which it is devoid in the true and absolute sense. To lose the individual personality in the impersonal absolute, in which supposed state the individual, the so-called *Sādhana* or worship, and the *Brahman*, in form become one, is called *Moksha*, which provides no room either for devotion or its subject and object. The idea of transitory plurality as distinct from *Brahman* is strong in the individual in bondage.

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[1] Râdhâkrishnan, Vol. II. p. 645 [2] S.B. IV. 1-3 [3] Râdhâkrishnan, Vol. II. p.652

Shankara's philosophy is called *Kevalādvaitavāda*, which attempts to dissolve all personality into one impersonation, or to inflate a quantitative infinitesimal into infinity.

Shankara fails to explain what is that influence that gives rise to the idea of the second object as distinct from the absolute which is not subject to *Gunas* which are inseparable from individuals on earth. He pretends to have been freed from the clutches of duality by assuming the unfettered *Brahmana* position, which effectually prevents him from acting as a teacher.

Let us consider whether what Shankara says is realised by him or whether it is mere theory; that is to say, simply academic in character and not requiring to be experienced by others. It is obvious that he had not realised in his own life what he put forward, because of the fact that his position as *Brahman* did not allow him to speak as a teacher to any second person, unless he adopted the idea of duality or plurality, which is incompatible with his theory of absoluteness devoid of a second in a state of salvation *(Moksha)*. How can he be in a position to enlighten us with the knowledge of an impersonation to which he has not himself attained, still being a teacher, or knower? In that position, he cannot but feel the crushing weight of duality, which he attributes to the adjunct of *Māyā* or nescience, which is said to have differentiated us from the Absolute; but we know It (Absolute) is independent, self-sufficient, and too high to come down as so many beings *(Jivas)* being contaminated by *Gunas* of *Māyā*. Shankara and his followers are called *Māyāvādins* because of their peculiar theory of *Māyā*, which is denied its eternal entity for the sake of argument, in spite of the fact of its existence.

So devotion, or *Bhakti*, is different from *Karma* and *Jnāna* on fundamental principles. The *Bhakta* or devotee from beginning to end retains the permanent personality in the eternal tie of love, which always implies and never does away with, the existence of the absolute Godhead, as

the object of devotion, eternally distinct from the devotee who shudders at the very idea of becoming one with the Godhead, as the perfection of his devotion, which, on the other hand, flows eternally and in pure form after he has liberated himself from the *Gunas* of the world. Devotion is not the means to some end, as Shankara thinks, in the fulfillment of which it ceases. *Moksha* in the Vaishnavite theory means the freed state, in which a devotee serves the Godhead in his spiritual form; whereas Shankarite *Moksha* destroys everything either *Sādhana* or devotion, or its subject or object.

Bhakti keeps herself aloof also from *Yoga,* the ends of which are almost similar to that of *Kevala Jnāna,* with a difference in regard to the means adopted for the realisation of absoluteness. *Yogins* practise many kinds of *Yogabhyāsa* which resemble physical feats, training, discipline and psychical control of the mental processes directed to acquire *Chitta Vrittinirodha,* or the absolute control or concentration of mind necessary to obtain the 18 psychical powers, such as *Animā, Laghimā,* etc. The highest of the ends of *Yogins* is *Kaivalya,* which causes one to merge into the oneness of the Absolute. *Bhaktas* do not beheve in the gymnastic skill of the *Yogins* and also in the pedantic wrangling of the Shankarite scholars. Moreover, *Bhaktas* despise the very idea of becoming equal to, or one with God, as they think that would be utter insincerity. They retain their eternal servitor's position all through; they are neither prompted by schismatic exploitation nor by the hedonistic alluring elevation of the *Karmakāndins*; nor do they follow the pessimistic salvation of annihilating the self, being afraid and tired of world by misery, like the Buddhists or *Jnānins*. They neither enjoy nor pose themselves as enjoyers, nor do they give up everything of the realistic world as undesirable.[1]

We have seen that Salvationists (*Jnānins*) cannot satisfactorily explain the existence of the second entity without impairing the Absolute Integer, who being

[1] Bh. R. S. Purva II. 93, 125

Nirvikāra cannot be subject to any modification. The devotee views from their peculiar position both the Absolute as the one and independent, and *Māyā* which being His external *Shakti* has her peculiar existence in relation to the Absolute, Who is the only Fountainhead of all subservient entities. Just as the rays of the sun have their existence only in relation to it, but to none other than the sun, nor are they themselves the sun, so *Māyā*, being his potency, is included in his absolute whole, as his shadow. So the great sayings, such as *Ekamevādvitiyam*, etc. do not create any inconsistency in the devotional manifestation, which is the outcome of His potency-the existence of which lies in the Absolute.[1]

The Bhāgavata Purāna[2] defines the position of the devotees, who, being thus placed, see the full aspect of Godhead and *Māyā* simultaneously. That is, the position in *Bhakti* which reconciles the eternal existence and form of God with that of the individual *Jivas* and *Māyā*.

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas introduce three kinds of *Shaktis*, such as:- (1) *Antaranga*, which evolves into the Kingdom of God called Vaikuntha; (2) *Tatastha* or *Jiva Shakti*, the outcome of which is the individual souls and (3) *Māyā Shakti*, which manifests itself in the form of the mundane world.[3] According to the Gaudiya Vaishnavite system of philosophy, God and His *Shaktis* are one and not separate entities in a way which is beyond human conception. That is why Sri Jiva Gosvāmi calls it *'Achintya Bhedābheda'*. This *Shakti* theory of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas may be traced in the Svetasvara Upanishad[4], Gitā[5]· Brahma Samhitā[6], Bhāgavata[7] Vishnu Purāna[8] Sarvajnasukta by Vishnusvami and so on. We, who comprise all the souls *(Jivātma)* are also having our existence, not separate from or independent of, the Absolute, because of the fact that we are the display or result of the evolution of his intermediate potency. *Tatastha* or *Jivashakti* is placed between the Absolute on one hand

[1] C. C. Madhya XX. 109, 111 [2] Bh.I.7.4 [3] C.C.Madhya VIII.151/152
[4] VI.8; 1.3.16, IV.5 [5] G.IX, 8/10.VII.4/5 [6] Bh.R.S. 44; [7] Bh.II.9-30
[8] First portion, 12, 69; VI. 7,61

and non-absolute *Māyā* on the other. This sort of identity of ours is quite compatible with *Nirvikāra* or unmodified Brahman, Who is really second to no independent entity. We, being the effect of the evolution of his potency *(Shaktiparināmavāda)* do not require Him to undergo any modification for our existence. The Salvationists *(Jnānins)* explain our individual entity as the consequence of *Vikāra* or modification of *Brahman*, Who is *Nihsaktika* or having no power or potency. *Brahman* plus Ignorance *(Māyā)* or modified *Brahman* is called the individual soul or second entity, and Salvation means the purging away of ignorance and the merging in the oneness of *Brahman*. Is their salvation, if it exists, permanent or temporary? It cannot be permanent, as there is every possibility of their coming again as before, when *Brahman* is under ignorance, or *Avidyā*, or *Māyā*. According to Vaishnavite thought, *Māyā* or *Avidyā* is His external potency, and cannot act on Him, but only on individual souls, who are evolved from another potency of His. So the relation between the individual soul and *Māyā* is inimical until *Jivas* or souls come under the shelter of the absolute God, Who remains perfectly undisturbed by the conflicts of his two potencies.

It is obvious that devotion or *Bhakti* is diametrically opposite to *Karma* or *Jnāna*. *Karmins* seek the pleasure of mind and body, which *Bhaktas* attribute to the action of *Māyā* on souls in bondage. With a loud voice Vaishnavas denounce salvation or Shankarite *Moksha* as poison[1]. Throughout His life, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu fought against it.

Jiva Gosvāmi, in his 'Shada Sandarbhas' and Baladeva Vidyabhushana, in his writings has made a special point of attacking *Māyāvāda* theory and *Moksha*. Thākur Narottama (16th century) says;- "The *Karmakānda* and *Jnānakanda* are plates full of nothing but poison. One who mistakes them for nectar and drinks them, wanders through the various births: eats the unclean; and his life is spoiled"[2] He further warns the Vaishnavas against having any

[1] C.C. Madhya XVIII. 115 [2] Prema *Bhakti* Chandrika,8

connection with *Karmins, Jnanins, Yogis,* worshippers of other gods and goddesses, and so on.[1] Prabodhānanda Sarasvati, another authoritative and contemporary writer of Sri Chaitanya in the ecstasy of his joy in his loving service to God, compares salvation *(Kaivalya)* with the abomination of hell. The realisation of undifferentiated Brahman is nothing in comparison with even a single drop of that milky ocean of which is enjoyed by devotees in their devotion to God.[2]

Following the Bhāgavata[3] the Gaudiya Vaishnavas seem to have incorporated the conception of *Brahman* and *Paramātman* in that of Bhagavān (God possessing six-fold powers) in their own way to give catholicity to their ideas.[4] According to them, *Brahman*, *Paramātman* and *Bhagavān*, are the three names of *Advaya Jnāna Tattva*, or the ultimate Absolute. Though there is not much difference in the said nomenclatures, from the point of view of the Absolute, there is a good deal of difference in the observation of those who approach the Absolute. Let us imagine a hill in the far distance and we, three persons, to be observers standing in different places - the first being nearest to the hill; the second at a moderate distance; and the third very far away. The third person sees it simply as a heap of rising ground without anything particular on it, owing to the distance. His idea will be quite different from, and more imperfect than that of the second person who is nearer to the hill than the third, and who sees various trees growing on it. The first man, owing to his proximity, sees the hill perfectly, with the fruit of the trees, the stones, the colour of the earth, etc., in detail. The observation of the third and second is not wrong; but it is vague, without detail, and partial. So *Brahman* and *Paramātman* are the indistinguishable and partial realisation of the Absolute, who is fully manifested as Bhagavān. As the mid-day sun is too dazzling to be visible in detail, so *Brahman* is the radiating halo of the brightest glory of the most lovely Divine Person Whose Form and Beauty *(Rūpam)* are hidden within.[5]

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[1] ibid. 2 [2] C.C. Adi VII. 97 [3] Bh.I.2.11 [4] C.C. Madhya XX.159; Adi II - 6.27; Tattva Sandarbha VIII [5] Tattva Sandarbha V. VIII.

The Upanishadic idea of *Brahman* is nothing but the purest effulgence emitted from the divine Person of God (Bhagavān). The Katha Upanishad[1], Mundaka[2], Svetasvara[3], Ishopanishad[4], Brahma Samhitā[5], seem to give us this idea of *Brahman*: that It has *Rūpa*, or Form, which is hidden within His dazzling brilliance. There is nothing *Avidyā* or nescience in *Brahman*. It is *Chit* or spirit, pure and simple, the luster of which renders it devoid of anything approaching personality. So *Bhakti* is not capable of existing in the state of observation of the Absolute as *Brahman*, the sphere of which is uninhabited by any individual soul. This undifferentiated *Brahman* - the impersonation of Godhead is also infinite, reposing on the other side of the gulf, which separates the spiritual world from the mundane. The gulf is called Viraja or Kārana Ocean.[6]

The next step to fuller observation is called *Paramātman* Who is both *Sat* (existence) and *Chit* (Spirit). *Paramātman* has been identified With *Purusha* (Vishnu), to give the idea of the creation and the maintenance of the mundane worlds.* *Paramātman*, though not directly connected with the purest devotional school, is the Efficient-cause of the fourteen mundane worlds. He is called Vishnu in the sense that He pervades the whole existence of the world. The gulf of Viraja lying between the spiritual world and the mundane is the water in which the individual soul must bathe in order to free himself from the attributes (*gunas*) of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* of the mundane world. Vishnu in His three Aspects of *Kāranābdhisāyi*, *Garbhodakasāyi*, and *Kshirodakasāyi*, creates and maintains the mundane world. He, as *Kārana* sleeping in the ocean of *Kārana* or Viraja, creates the mundane worlds at His Will, through *Māyā*, which is His external potency. He in the name of *Garbhodakasāyi*, pervades the whole world as *Samasthi* Vishnu (collective). It is from Him have emanated Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu (or *Gunavatāras* of Vishnu), the actual creator, destroyer and sustainer of the worlds, and, all the

[1] 1. II.2.15 [2] II.2.10; [3] VI.14, [4] 15.16, [5] V.40
[6] C.C.Madhya XV152; XXI. 52; XIX. 155; XX. 268/269; XXI. 53. C.C. Adi. V

divine Descents or *Avatāras*. *Kshiroda*, the third aspect of *Purusha* Vishnu, is the all-knowing Indweller in all-individual souls, as *Vyasthi* Vishnu *(Antaryamin)*. Vishnu in this threefold Aspect, though immanent and maintaining the world, has no direct contact with *Māyā* which manifests this world, evolving out of herself through His energy[1]. The *Bhakti* does not start here because devotion does not exist on the plane where there is only *Sat* (more existence) and *Chit* (spirit), without full *Ānanda* or Bliss because here there is no full manifestation of the Personality of Godhead.

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas have further connected the *'Pancharātrika Vyuha'* system with these *Paramātman* Vishnu Purushas, incorporating them in their theology. *Paramātman* is the partial Aspect of the Absolute-whole, who is technically known as Bhagavān[2] who possesses the Infinite Power to keep all under control, infinite Wealth, the highest form of good Name, Beauty, Omniscience and detachment from *Māyā*.[3] The attribute of *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ānanda*, are fully manifest in the absolute as Bhagavān,[4] following the Brahma Samhitā,[5] and the Bhāgavata,[6] the Gaudiya Vaishnavas have identified this conception of Bhagavān with Krishna.[7]

The object of Gaudiya Vaishnavite devotion is the cowherd Lover Krishna of Vraja, Who has been described by Rūpa Gosvāmi in the opening verse of his *Bhakti* Rasāmrita Sindhu, as "an Embodiment of infinite nectarine *Rasa;*" *(Akhila Rasāmrita Murttih)*. This *Rasika* conception of the God of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas seems to be a development of the Upanishadic idea of the blissful *Paratattva*, as we find in the following lines in Taittariya Upanishad,[8] "That highest Truth is *Rasa*" *(Raso Vai Sah.)* "Individuals feel inexplicable joy in greeting Him, Had He not been full of Bliss none would have made, any effort, either bodily or mentally. He brings Bliss to all." Next, the Upanishad[9] begs *Brahman* - *Paramātman* to unfold His

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[1] C.C. Adi. II. [2] ibid. Madhya XX.161 [3] Vishnu Purâna VI.5.47
[4] C.C.Madhya VI. 166/167 [5] V. I. [6] i.e. 28
[7] C. C. Adi II. 70, 94, 106 [8] Vide II. 7 [9] Vide 16

Form and Beauty, which is full of *Rasa*. Krishna of Bhāgavata Purāna and of the Gaudiya Vaishnava literatures seems to be the gradual development of the *Brahman - Paramātman* - in *Rasa*, of the Upanishad. The indication and imperfect manifestation of the blissful character of the Absolute, has received its perfection of all-round development in the Bhāgavata Purāna. The real character of Krishna as the Absolute, is adequately drawn in the first shloka of the 5th chapter of Brahma Samhitā. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas seem to have incorporated in their conception of the divinity of Krishna the Vedic conception of *Hiranyagarbha*- the *Pancharātrika Vyuha* theory- the Upanishadic idea of *Brahman* and general divinity of Vishnu. Sri Sanātana Gosvāmi in his Brihat Bhāgavatāmrita, Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi in his Laghu Bhāgavatāmrita, Sri Jiva Gosvāmi in his Sandarbhas, Krishnadās Kavirāj in his Ghaitanya Gharitāmrita, and so on, have given a very detailed account of the hierarchy of the Divinities, including the above conceptions, which culminate in the conception of Krishna as the Supreme Lord. This attempt to include the Divinities in the character of Krishna dates from ancient times. The Bhāgavata-Purāna apparently met with great success in this connection. In the Gitā, Krishna - is made to say that He is the ultimate object of the Vedas and the Vedānta. [1] This idea that Krishna is the ultimate object of the Vedas or the Supreme Lord has been demonstrated in the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature;[2] in which Bhagavān was given a twofold character – that is to say, of the Majestic God Vishnu (Nārāyana) and of the Loving God Krishna Himself. Krishna has been described as the plenary Source of all divine Incarnations or Descents.[3] He does not Himself actually kill demons or do wonderfully heroic deeds; this is all done through the agency of Vishnu. [4] He, as Krishna, enjoys supreme Bliss, being free from all cares mar the uninterrupted excellence of *Rasa* Vrindāvan.

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[1] G. XV. 16 [2] C. C. Adi VII. 131 [3] ibid. V. [4] ibid. Adi IV. 13

THE OBJECT OF GAUDIYA VAISHNAVITE DEVOTION

Generally, the absolute Bhagavān, being, the Embodiment of infinite Love *(Mādhuryā)*- and magnificent Splendour *(Aisvarya)*, are known as Krishna and Nārāyana respectively. It is Krishna, the Love Incarnate, is the Object of the exclusive devotion of the best type of the Gaudiya Vaishnava devotee. Nārāyana reigns in *Paravyoma* which is the lower half of the spiritual globe known as Goloka, which lies beyond or above of the Virajā or Kārana-ocean, and is encircled by Brahmaloka, or *Jyotirmaya Dhama*. The Virajā separates the spiritual globe or sphere from the mundane worlds. The upper half of Goloka is called Krishnaloka (Kingdom of Krishna), which is again divided into Vrindāvan, Dwarakā and Mathurā. The first is the place where the fullest possible display of Divine Love is to be found. Krishna, being *Svayam Rūpa* - Blissful Absolute, attracting all beauties and charms. Krishna in His *Vaibhava-Prakasha* is known as Baladeva or Mul Sankarshana Whose, Manifestation in magnificence - *(Vaibhava Vilāsa)* is Nārāyana or Mahā Sankarshana. Baladeva and Nārāyana have their fourfold manifestations, called *Chaturvyuha* as their *Vilāsa* or display of Splendour[1] Kārana-Vishnu Who is the Cause, of the mundane world, is the partially manifestative Emanation of Nārāyana or Mahā Sankarshana,[2] Krishna as Divine Cowherd enjoys the beatific Pastimes and Dalliances at Vrindāvana, the most romantic place of concentrated Love in the kingdom of God.[3] Laghu Bhāgavatāmrita[4] Krishna as a Kshatriya prince reigns at Mathurā and Dwarakā where love is subdued by the preponderance of lordliness.[5] Love cannot exist in the fullest sense of the term either at Dwarakā or Mathurā, or at Paravyoma of Nārāyana. There it is only the wedded wives who can serve the Lord, so Love is restricted[6] According to Gaudiya Vaishnava thought, the unconquerable thirst of the Absolute for the enjoyment of unalloyed souls, in the best and most perfect way; remains unquenched. It is true that the Absolute should have no

[1] 4. C.C. Adi V. [2] ibid. 55 [3] C.C. Madhya XX. 176 [4] Purva Khanda 165
[5] C.C. Madhya XX.176/178 [6] ibid. Adi IV. 46/48

wants at all; but He feels so for the sake of '*Chidvilāsā*' or the display of spiritual sports and Varieties. So the devotees proceed further and enter the spiritually romantic sphere. Vrindāvana where the Adolescent Krishna is the only Object of *Pārakiya* devotion (Paramour Love), where devotion reaches perfection in the fullest degree.[1]

The best of all the devotees of Vrindāvan is Rādhikā, to whom the Gaudiya Vaishnavas owe supreme allegiance. It is no exaggeration to say that they long for her service more than for Krishna. They identify themselves with the maids of Rādhā to bring about union between Rādhā and Krishna. The best portion of the Gaudiya Vaishnava literatures is devoted to this subject.

KRISHNA'S LILĀ

Krishna's beatific Sport *(Lilā)* is either *Prakata* viz. manifested in phenomenal world or *Aprakata* - manifested in the spiritual world. Krishna's Childhood, Adolescence and Youth are supposed to continue eternally in the spiritual world, without being subject to the limitations of time and space. This self-same *Aprakata Lilā* becomes *Prakata* or manifest in this world on His Own initiative, for the extension of His *Lilā*, and out of tenderness for His devotees. This is the main purpose of His *Prakata Lilā*. Its secondary purpose, to deliver His favourites from maltreatment by the demons *(Asura)* or anti-devotees, is performed by Vishnu-in-Krishna. This manifest *Lilā* is also eternal in this world. Just as the sun remains fixed, while the world owing to its rotation sometimes sees it and again loses sight of it but the sun does not actually rise or set; so the Prakata Lilā, though setting, in one part of the world, is rising in another. The only difference between the *Prakata* and *Aprakata Lilā*, is going from one place to another, the disappearance from one part of the world to another are the only possible in the former. At the end of the *Prakata Lilā* in the world, Krishna is evidently separated from His associates. He is always in their

[1] C.C. Adi IV, 47. Bh. R.S. Daksin 1. 110/111

company in His *Aprakata Lilā*, by the display of His *Yogamāyā*.[1] *Mādhurya Rasa*, which is the highest essence of the Bhagavān Krishna, is worked out in varying degrees in His Transcendent Human Form, in His spiritual cities Dwarakā, Mathurā and Vrindāvan. His Transcendental Human Body (*Nara Vapu)* is of infinitely Blissful *Rasa*, which becomes deepened in the ever-young Krishna, Who receives service in all the five-fold relationships, from the innumerable devotees who belong to any of those relationships.

Now it stands that Krishna as the Embodiment of *Rasa* is the Object of Gaudiya Vaishnavite devotion that *Rasa*, though it is fivefold is really one, that is called *Sringāra* or *Ujjvala Mādhurya*, which may be either in union *(Sambhoga)* or in separation *(Vipralambha)*.[2] Gaudiya Vaishnavas prefer the latter in their devotion to Krishna.

Throughout the life, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu wept for Krishna in intense Love-in-separation. It will not be out of place here to give a short account of the gradual experience of *Bhakti* in order to appreciate its significance, before we begin our discussion on the conception of Rādhā which is the highest development of the Gaudiya Vaishnavite' conception of *Bhakti*.

A BROAD OUTLINE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF BHAKTI

Bhakti is of two kinds, according to the mode of its inspiration in the heart of a devotee.

One is called *'Vaidha Bhakti'*, i.e., the love of God caused by practices in obedience to Scriptural injunctions; the other, called *'Rāgānugā Bhakti'*, which is spontaneous and selfless love for God, and arises in the heart of a devotee for no cause, or under no obligation, other than his natural inclination towards God.[3] The highest type of *Bhakti* of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas is *Rāgānugā* from the fact that their Love for God is spontaneous. It comes of its own accord to very few, so the general Vaishnavas should

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[1] Paramâtma Sandarbha. [2] C.C. Madhya XXIV. 58
[3] C.C. Madhya XXII. 105/106, 148

practise the *Vaidha Bhakti* gradual manifestation of *Rāgānugā Bhakti*.

Bhakti begins with faith *(Shraddhā)* in Krishna. A neophyte in whose heart faith arises, should always seek the companions of advanced devotees to learn the devotional processes which are 64 in number, the first of which is to surrender himself at the feet of Guru *(Gurupādāsraya)*.[1] All practices need not be observed by everyone.[2] The number of these has been further reduced to nine and again to five, which are (1) the companionship of the *Sādhus* or devotees, (2) the chanting of Divine Name of Krishna, (3) listening to the Bhāgavata, (4) living at Mathurā and (5) the service of the Deities with firm faith. The Name of Krishna being free from the tenfold offence, which is considered the highest of all.[3]

Many minor duties may also be obeyed for the unimpeded development of *Bhakti*; the foremost being complete avoidance of the company of those who consort with women, of those who are averse to Krishna and who are *Karmins* and *Jnānins*.[4] The net result of this state of *Sādhanā* or devotional practices is the complete suppression of sin and worldliness, after which *Bhakti* develops into *Nisthā* or devoutness which is followed by *Ruchi* or intense desire to hear and chant the Name of Krishna With all fervour of heart.[5]

The next stage of development is *Āsakti* or loving attachment to Krishna. The stage from *Āsakti* or attachment is technically called *Sādhanā Bhakti*. *Āsakti* further deepens into *Bhāva* or *Rati* or *Priti*, that is to say, exclusive Love to God, which is wholly spiritual and unalloyed. The germ of *Bhāva* in the heart of a devotee is accompanied by the following mental states (1) *Kshānti*: calmness of mind, (2) *Avyarthakāla*: no waste of time in matters other than of Krishna, (3) *Virakti*: indifference to or hatred for mundane affairs (4) *Mānāsunyatā*: disregard of honour and respect for one's self, (5) *Āshābandha;* firm hope in expecting

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[1] Bh. R. S. Purva II. 33-104 [2] C.C. Madhya XXII. 129 [3] C.C. Antya IV. 71
[4] C.C. Madhya XXII. 84. Adi I. 90-92 [5] C.C. Madhya XXIII. 10; Bh.R.S.Purva. IV. II

Krishna's favour, (6) *Samutkanthā*: intense expectation or anxiety for Krishna's union, (7) *"Nāma gāne sadā Ruchi"*: intense desire to sing incessantly the Divine Name of Krishna, (8) *"Āshaktih Tad Gunākhyāne"*: enthusiasm in singing the Glory of Krishna, (9) *"Pritih Tad vasatisthale"*: love for living in the holy places hallowed by Sri Krishna's Pastimes.[1] This stage of *Bhāva Bhakti* (from *Āshakti* to *Bhāva*) is gradually deepened into *Prema-Bhakti*. *Rati* or *Bhāva* is of five kinds corresponding to the five-fold *Rasa* through which the five, kinds of devotees serve and love Krishna. They are (1) *Sānta Rati*: where a devotee has firm faith in Krishna and meditates on Him, having completely withdrawn himself from all worldly attachments, but has not warmth of loving feeling for God, examples of this kind of *Bhakta* are Sanakas, Navayogindras, and so on.[2] (2) *Dāsya-Rati*: servitorship to God, regarding Him as the Divine Master as Chitraka, Patraka did, (3) *Sakhya Rati*: frendship for God as Sridama, Arjuna and others loved Sri Krishna, (4) *Vātsalya Rati*: a devotee serves and loves Krishna as the Divine Child, a feeling such as that of a father, or mother, or any other superior. Nanda, Yashoda, and other elder Gopa, Gopis are examples of this kind of *Bhaktas*. (5) *Madhura* or *Ujjvala Rati*: to love God Krishna in the spirit of a love-lorn girl, regarding Him as the Divine Lover or Darling.[3]

The consorthood of the most loving God is the most exquisite development of *Bhakti* to which the most beautiful portion of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature is devoted. This *Rati* is of two natures, viz (1) *Kevala-Rati* Love, which knows no reserve, no awe, no dignity, the love of the Gopis of Vraja for Krishna is the example of this *Kevala-Rati*. (2) *"Aiswarya Mishra Rati"*: love tinged with awe and reverence for Krishna. The devotees of Dwarakā, Mathurā, etc. serve Krishna in this latter aspect of *Rati*.[4]

When *Bhakti* passes from the *Bhāva* stage to that of *Prema*, it is called *Prema-Bhakti*, from which stage it proceeds in varying degrees with reference to the five-fold

[1] Bh. R.S. Purva III. II [2] Bhâgavata V.4.11. [3] C.C. Madhya XXIII. 41
[4] C.C. Madhya XIX. 192-193

Rati or *Rasa* augmenting it the devotees cultivate Love to Krishna. This fivefold *Rati* is the dominant sentiment called *Sthāyi Bhāva*.[1] *Sānta-Rati* stops at the *Prema-Bhakti* stage, while *Dāsya*, *Sakhya*, *Vatsalya* and *Ujjvala Mādhurya*, advance to *Rāga*, having passed through *"Sneha"* (melting of the heart for Krishna) *"Māna"* to which Krishna submits to its influence, and *"Pranaya"*. At this stage Krishna is the Exclusive and the dearest Object of Love. *Dāsya Rati* cannot go up to the limit of *Rāga* where a devotee in *Ujjvala-Rati* feels it hard to bear the separation from Krishna. The *Sakhya*, *Vatsalya*, and *Ujjvala-Madhurya* reach the stage of *Anurāga* when Krishna appears to be full of infinite charm. The *Sakhya*, and *Vatsalya* aspects of *Rati* terminate at this *Anurāga* stage, while *Ujjvala-Madhura Rati* reaches *Bhāva*, which is the culminating point of Love of the wedded wives of Krishna. But the *Ujjvala-Madhura-Rati* of the Gopis of Vraja goes a step further to reach. *"Adhirudha Mahābhāva"* the best example of which is to be found in the Love of Rādhikā for Krishna. To give an idea of this state of love is impossible in this conditional sphere. The *Adhirudha Mahābhāva* is of two kinds, viz. (1) *Mādana* in the close presence of Krishna, the display of which is manifold. (2) *Mohana*, caused by the separation from Krishna in love-lorn Gopis; it has two outward manifestations: (1) *Chitrajalpa*, numbering ten in variety, and 2) *Udghūrnā;* otherwise *Divyonmāda* in which state the devotee suffers from acute madness due to separation from Krishna. In this condition the devotee is unable to control her passion for union with her Lover Sri Krishna, and invents a way to lessen her frenzy of passionate Love. She pretends herself as Krishna in order to imagine that He is enjoying her.[2] In His last years, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, manifested both *Udghūrnā* and *Chitrajalpa* in His excesses of Love-in-separation for Krishna. The Bhāgavata describes the *Chitrajalpa* state of passionate Love in the character of the, Gopis.[3]

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[1] Bh. R.S. Purva V.I [2] C.C. Madhya XXIII. 57 [3] ibid. X. 47

The fivefold *Rati* (*Santa, Dāsyya,* etc.) is the dominant sentiment (*Sthāyi Bhāva*) of Love, but it requires stimulants in its development from *Bhāva Bhakti* to *Mahābhāva* to increase its sweetness, as curd mixed with sugar, a little black pepper, and camphor, is deliciously palatable and known as *Rasāla*.[1] The ingredients necessary to increase love are:

(1) *Vibhāva* which excites *Rati* or love for Krishna and is of two kinds. (A) *Ālambana* and (B) *Uddipana*. (A) *Ālambana* is again *Vishaya -Ālambana* who is Krishna Himself for Whom Love is felt, and *Āshraya – Ālambana:* the devotee in whom love is excited. The presence of the two *Ālambanas* is necessary to kindle Love. (B) *Uddipana* (excitants,) awakens Love for Krishna in consequence of association with Krishna's Deeds, Merits, Pipe, Music, etc., which remind the devotee of Krishna.[2]

(2) *Anubhāva* is divided into 13 classes such as dancing, singing, smiling, etc., which betray the internal sentiment of love.[3]

3) *Sattvika:* is the eightfold outer expression, and comprises stupor, perspiration, tremors, a chocked voice, change of colour, shivering, tears, suspension of breath, all of which are caused by the presence of Krishna.

(4) *Vyabhichāri* or *Sanchāri:* It is caused by separation from Krishna and betrayed by the words and gestures of the devotee pining for union with Krishna. It is of 33 varieties viz. (1) self-disparagement (2) despondency, (3) humility, (4) self abuse, (5) fatigue, (6) arrogance, (7) pride (8) apprehension, (9) fear, (10) fervour of heart, (11) frenzy, (12) convulsions (13) bad health, (14) loss of judgement, (15) longing for death, (16) idleness, (17) stupor, (18) shyness, (19) the hiding of' his mental processes, (20) recollection, (21) arguments, (22) reflection, (23) determination, (24) calmness, (25) laughter, (26) curiosity, (27) ferocity, (28) impatience, (29) spite, (30) fickleness, (31) sleep, (32) drowsiness, and (33) wakefulness.

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[1] C.C. Madhya XXIII. 45 [2] ibid. 46 [3] ibid. 47

Such is the main outline of the development of *Bhakti* to God, from its rudimentary state of simple faith to *Mahābhāva*, in which state Vaishnava devotee is believed to be in close touch with the most loving personal God Who is identified with Krishna of Vraja.

THE CONCEPTION OF RĀDHĀ

In Gaudiya Vaishnavism, Sri Krishna is the only Autocrat in *Rasa*, the sweetest charm of which is so intoxicating that He (Krishna) becomes mad in its pursuit. [1] He enjoys Himself in it. He forgets Himself under its magic spell. He is *Rasa* Incarnate. Sri Rādhā has been identified with *Mahābhāva*, which is the highest development and deepest concentration of that *Rasa* [2] Krishna enjoys His Own Beauty in the person of Rādhā. *Rasa* is deepened into Her limbs and senses. She is the reservoir of Sri Krishna's Beauty and the Nectar, which He drinks in and through Her. Sri Krishna enjoys His Own sweetest Grace when it is mirrored in Rādhā. [3] She is considered by the Vaishnavas as the Beauty of Sri Krishna. The Absolute is a pair, not a single person. God is eternally coupled; Sri Rādhā and Sri Krishna are identical and distinct at the same time. The relation between Them is like that of the musk and its scent.[4] They are one and the same, but They assume the two Forms only to enjoy the Beauty of the Beautific Sports.[5] They are Two Aspects of one complete Whole. *Mādhurya Rasa*, the ocean of which is none but Sri Krishna, requires two persons to make the joy more and more ineffable, so Krishna makes Himself, twofold as it were, *Visaya* and *Āshraya* of *Mādhurya Rasa*. *Visaya* is Krishna and *Ashraya* is Rādhā[6] – "Other Gopis are Her *Kayavyuhas* or limbs". When this *Rasa* is restricted, it is called *Svakiya* as in the case of Krishna's wedded wives of Dwarakā. But Rādhā is the example of the spontaneous, incessant, and unrestricted flow of *Rasa*. *Rasa* does not care to be bound or restricted. This notion of love or *Rasa* strongly contradicts the worldly notion of restricted love and unrestricted love which is reversed in the spiritual world

[1] C.C.Adi IV. 122 [2] C.C. Adi LV 69 [3] C.C. Adi IV 138-141
[4] C.C. Adi IV. 97 [5] ibid. 56 [6] ibid. 132-133

of the Vaishnavas. What is higher here is lower there, and vice versa. *Sānta* or calmness is the ideal state that everybody wishes to attain after the fateful restlessness, but it is the lowest of the five relational *Rasa* in the spiritual world and in a like manner, what is the worse, in the world, is the best in its wholesome origin in the spiritual world. According to the Vaishnavite conception of the Love of God, we cannot judge the merit of the spiritual activities by the moral criteria of the world. This relation between Krishna, and Rādhā or Gopis, and enjoyment of each other has got nothing with the mundane sexual experience. The service of Rādhā in Vraja, is not within the reach of the people of the perverted world with their gross body. Vraja is the highest part of the transcendental world where Sri Rādhā dwells.[1]

Gaudiya Vaishnavas following the Vishnu Purāna[2] accept the three kinds of *Shakti* or potency of the all powerful Krishna, viz., (1). *Antarangā Shakti* or intimate potency, (2) *Bahirangā* or outer potency or *Māyā Shakti*, and (3) *Tatasthā* or *Jiva Shakti*. Krishna is *Sacchidananda* that is All-existence, All-intelligence and All-bliss.[3] The term *Sacchidānanda* loses all its significance should there be no potency for the display of the threefold significance contained in the term. He is all-powerful and always accompanied by His power or *Shakti*; the two *Shaktis*: *Bahirangā* and *Tatasthā* have, no concern with Him in His Self-display. His *Antarangā Shakti* is of threefold aspect: *Sambit, Sandhini and Hlādini*, corresponding to *Sat, Chit* and *Ānanda*. This idea of the threefold Aspect of *Shakti* has been borrowed by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas from Vishnu Purāna[4] and partly (two aspects *Hlādini* and *Sambit*) from Vishnusami's Sarvajna Sukta. Sri Jiva Gosvāmi in his *Bhakti* Sandarbha and Krishnadās Kavirāj in his[5] Chaitanya Charitamrita have quoted it from the latter. But the Gaudiya Vaishnavas developed it in a different way, in order to accommodate it to the conception of Rādhā. *Antarangā Shakti* is also known as *Svarūpa-Shakti*. She, by virtue of His *Sambit* aspect, makes Krishna known as Godhead that

[1] 1. C.C. Adi III.5. 11-12 IV.46-47 [2] I. 12- 69 [3] C.C. Adi IV. 61
[4] I.12. 48 [5] C.C. Madhya XV.III. 114

is to say; Krishna's *Chit* or knowledge is appreciable through the Grace of the *Sambit* aspect of the *Antarangā Shakti*. By the *Sandhini* aspect, *Antarangā Shakti* manifests *Suddha Sattva* or pure matter which evolves into Krishna's Sphere, House, Seats, Beds, and so on i.e. she is responsible for the manifestation of all that is necessary for His *Lilā*. So Krishna's existence (*Sat*) is fully manifested through the exercise of the *Sandhini* aspect of *Antarangā Shakti*. The essence of her third aspect *Hlādini* which makes Krishna's *Ānanda* or Bliss possible is called *Prema*, which deepens into *Bhāva*, the perfection of which is called *Mahābhāva* which is fully embodied in the person of Sri Rādhā, *Ānanda* or Bliss of *Sacchidānanda* Krishna consists in His relationship with Rādhā, who is the perfection of *Hlādini* of *Antarangā Shakti*, though His other two aspects *Sat* and *Chit* require to be correspondingly complimented by the *Sandhini* and *Sambit* aspects of His *Antarangā Shakti* and are equally important and necessary for Krishna as such.[1] As Krishna is the Source of all the Divine Descents, or *Avatāras* of Vishnu, so Rādhā is that of the Shaktis of the latter. All Lakshmis, or queens, and the Gopis of Vraja are emanations[2] She pleases and charms Govinda (Krishna) to Whom she is the only all-in-all. She is the head of all Beauties. [3] This conception of Rādhā is strictly of the Gaudiya Vaishnavite. It is only they who give us the philosophy of the Love of Rādhā-Krishna by introducing the theory of *Rasa* and *Shakti* in this connection. All writers on the Love of Rādhā Krishna before Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi have simply described it. It is only Sri Rūpa who has given it a solid philosophical background and added new and sublime conceptions of Love. This he demonstrated in his *Bhakti* Rasāmritasindhu and Ujjvalanilamani.

Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, Sri Rūpa, and other early Gaudiya Vaishnava writers, always kept alive the uncompromising distinction between *Krishnaloka* where the Love of Rādhā-Krishna exists, which is manifested by His *Antarangā Shakti* out of *Suddha Settva* or spiritual matter and this mundane world created by His *Māyā*

[1] 1. C.C. Adi 62-69 [2] C.C. Adi IV. 90 [3] ibid. 81-95

Shakti. Spirit cannot have any friendly relation to matter; they are as opposed to each other as the poles. Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi and all other writers of the sect, say that *Anartha Nivritti* or suppression of worldly attachment is a necessary condition before *Rati* or attachment to God in Love takes possession of the heart of a devotee. [1] They practised severe asceticism and devotional worship to purge their heart of all worldliness. It is so subtle a problem that the Bengal Vaishnavas in the later period, confused one with the other and employed this physical body as either an object or subject of *Prema* or love of Rādhā Krishna, in consequence of which *Prema* has been degraded into gross sexuality so horrible and repulsive in character that it shakes the moral sentiment of pious people. The beauty and purity of the Love of Rādhā-Krishna, which Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and His followers used to sing, seems to have been distorted into a form of gross vice and immorality by the pseudo Vaishnavas and Sahajiyās of the later period.

HISTORY OF RĀDHĀ-KRISHNA CULT

The Rādhā-Krishna cult seems to be the logical development of the Krishna Gopi cult, which may be traced in Vishnu Purāna [2] and Hari Vamsa, which describe the Rāsa dance of Krishna. The Bhāgavata Purāna and Brahma Samhitā are the best of all books on the Krishna Gopi cult that were written before the Gaudiya Vaishnava movement. But none of these books seem to have any distinct reference to Rādhā. Only the Krishna Karnamrita by Vilvamangala of 9th Century and the twelfth Century book Gitāgovinda (verse 1) sing most supremely the exalted position of Rādhā in relation to Krishna; the songs of Vidyāpati and Chandidās are the next best works on the subject. All these four authors seem to be ardent devotees of the Rādhā-Krishna cult. Its literary evidence, so far as known, cannot be older than the 9th Century; the conception of Rādhā conveyed to us by these writers and the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, cannot be traced in works earlier than the

[1] C.C. Madhya XXIII 10-11; Bh. R.S. Purva IV. II.[2].V. 13

Krishna Karnamrita (9th. Century) and the Gitā Govinda (12th Century). It is true that the Bhāgavata does not contain the name of Rādhā but it supplies a clue to Her conception. Sri Rādhā is the head of all Gopis and the best-beloved of Krishna. Sri Krishna loves her more than any other Gopi, which is the main and simple conception of Rādhā. Let us search for Her in the Bhāgavata.

The Verse Bh. X. 5.18 states, "The Vraja of Nanda, being the residence of Hari, is naturally prosperous in all respects. It is all the more so for being the playground of the pastimes of his *Ramā* or consort. The word "*Ramā*" seems to be applicable to Rādhā as the principal consort of Krishna at Vraja. His wedded consorts are never mentioned any way in connection with Him at Vraja; their place being Dwarakā. When Krishna suddenly left the *Rāsa* dance in quest of His dearest mistress, the Gopis in their search made inquiries of all they came across, saying "O friend, has dear Krishna come this way with His dearest consort (*Priyā*)?",[1] The Gopis found the foot-prints of Krishna with those to whom they refer as *Vadhu*, who is said to have followed Krishna, as the female elephant runs after her lover.[2] In the 28th, Shloka[3] the exclusively unparalleled Love, of one for Krishna is most clearly indicated. "He was surely beloved by that fortunate one, so that He being pleased with her, took her to some solitary nook. The Gopis murmured in a fit of delicious envy, "O, she stole away the property of all the Gopis-the honeyed Lips of Krishna, and drank the nectar herself. He (Krishna) has taken her on His Shoulders, and plucked flowers for His *Priyā* and caresses and dresses her hair".[4] The 36th Shloka says "She, whom Krishna led into solitude, thinks that He, deserting all His devotedly passionate Gopis, is attached only to her, so she thinks herself to be the very best and dearest of all." In the 39th, Shloka she bewails and weeps in separation from Him saying –"Oh, my Lord and Enjoyer, O, my beloved Darling, Where are You? Draw near to me" It is clear that the *Priyā* of the Bhāgavata text is the Rādhā of later literature on the Rādhā-Krishna cult. Krishnadās Kavirāj refers to Krishna's

[1] Bh.X. 30. 11 [2] Bh.X. 30.26 [3] Bh.X. 30.28 [4] Bh.X. 30.36.

desertion of the Rāsa dance in quest of Rādhā, and says "Millions of Gopis, without Rādhā, failed to satisfy His (Krishna's) Desires, we know how great she is" [1]. The Bhāgavata has distinguished the one from the other Gopis in the degree of the intensity of Krishna's love for her. It is probable that the creation of the exalted position of Rādhā was in process in the Bhāgavata, the date of which should be at least as early as the 5th Century, if not earlier.

The Padma Purāna distinctly mentions Rādhā and praises her, saying that she is the beloved of Krishna[2] Adi Purāna refers to the exalted position of Rādhā. [3] The author of Chaitanya Charitāmrita quotes a verse from Brihat Gautamiya Tantra which states that Rādhā is close intimate of Sri Krishna by virtue of her exquisite and attractive charm. She is the reservoir of all female Divinities. [4] But we cannot assign any precise date to these books. We can find the name of Rādhā (not in relation to Krishna) in Vajasaneya Samhitā,[5] Katha Samhitā, Taittiriya Samhitā[6] Samkhyayana Brahmana.[7] Madhyandina Samhitā.[8] The Atharva Veda[9] contains *"Rādhā visakhe sahabhānu Rādhā."* We know Visakhā is Rādhā's best friend in Gaudiya literature. Brahma Baivartha Purāna tells us that the word "Rādhā" has been explained in the Sāma Veda.[10] but these references suggest on clue to the later conception of Rādhā in Vaishnava literature. We require further evidence before we can come to the conclusion that the Rādhā cult was prevalent in ancient times.

It seems that all writers on the Rādhā-cult from Vilvamangala and Jayadeva, have drawn their material from the Bhāgavata and developed it in their own way. Some scholars say that the Rādhā conception of the Vaishnavas was first drawn from the Brahma Vaivartta Purāna, but this does not seem correct for the Brahma Vaivartta Purāna is of much later origin. Prof. Wilson chronologically places Padma Purāna second and the Brahma Vaivartta Purāna almost at the end in the list of Purānas (Introduction to

[1] Bh.X. 30. [2] Quoted in C.C. Adi IV.215, C.C. Adi IV. 216
[3] C.C. Madhya VIII 115 [4] Adi. IV 83 [5] VI.34 [6] III. 10; I.4, 1.1.
[7] III. 9. 4. 16. [8] I.3.3.31.1. [9] XIX.7.3. [10] III.153

Vishnu Purāna). Padma Purāna describes the Lilā of Rādhā Krishna, which are very much the same as the descriptions found in later Vaishnava literature. So Brahma Baivartta Purāna is not the first to invent the character of Rādhā, nor can the Vaishnavas have borrowed the conception of Rādhā from it, as its Rādhā is very much older than Krishna. She attained full youth when Krishna was a child. They were married by Brahma according to the marriage rite. Rādhā is not youthful in her married life. The account of Rādhā in all literature since Vilvamangala and Jayadeva, show her in the full bloom or youth and the mistress of Krishna. We must note that Sri Jiva Gosvāmi brings about the marriage between Rādhā and Krishna in his Gopāla Champu.

THE REPRESENTATION OF RĀDHĀ-KRISHNA IN SCULPTURAL ART

Fortunately the wonderful discovery at the Pāhārpur temple in Rājshahi, of the plastic representation depicting Rādhā-Krishna has moved its date back as far as the sixth Century. This important piece of sculpture is one of many which formed the Rādhā-Krishna group, depicting the various Exploits of Krishna's Boyhood and Youth. Though very few acts of Boy Krishna, such as His lifting up of the mountain Govardhana and His nativity, represented in the plastic art of an early period are to be found in the sculptures discovered in Mandor, Mathurā and Bādāmi, the representation of many exploits of Boy-Krishna, Balarāma, Rādhā-Krishna, and Krishna Gopi, is nowhere to be found except in Bengal, to the surprise of students of iconography and history. This Rādhā-Krishna sculpture with other Krishna Images is the earliest example of the subject. We are not directly concerned here with the sculpture depicting other incidents than the Dalliance of Rādhā Krishna, so we must say a few words about this representation of the Divine pair Rādhā-Krishna. There can be no doubt as to the identification of these Images. It is found among the Krishna group, which depicts only the exploits of Krishna Balarāma, and no other. All the iconographical details: the peculiar mode of standing *(Tribhanga Lalitā)* the position

of the hands, the garments, and so on, present in this sculpture are exactly and canonically peculiar and appropriate to thisDivine Pair only. The sculpture has been reproduced in the annual report of the archaeological survey of India.[1] The figures are standing side by side with legs crossed and arms round each other. The Left Hand of Krishna is placed in front of His Chest, while the hand of Rādhā hangs down in the *Varada* or boon-distributing pose. Krishna is clad in a close fitting cloth reaching to the knees and a scarf. The drapery of Rādhā consists of a full lower garment, which covers the legs down to the ankles. Mr. K. N. Dikshit. M.A. later on the Deputy Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India has identified these Images as those of Rādhā Krishna. We had a discussion in regard to its date, which he assigns to the sixth Century, this being our view. The suppleness of body, the distribution of mass, the treatment of the cloth enhancing the volume of the body, the blissful expression of the face, the modeling, the plastic movement, and the rhythmical outline of the figures which express beauty and youth -all these characteristics, present in this and other pieces excavated in Paharpur, decidedly belong to the Typical Gupta school of art. Mr. Dikshit is very emphatic in his opinion of the early date of this cult, as we find in the following lines of his report; -"The Paharpur finds set at rest uncertainty in the matter and take back the beginning of Rādhā-Krishna worship in Bengal to the Sixth Century A. D. or about six centuries earlier than Jayadeva". The Paharpur temple outside of which this Krishna-Balarāma group sculptures, are to be found, is believed to be Buddhist. The Buddhist being anxious to establish the superiority of their religion to Hinduism sometimes employed the images of Hindu gods and goddesses in decorating their monasteries and *Stupas*. Evidently the Rādhā Krishna cult must have been quite prevalent in Bengal in the Sixth Century, otherwise the Buddhists would not have been tempted to give an inferior position to their images. So the origin of Rādhā-Krishna worship,

[1] 19-25-27 plate. XXX.II.C

whether in plastic art, or in fervour of devotion is earlier than the Sixth Century, which is the date of this piece of sculpture.

The question where the Rādhā cult first originated is very difficult to answer. The earliest sculpture of the cult has been found in Bengal, which seems to suggest that it may have come into practice first in Bengal. The Gaudiya Vaishnava writers state, as we have already noticed, that Rādhā is the concentrated essence of the *Hlādini* aspect of His *Antarangā Shakti*, but they have distinctly borrowed this idea of *Hlādini* from the Sarvajnasukta of Vishnusvami[1] who is believed to be the earliest of all the Vaishnava Āchāryas, and who was born in the Pandyan country in the south of India. Vilvamangala Thākur who is the first writer on Rādhā, is believed to have belonged to Vishnuswami community. He was also a southerner. It is also probable that the Rādhā Krishna cult may have originated with this sect of Vishnuswami and in the south of India.

AN OUTLINE OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE VAISHNAVAS BEFORE THE TIME OF SRI CHAITANYA

The worshippers of Vishnu are called Vaishnavas. The worship of Vishnu seems to have been prevalent in very ancient times innumerable references to Vishnu may be found in the Rig Mantras, Samhitās, Brahmanas and Upanisads. Some of the ancient Rig Vedic hymns assign a very high position to Vishnu saying: "The wise (*Surayah*) will see the highest place of Vishnu"[2], "where there is a well of honey and the gods rejoice."[3] It seems from the references to the word "Vaishnava" in the Aitareya Brahmana[4] and Taittiriya Brahmana[5] that the Vishnu cult was established in the Brahmanic period. Vishnu in the above references has been described as the best of the gods of *Yajna* (Sacrifice); the Satapatha Brahmana[6] and the Ātharva Veda[7] mention Vishnu as the highest of all gods.

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[1] C.C. Madhya XVIII. 114 [2] I. 22. 20. [3] I. 154.5.
[4] I.3.4 [5] II.4.3.3 [6] XIV. I.1.5 [7] I.1

In the next stage, the Pancharātrika form of Vaishnavism seems to have been introduced into Vedic Vaishnavism. We cannot say with certainty whether the Pancharātrika Sect derived from the old Vaishnava Sect or whether it had a different origin. It is certain that they were identified with each other. The Pancharātrika system made the Vaishnava Sect as a whole typically Sectarian by the introduction of ritualistic elements; these may have been the Sectarian development of Yajna, which was the practice among the Vaishnavas of the Brahmanic period. The famous four-handed *Chatur-Vyuha* theory of Vishnu, under the Names of Vasudeva, Shankarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, is the distinct contribution of the Pancharātrika Sect of the Vaishnavas, which was gradually adopted in the country, as early as the 5th century B.C. Panini (IV. 3.98) mentions Vasudeva. Patanjali (Circa 2nd century B.C) makes it clear that the Vasudeva referred to, is "the Name of one who is pre-eminently worshipful." The Niddesa, one of the Pali Buddhist canons, mentions the followers of Vasudeva and Baladeva among other sects that prevailed in the 4th century B.C.[1] The Besnagara Pillar inscriptions (Gwalior) tell us that a Yono Duta (Greek), Heliodora, was a Vaishnava (Bhāgavata), who erected a Garuda column in honour of his god Vasudeva.[2] It belongs to the 2nd century, B.C. The Ghasundi inscriptions (Nārāyanavata), almost of the same date, refer to the Puja stone wall (Sila Prakara) for the worship of Shankarsana and Vasudeva.[3] Dr. Niranjana Prasad Chakravarti, Government epigraphist for India, has discovered another important Brahmi inscription of the first century, B.C, at Nagari, eight miles North of Chitorgarh, in the Udaipur State, Rajputana. It has been found on the wall, of a structure called Hathibada. The Amrita Bāzār Patrikā thus writes: "It contains precisely the same text as the celebrated Ghasundi wall inscription and shows beyond all doubt, that the Hathibada was originally a holy enclosure set up round the deities Shankarsana and Vasudeva by a king called Sarvatata long before the Christian

[1] Bhandarakar's Vaisnavism, etc. p.3.
[2] Luder's list of Brahmi inscriptions. No. 669 [3] ibid. No.6.

era. Again, the king Sarvatata who was a Bhāgavata or Vaishnava and who erected the enclosure for the worship of these brother Deities, is represented as having celebrated an Aswamedha sacrifice, which at that early period could be performed only by a paramount sovereign."[1] The Nanaghat inscription No.1 (in the large cave) invokes Vasudeva and Shankarsana.[2] Nārāyanikas, Vāsudevakas [3] Bhāgavatas, and the like, seem to be terms denoting various classes of devotees of the Pancharātrika Vaishnavas.

INTRODUCTION OF KRISHNA CULT

The Name of Krishna may be found in the Veda Samhitā[4] but this Krishna is not the god Krishna of the Krishna cult. Others of the same of Krishna seem to have been mentioned in the Vedas and Upanishads. They are either sages or Asuras and the like. God Vishnu is given the epithet of Gopa (the name or epithet of Krishna in later literature) in the Rig Veda.[5] The Yamuna region, the playground of Krishna in later literature, is also mentioned in the Rig Veda.[6] But we have no reason to connect these references with Krishna of the Krishna cult. Chāndogya Upanishad mentions Krishna as the Son of Devaki (mother of God Krishna in later literature) and as disciple of Ghora Angirasa who instructed him, in the doctrine.[7] The teaching which Krishna learned from Ghora Angirasa is more or less the same as that which he taught to Arjuna in the Gitā[8]. The Krishna of the Chāndogya Upanisad is perhaps the same as the Vāsudeva Krishna of the Gitā and other literature.[9] The towns of Methora and Kleisobora in the writing of Megasthenes and Arrian are identified with Mathurā and Krishnapura (town of Krishna) by Lassen Mc Mc Crindle and Hopkins.[10] Megasthenes lived fully two centuries before Patanjali who belonged to the 2nd century B.C.

It would appear that the Krishna cult was established at least some time before Pātanjali because he notices in

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[1] March 27th, 1935 [2] Luders, No. 1112 [3] Pânini, IV, 3. 95
[4] I.116. 23 117. 7; VIII. 36, 87 Suktas and X. 42, 43 and Suktas
[5] I. 22. 18; I. 154. 6; I. Anuvak 22. Sukta 164. Rig 31 [6] V. 52. 17
[7] III. 17. 16; 4 [8] XIV. I-2 [9] Mbh. XII. 248. 8 [10] R.C.'s P. 23

commentary on Pānini[1] a verse which states that musical instruments were found in the assemblies at the temple of Rāma and Kesava (Balarāma and Krishna). In Pātanjali's time the image of Kesava-Krishna seems to have been worshipped in the temple, and he was identified with Vāsudeva of the *Pancharātrika Vyuha-Vishnu*. Pātanjali mentions Shankarsana the second Vyuha-Vishnu as the brother of Krishna[2] "We learn from Pātanjali that the event of the death of Kamsa at the hands of Krishna was, in his day believed to have occurred at a very remote time". In another place Patanjali says "In the days of yore, Vāsudeva killed Kamsa",[3] It seems from the nature of the references to Krishna Vasudeva in the Mahābhāsya that the Krishna Vāsudeva cult was in vogue long before Pātanjali, The Mahummaggajataka refers to Jambavati as the beloved queen of Vāsudeva Kanha (Vāsudeva Krishna).[4] The Ghata Jataka identifies Vāsudeva with Krishna.[5]

It is difficult to say whether Krishna was at first different from Vāsudeva of the *Pancharātrika Vyuha* and was identified with Him later on as one or the other grew in popularity, or whether Krishna was from the first the same as Vāsudeva. Prof. Keith however remarks "The separation of Vāsudeva and Krishna as entities, it is impossible to justify"[6] and this view seems thoroughly sound. It seems that the Krishna cult became identified with the ancient Vedic Vaishnava sect and the *Pancharātrika* System before Pātanjali (2nd Century B.C.) It should be remembered that this early Krishna cult has not evidently any connection with the character of Krishna of the later Krishna cult in which the romantic element is conspicuously present.

The position of Krishna as the Supreme Being incorporating all the divinity of Vishnu, was gradually developing and became explicit in the great epic, or more precisely in the Gitā (which is included in the Mahābhārata), and finally in the Purānas, especially in the Bhāgavata Purāna. The date of the Gitā is a controversial

[1] II. 2.34 [2] Pânini. II.2.23. [3] R.C. 's P.22 [4] Bhandarakar's Vaishnavism P.10, [5] Cowell's Jataka. Vol. IV. P. 54 [6] J.R.A.S. 1915. P. 840.

question. According to the orthodox Hindu view of Dr. Telang, "The Gitā must have been composed at the latest somewhere about the fourth century, B.C.[1] Dr. Macnicol assigns it to the Post-Buddhistic period but before the Christian era.[2] Sir R. G. Bhandārakar, and Dr. H. C. Rāya Chaudhuri, prefer to place it in the third century B.C.,[3] 1. According to Prof. Hopkins, the Gitā seems to have been composed considerably before the second century, A.D.[4]

The present Purānas are certainly not the same as the old. The present Purānas were first written in Sanskrit and compiled in the days of the Imperial, Guptas onwards (4th Century A.D.) On the whole, we believe that the Paurānic age was later than that of the Vedic and Upanishadic, but there is evidence that Purānas were existent as early as the Upanishads, Aranyakas, and even Brahmanas.

Chāndogya Upanishad[5] Brihadāranyaka[6] contain distinct references to the Purānas. *Satapatha Brahmana* in its 11th and 12th *Kandas* mentions them. The present Purānas seem to be the development and compilation of the old Purānas, which had, as usual in ancient times, remained in the memory and mouths of the singers called Sutas. It seems that the Purānas were employed by the Vaishnavas to embody their doctrines. We have no reason to believe that the present Purānas are not connected with the old Purānas, but it must be admitted that many new ideas have been introduced into the present Purānas in the course of their development, the nucleus seems to be the same as the old, and the nucleus of some Purānas (*Sattvika*) seems to contain the Krishna Vishnu cult.

During this period of the Gitā, and the Purānas, the *Avatāra* theory has apparently been applied to the character of Krishna; a form of *Avatara* theory may be traced to the *Satapatha Brahmana*.[7]

These references state that, "having assumed the Form of a Tortoise, Prajāpati created offspring", and again that "in the Form of a Boar He raised the earth from the bottom

[1] Introduction to his edition of the Gitâ, p.X. CII. [2] Indian Theism' 70
[3] R.C's Vaishnavism, p. 52. [4] Great Epic of India [5] VII.1.2.4 [6] II 4. 10
[7] 7. 5. 1. 5; 14. 1. 2. 11.

of the ocean." [1] The Brahmanas also state that Vishnu assumed the Form of a Dwarf to recover the earth for the gods, from the *Asuras* by taking his three strides." [2] This reference to Vishnu as Vamana seems to be midway between the Vedic Vishnu, having three steps[3] and the Vamana Incarnation of Vishnu of the Purānic literature. "The Incarnation of Vishnu as Krishna is not a post-Christian innovation. It is clearly implied in the Taittiriya Aranyaka.[4]

In the pre-Christian era, Krishna was in all probability accepted as the Supreme God, incorporating within Himself the Vishnu's *Vyuhas*. During the early centuries of the Christian era, the Vishnu cult suffered to some extent owing to the rise of the Saka and Kushana kings of northern India who were either Buddhists or Shaivas. Dr. H. C. Rāya Chaudhury goes so far as to say that their anti-Vaishnava attitude was probably one of the causes which brought the foreign kings (Saka and Kushana) into conflict with the Vaishnava monarchs such as Chandra of the Meherauli inscription, and the Chandra Gupta of the Gupta dynasty.[5] Sri. R. P. Chanda has discovered the Mathurā inscription *Mahāksatrapa Sodasa*, which records the erection of the *Torana Vedika, Chatuhsala*, at the *Mahasthana* of Vasudeva.[6] The Naskia Buddhist Cave inscription of the time of Rajan Vasisthiputa Sri Pulamayi refers to Rāma (Balarāma) and Kesava (Krishna)[7].

If we accept the tradition that Vishusvāmi flourished in the Pre-Christian or in the early Christian era, we must admit that Vaishnavism was also prevalent in the South of India at this time. He was a worshipper of the Narasimha Incarnation of Vishnu. The Nanaghat inscription (Ist Century B.C.) distinctly shows that Vaishnavism penetrated into the Deccan in the pre-Christian era.[8] The China inscription of the time of *Yajna Sri Satakarni* (2nd Century A.D.) found in the Krishna District in the South, contains an invocation to God Bhāgavata Vāsudeva.[9] The worship of Krishna Balarāma in the temples in the South

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[1] Vedic Mythology. p.41, et.seq. [2] R.C.s Vaishnavism, p. 96 [3] Rk. Veda, I.22,18
[4] ibid X.1.6" [5] Vaishnavism p.100. [6] Memoir of Arch. Survey of India. No.5
[7] Luders. No.1123 [8] Luder's Ins. No.1112 [9] Luder's No. 1340

was prevalent in the early Christian era. The ancient Tamil poems such as Chilappatikaram and the like, refer to the temples dedicated to Krishna and Balarāma at Madura, Kaveripumpattinam and other cities.[1] The poet Kari-kannan of Kaveripumpattinam refers to Baladeva and Krishna[2] Setting aside the orthodox view that the Ālvārs lived in a very remote time, the earliest saints of the line of the Ālvārs seem to have flourished in the early centuries of the Christian era. These Ālvārs were the ardent devotees of Krishna Nārāyana and expressed their devotion in a great number of poems known as Nalayiva Divya Prabandam.

The pastoral element and the Sports of the divine childhood were apparently in process of being introduced into the Character of Krishna before, or in the early Gupta era. This is a further development of the identification of Krishna with Vishnu, because the Vishnu of the Rig Veda is called Gopa or protector of cows,[3] or herdsman.[4] So the pastoral of the Vedic god Vishnu is greatly enhanced in the Character of Krishna. Harivamsa seems to be the first book to describe Krishna as the divine Child, though the date of *Harivamsa* is yet to be settled, the discovery of the sculptures of Mandor in Marwar representing the exploits of Krishna suggest that Krishna as divine Child had already become an object of devotion. "These sculptures cannot be dated later than the Christian era," [5]

With the rise of the Vaishnavite monarchs of the Gupta Dynasty (4th Century A.D.) a great impetus was given to all round development of Vaishnavism. Numerous Vishnu-Krishna temples and inscriptions discovered throughout the Punjab, Rajputana, Central India, Western India, Magadha, and Bengal of the Gupta age, decidedly prove the wide prevalence of Vaishnavism. The Gupta monarchs call themselves Paramabhāgavata in coins and inscriptions. The Traikuta King Dahrasena describes as Paramavaishnava on coins.(456 A.D.) Chandra Varman of the Susuniya inscription calls himself a servant of Chakrasvamin

[1] Kanakasabhai's Tamils 1800 years ago, p. 13-26 [2] ibid. pp 68-9
[3] The Vedic index Vol. I.155.6 [4] Hopkin's religion of India. P.57.
[5] Arch survey report. W. India, 1906-7.P. 33. R.C's Vaisnava history P.91

(Krishna –Vishnu), Chandra of the Meherauli pillar inscription built a lofty column to Bhāgavata Vishnu on a hill called Vishnupada[1] Somatrata, the donor of the Tusam rock inscription discovered in the Hasser District of the Punjab, who made two reservoirs intended for the use of the Bhāgavata, was the grandson of the Bhāgavata Bhakta Yasastrata[2] Dhruvasena of the Valabhi Dynasty (530 A.D.) was called Bhāgavata.[3]

The Images of the Avatāras of Vishnu such as the Dwarf[4] the Boar[5] etc., were installed for worship in this period. Krishna as Child-God along with His mother became the object of popular devotion.[6] The principal Purānas seem to have been compiled during the Gupta Period, but the texts underwent additions according to the spirit of the different ages. This was, perhaps, the most flourishing time in the early history of Vaishnavism.

The Krishna-Gopi cult or worship of Krishna as divine lover of the milk-maids of Vraja seems to have been introduced into Vaishnavism during the Gupta Period. The Bhāgavata Purāna, which elaborately describes this new cult, must have been composed in the fifth -century. We have already referred to the Rādhā-Krishna Images discovered at Paharpur. These Images may have belonged to the later Gupta period. The inscription in a cave at Pabhosa, about 32 miles south west of Allāhābād is signed "The maker of the Images of Sri Krishna and the milkmaids",[7] and though the inscription is undated, Buhler suggests the 7th or 8th century. These Images and inscription show that the Krishna-Gopi cult or Rādhā Krishna cult was widespread from the fifth century. Harivamsa, Vishnu Purāna[8] and the Bhāgavata, all describes the Krishna-Gopi cult. The Khoh inscription of Sarvanatha of the 6th century, distinctly tells us that the Mahābharata contains a hundred thousand Slokas (*Sata Sahasri*) which include Harivamsa. It is therefore quite

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[1] R.C's P.101. [2] R.C.'s P.100 [3] The Maliya topper plate inscription. R.C.'s P.103.
[4] Junagada inscription [5] Iran inscription of the time of Tormana
[6] Pathari sculpture Smith's History of Fine Arts. P.164.
[7] Ep. Ind. Vol.II. P.382 [8] V.13

reasonable that Harivamsa was composed long before the 6th century. The Bhāgavata Purāna must have been composed in the 6th century. Vishnu Purāna, which also describes the Gopi cult, must have been earlier than the Bhāgavata as it refers to the latter.[1] We may assume upon the strength of the references to the Gopicult in the Vishnu Purāna, Bhāgavata and Harivamsa that it was widespread before the fifth century, otherwise these, books could not have recorded it. Kālidās's reference to Vishnu as cowherd adorned with shining peacock feathers[2] seems to suggest the lover-cowherd element in the character of Krishna, Kālidās was apparently a court poet of Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta Dynasty. The character of a divine lover in Krishna is not an altogether new element. Vishnu is called Yuva Ākumāra or ever young and Gopa in the Rig Veda.[3] The identification of Vishnu with Krishna was finally completed by introducing the youthful cowherd character of the Rig Vedic Vishnu into that of Krishna. The romantic element of Krishna's character is a further development of the conception of the youthful God of the Vedas. It must be admitted that it is a new conception of devotion to Krishna of the Gupta period.

After the fall of the Gupta Dynasty, under the non-Vaishnava kings such as Mihirakul, Yasodharma, and Harsha, Vaishnavism lost its royal patronage but it had succeeded in capturing the popular imagination and was a developing cult. Vaishnavas were then the exclusive worshippers of Vishnu and had no connection with other gods except Krishna-Vishnu that is why 'Varaha Mihira' (587 A.D.) says in his Brihat Samhitā that the function of installing Vishnu-Images should be assigned only to the Bhāgavatas.[4] In the 8th chapter of his Harsha Charita, Bana (middle 7th century) mentions that the followers of the Bhāgavata and Pancharatras lived in a country surrounded by the Vindhya mountains. Mangalisa (678 A.D.) of the early Chalukyan Dynasty caused a fine cave temple to be scooped out, in which he installed Images of Vishnu such as Ananta Vishnu the Boar and Man-lion

[1] III .6. 2. [2] Meghaduta. V.15 [3] I.155.6 [4] 60.19

Incarnations etc.[1] The Rastrakuta king Dantidurga (8th century) erected the famous Dasavatara temple at Ellora, in which are found the Images of Narasimha Vāmana, Varāha Incarnations of Vishnu as well as of Krishna holding the Govardhana mount on His hand and destroying Kaliya. The temple of Osia, 32 miles north of Jodhpur contains the Images of Krishna Balarama. "The temple cannot be later than the 9th century". [2]

In the south, the Ālvars flourished and popularized the devotion to Krishna Vishnu in the period extending from the early centuries of the Christian era to the 8th century and successfully fought against Buddhism and Shaivaism. Images of the principal Ālvars are to be found in the various temples in the south. One of the later Ālvars, Tirumangai Ālvar destroyed the Buddhist monastery at Nagapatnam and vanquished the Saiva saint, Tirugnana Sambandhar, who was a contemporary of the Pallava king Narasimha Varman of Kānchi who reigned from 625-645 A.D.[3] The age of the Ālvars was followed by that of the Āchāryas, such as Rāmānuja, Madhva and their successors. The famous Vilvamangala Thākur, author of Krishana Karnāmrita, seems to have flourished in the period between the end of the Ālvar age and the rise of the Āchāryas; the latter contributed their solid philosophy to *Bhakti* to combat the Māyāvadism of Shankara. The age of the Vaishnava Āchāryas must be regarded as the finest period in the history of Vaishnavism from an intellectual point of view.

So far as Bengal is concerned, we have noticed that the Rādhā-Krishna Images of the 6th century were discovered, at Pāhārpura in the Rājshahi District. After the great political unrest in Bengal, Gopala, the first king of the Pāla Dynasty came to the throne in 765 A.D. The Pāla kings were zealous Buddhists who not only made Buddhism a state religion, but also popularized it by erecting Vikramasila and other centres of Buddhist culture. But although many Hindus became Buddhists in this period,

[1] Ferguson and Burgss, cave temple. p.407
[2] Bhandarkar's Vaishnavism p.46 [3] R.C.'s p.111.

Hindus in general still adhered to their own religion. They devoted themselves to studying Hindu scriptures and gave of their wealth to erect temples for Hindu God's Images. We know from Harihara Charita Kāvya of Chaturbhuja that one Suvarnarekha, a contemporary of Dharmapala, was well versed in Sruti, Smrti and Purāna. The Vishnuite Image of Shankarshana is found in the very heart of the Buddhist university of Nalanda. The Beghaura Nārāyana Image discovered near the sub divisional town of Brahmanbaria in the Tipperah District is the work of one Paramavaishnava Loka Datta of Bilakindaka in Samantata. The Gaya Nrisimha Krishna Vartika stone inscriptions praise Vishnu and record the dedication of the temples to Him.[1] This evidence shows that even Vaishnavism under the Buddhist rule, was still current in one form or another. The innumerable Vishnu Images of Pāla art, widely extant, support this view.

The next important line of kings who occupied the throne of Bangal after the Buddhist Dynasty, were Hindus who came from the Carnatic with the expedition of Vikramāditya VI of Kalyani between 1044-65 A. D. Lakshana Sena, the last great king of this Dynasty, was in favour of Vaishnavism. His court-poet was the famous Jayadeva of worldwide fame, whose immortal melody and rhythm express with great beauty the love Rādhā-Krishna. The Vaishnavism of Bengal particularly the Rādhā-Krishna cult began to show its excellence in the reign of Lakshmana Sena; when he was supplanted by the Mohamedans, Vaishnavism suffered a check in its rapid growth,

Next came Vidyāpati Thākur of Mithila and Chandidās of Bengal with their immortal songs in praise of the Rādhā Krishna cult. Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu greatly enjoyed their works. But none of them earlier than Sri Chaitanya contains any philosophy or doctrine of Rādhā-Krishna cult. Songs in themselves cannot support and protect a cult, therefore Sri Chaitanya caused His disciples and followers to organise all that was required for the establishment of a

[1] H.C. Rây's dynastic history

definite sect. The writers of Sri Chaitanya's sect surveyed nearly the whole of the religious literature of India, and studied the philosophies of other Vaishnava sects in order to create their own learned books by incorporating the best of their philosophy and of their doctrine, etc., and apparently supplied what was lacking in other systems. All the Vaishnava movements seem to have found their synthesis in Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

The followers of Sri Chaitanya are called *Gaudiya*[1], a word derived from "*Gauda*" which means both the capital of "*Gauda*" [2] and also the whole of Bengal[3]. In the latter case, the word "*Desa*" (country) has been used occasionally. The terms "*Gaudiya Bhakta*" and "*Gaudiya Sampradāya*" were mainly used for the Bengali followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva to distinguish them from those of other provinces[4], but the word '*Gaudiya*' seems to have been applied to the followers of Sri Chaitanya as a whole [5] we have used it in its widest application to the followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva of any province in the present day. Moreover the present movement has made use of the term "*Gaudiya*" as the name of their monasteries in different provinces of India, and also in their written work.

[1] 1. C.C. Adi. I.19; Madhya XII.127; XVIII.166;172,175 etc.
[2] ibid. Madhya XIX.9 [3] ibid. Antya XII.65;VI.157,IV.133 etc.
[4] ibid. Madhya XII.122,125,127 etc. [5] ibid. Adi. I.19; XX.143 etc.

CHAPTER TWO

SOURCES AND BACKGROUND OF GAUDIYA VAISHNAVISM

Gaudiya Vaishnavism may be divided, for convenience' sake, into three main aspects namely devotional, socio-religious-ritualistic, and philosophical, the respective sources of which may be traced to previous writings and other Vaishnava schools of Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vishnusvāmi, and so on. We cannot be exhaustive in surveying all the sources, or precise in arranging them under the exact heads, because one source, may give ideas for several aspects or one aspect has been based on several sources. We shall, however, try to give a general outline of the sources, showing their influence on Gaudiya Vaishnavism on fundamental points.

SOURCES OF ECSTATIC DEVOTIONAL ASPECTS OF GAUDIYA VAISHNAVISM

The introduction of *Rāsa* on psychological experience into devotion to God is the distinctive contribution of Sri Chaitanya Deva's Gaudiya Vaishnavism. This is the logical outcome of emphasizing the extreme importance of the emotional aspect in a passionate devotion to God. In the latter years of His life Sri Chaitanya passed the whole of His time in singing and hearing Sri Krishna Karnāmritam by Vilvamangala Thākur, Gita-Govinda by Jayadeva, and the poems of Vidyāpati and Ghandidās in the company of Rāya Rāmānanda and Svarup Dāmodar who could read His feelings and gave Him solace in His poignant emotion of Love-in-separation for Krishna, by reciting the appropriate in songs from them which exactly touched a deep responsive chord in His devotional heart. [1] Let us say a few words on

[1] C.C. Adi XIII. 42

these points and their poems, who may be taken as forerunners of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's devotion, and who hinted and sang of the *Vipralambha* aspect of God-love to which Sri Chaitanya Deva gave a definite system and form, and the best part of His devotional life.

KRISHNA KARNĀMRITA BY VILVAMANGALA LILĀSUKA

Its author Vilvamangala is also known as Lilāsuka, which name is said to have been given by his Guru Soma Giri on account of his merit in describing the loving *Lilā* or Sports of Krishna.[1] Vilvamangala also calls himself Lilāsuka in the concluding verse of the first Sarga of his Book. There seems to have been more than one person of the name of Vilvamangala but we are concerned with the author of Krishna Karnamrita. The date of this poet is yet to be settled. Sarangadhara of 13th Century quotes in his *Paddati* some passages from Karnāmrita acknowledging his indebtedness to Vilvamangala as its author.[2] The author of Karnāmrita is also mentioned in the Madhura Vijayam of Gangā Devi, wife of the Vijayanagara prince, Vira Kampura, who also reigned in the 13th century. After paying homage to Valmiki, Vyāsa, Kalidāsa, Bhatta, Bana, Bharavi and Dandi, who lived many centuries before her she mentions the name of the later poets such as Karnāmrita Kavi, Takkaya, Agastha, Gangadhara, and Vishvanāth. Mr. Govinda Wariyar has identified Tikkaya with Tikkanna SoMāyāsi who was a Courtier of the Telugu-Coda King Manmasiddhi, who reigned about the end of the 12th Century. Agastha was the uncle of Vishvanāth, whose father was Gangādhara all of whom graced the court of the Kakaitya King Pratāprudra of Warrangal (1267-1323 A.D.). Mr Govinda Wariyar suggests that the poetess seems to mention the poets in chronological order so that the poet-author of Karnamrita who has been mentioned after Dendin and before Tikkaya (i.e. 8th and 13th century) may have flourished in the period between their respective ages, i.e. between 8th century and the 13th century[3]. He has drawn our attention to the fact that in his commentary on one of Shankara's works, Vilvamangala speaks of his tutor

[1] Yadunadnana's translation I. [2] Indian H.Q. June 1931 P. 338 [3] ibid. p. 339

Padmāchārya as the disciple of Shankarāchārya. We know Padmāchārya was one of the principal disciples of Shankara. As the date of the latter is believed to be Circa 8th century, so Lilāsuka's period, may have flourished either during the lifetime of Shankara or immediately after his death. Mr. Wariyar further strengthens his view upon two or three traditions. Suresvara and Padmāchārya, two disciples of Shankara founded the Vetuvile Math and the Tekka Math at Trichur in Kerala, in the temples of which province Vilvamangala's name is sacredly remembered. The principals of the Vetuvile Math claim a continuous spiritual succession from Vilvamangala. It is on account of this fact that the members of this institution, Vetuvile Math, still enjoy the privilege of offering *Pushpanjali* (offerings of flowers) to the Vishnu Image of Padmanābha at Trivandrum to Whom according to tradition, Vilvamangala offered the said worship for the first time. Mr. Wariyar suggests that as both the Maths Vetuvile and Tekka founded by Suresvara and Padmapad are situated very close to each other it would have been easy for Lilāsuka Vilvamangala the Sannyāsi of Vetevile Math, to have become a literary disciple also of Padmapada, the president of the neighbouring Math.[1] This fact that Vilvamangala was at first a Shankarite follower before his conversion to Vaishnavism may be, gathered from his own writing. He says that he was an Advaitin Shaiva.[2] In another verse he seems to abuse *Mukti* by way of praising *Bhakti*, implying that the former stands with folded arms in servitude to the latter.[3] Mr. Wariyar remarks "During this period from before Shanakara, Vaishnavism was making headway in the south under the active patronage of King Kulasekhara of Kerala, who was the author of the immortal Vaishnavite poem Mukundamālā, which is quoted in Rūpa's Bh. R,S.[4] He invited Vaishnava scholars from other provinces to check the advance of Buddhism and other non-devotional sects. Kulasekhara built the Kulasekhara temple in the suburb of Kranganore, another at Kulasekharapuram, and Vaishnavite Math at Kumbhakonam[5]. Prabhakara is said to

[1] ibid. p. 336 [2] *Sarga II. verse 24 Another verse to the effect quoted in C.C.* M.XXIV. 128 [3] ibid. I. 107 [4] D. V. 15 [5] I.H.Q. June 1931, p. 326

have been employed by Kulasekhara to fight Buddhism. Sir R.G. Bhandarkar differs from Mr. Wariyar's view on the date of Kulasekhara[1]. Mr.Wariyar remarks "Vilvamangala's conversion to Vaishnavism was quite possible in an age of religious revival, when the disciples of Shankara himself founded the Maths at Trichur dedicated to God Vishnu in His manifestation of Parthasarathi and Narasimha[2] Vallabha Digvijaya, in the life of Vallabhāchārya, tells us that Vilvamangala belonged to the Vishnuswami sect.[3] It may be possible, first because neither the Rāmānuja sect, nor the Madhva sect, had yet come into being, and secondly, the Images of Nrisimha at the temples at Trichur further encourage this supposition, because Nrisimha is the official deity of the Vishnuswami sect.[4] The memory of Vilvamangala is still fresh at Trichur and other parts of the Kerala State. M.K. Ramo Pisharoti suggests on tradition that Vilvamangala was a contemporary of Kulasekhara, who patronised him[5], but this does not seem very probable. He himself admits that Prabhākara was employed by King Kulasekhara of Kerala, who was vigorously fighting to suppress Buddhism, and that Prabhakara precedes Shankara[6] but we know that Vilvamangala was the pupil of Shankara's disciple Padmpada, and during the lifetime of Shankara it was not Kulasekhara but Raja Raja and Raj Sekhara who were the kings. Kulasekhara tells us in his Mukundamālā stotra that he was the king; so it appears that Kulasekhara was earlier than Shankara. To meet this difficulty, Mr. Ram Pisharoti suggests that there were two Kulasekharas, one being the author of Mukundamālā and patron of Prabhakara, who lived at the time of Somagiri and Lilāsukha the second Kulasekhara being a dramatist who lived before 788 A. D.[7] It does not seem probable that two kings of the same name would succeed one another. The poet and the dramatist Kulasekhara might well be one and the same. This Kulasekhara, author of the Vaishnavite poem Mukundamālā, seems to be the same as the famous Alvar, Kulasekhara who wrote the Vaishnavite devotional poems

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[1] Vaisnavism p. 50 [2] ibid. p. 339 [3] ibid. III. 1.2.p.164
[4] Sayana's Sarva. D. Samgraha Rasesvar Darsān p. 141-142, Cowell's ed.
[5] 1. H.Q. 1431. 329 [6] ibid. 326 [7] ibid. 329

in Tamil, which have been included in the *Nālāyira Prabandham*. Some scholars distinguish the Sanskrit author Kulasekhara from the Tamil author of the same name.

Vilvamangala, author of Krishna Karnāmrita seems to be the same as the author of Gopikabhiseka, a poem on the deeds of Krishna. A good deal of Prakit has been used in it. Mr. Govinda Wariyar likes to attribute its authorship to the grammarian Vilvamangala author of the grammatical work Purusakara which refers to a grammar of the 12th Century, and which was referred to in his Dhatuvritti by Madhavachārya, the famous minister of the founders of the Vijayanagararaj.[1] His grounds for attributing it to the grammar Vilvamangala is that some of its verses are chosen as illustrations of the sutras of Trivikrama's Prakrit grammar. He seems to imply that there was another Vilvamangala in the 17th century, but we are not concerned either with him or with the grammarian Vilvamangala of the 13th century. The subject of our discussion is the Vaishnava poet Vilvamangala Lilāsuka author of the lyrical Krishna Karnāmrita. The other two are never called Lilāsuka Vilvamangala. If we like to agree with Mr. Govinda Wariyar and Mr. Pisharoti that Lilāsuka Vilvamangala lived at the end of the 8th or at the beginning of the 9th century, we have to admit that Krishna Karnāmrita, is perhaps the first book which mentions the Love of Rādhā for Krishna, and the next book on that cult is Jayadeva's Gitāgovinda.

The Rādhā Krishna cult is the further development of the devotional tendency of loving God in close fellowship and in the spirit and relation of a woman to her husband or lover. This tendency is striking in Prabandham of the Ālvārs. Godā, the famous woman Ālvār, is said to have been married to the Deity Ranganāth of the Srirangam temple Tondaradippādi Ālvār (Sanskrit Bhaktānghri Renu) expresses in his Tirup Palliyeducci, (*Paramātmara Jagarana* in Sanskrit) that to serve and love God in one's spiritual body is the Summum bonum of one's service to God.

Furthermore, the Gaudiya Vaishnavas (16th century)

[1] 14th Century ibid. p. 336

demonstrate that Rādhā is the concentrated essence of the *Hlādini* Aspect of God's *Parāshakti*[1] but they distinctly admit that they have borrowed this conception of *Hlādini Shakti* from Vishnusvāmi's *Sarvajnasukta*. The Rādhā cult is mentioned for the first time, so far as we know, in Krishna Karnāmrita of Vilvamangala, who is believed to have belonged to the Vishnuswami sect. It is no wonder that the conception of the *Hlādini* Aspect of God's Shakti was transformed into Rādhā cult in this sect, sometime before Vilvamangala, who has simply expressed it in his writing.

Krishnadāsa Kavirāj by way of explaining the first shloka of the Karnamrita, records the traditional account of the life of our poet, in his commentary, Sarangarangada. He states that Sri Vilvamangala was a renowned scholar and lived on the eastern bank of the river Krishna in the south of India. He had an illicit love with a dancing girl who was a musician and harlot named Chintāmani, who used to live on the opposite bank of the river Krishna, and whom he used to visit every night, One stormy night, finding no boat, he risked his life to cross the terrible river by floating on a corpse that lay on the surface of the stream. But, to his disappointment, he found the gate of the prostitute's house bolted from within. He shouted her name with all his might, but it was of no avail. His cries were deadened in the deafening thunder, boisterous winds and torrential rain, which were beating on the windows and walls. What was to be done? Nothing could daunt his morbid passion, which should be satisfied even at the cost of his life. He was then as devil incarnate. The walls were too high and steep to scale. The weather-beaten but passionate Vilvamangala made a last desperate attempt to climb the steep wall. Having nothing else to hold on he seized the tail of a snake, which clung to the wall, and succeeded in leaping over but fell heavily to the ground on the other side of the wall bringing Chintāmani out to the spot. In what was practically a dying condition, he was discovered by his love for whom, for the sake of a frantic infatuation, he had risked his life. Had she not found and succoured him, it is certain, he must have

[1] C.C. Adi IV. 68-69

died. She carried him into the room and there nursed him tenderly as he hung between life and death when he recovered consciousness, she pitied and abused him for his foolhardy venture, saying "What a great fool you are! Shame on your learning! I know and I am always conscious of my own wicked life and profession. Had you been attached to God in the way you love me, you would have been an angel" It sounded like the call of God. To Vilvamangala who had existed in a circle of hell, the whole face of things was instantly changed, so inspiring were her words in that great moment. To him, those words of hers were not merely a reprieve, but a total deliverance from his hateful life, a restoration that suffused his whole being. Her grim censure proved wholesome to the remorseful Vilvamangala; changed the whole course of his life, giving it a swift turn into spiritual channels.

The very next day he renounced the world and began the most severe asceticism, being initiated by his Guru-Somagiri. Chintāmani deserves commemoration for having saved him from death, both physical and moral, and presenting him to literature and to the world of Vaishnavas. It is God Who was mysteriously preparing him for a world where sins and lusts are unknown. God lifted him out of the slough of earthly sin through the instrumentality of Chintāmani whom Vilvamangala has immortalized in the first Shloka of his Krishna Karnāmrita, and makes obeisance to her who, in the character of a harlot, showed him the way to the kingdom of God. He lived for some time at Vrindāvan after his initiation. He is said to have composed his poem when he was still at Vrindāvana and on the way from there to his native province. He rhymed with poetic grace, the felicity of his inner experience, the rapture of an enchanting love of God, in his immortal poem. He compares the very subtle sentiment of love with the perversion to which he was blindly addicted in his early life, in his deliciously arresting verses of Krishna Karnamrita, which, apart from describing the niceties of the Vaishnava religion, is a volume of enchanting poetry, distinguished as unique in the annals of literary art. To the Gaudiya Vaishnavas it is the gospel of

spiritual Bliss, a record of that mysterious voice which was whispered in the inner ear of Vilvamangala, the blessed disciple of Soma Giri.

KRISHNA KARNĀMRITA AND GAUDIYA VAISHNAVISM

Sri Chaitanya Deva acquired this one Shataka of the three-Shataka from the south of India. He heard it recited at a gathering of Brahmana Vaishnava Pandits on the bank of the river Krishna. He was so charmed to hear the sweetness and grace of Krishna's Divine Love Sports which compose the subject-matter, that he kept a copy of it with care and enthusiasm.[1] Sri Chaitanya told Rāmā Rāya that His devotional principle is just the same as that found in Krishna Karnamrita[2]. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj says that there is no book like the Karnamrita in the whole of the threefold world. He who reads it incessantly, knows the depth of the charming beauty of Sri Krishna. It inspires one with unalloyed Love of God.[3] Rāya Rāmānanda, Vasudeva Datta Thākur, and others, made copies of it for their personal use. It has, since then, been regarded as the very best book on the best kind of devotion in the Gaudiya Vaishnava community. We are only discussing this first Shataka of 112 verses of the Krishna Karnamrita, which Sri Chaitanya brought, and which is the most popular in Bengal.

SUBJECT MATTER OF KRISHNA KARNĀMRITA

We have already mentioned that there are two kinds of *Bhakti-Vaidha* and *Rāgānugā*. The latter is the spontaneous and selfless Love for Krishna, to Whom a *Rāgānugā* devotee is attracted merely on hearing of His sweet and loving Character, desiring intently to cultivate a Love for Him regardless of the scriptural injunctions which cause a *Vaidha* devotee to feel very humble and distant from God Whom he holds in respect and awe. It is the nature of *Rāgānugā* Love to draw the devotee into close fellowship with God Whom he regards as an intimate friend and mate. The Gaudiya-Vaishnavas are particularly the exponents of the latter kind of God-Love. This *Bhakti* may be cultivated by devotees as

[1] C.C. Madhya IX. 304-309 [2] ibid. 324 [3] ibid. 307-308

servants, as friends, parents and sweet-hearts. *Rāgānugā Bhakti*, in the relationship of the lover and the beloved is the subject of Krishna Karnamrita. Its place is supreme amongst the founts of Gaudiya Vaishnava devotional literature. The Bengali recension of this particular Shataka consists of 112 shlokas in the first and second of which the author, makes his obeisance to his preceptors; and defines the Absolute Whom he has identified with Krishna, as the highest object of loving grace (*Mādhurya*). The two best qualities the sweet grace and tender restlessness to the lover in the character of Krishna's Beauties of Vraja have been drawn in the first hundred and five shlokas. Sri Rādhā has been described in the next shloka as the Crest-Gem of All transcendental beauties and no devotee of the transcendental Vraja can delight Krishna except in strict obedience to her. This is just the view of the Gaudiya Vaishnava writers who invariably from Sri Chaitanya Dev down to the most recent writers time, have particularly emphasised this vital point of their devotion. Sri Charitāmrita is replete with passages, which extol Rādhā's position beyond measure. She stands foremost amongst all spiritual damsels whose prototype she is surpassing all in beauty, merit, luck and love[1]. All spiritual maidens help to enhance the Bliss of Krishna with Rādhā, who is the central object of His love-sports. She being Krishna's darling and His life's treasure, no Beauty of Vraja can contribute to Krishna's pleasure without her. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas never indulge in their devotion to Krishna without obedience to Rādhā. Had Krishna quarrelled with Rādhā, all Gaudiya-Vaishnavas would have liked to forsake Krishna in favour of Rādhā. Krishna Karnamrita is perhaps the first authentic book which expressly establishes Rādhā's supremacy in the Love-Sports of Krishna, as we find in verse No. 106. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas made this idea, the most striking feature of their romantic religion of God-love. Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi, in his Upadesamrita seems to re-echo and develop the above idea in saying: "The *Jnānins* are better than the *Karmins* but the devotees, liberated from *Jnāna*, are better than the *Jnānins*, and of all devotees, those

[1] I.4.214

who are devoted to God by *Prema* are most beloved of Him, and, even among them the damsels of Vraja (Gopis) are decidedly supreme, and again of all the damsels, Rādhā is the best. "Sri Rūpa in his Ujjvalanilmani, Dānakeli Kaumudi, Lalita and Vidagdha Mādhava Natakas, Stavamālās: Krishnadās Kavirāj in his Govindalilāmrita, and Chaitanya Charita; Raghunathdās Gosvāmi in his Vilapa Kusumanjali and other *Stava* poems; Rāmānanda Rāya in his Jagannāth Vallabha; and Visvanath Chakravarti in his writings, and others, extended this idea that we first come across about supremacy of Sri Rādhā in Krishna Karnāmrita (Verse 106). Krishnadās Kavirāj made Krishna say that even the angry words of His beloved Rādhā gratify Him more than the praise of the Vedas.[1] In his Rādhārasa Sudhānidhi Pravodhananda Sarasvati says "Krishna Madhusudhana, Who is hardly attainable by the Yogis feels Himself glorified if He happen to be touched by the glorious wind set in motion by the agitated skirts of Sri Rādhā." Even the modern writer Thākur Bhakti Vinode emphasised the idea in one of his songs: Krishna's pleasure:

Krishna's pleasure
lies in the Bliss of Rādhā,
I like to meditate upon it.
To keep His company,
leaving the feet of Rādhā,
I shall never yearn.
There may be some,
who live apart from her,
Let them live as they prefer.
I am always in support of Rādhā.
I hate to see the others. (Saranagati. No, 26)

The principle of Krishna Karnāmrita has been so much developed in Gaudiya Vaishnavism that it will be no exaggeration to say that they were rather devotees of Rādhā than of Krishna, Who goes nowhere except in the company of Rādhā. Such is the exalted position of Rādhā in Gaudiya Vaishnavism. In the verses No. 22, 29, 100, 102, the author expresses his opinion that there should be no devotion

[1] C.C. Adi IV. 26

except to Krishna in the sweet sentiment of Love. Krishnadās Kavirāj re-echoes the same idea.[1] Karnāmrita (Verse 108) also supplies the Gaudiya Vaishnavas with the subtle process of gradual revelation of Divinity which beginning with the name of Krishna, culminates in the full fledged manifestation of His Divine character before He manifests His beauty (*Rūpa*) and attribute (*Guna*). Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi adopts this process of gradual manifestation of Divinity to the devotee in the 8th shloka of his Upadesamrita. Karnamrita is specially meant for those who have been already, liberated from the conditioned state of the world and have attained the highest spiritual sphere. The exact nature of such a blessed life in Vraja has been told in the last shloka. The Name of Krishna has been invested with all His beauty and sweetness and identified with Himself in the shloka No. 108. This principle of the Name Krishna is exactly followed by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in the first and 2nd shlokas of His Sikshastaka, Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi, particularly in the fifth shloka of his Krishnanamastaka and in Vidagdhamadhava[2] have further developed this principle of the Name of Krishna that we find in Krishna Karnāmrita Krishnadās Kavirāj quotes the passages from it in the following places in his famous Chaitanya Gharitamrita viz Adi. 1-57, *Madhya*. ii. 58, 62, 65, 78: XXI. 136; XXIII 29, 32, Antya.XVII.51

Sri Rūpa quotes at least five verses from it in his Bhaktirasāmrita Sindhu, and 3 verses in his Ujjvalanilamaṇi to support his views.

SOME GAUDIYA COMMENTARIES ON KRISNA KARNAMRITA

Ghaitanyadāsa, possibly the elder brother of Kavi Karnapura, has written a commentary on it named Valavodhini, which has been published with its Bengali rendering by Thākur Bhakti Vinode in his Magazine "Sajjanatosani" vol. X. Anuragavalli by Manoharadāsa contains references to Gopal Bhatta's commentary called Krishna Vallabba (Ist Taranga). Bhakti Ratnakara has also

[1] C.C. Adi IV. 42-49 [2] Vilâs II. 234

referred to it, (Ist Taranga). The most popular commentary that is accepted in the Gaudiya community is the Sarangarangada by Krishnadās Kavirāj, the celebrated author of the Chaitanya Charitamrita, Yadunandana Dās Thākur, the poet disciple of Hemalatā Devi, daughter of Srinivas Āchārya, has rendered Karnāmrita into Bengali metrical verses following the Sarangarangada. It has been published by Amulya Kumar Vidyabhusana in Calcutta. It has gone into several editions, and is extremely popular. Sri Vrindāvanadās, disciple of Srinivas Āchārya[1] has written another commentary on Krishna Karnāmrita.[2] Vankavihari Tarkalamkara has written another commentary.[3] All these Gaudiya Vaishnava commentators have commented only on the 112 shlokas that are included in the first Shataka which Sri Chaitanya Deva had brought from the South and which He daily recited.

The whole three-Shataka of Karnāmrita has been published in Deva Nagari characters in Bombay, and in Telugu at Madras. Krishna Karnāmrita is also called Krishna Stotra as it appears at the colophon of one of the India office manuscripts.[4] There is at least one running commentary on the whole of the three Shataka of Karnāmrita. It is known as Suvaina Cosaka written by Pāpamalaya Suri, son of Tirumalaya Bhatta and Kodandamma, as we find in the concluding line of the said commentary. We are not sure whether Papamalaya was the first cousin of Gopāla Bhatta whose uncle's name was Tirumalaya Bhatta.

Besides his famous Krishnakarnāmrita, he seems to be the author of Krishna Kaumudi[5] Kranavalacharita, Govinda-stotra, Bala Krishnakridā Kāvya, and Vilvamangala strota.[6]

GITĀ GOVINDA BY JAYADEVA

Gita Govinda is one of the four sacred books, which were daily recited to Sri Chaitanya Deva. Vanamalidās, disciple of Srinivas Āchārya and grand disciple of *Gopala*

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[1] Karnananda 6th Niryas [2] Mitra's notices of the Sanskrit MSS, Vol. IX P. 63 (Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS in private libraries of N.W. Provinces printed at Benares p. 608-609) [3] Mitra's notices Vol. VII p. 88. No. 2316 [4] No. 3902
[5] Mitra's notices, Vol. IX P. 60 [6] Aufrect C.C. p.373

Bhatta has written a biography of Jayadeva in poetry, but it is not of historical importance. He is believed to be the court poet of Lakshman Sena, the last great Sena King of Bengal, who was attacked by Buktiar Khilji possibly in 1203 A.D. when he was in his residence at Nadia. The author of the commentary Ganga on Gita Govinda says that he was attached to the court of Lakshman Sena, Jayadeva mentions Govardhana, Saranam Dhoyi and Umapati all of whom were the court poets of Lakshman Sena. Dhoyi composed his Pavanaduta making Lakshman Sena its hero. Govardhana in the beginning of his Arya Saptasati praises him as the crest jewel of the Sena Dynasty. Several inscriptions of the Sena Kings now discovered were written by Umapati. Mr. Satish Chandra Rāya M.A. has quoted the following Shloka inscription which is said to have been found on the lintel of the hall of the Palace of Lakshman Sena *'Govardhanascha Sarano Jayadeva Umāpatih / Kavirajascha Ratnani samitatu Lakshmanasyacha'*. (Introduction to his Gita Govinda). It seems from the above that Jayadeva was one of the poets together with Umapati, Govardhana, and Sarana. Chand Bardai in his Ghauhanrasau[3] has mentioned Jayadeva as the author of Gita Govinda.[2] The date of the composition of Chauhanrasau is yet to be settled. Its author is said to have been killed in the war between his patron Prithiraja and Mohammad Ghori, which took place in 1193 A.D. If we believe it, we have to admit that Gita Govinda was not only already composed before 1193 A.D. but was in public appreciation throughout the country as far as Rajputana. Jayadeva had dedicated his Gita Govinda to his friends Parasara and others (Last verse).

Jayadeva was the son of Sri Bhojadeva and Bala Devi (Last verse). The Nirnaya Sagara edition reads Ram Devi or Rādhā Devi instead of Bala Devi. His birthplace seems to have been Kenduvilva which he indicated in the 8th Shloka in the third Sarga of Gita Govinda. Kenduvilva has been identified with modern Kenduli in the District of Birbhum, West Bengal. It is situated on the northern bank of the river

[1] Part I. p.11. Kasmi [2] Part I.p.11 published in the Kashmiri Nagari Grenthamala

Jaya, about ten miles away from the sub-divisional town of Suri. The memorial temple rose above his Samādhi tomb, and the annual celebration held in the month of March, keep alive the hallowed memory of the immortal Vaishnava poet of Bengal. The Images of Rādhā Vinoda which he installed are to be found in the temple which is supposed to have been built in the 17th, century on the very site of Jayadeva's house at Kenduli. It is quite a good example of a nine-towered type of temple extant in Bengal. It is called the Rādhā Vinoda Temple and its facade is exquisitely decorated with delicate brick tiles, representing the various Incarnations and Exploits of Vishnu.

Jayadeva's wife's name seems to have been Padmāvati, Vanamālidās in his Jayadeva Charita says that she was the daughter of a Brahmana of the South. (By South, he seems to mean Orissa). The father of the girl made up his mind to dedicate her to the Image of Jagannāth at Puri, but he is said to have been ordained by God in a dream to give her in marriage to Jayadeva, who was then living his devotional life at his native village of Kenduvilla. She was also a very religious-minded woman and as devoted to God as her husband. The Sanskrit Bhaktamala by Chandra Dāsa tells us that both Jayadeva and his wife Padmāvati were devoted to the worship of Krishna like one soul, in the form of singing and dancing.[1] Sekh Subhodaya; a later compilation at the direction of the Mohammedan king of Gauda, tells us that Jayadeva's wife defeated the best dancing girl of the royal court of the Sena Kings in the art of dancing[2]. Jayadeva himself says that he used to dance in describing the Love Sports of Vāsudeva, Padmavati is also mentioned in this connection. Our Gaudiya Vaishnava commentator, Pujari Gosvāmi, gives us two meanings of the word Padmavati, which may be applied to Rādhā if we take it in the indirect way, or to his wife Padmāvati with whom he danced. Another commentator Kumbha Karna Mahendra explains that Jayadeva used to dance with his wife Padmāvati, out of fullness of heart for God, without caring for the criticism

[1] Gita Govinda. P.9. Published by the Nirnayasagara Press Bombay
[2] Introduction to Satish Rây's edition of the Gita Govinda

of the public. She seems to have been a very cultured woman.

His biographer Vanamālidās records that a certain king rescued him after his body had been tortured by some robbers who were later on destroyed miraculously. This King, who may have been King Lakshman Sena, came under his spiritual influence. Jayadeva is said to have lived in the palace of his rescuer for a long time. Lakshman Sena's father, Vallal Sena, was a Shaiva whose inscriptions began with an invocation to Shiva; but some inscriptions of Lakshman Sena begin with that to Narayana and be styles "Parama Vaishnava" "Paramanarasingha". It may be that Vaishnava Jayadeva may have exerted some influence on him.

The Sanskrit Bhaktamāla by Chandra Datta tells us that he sometimes lived at Puri with his wife. The king of Puri became his ardent admirer. It is also mentioned in a verse of the Alamkāra Sekhara (Chap. V.) It seems that after the overthrow of his patron, Laksman Sena, he went to the Hindu court of the Orissan king. He exerted a good deal of influence there, in consequence of which, he introduced the daily recitation of his Gita Govinda into the temple of Jagannāth where it is still in vogue. Jayadeva also lived sometime at Vrindāvana and installed his Rādhāmādhava Image there. The temple of this Image is found near Vramaraghata at Vrindavana. (Gaudiya vol. X.P.150) He seems to have toured in different provinces. His memory is also connected with several Rajput States. Today his Gita Govinda is daily recited in almost every temple throughout India, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin. Prof. Buhler discovered a manuscript copy of Gita Govinda in Kashmir and according to Rajatarangini, the historical archives of Kashmir, where the king Harsa had it recited.

Krishna Karnāmrita contains scanty references to Rādhikā but Jayadeva's book as a whole expresses very touchingly in these immortal lyrics of his, the deep pathos of Rādhikā, which was caused by the absence of her Lover Krishna. He seems to have described the development of the Rādhā cult, which took place between his time and that of Lilāsuka Muni. Sri Chaitanya found a fitting

expression of His own intense yearning for a single love-look from the object of His love, in this lyrical poem of Jayadeva. What is interesting is that Sri Chaitanya was born in the capital deserted by Lakshman Sena, the solemn atmosphere of which about three centuries previously was filled with the sweet music of Jayadeva himself, whose residence was, as the local people point out, at the corner of the Ballala Dighi, lying within a stone's throw from the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya, at Sri Māyāpur, which was a quarter of the old city of Nadia.

Gita Govinda is called Ashtapadi in the south of India from the, fact of its having eight shlokas in every *Sarga* or canto. Jayadeva is really a great poet in the true sense of the term. His poetry and music are artistically combined to vibrate to the rhythm of souls. It equally appeals to the devotional fervour of the Vaishnavas and the lovers of poetry and music every song is invariably preceded by the particular mode of tune appropriate to it. The Gita Govinda is perhaps the best of the whole of Sanskrit literature in this respect. It is rightly said that, "whatever is delightful in the modes of music, whatever is graceful in the fine strains of poetry, whatever is exquisite in the sweet art of love, let the happy and wise learn from the songs of Jayadeva."

Krishnadās Kavirāj quotes at least 6 verses from Gitā Govinda in his Chaitanya Charitamrita, Sri Rūpa four verses in his Bhaktirasāmrita Sindhu, 13 verses in Ujjvalanilamani. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas have several commentaries on it, but the Balabodhini by Pujari Gosvāmi alias Gopināth Pujari, disciple of Gopāl Bhatta, is very popular. Gita Govinda has numerous commentaries, some of which we are tempted to mention here.

1) Balabodhini by Pujāri Gosvāmi Tikā,
2) Vachanamālikā,
3) Artharatnāvali by Chaitanyadāsa,
4) Artharatnāvali by Gopala,
5) Gangā by Krishnadatta, (Shaivite interpretation)
6) Padapayodhini by Nārāyana Bhatta.

7) Pada-bhāvartha chandrikā by Srikanta Mishra,
8) Tilakottama by Hridayabharana,
9) Pitāmbara Tika,
10) Bhāva Vibhanini by Udayanāchārya,
11) Bhāvachārya Tikā,
12) Prathamastapadivivriti by Vittala Dikshit, son of Vallabhachārya,
13) Sri Harshatika, According to some, King Harsha of Kasmir is its author,
14) Mānaka Tikā
15) Mādhuri by Rāmadatta or Bamatarana,
16) Another by Rāma Tarana.
17) Rotnāmālā by Kamalākara.
18) Rasika Priyā by Rana Kumbha.
19) Sarvanga Sundari by Nārāyandāsa.
20) Rasakadamba Kallolini by Bhagavātdāsa.
21) Svānanda Govinda by Rūpa Deva.
22) Svānanda Govinda by Laksman Bhatta.
23) Sruti Ranjini by Lakshman Suri.
24) Sanjeebini by Vanamali Bhatta.
25) Sruti Ranjani by Visvesvar Bhatta.
26) Rasamanjari by Samkara Mishra.
27) Sālinatha Tika,
28) Sāhityāratnakāra by Seysaratnakara.
29) Krishnadasatika.
30) Sarādipikā by Jagaddhara.
31) Sandehabhedika by Khumarakhan.
32) Saradipika by Jagaddhara.
33) One by Ramakanta, son of Rambhadara.
34) Padyotanikā by Narayana Bhatta.
35) Mahimastotra by Madhusudhana (introduction by Hari Mohan Vidyabhusana, Calcutta)

The names of the first 29 commentaries are taken from Aufrect's C. C. and the rest from Vaishnava Manjusa[1] and others.

VIDYĀPATI THĀKUR

Another great poet whom Sri Chaitanyadeva ardently appreciated was Vidyāpati Thākur of Mithilā. His poems were also recited to him. Vidyāpati Thākur wrote his famous love sonnets of Rādhā and Krishna in the vernacular of Mithilā, which is akin to that of Bengal, and is one of the causes of its wide popularity in Bengal His poems, are more read and sung in Bengal than in his own province of Bihar. Since the Pala Supremacy, these two neighbouring provinces were united both in culture and politics. The influence of the former is not to be easily dropped with the fall of the latter. Sri Chaitanyadeva gave an impetus to the popularity of the poems of Vidyāpati in Bengal, and since then, his poems and those of Chandidās have become the manuals of the highly cultured and advanced type of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas.

Rājā Shiva Simha Rūpanārāyana whose court poet Vidyāpati was, granted him a freehold gift of the village of Visapi as a token of his patronage. [1] The title deed of the gift is dated in the year 293, L.S. (1400 A.D.) when he was already a poet of distinction. This village had since then been in possession of the descendants of Vidyāpati until the latter part of the 19th century when his descendant Vaiya Thākur was dispossessed of it by the Government. Producing the engraved copper plate, recording the grant by Rājā Shiva Simha, and the genealogy of the family by which their right might be established, were of no avail. Sir Alfred Grierson doubts the validity of the grant, but it is possible that the original deed was lost or destroyed by the ravages of the tropical climate, and that the copperplate was made in facsimile of the original. It was a fact that they were enjoying the use of the village rent-free and other

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[1] Part I. P. 13 [2] Sir Alfred Grierson in Indian Antiquary
Nagen Gupta"s introduction to Vidyâpati's poem

agricultural benefits which would not have been possible if it had not been granted by a Raja. This is not the only historic document to determine his age.

There still exists a manuscript of the Bhāgavata Purāna in his own handwriting at Tarauni which is about 24 miles from Darbhanga. This is perhaps the trustworthiest evidence of his age. The manuscript contains. *"Subhamastu sarvarthagata samkya L.S. 309 sravana sudi 15 kuje rajavanauli grame Sri Vidyapaterlipiriyamiti"* It was written at the village of Rajavauli by Vidyāpati in the year 309 of L S. (1456 A.D.) This manuscript is free from all defects and mistakes whatsoever, which would not have been possible to any one other than an accomplished court poet like Vidyāpati. The nature of the writing indicates that it was written in his very old age. One of his songs has been dedicated to Gyas Deva Sultana, who seems to be the same as Gyasuddin Sultana of Bengal (died in 1373 A.D.). It seems that he flourished in the latter part of the 14th century and the first part of the fifteenth. Mr. Nagen Gupta is of the opinion that Vidyāpati lived to the age of ninety.

Vidyāpati's father, Ganapati Thākur, and his other ancestors were famous both in politics and literature. Many of them served the royal court of Mithila in these capacities. Vidyāpati was also the poet laureate and dedicated a good number of his poems to Raja Shiva Simha and his wife Lakshmi Devi, who were his patrons. Vidyāpati's expression of the Love of Rādhā for Krishna, her intense yearning in Love-in-separation, and the final sweet reward for her pain brought about by his personal devotion, seem to have been inspired by Sri Bhāgavata Purāna, which provided him with the theme of his poems. Vidyāpati's hymn beginning with Tātala Saikate [1] is the exact purport of one shloka of the Bhāgavata. [2]

All sects; Shaivas, Ganapatyas, and particularly the Shaktas, tried to draw Vidyāpati on their side. It is very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to discover the genuine Vidyāpati among the pseudo Vidyāpatis

[1] p. 496. N. Gupta's edition [2] II. 1. 37

representing various rival sects. It is not safe to estimate his personal faith on the basis of his interpolated poems. The Shaivas have gone so far as to say that he gave up his faith in Hari Krishna in his latter years and stuck to his god Shiva whom he is said to have invoked to dispel the fear of death in his last moments. But his most famous and popular song, beginning with Tātala Saikate, will prove the Shaivas' attempt to claim him for their sect, to be futile and unfounded. Vidyāpati says at the end of the said song, "O Madhava, in the final fear of death. There is no hope but Thou, Thou art the beginningless Lord, universally proclaimed. The responsibility to deliver me is Thine".

Vidyapati's advocacy of the supremacy of the Vaishnvite book Bhāgavata roused Shaiva Smarta Kesava Mishra's animosity. Kesava Mishra was a descendant of Rājā Shiva Simha in the female line. In his Dvaita Parisistha, he tried his best to establish the Devi-Bhāgavata as authentic in rivalry to the Vaishnavite Srimad Bhāgavata. He abuses Vidyāpati Thākur, saying *'Atiluvdha Nagara Yasaka'* greedy beggar on account of his devotion to the Bhāgavata Purāna.[1] If Vidyāpati was a Shaiva Shakta as a few poems represent him, Shaiva, Shakta Kesava Mishra would have held him as the leader of their sect, but his hostility against him for his exclusive devotion to Krishna and the Bhāgavata seem to show that he was a devout Vaishnava. It may be that he was a Shaiva in his early years. A very few poems in praise of Shiva, Gauri and so on, that bear his name cannot stand against his host of Krishnaite poems. Sir Alfred Grierson has critically published 82 poems of Vidyāpati of which 76 are devoted to Rādhā Krishna.[2]

The Bengali editors have collected a huge number of poems assigning them to the Vidyāpati of Mithila. Sir Alfred Grierson seems very right in his remarks: "These spurious songs of Vidyāpati have been more than once collected (Bengali editions). I have gone carefully through them, every poem, in both these collections, and am in a position to state that not more than five or six of them altogether show

[1] N. Gupta's introduction [2] Introduction to the Maithili Language of N. Bihar etc. 1881-86

even a resemblance to songs admitted up here (Mithila) to be the work of Vidyāpati. Even these are so distorted both in language and rhythm that identification is by no means easy, the fact is that both these Bengali collections are most interesting as showing the influence of Vidyāpati over the Bengali mind, but in no way can they be considered as containing more than a few lines really written by himself.[1] He further writes: Vidyāpati Thākur who lived in 1400 A.D. has only left us a few songs which have come, down to us through five centuries of oral transmission, and which now cannot be in the form in which they were written."[2] We can further substantiate the very conscientious view of this very learned scholar. These Bengali editors unscrupulously include all the poems, which contain in their Bhanita the names of Vidyāpati Kavisekhara, Kavirajanjana Champati, Raya Sekhara, which are believed to be the titles of Vidyāpati of Mithila. Rasakalpavalli (1643 A.D.) and Raghunandana Sakha Nirnaya, by Gopaladāsa of Srikhanda, have thrown great light on the confusion of Vidyāpati of Mithila with several Bengali poets bearing the above titles, who wrote their poems in *Vrajavuli* and *Maithili*, which became the 'fashionable vehicles with the Bengali poets since the middle of the 16th Century. There were several Poets of the names of Vidyāpati Kaviranjana, Kavi Sekhara and Daya Sekhara at Srikhanta who were all disciples of Raghunandana Thākur, follower of Sri Chaitanya Deva,[3] Gopaladās seems to have been the younger contemporary of them. He quoted some of their poems in his *Rasakalpavalli*. He says of Kaviranjana Vidyāpati of Srikhanda that he was like Vidyāpati of Mithila in composing songs, Kalidāsa, in the manipulation of verse.' He was known, as the younger Vidyāpati. He was a Vaidya by caste. "The three worlds are now flooded by his poems".[4] It is quite clear that The Vaidya Vidyāpati of Srikhanda is different from the Brahman Vidyāpati of Mithila. The former has been described with Dāmodara[5] and Yasaraja, as having been in the service of the king.[6] This fact may be further

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[1] Indian Antiquary. 1882. [2] J.R.A.S.B. 1893. quoted N. Gupta's introduction.
[3] Raghunandana Sakhavatnana. S.P.P. XXXVII. p. 54 [4] ibid. p. 43.
[5] Maternal grandfather of Govinda Kaviraj [6] p. 42. The Decca museum manuscript of Rasa Kalpavalli

borne out by the fact that one of this Bengali Vidyāpati's songs has celebrated Shah Nasira, who is evidently King Nasarat Shah, son of Hossain Shah.[1] Nasarat Shah reigned from 1519-1533. He uses his name either as only Vidyāpati or Kavirajanana as author in the *Bhanita* of his poems. In the above song in praise of king Nasarat Shah, he calls himself only Vidyāpati. He was attached to the local court of the Zamindar of Rūpapur near Bolepur in Birbhuma, in his latter years. His tomb is to be found there. A very large tank at the village is called Vidyāpati Pukur after his name. There is a difference of about 100 years between the period of Vidyāpati of Mithila, and that of Srikhand, Bengal. His poems have been confused with those of Vidyāpati the Mithila poet in the later anthologys but the extraordinary scholarship of Sir Alfred Grierson could easily distinguish the poems of the Mithila Vidyāpati from those of the Pseudo Vidyāpati who is no other than of Srikhanda. Sri Chaitanya Dev used to appreciate and sing of the Mithila poet.

Vidyāpati's poems are so appealing and expressive of spiritual feeling that the Bengal Vaishnavas consider them in no wise less important than the great Bhāgavata Purāna. His poems are the clear representation of what is believed to occur in, the romantic land of Vraja. There is no barrier between God and his devotees who regard Him as one, who by virtue of His charming grace mixes with them as an equal, plays with them and dances among them. Vidyāpati shows in his poems that such an affinity, with God leaves no room for reverential aloofness. Vraja is the place for rendering the very best confidential services to God Krishna whose infinite power, splendour, majesty and lordliness become subdued under the spell of His graceful charm, which is so infinitely blissful that the separation from Him is worse than death to His devotees; yet it is necessary for attaining the highest perfection of Love in union. Vidyāpati describes most faithfully the Pastimes and Dalliances of Vraja on this principle of Love, that the idea of Love-in-separation is a healthy means of making Love always progressive. This exactly describes the devotional principle of Sri Chaitanya

[1] S.P.P. 40 pt. I.p.28

Deva and that is why He appreciated it so much. His poems may be classified into several groups according to the various aspects of Rāsa that have been treated in them.

CHANDIDĀS

This is another poet who inspired Sri Chaitanya Deva with his poems. He is the indigenous Bengali poet who composed his songs in pure Bengali. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj tells us that Sri Chaitanya Deva used to savour the poems of Vidyapati, Jaydeva and Chandidās with Svarūpa and Rāmarāya.[1] Sri Sanātana Gosvāmi refers to poems of Chandidās.[2] Premavilasa tells us that the song by Chandidās in praise of Krishna's Lilā was daily recited at the Kheturi temple[3].

None of the earlier, or later writers gives any history of his life or home, or the like. He was the first great Bengali poet who sang the glory of the religion of Love of God in the Vernacular of Bengal. He is still considered, and will be considered for all time, one of the most celebrated poets of Bengal, but it is strange that the life and character of such a great poet are shrouded in mystery. It is extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, to form an idea of the real character of Chandidās who left nothing to us except some of his beautiful poems, which alas, have suffered from wanton interpolation during these five hundred years. It thus renders our investigation all the more difficult and perilous. His real life is still unknown to the public. The history, hitherto told of him, is mainly based on those interpolated poems, which are tinged with sectarian animosity or with the illicit ambition of those so-called poets, who hoped to give publicity to their own poems, by availing themselves of his established reputation. We are again impeded in our attempt to bring the Vaishnava Chandidās before the public from the obscurity of the past by the fact that there was more than one Chandidās. The Chandidās, whose poems Sri Chaitanya Deva and earlier Vaishnavas used to appreciate, seems to be the earliest poet of that name. The number of poems that go by the name of

[1] C.C. Adi XIII 42 [2] Vaishnava Tosani a Commentary on the Bhâgavata X.33.56
[3] XIX. p. 184

Chandidās is almost inexhaustible. They contain in their *Bhanitas*, the names of Vedu Chandidās, Vatu-Chandidās, Dina Chandidās, Dinahina Chandidās, Dvija Chandidās, Rāmaniranara Chandidās and Chandidās. It seems that there were several Chandidāss who were more or less contemporaneous, that is why they added some other word to their name so as to distinguish one from another. If there was only one Chandidās, he need not have put *Vadu* (senior), or *Vatu* (junior) and so on. Therefore the Chandidās whose poems were appreciated by Sri Chaitanya Deva must be the earliest of all. If he had any distinguishing designation against his name, Krishnadās Kavirāj, Sanātana Gosvāmi, Nityānandadās and other who mention him, would have referred to him as such, but they invariably mention him as Chandidās. Dina Chandidās celebrates Thākur Narottama in some of his poems.[1] There is a poem in the Padakalpataru stating that Vidyāpati and Rūpanārāyana came to meet Chandidās.[2] It is perhaps the Vidyāpati of Srikhanda and Rūpanārāyana, the court Pandit of Paikpadaraj and the disciple of Thākur Narottama, who met this Dina Chandidās, because Rūpanārāyana and Dina Chandidās call themselves the disciples of Thākur Narottama, whose friend was Raghunandana, whose disciple was Vidyāpati of Srikhand. Mr. Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyaya has been able to trace this Dina Chandidās who calls himself the disciple of Thākur Narottama.[3] Mr. Manindranatha Basu of the Calcutta University has further enlightened us in this regard.[4] He was attached to the Raj family of Chatna the family god of which is the goddess Vasuli whom he mentions in his poems. Rāi Bāhādur Joges Chandra Rāy M.A. tells us that Vidyāpati met Dina Chandidās at Chatna. It seems from the above that this Chandidās of Chatna who used to mention Vasuli is different from the Chandidās whose poems were the object of Sri Chaitanya Dev's admiration, because the former belonged to the end of the 16th, or beginning of the 17th Century, and the latter flourished before the 15th Century. Dr. Suniti K. Chatterjee says that this Dina Chandidās's

[1] S.P.P.XXXVII. p. 41 [2] IV. 26 [3] Bharatvarso Paus 1333 B.S [4] S.P.P. XXXIII. Part 4

poems number more than 1000.[1] About more than ninety per cent of poems that go by the name of Chandidās are those of this Dina Chandidās. He seems to have been a *Sahajiya*. Though he calls himself the disciple of Narottama Thākur, the list of the authentic disciples of Narottama does not include his name. The *Sahajiyas* have tried to include the names of the Vaishnava masters among their Gurus and put in their mouth their *Sahajiya* doctrine. Another *Sahajiya* Mukunda Gosvāmi regards Krishnadās Kavirāj as his Guru.

VADU CHANDIDĀS

Mr. Manindra Mohana Basu M.A. has published a number of poems which contain the names Vadu Chandidās, and *Vatu* (Boy) Chandidās as their authors.[1] In all these poems, both *Vatu* and Vadu Chandidās invariably call themselves the votaries of Vasuli goddess but *Vadu* Chandidās does not mention Vasuli in his poems that have been included in Gopaladās's Rasakadamba.[2] Who is this Vadu Chandidās? The author of the Krishna Kirtana, whose other name was Ananta, is named Vadu Chandidās.[3] Some scholars hold that Vadu Chandidās is earlier than Dina Chandidās. In all his poems he invariably puts his name of Vadu Chandidās as its author. This Vadu Chandidās does not seem to be the same as the one to whom the Vaishnava masters refer. If they meant him they would have mentioned him as such, but they mention only Chandidās. The name of *Vadu* (senior) Chandidās is so strongly relative that it suggests distinguishing him from his junior contemporary who was his namesake. Should we believe that Vadu Chandidās was different from Dina Chandidās, though both of them were votaries of Vasuli (Buddhist goddess)? It may be that Vadu Chandidās used to call himself in some of his poems also Dina Chandidās out of personal humility (*Dina* means humble). If they are one and the same, then the Chandidās of Sri Chaitanya Deva's appreciation is different from them, because Dina Chandidās belonged to the 16th Century.

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[1] S.P.P. XXXVII. p.41 [2] S. P. P. XXXX. p. 43-54
[3] S. P P. XXXVII. p. 114-115 [4] S.P.P XXXIX p. 198

Mr. Manindra Mohana Basu suggests from the poems of Ratnasāra (a *Sahajiya* book) that there was another poet of the name of Taruniramana Chandidās.[1] He seems to be the same as Taruniramana whose 45 poems have been included in the Siddhānta Chandradaya and who is the author of Padavali and Upasanatattva.[2] This Taruniramana Chandidās of Siddhānta Chandrodaya, a typical *Sahajiya* book, has some connection with the washerwoman whom he calls by the name of Rami, Tara, *Dhuvini* (washerwoman) and so on. Sometimes he uses his whole name of Taruniramana Chandidās (Ratnasāra) and at other times only Chandidās, or Taruniramana in the *Bhanitas* of his poems. For example, we find the name of Chandidās in a poem No.822 of Chandidās's *Padavali* published by Sāhitya Parisad. The very poem contains the name of Taruniramana in the Calcutta University Manuscript No 2865. It seems that none of these men of the name of Chandidās is the same as the older Chandidās whom Sri Chaitanya Dev appreciated. The latter does not seem to have written a great number of poems. The later 17th Century anthology, "Ksanadagita Chintāmani of Vishvanāth Charkavarty does not contain a single poem by Chandidās. Vishvanāth was the greatest writer of the day in the sect, yet it is strange that he could not gather a single poem of Chandidās. It seems that Chandidās's poems were practically lost in the latter part of the 17th century. The later careless anthologists not only confused the poem of Chandidās with those of another of the same name but also changed the name of Chandidās in favour of other poets in the *Bhanitas* and *vice versa* for example, the poem No.355 of Chandidās's Padavali[3] has been assigned to Nara Hari in Padāmrita Samudra.[4] The poem No.358 of Chandidās's Padavali is just the same as that of Rāma Chandra.[5]

It is extremely difficult to separate the poems of the earliest Chandidās of Sri Chaitanya Dev's appreciation from those of the later *Sahajiyas* of the name of Chandidās. The

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[1] Monthly Vasumati 1344 B. S. Asadha [2] Sāhitya Parisad edition
[3] Sahitya Parisad edition, [4] p. 415 Mursidabad edition,
[5] Sâhitya Parisad manuscripts No.201

Sahajiyas purposely distorted the poems of Chandidās and interpolated their own poems to give some show of authenticity to their cult, which seems to have sprung up in the latter part of the 16th century. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee expresses great regret that first at the hands of anthologists, Vadu Chandidās being confused with Dina Chandidās, the former has been drowned in unfathomable depths, and secondly the *Sahajiyas* made Chandidās appear to be a follower of the *Sahajiya* cult and connected with *Vasuli* and their *Rāgatmika* poems with the name of Chandidās, also manufacturing the story of the washer woman Rami'.[1] Dr. Chatterjee seems to suggest that Vadu Chandidās was identical with the earliest Chandidās of Sri Chaitanya Dev's appreciation and that he composed a few poems dealing with the Love-in-separation of Rādhā, but his poem is hopelessly lost amongst those of Dina Chandidās. It is very difficult to support the view that Vadu Chandidās is the same as that of Sri Chaitanya's Deva's appreciation, because the *Bhanitas* of both Vadu Chandidās and Dina Chandidās invariably invoke Vasuli, and possess a similar style. These two were probably one and the same for he seems to have used the terms Dina (humble) and Vatu (child) in his *Bhanitas* to show his humility. *Vadu* may be the later modification of *Vatu* which word has been used many times. It is certain that Dina Chandidās flourished in the late 16th Century because he celebrates Thākur Narottama. It is generally believed that the earliest Chandidās of Sri Chaitanya Deva's appreciation lived at Nannur in the Birbhum, and the later Dina Chandidās's native village has been identified as Sacha. The earliest Chandidās does not seem to have any connection either with *Vasuli* or with the washerwoman first because they are to be found in the poems of Dina Chandidās and Taraniramana Chandidās respectively and belong to the late 16th century if not later, whereas Sri Chaitanya Deva's Chandidās seems to have flourished at least a century earlier; secondly, if he were connected with any of these two elements, *Vasuli* and the washerwoman, Rāmi, Sri

[1] S.P.P. 1339. p. 205

Chaitanya Deva would not have appreciated him. This we can infer from his conduct and teachings. Sri Chaitanya Deva was extremely ascetic. He denounced Kālā Krishnadās and the junior Haridās. Because for their reading with woman, saying, "I cannot look upon the face of a *Vairagi* who converses with a woman."[1] In another place, he says, "The sinful practise false asceticism like the monkeys and indulge in carnal passion by speaking to women."[2] Junior Haridās committed suicide out of remorse that Sri Chaitanya Dev had forsaken him, but He remained obdurate. His first teaching to His disciples was to shun bad company of woman.[3] Of those who are attached to women Sri Chaitanya Deva's religion does not allow any worship or obedience to any Tantrik or Buddhist gods or goddesses like Vasuli. The author of Chaitanya Bhāgavata despises the goddess Vasuli.[4] Vasuli was the Buddhist goddess but we know the Gaudiya Vaishnavas are the veritable enemy of Buddhism.[5]

The genuine poems of Sri Chaitanya Deva's Chandidās should be cautiously distinguished from those of others of the same name, and other spurious ones, which were written by the later *Sahajiyas* who included not only Chandidās, but also Sri Chaitanya Deva, Rūpa, Narottama, Krishnadāsa and other Gaudiya Vaishnava Masters, by putting their *Sahajiya* doctrine into their mouths. The editors of Chandidās's poems, have published anything and everything without exercising any critical discrimination and they are always ready to do so if old manuscripts of poems professing to be by Chandidās come from any quarter, as if Chandidās had composed and bequeathed an inexhaustible store of poems. If he wrote many poems, why could the earlier Vaishnava anthologists not have collected them?

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[1] C.C. Adi II. 117 [2] ibid. Adi 120 [3] C.C. Madhya XXII. 84
[4] C.C. Adi.II. 87 [5] C.C. Madhya IX. 48

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS RITUALISTIC BACKGROUND OF GAUDIYA VAISHNAVISM

It is mainly the *Pancharātra* literature and the *Purānas*, which supplied the Gaudiya Vaishnavas with the socio religious ritualistic principles, such as initiation Sacraments, Sannyās etc.

PANCHARĀTRA LITERATURE

According to Nārada Pancharātra[1] *Pancharātra* means the fivefold knowledge of the manifestation of divinity by means of His *Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Antaryāmin* and *Archa* forms. In short, it is some sort of Vaishnavite *Tantra* system. These *Tantra Samhitās* of the ancient Vaishnavite are held in great esteem, like the Vedas. The great Vaishnava Sambhu is said to have known it from the lips of Nārāyana, the wonderful knowledge which is destructive of affliction and of the cycle of births, and rebirths.[2] It was then transmitted to Nārada[3] We can also learn of the traditional account of the origin of this important section of the literature from the Vrihagendra Samhitā[4] that at the beginning of the *Treta* age, Ananta, Garuda, Visvaksena, Brahma and Rudra had their questions answered by Kesava in five consecutive nights. Thus each of them learnt from Him the religion of *Bhakti* in the form of *Jnāna*, *Yogā*, *Kriyā*, and *Kārya*, consisting of *Sata Sahasra* or one hundred thousand Shlokas. By *Kriyā* we mean the construction and installation of the temples and Images, by *Kārya*, the socio-

[1] I, 1. 44 [2] Pancharatra I. 1. 45 [3] ibid. 59 [4] I. 31-32

religious observances as daily rites, initiation, festivals and the like of the *'Varnashrama Dharma'*. The supremacy of these philosophical and theological and ritualistic books are admitted by the Mahābhārata[1]. The literature of the *Pancharātra* is vast. Each of the *Samhitās* deals under *Adhyas* (chapter), *Patalas* and so on, with some of the topics of the system. Tradition asserts that the number of these *Pancharātric Samhitās* is 108, but the lists of the Kapinjala, Palmattra, Visnatantra, Hayasirsa and Agnipurāna comprise 106, 112, 141, 34, and 25 respectively. Nārada Pancharātra mentions only Brahma, Siva, Kaumara, Vasistha, Kapila, Gautamiya and Nāradiya. Dr. Schaedar furnishes at least 215 names of these Samhitās in whatever form and, nine other names mentioned here and there. The number increased in the course of years. They may be divided into the *Sattvika*, *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika Samhitās*, but the Gaudiya Vaishnavas are concerned only with the first named section.

The *Pancharātric* system seems to have been prevalent in the pre-Christian Era. Pānini, Patanjali, Besnagara inscriptions and so on contain references to the *Vyuha* Vishnus, the conception which is the distinctive contribution of the *Pancharātrika* System are not at all sure whether any of present *Pancharatric* literature goes as far back as the pre-Christian Era. The Mahābhārata refers to Pancharātra.[2] In this Nārāyaniya section of the Mahābhārata, we get the explanation of the *Pancharātrika* System. The idea of *Pancharātra*, both in its philosophical and ritualistic aspects, may be traced in very subtle form to the Rig Vedas[3], when Purusa Nārāyana is said to have conceived the idea of a *Pancharatra Sattra* (continued sacrifices for five days) as the means of reigning over all other beings. He performed the sacrifices and obtained that dignity.

According to Dr. Schraeder, Puskara, Varaha and Brahma Samhitā are the earliest of all Pancharātrika Samhitās. He likes to assign them to a date not earlier than the 8th Century. The Sri Vaishnava School seriously deals

[1] Shântiparva, Mokshdharma Chap. 349 [2] Shântiparva, Moksadharma Chap. 349. XII. 235, 25 [3] ibid. XIII 6.1

with the Pancharātra System and literature. Yamuna Āchārya deals with them in his Agam-Pramanya. Its authoritativeness has been well discussed by Rāmānuja in his Nitya and commentary on the *Vedānta Sutra* under the *Sutra Utpattyasambhavat*[1]. Vedānta Desika gives a systematic treatment of it in his Pancharātra Raksa. Madhva's *Tantrasāra* is also an excellent work on it.

THE GAUDIYA VAISHNAVAS AND THE PANCHARĀTRA LITERATURE

According to Sri Jiva Gosvāmi, the study of Pancharātra is essentially necessary for a swift understanding of the real meaning of the Vedānta.[2] They have accepted the Pancharātra and the Bhāgavata as the best authority on Bhakti. The author of Chaitanya Charita cites Nārada Pancharātra and the Hayasirsa Pancharātra in support of his view on the Manifestation of God and the system of Bhakti.[3] He also quotes verses from Vaishnava Tantra, Sattvata, Tantra and so on. Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi gives ample references to the Pancaharātra Samhitās in his Bhaktirasāmarita Sindhu. In support of the ritualistic principles, the author of Hari Bhaktivilāsa, the great ritualistic work of the sect refers to many Pancharātra Samhitās.

In short, the Pancharātra Samhitās supplied them with the principles, of theology philosophy and Ritual. The life of a 'Vaishnava is strictly regulated by the principle of the *Pancharātric* System. The Founder Āchārya of the Gaudiya Maths stressed special importance to it in establishing the *Daiva Varnashrama*. He had called numerous verses from Ananta Gautamiya, Nārāyaniya, Brahma, Bharadvaja, Hayasirsa and others in his scholarly Anubhasya on the Chaitanya Charitmrita.

NĀRADA PANCHARĀTRA

The Asiatic society of Bengal has published the Nārada Pancharātra, which is believed to be one of the *Samhitas*

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[1] ibid. II. 2.40. ff. [2] Paramatma Sandarabha 18
[3] M. II. 159. XIX. 170. XXIII. 8. V1 145 etc.

of the *Pancharātra*. It deals with Krishna, and His worship, among others. It gives us an account of the exalted position of Rādhikā[1]. It is not accepted as authentic in the Rāmānujiya sect.[2] The Gaudiya Vaishnavas give high respect to it by citing evidence from it.

Sri Rūpa quotes at least four verses from it in his Bhakti Rasāmritasindhu.[3] Krishnadāsa Kavirāj three verses in his Chaitanya Charitāmrita.[4] and Sanātana Gosvāmi at least 72 verses in his Haribhaktivilāsa. [5]

Under the ritualistic background of Gaudiya Vaishnavism the Purānas are as important as the Pancharātra, if not more so. The Purānas have been discussed under the theological philosophical aspect. The names of the Purānas in support of its ritualistic principles have been given in connection with the Haribhaktivilāsa. The Srmiti works such as Katyayana Smriti, Nārada Smrti, and so on, have also been cited in that great book.

PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

The philosophical writers of Gaudiya Vaisnavism have drawn their materials mainly from the classical Sanskirt literature and the writings of the Madhva, Rāmānujiya Vaishnavism, Sridhara and so on. We shall therefore discuss the philosophical background under two heads: classical literature, and other medieval Vaishnava schools.

LITERATURE UPANISHADS AND THE VEDĀNTA

The earlier philosophical writers, Sri Sanātana Gosvāmi, Sri Jiva Gosvāmi, and others, have cited copious reference, to the Shrutis in support of their views throughout their writings, but they did not write any literature exclusively on them, either in the form of commentaries or any independent treatise on them, in the light of their own philosophical system, which goes by the name of *Achintya Bhedābhedā*. It was only Baladeva Vidyabhusana (18th century, who undertook the great task of interpreting the

[1] ibid. II. 3. 24. ff [2] Bhanderkaer's p. 41 [3] Purva. i. 10. etc.
[4] M. IX. 157 etc. [5] V, 140-160 etc.

ten main Upanishads and the Vedānta in the light and spirit of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. This he did partly because other sects had questioned the sectarian locus standi of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, on the grounds that they had no commentaries on classical scriptures, and partly because he wished to incorporate their thoughts into them in order to attract the intelligentsia who used to study them.

THE GITĀ

The Gitā is perhaps the earliest of books which gives us a fairly explicit idea of *Bhakti*, The word '*Sraddhā*' (Faith) which is the first word on *Bhakti*, may be found in the Chandogya Upanishad,[1] Panini[2] and so on, but it does not convey any philosophical conception of *Bhakti* to us. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas make ample use of it in dealing with the subject of surrendering to God as the first step to *Bhakti*[3] *Shakti*[4] *Jiva*[5] *Varnashrama*[6] and so on. Almost all the Gaudiya Vaishnava writers take recourse to it for inspiration and support. There are at least two Gaudiya Vaishnavite commentaries on it, one is called *Sarartha Varsini* by Vishvanāth Chakravarti, and the other is Gitā Bhusana by Baladeva. Moreover the Gaudiya Vaishnava writers quote other Vaishnavite commentaries on it. Both Vishvanāth and Baladeva have interpreted it in the light of the Gaudiya Vaishnava doctrine. There is not a single book among the whole of the Hindu scriptures which has had so many commentaries written by all the religious sects, which invariably accept it as very authoritative, placing it almost on the same footing as the Vedānta and Upanishads. It is more popular than any other religious literary work in India. The main cause of its extremely wide popularity is that it contains almost all the principal religious thoughts. Shankara, Rāmānuja and Madhva commented on it for use in their respective sects. Yamunāchārya as written Gitārtha Sangraha. Sridhara's Suvodhini, Vallabha's Gitārtha Vivarana, his son Vitala's Gitā Tātparya, Sri Purushottama's Amrita Tarangini are also

[1] ibid. VII.19 [2] ibid. II. 2. 34 [3] ibid.XVIII. 66 [4] G. IV. 6. VII. 4-5
[5] G. XV.7, G. II. 23-24 [6] G. V. 13

widely read among the Vaishnavas, Kesava Kashmiri's Tattva, Prakasika is read among the Nivarka Vaishnavas. Ānanda Giri's *Vivechana* and Madhusudana Sarasvati's Gudhartha Dipika are likewise current among the Māyāvādins. Besides these there are numerous commentators among whom the following may be mentioned:- Arjuna Mishra, Chaturbhuja M'shra,, Janārdana Bhatta, Deva Bhatta, and so on.

DATE OF THE GITĀ

The Gitā is part of the Shāntiparva of the Mahābhārata. The late Mr. Telang has assigned it to the fourth century B.C.[1] Mr. Machical says: "It is post-Buddhistic but atleast a considerable part of it is pre-Christian".[2] Sri R. G. Bhanderakar and Dr. H.C. Raya Chaudhuri prefer to place it before the 3rd Century B.C. Prof. Hopkins dates it before the 2nd century A.D. We have no unquestionable evidence by which we may determine its precise date. We shall assume that it may have been written during the early years of the Christian era.

No school can claim the Gitā as a whole as exclusively fitting to its doctrine. This little book of 700 shlokas contains the various religious thoughts current at the time of its composition. Our purpose is to show how the Vaishnavas interpret it to suit their theistic doctrine of *Bhakti*. The Santiparva of the Mahābhārata, of which the Gitā is a part, tells us that the Bhāgavata religion or Vaisnavite *Bhakti* is the main object of the teaching of the Gitā[3]. It seems from an unbiased reading that it upholds *Bhakti*, giving also a relative importance to *Karma, Jnāna* and *Yogā*. The book falls into three main divisions each of which contains six chapters. The first part deals with *Karma* in its various aspects such as *Sakama Karma* (*Karma* performed with its fruits in view), *Phalatyaga Karma* (when the work in performed without desire of reward), *Madarpita Karma* (*Karma* sacrificed to God); and *Yogā* is also discussed taking into consideration the respective capacities of the people. The

[1] Introduction to his edition p. XCII [2] Indian Theism p.75.
[3] Mdh. XII. 346. 11, XII. 348, 8

other two parts are devoted to *Jnāna* and *Bhakti* but the preponderance of the latter may be traced in every division.[1] It fulfills the negative purpose in the working out life in the world for the benefit of those who are addicted to worldly life and enjoyment. To place oneself under the regulations enjoyed by *Karma* is not sufficient and ultimate. The author's intention is to make the *Karmins* develop their latent aptitude for *Bhakti*. The last two slokas of the sixth chapter are clear in placing *Karma* and *Jnāna* in their respective positions, relative to *Bhakti*.

It is the moods of *Prakriti*, *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tamas* which compel the people to do works (*Karma*) and thereby fetter their souls[2] to the cycle of births and rebirths. It is *Karma* actuated by the moods (*Gunas*), which has made us what we ought not to be. We are now in bondages, as the consequence of our past works. To create more *Karma* means to become involved all the more in further undesirable complexities, from which we may not be able to emerge at all. To pass beyond those three moods is to be delivered from birth, death, age and pain, and to realise immortality.[3] For this purpose we have no other recourse but to *Bhakti*, or *Sraddhā*.[4] *Ahamkara* or egoism makes *Karmins* proud of being the doers of deeds.[5] The *Karmins* are really discouraged by the author.[6]

In the second lesson the author exposes and critises the *Karmins* in the verses no. 42, 43, 44. They are bound by hundreds of bonds of hope and given over to desire and wrath. They seek to gather substance unrighteously for the enjoyment of their desires[7] when they have enjoyed the great *Svarga* or Paradise and their wage of righteousness is spent, they enter into the words of mortals. The Gitā prefers *Jnāna* to *Karma*.[8]

We should not confuse *Jnāna* with that of Shankra to whom the phenomenal world is illusive unreality caused by *Brahman* Himself being under *Avidyā* or ignorance. The Gitā calls[9] them demons who say that world is unreal and

[1] G - VI. 47. G. X. 10 [2] G. XIV.7,9 [3] G. XIV20. [4] G. III. 31
[5] G.III.29 [6] G. II-49 [7] G. XVI.12 [8] G.IV.19 [9] XVI.8

without foundations, having no supporting reality. *Ahangrahopāsana* or the 'I-am-god' idea has received a very crushing and unwelcome blow from the Gitā.[1]

This world of ours is the result of the evolution of *Prakriti*, and not of *Brahman- Bhagavān* as Shankra says, who is a *Shakti* of His and to whose working He is unattached.[2] *Prakriti* gives birth to this world and the world performs its evolutions under His control and at His will.[3] Though He causes creation through *Prakriti*, He keeps Himself independent of this. Created beings freed from *Māyā* are not the *Brahman*. Neither is it the fact, as Shankara says, that He becomes many under the influence of some force (*Māyā*), which the Shankarite scholars cannot explain adequately by reference to its existence in relation to the *Brahman* Who is too powerful to overcome by anything else. His unattached independence is upheld.[4]

It is the threefold mood of *Prakriti* under which born beings are made to work, while God, being beyond *Gunamayi Prakriti* who is subservient to His Will, keeps His Personality and Autocracy in all glory and Splendour on the other side of this world which is subject to the moods and consequently to the changes of birth and death. *Nirvishesavād*, or the way of Undifferentiated Brahman, adopted by the pantheistic followers of Shakara, is described as one full of miseries.[5] Exceedingly great is the toil of those whose minds are attached to the un-manifested (*Avyakta* or *Nirvishesh) Brahman*. It will give us only pain as its final result[6].

A very sharp line of demarcation is drawn in the Gitā between God and individual souls who never lose their separate identity that the Shankarite *Māyāvadins* so ardently try to do away with. The Gitā calls unconditioned individual souls *Kutustha Akshara*-and conditioned individuals, *Kshara*. The *Kshara* individuals are not to be identified with the *Akshara* category who undergo no worldly modifications. The Supreme soul (*Paramātma*) Who pervades and maintains both is a third category.[7]

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[1] G. XVI.14 [2] G. IX.9 [3] IX.10 [4] G. IX .5-7 [5] 5. G. IX.4 [6] G.XII.5 [7] G. XV. 16, 17

Paramātma or Purushottama is supreme over all individual souls. The latter are by no means His equals, let alone superior to Him. There cannot be any force that may overpower Him in order to make Him many, because the Gitā says that there is no peer to Thee, how should there be anything greater in all the three worlds, being Thou of power beyond all comparison[1]? And there is nothing to transform individual souls to the Absolute, because He is always complete. He does not need the summation of individuals to form Himself into the Integer, as He is. They, being very small, in spite of their spiritual nature, are liable to be misled by the influence of the threefold mood of His *Prakriti* which has absolutely no power over Him. Conditioned individual souls alone are the denizens of this world and playthings in the power of its moods.[2]

So, according to the Gitā, it is their liability to fall into the clutches of the moods which differentiates the conditioned individual souls from God, who is ever *Nirguana* or moodless. God never comes to the world being subject to the moods, which must necessarily be traversed by conditioned individuals before they can regain or reawaken to their spiritual nature.

Now the question arises: how should powerless individuals be able to surpass the insurmountable threefold moods? The Gitā provides the means in the following verse:

"For My *Māyā*, who is characterised by the moods is certainly Divine as regards her power, and is hard to cross. Those alone, who take their refuge in Me, certainly pass beyond her sway." [3]

It is submission to the Grace of God, which makes the moods powerless to act on submissive individuals. So the Shankarite view of force of making Brahman transformed to many falls to the ground. He is too big to become Shankara's sum of individuals as the consequence of some unknown force, which is powerless even to the individual who is protected by His Grace. [4]

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[1] G. XI.43 [2] G.VII.12 [3] G. VII.14 [4] G.VII.13

The Gitā may be regarded as a devotional book in which the Lord Krishna sings the glory of *Bhakti*.

The Gitā[1] in dealing with *Karma* takes care to point out that the *Nishkāma Karmin* is very different from the *Bhakta* as *Bhakti* does not allow any adulteration.[2] *Bhakti* is the unmixed function of the soul. Nobody can go beyond the moods but only the *Bhaktas* who serve God by the spiritual resources of their *Avyabhichārini* (Chaste) *Bhakti*. By renouncing all mundane undertakings (*Ārambha*) the *Bhakta* passes beyond the moods[3]. According to the Gitā the moods are the lines of demarcation between the *Karmin* and *Bhakta*, and *Bhakti* is always performed with *Priti* (lovingness). The best kind of *Bhakti* is described in the 10th chapter.[4]

The *Bhaktas* have neither mind nor time to do anything else than to sacrifice the same to God. His whole being absorbed in the loving service to God whose super sensual pleasure (*Toshana* and *Ramana*) is all in all to Him. *Karmins* are too poor to realise this glorious relation existing between God and His devotees. This idea of the Gitā has become real and vivid in the practical life of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. The whole underlying idea of *Karma* is of gradual progress arising from its propensity to discipline while *Bhakti* is above these propensities and austerities.

Sometimes the *Karmins* and other sects regard Krishna Vasudeva as equal to, or as one of many gods. The Gitā saves us from such misconception. It is only the *Alpa-Medhasa* or dull-headed people who worship gods other than Krishna.[5]

Vāsudeva - Krishna is the mainstay of all dim and partial (*Brahman* and *Parmātma*) appearances of the Absolute Godhead[6] and the Source of other gods who are not in any way independent of or equal to Him. They owe their existence to Him Whose orders are carried out by them they discharge their allotted duties in their

[1] G. IX.27 [2] G. XIV. 26 [3] G. XIV. 25 [4] G .X.9 [5] G.VII.23 [6] G.XIV. 27, XV, 17

respective spheres. Those who worship them are wrong in going against the scriptural way (i.e. *Avidhi Purvakam*). The Gaudiya Vaishnavas do not worship any other gods or goddesses, which would pollute their unalloyed Devotion.

Sri Chaitanya Deva at His meetings and discussion with Prakashananda at Benares and Vasudeva Sarvabhauma at Puri followed the Gitā's teaching, showing the separate and eternal position of the fractional soul, as such, in relation to the Absolute Who is *Shaktimān* or the Lord of *Shaktis* while the fractional soul is but a particle of the essence of a *Shakti* of His. Sri Chaitanya Deva's exposition the human soul is based on the Gitā and Vishnu Purāna and His exposition of *Bhakti* on the Gitā and Bhāgavata. Just before His Advent a small group of pure Vaishnavas used to assemble at the Academy of Sri Advaita Āchārya at Navadvipa where they held regular readings of the Gitā and Bhāgavata, these two books possessing the life-giving spirit of *Bhakti*. The great author of Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita mentioned the Gitā at least forty-eight times in his monumental work on Chaitanya's career and teaching. So the Gitā, along with Srimad Bhāgavata, may be safely reckoned as the main founts of the Gaudiya philosophy.

THE PURĀNAS

The early Gaudiya Vaishnava writers have laid special stress on the importance of the Purānas in formulating their doctrine. Sri Jiva Gosvāmi in his Tattva Sandarbha argues to support his view in this; the purport of his arguments is being as follows. "In this age the Vedas are not widely read. Moreover some of them and that their greater portion-are either lost or hidden. The people also lack understanding of its intricacies, which have become all the more difficult owing to the contradictory interpretation of different scholars. In this state of chaos it is only the Purānas and Itihāsas which may help us in getting over our difficulties. It is called Purāna because it

fulfills (*Purān*) the Vedas. That which is not the Veda cannot fulfill it, as lead cannot substitute the action of gold. We know from the Kurma Purāna, in its 49th chapter that Krishna Dvaipayana, after dividing the Vedas, first taught the Rig Veda to Rishi Paila, Yajur Veda to Vaishampayana, and the Sama Veda to Jaimini, Atharva to Samanta, and Ithihāsa and Purāna to Suta. Quoting a reference to the verses from the Pravasa Khanda of the Skanda Purāna, Sri Jiva Gosvāmi shows that Brahma is the common source from whom the Vedas as well as the Purānas derive.[1] The Bhāgavata Purāna is of the same view.[2] The *Purānas* are called the *Panchama Veda* or the fifth Veda. Sridhara, Rāmānuja Madhvachārya and other Āchāryas made commentaries on the Principal *Purānas*, quoted many passages as *Pramānas* or authority in support of their views.

THE BHĀGAVATA PURĀNA

This is the principal background of Gaudiya Vaishnavism both in its theological and philosophical aspect. It has been accepted as the highest authority. Throughout their literature, the Gaudiya Vaishnavas are untiring in its praise. Sri Chaitanya Dev used to interpret it as the true commentary on the Vedānta Sutra.

Vishvanāth Chakravarti, one of the authoritative writers of the Gaudiya sect has nicely expressed their views on it in a single verse. "That *Vrajendranandana* Sri Krishna of Vrindāvana is the only object of the Gopis. Srimad Bhāgavata only *Pramānam*, or authority for its support. This is the teaching of Sri Chaitanya" Sri Chaitanya Deva used to read and appreciate it in the company of His best followers. The author of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata thus remarks: "The true meaning of the Bhāgavata is only known to him who knows it as identical with God Himself.[3] He who does not consider God, His Devotees, and the Bhāgavata to be the same, is damnable.[4] He who does not honour the Bhāgavata is liable to be punished by the Yama

[1] Tattva Sandarbha 13 [2] III. 12.39 [3] C.Bh. Madhya XXII 25
[4] ibid. Madhya XXI. 18

in all rebirths.[1] It is the cream of the four Vedas.[2] In Tattva Sandarbha[3], Sri Gosvāmi, and in Haribhaktivilāsa.[4]

Sri Sanātana Gosvāmi says: "It is the true meaning of the Vedānta Sutra, it gives the real purport of the great Epic and it is the commentary on Gāyatri and significance of the four Vedas. The Sri Jiva accepts it as the highest of all *Pramānas*"[5]

ITS COMMENTARIES

Hayasirsa Pancharātra mentions Tantra Bhāgavata, which according to Sri Jiva Gosvāmi is the commentary on the Bhāgavata.[6] It seems to be the oldest commentary. Sri Jiva mentions the following eight authoritative commentaries (1) Sri Hanumad Bhāsya, (2) Vasanabhāsya, (3) Samvandhokti, (4) Vidyātkāmadhenu, (5) Tattvadipika, (6) Bhāvarthadipika, (7) Paramāhamsapriyā (8) Sukahridaya, (9) Bhāgavatatatparya by Sri Madhvacharya. He also mentions *Muktaphala, Harililā* and *Muktavali*. Sri Ghaitanya Deva used to advise His followers to read the Bhāgavata with the help of Sridharasvami's *Bhāvartha Dipika*.[7]

The Bhāgavata Ghandrika by Virarāghava belonging to the Sri Vaishnava sect and Padaratnāvala by Vijayadhvaja Tirtha, disciple of Rāj Rājendra of the Madhva sect, have also been popular in their respective sects. Vallabhāchārya's commentary goes by the name of *Suvodhini*. Vishnupuri has written a book known as *Bhaktiratnāvali* taking the important Slokas of the Bhāgavata and arranging them in accordance with the nine-fold *Bhakti*. It is very popular in Bengal.

THE GAUDIYA COMMENTARIES

Sri Jiva, Gosvāmi has written his famous commentary known as Karma Sandarbha. It is rather an enlargement of Sridharasvami's Bhāvarthadipika than as independent commentary. It is read with the greatest reverence and ardour among the sect. The Gaudiya School possesses

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[1]Adi. 39 [2] Madhya XXI. 16 [3] 18-22 [4] X. 283 [5] Sarva Shastra Chakravarti etc. ibid. 19-22. [6] Tattva Sandarbha 23 [7] C.C.Antya VII. 126-130

another great commentary *"Sarartha Darsini"* written by Vishvanāth Chakravarti. It is very popular. Radharaman Gosvāmi, a scion of the family of the brother of Gopinath Pujari, disciple of Gopal Bhatta, has written another commentary Dipika Dipana Sri Baladeva Vidyābhusana is said to have written yet another commentary, but we have no trace of it. (Introduction to the Gaudiya Math edition of the Gitā with Baladeva's commentary, Sanātana's Brihat Vaishnavatosani is an excellent commentary on its 10th canto. Besides these commentaries, the Gaudiya Vaishnava writers have written several treatises and theses on the Bhāgavata, such as Sanātana Gosvāmi's Brihat Bhāgavatamrita, Rūpa's Laghu Bhāgavatamrita, Jiva's Laghutosani and his famous Sada Sandarbba. Thākur Bhakti Vinode has written, 'Bhāgavatarka Marichimālā' taking, the important shlokas from the Bhāgavata and arranging them with reference to '*Sambandha*, *Abhidheya* and *Prayojana*'. Sri Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Thākur, has recently written and published an exhaustive and scholarly commentary called *Gaudiya Bhāsya*. The author of Bengali Chaitanya Charitamrita quotes more than three hundred verses from it in his book. All the Gaudiya Vaishnava writers invariably look to the Bhāgavata for their support and evidence. Both Madhva Āchārya and the Gaudiya Vaishnavas give the highest place to it.

DATE OF BHĀGAVATA

Scholars differ as to the date of the composition of the Bhāgavata. It is generally believed that it was written either in the 9th or 10th century. Mr. B. N. Krishna Murti Sharma has written a very interesting article on its date.[1] In his commentary on the Uttara Gitā[2] Gaudapāda (Circa 7th century) refers to the Bhāgavata by name and quotes a verse from it[3]. Gaudapāda wrote his *Samkhya Karika Vriti*, an abridgement of the *Mathurāvritti*, which is believed to be the earliest commentary on Isvara Krishna's *Sāmkhya*

[1] 1. Annals of the Bhâgavata Research Institute. Vol. XIV. Pt. III.
[2] ibid. II. 46 [3] Bh. X. 14.4

Kārika, so the *Mathurāvritti* must be a work of earlier date than that of Gaudapāda.

Mathurāvrtti under *Kārika* 2 and 51 quotes two slokas which occur in the Bhāgavata Purāna.[1] Mathurāvrtti was roughly translated into Chinese by the Buddhist monk named Paramārtha, between 567-569.[2] It seems that the Bhāgavata was popular in the 6th century. It will not be unreasonable to assume therefore that it may have been composed at least in the 5th century, if not earlier.

Srimad Bhāgavata should be distinguished from Nilakanta's, Mantra Bhāgavatam, which contains about 250 *Mantras* referring to Rāma and Krishna. Only the four chapters are now available. The first chapter called Gokula Khanda, contains 30 *Mantras*; the second, Vrindāvana Khanda 40; the third, Akrura Khanda 30 and the fourth, Mathurā Khanda 10. It[3] seems to be a later work than the Bhāgavata.

VISHNU PURĀNA

After the Bhāgavata the Gaudiya Vaishnavas assign the next important place to the Vishnu Purāna. One of the distinctive contributions of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas to a mature conception of God, lies in their clear exposition of the threefold *Shakti-Māyā*, *Jiva* and *Para*, and the threefold aspects of the latter:- *Samvid*, *Sandhini* and *Hlādini* which have been borrowed from the Vishnu Purāna.[4] All the writers of the sect cite verses from it. Krishnadās Kavirāj refers to at least 21 verses from it in his Ghaitanya Charita. As the Gaudiyas allude to the Bhāgavata and quote verses from it almost at every step, so Rāmānuja did the Vishnu Purāna in preference to the Bhāgavata. It is the Gaudiyas who assign a definitely supreme position to the Bhāgavata. Madhva also values it more than the Vishnu Purāna. Rāmānuja seems to prefer the Vishnu Purāna to the Bhāgavata which has been referred as many 13 times only in his *Vedānta Tattva Sara*. Sudarsana Suri in his *Sutra*

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[1] Bh. I. 8. 52. I. 6. 35 [2] Krishnamurti, Annals P. A. B. P. 217 [3] Introduction to the Gaudiya Math Edition of the Bhâgavata. [4] VI. 7.61. I. XII. 69

Prakasa on Rāmānuja's *Sribhāsya*, a commentary on the Vedānta, tells us that the standpoint of the Vishnu Purāna in doctrinal points is just the same as that of the Bhāgavata, so that Rāmānuja did not multiply his texts unnecessarily by quoting verses from the Bhāgavata.[1] The Bhāgavata and Vishnupurāna have been accepted as the greatest authorities on Vaishnavism. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj quotes verses from the Padma Purāna, Kurma Purāna, Garuda Purāna, Nrisimha Purāna, Brahmanda Purāna, Skanda Purāna, Nāradiya Purāna, Adi Purāna, and so on in his Chaitanya Charitāmrita. The Purānas are the main courses of Gaudiya Vaishnavite theological and socio-ritualistic theories.

BRAHMA SAMHITÁ

Brahma Samhitā is the immediate source of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas in promulgating their theological system. It is extremely important in this regard. By Brahma Samhitā, we mean only the fifth chapter of it, which Sri Chaitanya Dev acquired from the Adi Kesava temple at Tiruvattar in the Travancore State, in the course of His missionary tour in the South. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj remarks on it: "There is no parallel to Brahma Samhitā in theology (Siddhanta Shastra). Its greatest importance lies in its exposition of the principle and glory of Govinda. It expounds the deep and infinite philosophical theological principles in the least possible words He (Sri Chaitanya) had it copied with the greatest care",[2] Sri Chaitanya told Rāya Rāmānanda that Brahma Samhitā and Krishna Karnāmrita furnished evidence to support their theological system and emotional devotion.[3] On the return of Sri Chaitanya Deva from the South, all His followers made a copy of it for their personal use.[4]

ITS COMMENTARIES

Sri Jiva Gosvāmi and Sri Vishvanāth Chakravarti have written two commentaries on it, respectively. Sri Bhakti

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[1] Sruta Prakasika p. 413 Medical hall Press, Benares. 1889
[2] C. C Madhya IX. 239-230 [3] C. C. Madhya IX. 324 [4] C.C. Madhya XI. 143

Siddhānta Sarasvati Thākur has recently published the text with his own English translation. It has been amply quoted in the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. It is so important that it would not be out of place to give an outline of the subject matter with reference to the verses dealing with it.

It is as follows: - (1) Sri Krishna is the Object of worship, verse 1, (2) The Realm of Krishna-Gokula, verse 2-5, (3) Want of contact of Krishna with *Māyā* which is His extraneous limb. Verses 6-7, (4) the principle of the procreative masculine symbol in association with *Māyā*, verses 8-9, (5) Creation; the appearance of Vishnu, Prajāpati and Rudra as the respective presiding deities of the qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* from Mahāvishnu lying in the spiritual causal ocean, verses 10-21, (6) The appearance of Brahma in the lotus springs from the naval pit of Vishnu and His impulse for creation, verses 22-23, (7) Brahma receives from Krishna the *Kāmaveeja* (seed of amorous love or Krishna-Gopi and the *Mantram* of Krishna verses 24-25, (8) Brahma meditates on Krishna, verse 26, (9) Brahma receives *Kāmagayatri* and the status of the twice-born, verses 27-28, (10) Krishna's seat of Gokula, verse 29, (11) Krishna's beauty that has no equal or superior, verses 30-33, (12) Refutation of methods of spiritual endeavour other than pure loving service, verse 34, (13) The majesty of Krishna, verse 35, (14) Devotion to Govinda by means of the *Mantra* of *Nigama*, verse 36, (15) Devotion to Krishna at Goloka with arts and, spiritual Rasa, verse 37, (16) The vision of Krishna is realisable only to the eyes of love and Devotion, verse 38, (17) The various *Avataras* as Rāma, and so on, are emanated from Krishna while He remains as such, verse 39, (18) Brahman is the brilliance of Govinda, verse 40, (19) *Māyā* His is *Shakti*, verse 41, (20) He appears to the individuals in spiritual Rasa, verse 42, (21) The realms of Devi Mahesa and Hari are located one above another in an ascending order of superiority, verse 43, (22) By the will of Govinda, *Mahāmāyā Durgā* is the presiding goddess of her citadel of this phenomenal world, performing the functions of

creation, maintenance and destruction of the world, verse 44, (23) The conception of Rudra, verse 45, (24) The conception of Vishnu, verse 46, Conception of Kārnārnava Vishnu, verse 47, (25) Mahāvishau is the part of part (*Kalā*) of Govinda, verse 48, (26) Conception of Brahma in relation to Govinda, verse 49, (27) Ganesha places the feet of Govinda on his head, verse 50, (28) The elements of the world are in Govinda, verse 51, (29) *Surya* moves by the command of Govinda, verse 52, (30) All beings, from Brahrma to the insect, depend on the power of Govinda, verse 53, (31) Govinda causes all to suffer the consequences of their *Karma* while He causes the consequences of His Devotee's *Karma* to be burnt, verse 54, (32) The result of approaching Krishna by the respective methods of submission and opposition, verse 55, (33) The Charming beauty of *Sveta Dvipa Goloka*, the Kingdom of Krishna, verse 56, (34) Govinda's instruction to Brahma, verse 57, (35) *Prema* to Krishna, the result of knowledge and *Bhakti*, verse 58, (36) Best Bhakti accrues from the cultivation of scriptural knowledge and theistic conduct, verse 59, (37) *Bhakti* is the final object of spiritual endeavour, and there is nothing better than it, verse 60, (38) An appeal to the readers: God, commands the people to devote themselves to Him, giving up all other duties (*Dharma*), verse 61, (39) God is the ultimate source and mainstay of all, verse 62.

CHAPTER FOUR

PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND: MEDIEVAL VAISNAVA SCHOOLS

The Gaudiya Vaishnava writers- Kavikarnapura (Gaura Ganoddesadipika), Baladeva Vidyābhusana (Prameya-ratnāvali) and others cite the following the verses which are said to have occurred in the Padma Purāna. Those *Mantras*, which belong to no sects, are not effective and therefore in the Kali Age, there shall be the followers of four sects of Sri, Brahma, Rudra and Sanaka. They shall be the Vaishnavas purifying the world in the Kali Age. 'Sri' selected Ramanuja; the four headed (Brahma), Madhava; Rudra, Visnusvami; and Sanakas, Nimbārka;" The earliest writer Kavikarnapura, quotes the first portion only. Though the verses are of later origin, they seem to suggest that they influenced the Gaudiya Vaishnavas who acknowledge the indebtedness to them by recording that they were the only four recognised sects of the Vaishnavas. It is a fact that all the Vaishnava sects of the present day trace their origin to any of the four sects. We shall make a general survey of them by way of showing how the Gaudiya Vaishnavas are related to them.

THE MADHVA SECT

Sri Madhva is perhaps the latest of classical Āchāryas of the Vaishnava sects but we take him first, in preference to others, because the Gaudiya Vaishnavas are more connected with him and his sect than any others. Historically they have traced their origin to the Madhva sect. As regards the source of Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy, Sri Jiva Gosvāmi has given Sri Madhva the highest place among those from whose writing he borrowed his material in formulating the Gaudiya Vaishnavite philosophical system, in his famous

Sada Sandarbhas.[1] He particularly mentions Madhva's commentaries on the Vedānta, the Bhāgavata, and the Mahābhārata and so on as his source. He tells us that he could not consult many books in their original such as Brahmatarka Bhāgavatatantra, but he has taken reference to them from Madhva's writings, believing that Madhva had studied them. He also mentions Vijayadhvaja and Vyāsatirtha of the Madhva sect in this connection. Sri Jiva Gosvāmi had actually found the Gaudiya Vaishnavite philosophical system of *"Achintya-bhedābheda-vāda"* in Madhva's Bhāgavatatātparya[2]. Madhva traced it to Brahmatarka, Baladeva Vidyābusana in his writings, acknowledges supreme allegiance to Madhva, saying that their philosophical system is after that of Madhva, and that the latter was the first Āchārya of their Gaudiya sect[3]. It seems from the nature of references to Madhva's literature, that the Gaudiya Vaishnava writers on philosophy thoroughly studied the Madhva literature before they wrote their doctrine. Sri Chaitanya Himself visited the headquarters of the Madhva sect at Udupi and had discussion with its head Raghuvarya Tirtha, but He differed from him as to the conception of *Sādhya* and *Sādhana*. The then head of the Madhva sect greatly deviated from the teachings of Madhva as presented in his literature. Sri Chaitanya Deva and the writer of His sect accepted Madhva's views from his various writings and the particular line through which they traced their own origin to the Madhva sect, and that particular line was somewhat, different from the main line of Madhva at Udupi during the 16th Century. Dr. Farquahar tells us that the Madhva Vaishnavas introduced the *Kirtana* form of worship into their sect as the result of Sri Chaitanya's visit to their headquarters[4]. It was perhaps Vādirājasvāmi Tirtha, later principal of Madhva's Sode Math, who introduced *Kirtana* into the sect. His poems known as Harināma Samkirtana Sampradaya are still sung daily by the Dāsakuta Madhvas at Rajatapitapura.

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[1] Tattva Sandarbha 28 [2] Bh. XI. 7. 51. [3] Commentary on Tattva Sandarbha 28
[4] Outline of the religious literature of their Inra p. 303

These songs he first introduced at the Krishnadevālaya temple there. He was a great poet and musician. He introduced Madhva's *Dvadasa stotra* to be sung daily to the accompaniment of music at Madhva Math. He was sixteenth in apostolic descent from Madhva and lived in the sixteenth century, later than Sri Chaitanya[1].

Now the present Gaudiya Math has introduced the Madhva literature as text books at their theological schools; has published many Madhva books with their Gaudiya commentaries dedicated their Dacca Math to the memory of Madhva and hold great festivities on his birthday. They further translated the Sanskrit biography of Madhva into Bengali and published it to interest the Bengalis in the life and teaching of Sri Madhva. They have installed the image of Sri Madhva for daily worship at their headquarters.

We have consulted Anu Madhva Charita by Madhva's direct disciple Hrisikesha Tirtha[2] and Madhva Vijaya by Nārāyana Āchārya, son of Trivikrama Āchārya, and a principal disciple of Sri Madhva. At the end of every *Sarga*, the latter book is named Ānandanka. It has been published at Kumbhokonam and also at Bombay.

SRI MADHVA

Sri Madhva was born possibly in Saka 1160 (1238 A. D.) to Nārāyana Bhatta and Vedavati, a pious Brahmana couple belonging to the Madhvageha family. His birthplace is Pājakaksetra about 10 k.m. southeast of Udupi in the South Canara district. He was named Vāsudeva by his parents.[3] He took the name of Purnaprajna at the time of his *Sannyās* or renunciation.[4] He was then called Ānanda Tirtha in recognition of his literary merits in writing transcendental literature.[5] He was generally known by his name Madhva.[6] He had one elder sister and one younger brother who was first known as Subhaktimana[7] but after initiation by Sri Madhva was known as Vishnu Tirtha and was made the first pontiff of Madhva's Sode Math.

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[1] Gaudiya, Vol.VI. p. 230. [2] Published from Belgaon, N. Canara
[3] Madhvavijaya II. 54. [4] ibid. IV. 54, [5] ibid. V. 52. [6] ibid. I.55
[7] ibid. IT. 54

Madhva has been described as an incarnation of Vāyu[1]. He possessed an unusually strong physique and extraordinary intellectual power, for which he was famous. He was born as if with the definite purpose of dispelling the mists of Māyāvadism to which he was a veritable enemy all through his life. His mission was to fight Sankarite Māyāvadism. His advent was hailed with great delight and relief by his preceptor Achyuta Preksa and the latter's preceptor Prajna Tirtha who were being hard pressed and maltreated by the Sankarites. We know from the account given by Nārāyana Bhatta in his Manimanjari how cruelly Prajna Tirtha was tortured, his temple at Nandigrama and his books on unqualified dualism were set fire to by the Sankarites headed by one Padmapad. It is recorded in his biographies that Madhva took Sannyās from Achyuta Preksa in the 11th year of his advent[1] and lived a year with him at the Anantesvar temple at Rājātāpithāpura near Udupi. The cruel treatment meted out to his preceptors of two generations, made Madhva an uncompromising and terrible enemy of the Sankarites, to whom he was really an object of constant fear. The traditional apostolic hierarchy of Madhva as preserved by the Madhvas of Rājātāpithapura is as follows: - 1) Sri Hamsa Vishnu. 2) Brahma. 3) Sanaka and his brothers. 4) Durvasa, 5) Jnananidhi - Tirtha. 6) Garudavahana Tirtha, Ganesa Tirtha, Paratirtha, 7) Satya PrajnaTirtha, 8) Achyutapreksa 9) Madhva.

He toured throughout the country from the extreme south to the extreme north on his successful mission. He saw almost every sacred place of pilgrimage, where he entered upon disputations with scholars of rival schools, whom he defeated and won over to his faith one after another. We are tempted to enter at least into a very few details of the history of his long and eventful life and that of his community, which may help us in tracing the origin of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, and indicate the importance thereof.

Assuming his monk's staff (*Danda-grahana*) in his early years began to do wonders by practising a very strict religious life and propagating what he believed to be the only truth.

[1] Madhvavijaya I. 55 [2] A.M.C. 7

He did not believe simply and blindly but supported his belief with his spiritual insight and incontrovertible logic. The Madhva community is really a small group of logicians of unparalleled merit. Their logical treatise like Nyāyasudha and others, are considered the very high and subtle form of human reasoning. Their continuous intellectual fight with the Shankaraites gave rise to this wonderful production of the brain. During his missionary tour Madhva defeated his innumerable *Māyāvadin* rivals such as Vasudeva, Vadi Simha, Vuddhisagara and many others at Trivandram, Srirangam and other places. Next he entered into a very big congregational disputation by the banks on the Payasvini and was conferred the distinctive appellation '*Sarvajnayati*' as the result of his victory over his rivals. He visited Badrika in the Himalyas. Next he visited on his way to Dwaraka, Kurukshetra, Naimis (Nimsar), Allāhābād, Benares, Gaya and other places, where he established his conception of dualism by defeating rival doctrines. He finished his commentary on the Vedānta, which was written down by his disciple Satya Tirtha on his way from Badrika to the Ānanda Math. In this Bhāsya he gives a regular form to his system of *Dvaitavāda* by refuting about twenty-one Bhasyas of different schools, which are as follows 1) Bharativijaya, 2) Sambidananda, 3) Brahmaghosa, 4) Satananda, 5) Uddharta 6) Vijaya 7) Rudra Bhatta 8) Vamana, 9) Yādavapārakasa, 10) Rāmānuja, 11) Varttr Prapancha, 12) Dravida, 13) Brahmadatta, 14) Bhaskara 15) Pisacha 16 Vrttikara 17) Vijaya Bhatta, 18) Vishnukranta, 19) Vadindra 20) Madhvadasaka. 21) Shankara. This list is taken from Madhva Vijaya. (IX. 16)

Next he arrived at the Godavari district from Badrika, and met Sobhana Bhatta and Svami Shastri who were afterwards known as the famous Padmanabha Tirtha, the next Āchārya after Madhva in the Gaudiya line, and Narahari Tirtha respectively. [1] Beside Padmanabha who became Sannyāsi from the second stage of life (*Grihasta*), Madhva had the several principal disciples who became *Mahantas* of his principal eight Maths at Udupi.

[1] Madhvavijaya IX. 55

Sri Madhva wrote 32000 Granthas each of which consists 32 letters. We should like to mention here his literary productions. These are as follows: 1) Gitā-Bhāsya, 2) Sutra Bhāsya, 3) Anuvyakhyanam, 4) Anubhāsyam, 5) Gitātatparya Nirnaya, 6) Aitareya Bhāsyam, 7) Vrihadāranyaka-Bhāsyam, 8) Chandogya-Bhāsyam 9) Taittiriya-Bhāsyam, 10) Kathaka-Bhāsyam, 11) Atharvana-Bhāsyam, 12) Manduka-Bhāsyam, 13) Isavasya-Bhāsyam, 14) Talavakara-Bhāsyam, 15) Sataprasna-Bhāsyam, 16) Rk-Bhāsyam, 17) Tattvakhyanam, 18) Tattvavivekah, 19) Tattvodyotah, 20) Māyāvāda Khandanam, 21) Mithyatva-Anumana-khandanam, 22) Upathi Khandanam, 23) Katha-Laksanam, 24) Pramana Khandanam, 25) Karmanirnaya, 26) Vishnu-Tattva Nirnayah, 27) Nyāyavivaranam, 28) Krishnamrita Mahāranavah, 29) Tantra Sarah, 30) Sadāchara Smritih, 31) Dvadasastotram, 32) Narasimha Nakha-Stutih, 33) Jayanti-Nirnayah, 34) Sri Krishna Gadyam, 35) Mahābharata Tatparjaya-Nirnaya, 36) Sri Bhāgavata Tatparya Nirnayah, 37) Yamaka-Bharatam, 38) Yati Pranava Kalpah. This list of Madhva's works is taken from Jayatirtha's Grantha Malika Stothram.

His disciples and their disciples produced a vast storehouse of philosophical - religious literature which we do not think it necessary to mention here.

The next important Āchārya after Padmanābha in the Gaudiya Vaishnava line is Jayatirtha, author of the famous Nyāyasudha and twenty other treatises. Nyāyasudha is the monumental work on logic. The next and most important in the Gaudiya line is Vyāsa Tirtha whose Nyāyamrita is a wonderful work on the Vedānta sometimes compared to Vishnu's wheel-an infallible deadly weapon used against the *Māyāvadins* who had to admit its unfathomable depth of intellectualism. Madhusudan Sarasvati of the Sankarite School wrote Advaita-Siddhi as a rejoinder to it but failed to take up its challenge. Rāmachārya Tirtha, from among the Madhvas, in his Tarangini, refuted the arguments contained in the said Advaita-Siddhi. The Sankarite scholars in their turn offered *Brahmanandiya* in answer to the questions put forward in "Tarangini". The Madhvas

had again written Vanamalamisriya to silence their natural enemies. It is really a wonderful interesting study, how obstinately the two schools fought each other. The disciple of Vyasatirtha is Lakshmipati Tirtha, preceptor of Madhavendra Puri who was the grand preceptor of Sri Chaitanya and preceptor of Advaita.

The invaluable literary treasury of Madhva is believed, to have been copied in copper-plates and buried at Katakil Kshetra, also called Vyāsa Tirtha, about 35 k.m. south of Udupi, on which a copper image of Sri Krishna is installed. Ā traditional Cobra-snake is still found to guard it against misappropriation by the rival school.

SRI MADHVA'S PHILOSOPHICAL TEACHINGS

Sri Madhva's philosophical principle is contained in the following sloka by Madhva's disciple Trivikram Āchārya (Tattva Pradipah).

"Divine Hari is the highest concept of the Godhead the supreme Truth of all and the world is true. There exists a fivefold eternal difference between God, the human soul, and matter; the individuals are the servants of Hari and there is a gradation of fitness among atomic souls. To unfold the eternal function true to his proper nature brings about the emancipation of each soul. The practice of performing this pure function is *Bhakti*. The scriptures, direct perception and inference are its testimony. Realisation of the Godhead Hari is possible by following the whole body of the scriptures." The Gaudiya Vaishnava Vedantist Baladeva Vidyābhusan has accepted the above nine truths in his Prameyaratnavali, mentioning that he has accepted them from Madhva.

In direct opposition to Shankara's illusory theory of *Māyā*, Madhva discovers reality in phenomena.[1] His critical analysis of illusion points out the defect in *Māyāvadin's* subjective unconsciousness in seeing the objective reality. In truth these two positive conditions imply what Shankara calls illusion. The very notion of *Māyāvadin's* unreality

[1] Mbh.T.P.N. 1. 69. Tattvodyotah

brings out, as Madhva, shows, something very real, which *Māyāvadins* may mistake for illusion, but their mistake cannot in any way destroy the reality. Madhva disputes Shankara's theory of knowledge without a Knower and a Known. The world is not vain or unreal. There are three distinct entities God, the individual soul and the world existing from all eternity to all eternity, categorically different from one another. These are real and eternal - not temporary or only subjectively existent in false or unreal human consciousness. In the first sloka of *Tattva Viveka*, God is called *Svatantra* or independent Reality, while the individuals and the world are real but dependent on Him. The Gaudiyas are of the same opinion in this respect.[1] He (God) is free from all defects and is the abode of infinitely beneficent qualities. He is all-powerful and the regulator of both the animate and inanimate worlds. There is none to force Him to undergo any such modification in consequence of which Jivas come into being, as Shankara thinks. He regulates all, and there is no force to regulate Him, as the *Māyāvadins* fancy according to their theory of *Māyā*. The whole energy of Madhva is focused on establishing the undisputed independence of God and the dependent reality of *Jivas* and the noumenon of the world, these three being reduced by Shankara's followers, to one undifferentiated twilight of consciousness swallowing up all distinct truths and beauties. God, according to Madhva, is the holy embodied form of existence, consciousness and bliss, always delighting in His own nature.[2] There is no difference between His Body and Himself, as time and space, which give form and cause differences, to the dependent individuals in this world cannot influence Him. His Divine Form, Name, Beauty, Quality and Activity are one and the same. He manifests Himself in various forms and appearances, Who are also identical in their qualities and activities. In a word, He is devoid of all defects which *Māyāvadins* impose on Him for the sake of making plausible their fanciful theory[3]. Madhva defines God in the light of all that we have observed, in a single verse and

[1] C.C. Adi V. 142 [2] Mbh. T. P.N I.II, 12, 13 [3] Gitâ Tâtparya II. 25.

calls Him *Nirddosa Purna guna Vigraha"*[1] The Gaudiyas are exactly of the same opinion.[2]

Madhva's God is not painfully alone. By His side is Lakshmi who lives eternally with Him in Vaikuntha and along with all His forms and *Avatāras* without incarnating i.e. taking any material form which is subject to pain and suffering. She is also pervading and full of ever-fresh beauties[3]. She is known by many specific names- *Sri, Bhu, Māyā, Jaya, Kriti, Shānti, Sita, Daksina* and so on. In accordance with the different aspects and names of God[4] She is the most beloved Divine Consort of Vishnu. She is that regulatrix of the three-fold *Gunas* by the display of which the *Devatās*, human beings and *Daityas* are deluded. In the Madhva doctrine, Lakshmi is greatly inferior to Vishnu but she is undoubtedly superior to all else even to the four-headed Brahma[5] She presides over *Prakriti*, the material cause of the world. She serves Vishnu in various ways as His Divine bed, seat, throne, ornaments and so forth.[6] But she is a Jiva though higher than *others*. Unlike Madhva Sri Chaitanya does not place Lakshmi in the category of *Jiva* or atomic souls. She is the predominated aspect of the Predominating moiety of the Absolute.[7] These two aspects of the Gaudiya Vaishnavites God make Him *"Rasa Vai Sah"* Without the She-God, eternal active bliss is not possible. Sri Chaitanya retains Madhva's *Svatantra* Reality (*Isvara*) Who is however far more beautifully conceived by him. Madhva's conception of Godhead is as relatively complete, so Sri Chaitanya could not but accept this Āchārya as His precursor, the logical development of whose conception of God seems to have found its full expression in Sri Chaitanya's religion. It is interesting to notice the subtle development of God-conception with gradually progressive devotion from Madhva to Sri Chaitanya, through Nārāyana Tirtha, another Āchārya in the Gaudiya Vaishnava line. Sri Madhva addresses God as Devaki-Nandana, Nanda Kumara, Vrindavana Chandra,

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[1] Mbh. T. P. N. I. II, [2] C. C. Adi VII. 112-115 [3] Mbh.T.P.N. I.6-8,
[4] Bhâsya on Brihadâranyaka III.5, Gitâ Tâtparya XIV 5-6 Chândogya Bhâsyá VIII. 5 etc. [5] Gitâbhâsya. XIV. 5-6 [6] Chândogya Bhâsya. VII.
[7] Anuvyâkhya IV. 2. 1., [8] C.C.Adi IV. 98

Gokula Chandra, Kundaphalasana, SundaraRūpa Nandita Gokula Vanditapada.[1] Nārāyana Tirtha in his Madhva Vijaya[2] calls God *"Gopikapranayinah sripateh"* and *Nandanandamatindrayakriam.'* Madhva's God is the Boy-Krishna and object of all-affection, The lover conception of God as the lover of the Gopis seems to have been introduced by his Prasishya Nārāyana Tirtha. This Darling conception of God has found its best expression in Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Krishnadās Kavirāj states "All Gopis help to enhance the pleasure of Lord Krishna's Sports with Sri Rādhā being the instruments of their (Rādhā and Krishna) mutual enjoyment, Rādhā being the darling of Lord Krishna and His life's treasure, no maiden or Gopi conduces to His Pleasure without, Rādhā. [3]

THE WORLD IN MADHVA'S PHILOSOPHY

God energises the eternal and beginningless, unmanifested *Prakriti*, the material cause of the twenty-four mundane categories, the products of creation viz., *Mahat, Ahamkāra, Buddhi, Manas* and the ten senses and five sense-objects and five elements of matter. These all exists in a subtle potential form in *Prakrti* before their evolution took place. So these, though transitory in action (*Kārya*) are eternally existent.[4] Transitoriness does not mean unreality, nor deludingly false like the snake-rope illusion. Transitoriness is only quality of the entity, which is unaffected in its essential nature by the modification so its quality, either in the form of its manifestation or nonmanifestation. It exists before its action and manifestation took place and will continue to exist even after they are withdrawn into their primordial reality, just as an earthen pot is transitory. The pot is liable to be broken into pieces, when it loses its character of a pot and is reduced to earth, which does not however cease to be. So this world is the evolution of *Prakriti*, and transitory in the course of its manifestation, but eternally existing in some form or other. It is not false for; nor does it ever lose its intrinsic character. Sri Madhva

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[1] Dvadasastotra 6th [2] IX. 41-43 [3] C.C.Adi IV. 217-218 [4] Mbh. T. P. N. I. 69. Mandukya. I.13, 23. Vyasamrti quoted in Tattvodyota etc.,

in his various works, particulary in his Mahābharata Tatparya Nirnaya, Sutra Bhāsya, Tattvotdyota and, the commentry on Mundaka, quotes many passages from the Vedas and Upanishads to demonstrate the reality of the world. We also find Sri Chaitanya proving the reality of the world, Jiva's and God's personality in a like manner, in His discussion with Sārvabhauma at Puri and Prakashananda at Benares, in opposition to Shankara's theory of illusion which reduces all realities to unsubstantial ashes.

Sri Madhva insists on five categorical distinctions as real between (1) the individual souls and Godhead, (2) between one individual and another, (3) between matter and Godhead, (4) between individual souls and matter, and (5) between one form of matter and another.[1] Madhva takes distinction between God and Jiva to be real and thus disputes the Sankarite theory that the individuals and the *Brahman* are identical in release and different in *Samsar*. This distinction between God and individuals is also strongly upheld by Sri Chaitanya.[2] By *Mukti*, or release Madhva means restoration to the eternal position of *Jivas*, which is the basis of their individuality[3]. The strong distinctive individuality of *Jivas* not only differs from that of God but also implies difference between individuals themselves; while God in His various *Avataras* is always the same and identical. The *Jivas* are of very tiny magnitude and are always the same, even after their emancipation as distinct from the *Brahman*[4]. Sri Krishna is best served by released souls who are by nature His servants, (Sutra Bhāsya. iii 3,27). Unlike Shankara's *Mukti*, Madhva maintains the distinctions all along in emancipation; even two *Jivas* are not alike in character though fundamentally they are of the same spiritual substance, Sri Madhva divides reality into two kinds, (1) *Svatantra* or independent and (2) *Paratantra* or dependent reality. The latter again is of two kinds, 1) *Bhāva* (Positive) and 2) *Abhāva* Negative).

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[1] Mbh. T. P. N. I. 70-71. Also Vishnutattva Nirnaya citing from Parama Srutih.
[2] C. C. Madhya VI. 162 etc. [3] Gitâ Tâtparya. II.11, Anuvyâkhya. iii. 4 Mbh. T. P. N. I. 86. [4] Mbh. T. P. N. I.45. Chandogya Bhâsya- VI

Of the *Bhāva* there are two varieties (1) *Chetana* conscious soul and (2) *Achetana* or unconscious matter.

Like Rāmānuja, Madhva classifies conscious souls into three kinds (1) those who are free from eternity to eternity, such as Lakshmi, (2) those who have freed themselves by *Sādhana* such as Devas and freed men, (3) the *Baddha* or bound or, conditioned. The last includes those who are likely to be released and those who are not inclined for it. He also divides *Jivas* into three divisions as they are influenced by the threefold mode viz., *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas. Jivas* or dependent individuals are bound to move by the effect of the threefold cause viz., (1) the nature of their souls and the beginningless *Karma* done, (2) previously and 3) presently. These influences are more or less present in all souls from the highest Brahma down to demon Kali; while God alone is free from these defects[1]. Madhva again specifies a gradation among the *Jivas* under a particular *Guna*[2]. The ultimate cause of these classifications and gradations of *Jivas* is determined by God, according to Sri Madhva, whose extreme dualistic view is the radical re-action against Shankara's absolute oneness. According to Sri Chaitanya, *Jivas* are of two kinds, (1) *Nitya Mukta*, those who are God's associates like the Guru, and (2) *Nityavaddha* or the conditioned; and every conditioned soul is eligible be to freed[3]. The former are ever-free and enjoy bliss in the service of the Godhead. The conditioned (*Baddha*) are afflicted by the three-fold affliction, now enjoying and now suffering, on the wheels of *Samsār*; but in their true intrinsic nature, they are all servants of Krishna[4].

Sri Madhva and the Gaudiya Vaishnavas are in complete agreement in regard to the question of Guru or preceptor Sri Madhva in his Sutra Bhasya[5] writes that the preceptor's grace and performance of respectful duties by the *Sishya* or disciples are necessary for the

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[1] Mbh. T. P. N. i. 4. 84-92. Gitâ Bhâsya, VI. 9. Brahmasutra Bhâsya. II. 3. 32. Mbh. T. P. N. XXII. 34-86; Bramasutra Bhâsya. IV. 4. 19. etc.

[2] Bhâsya on Brihad Up, iii. 5, 3, C. C. M. XXII. 10-13

[3] C. C. Madhya XXII. 10-13 [4] C. C. Madhya XXII. 108 [5] ibid. III. 3-45

spiritual progress, yet the former is more important than the latter. Sri Krisnadās Kavirāj of the Gaudiya sect voices the same in the following lines "Be devoted to Krishna, serve the preceptor and thereby cut asunder the net of *Māyā* and reach His Feet."[1] To surrender oneself to the feet of Guru (*Gurupadashraya*) is of supreme necessity in the Gaudiya Vaishnavite *Sādhana* process. Sri Jiva Gosvāmi in his Bhakti Sandarbha (209) attaches a good deal of importance to the help given by the preceptor. Sri Madhva in his Sutra Bhāshya[2] discusses the very important question as to whether, the preceptor, once accepted, is to be given up, if he proves to be worthless, in preference to another who is really meritorious and worthy of the very responsible office. He mentions Brihat Tantra and Mahāsamhitā in favour of denouncing the so-called Guru and preferring, instead, a self-realised spiritual person. Sri Jiva Gosvāmi in like manner advises us to surrender to a bonafide spiritual master by giving up the hereditary or social preceptor[3]. Sri Baladeva Vidyābhusana in his Govinda Bhāsya[4] also condemns the so-called preceptor. So it is quite obvious that the Gaudiya Vaishnavas follow exactly their first preceptor in this regard.

Madhva tells us that the Name of God possesses enormous power to destroy the sins of the people in as much as no one could ever commit such sins as could not be destroyed by the recitation of the Name of Krishna[5]. Sri Chaitanya has said exactly the same thing in His Sikshāstaka[6]. Name of Krishna is identical with Krishna Himself in all respects. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas have given particular treatment to the efficacy of the recitation of the Name of Krishna as the best form of worship.

Sri Madhva teaches his disciples to serve the Vaishnavas[7]. Sri Chaitanya repeats it to His followers[6].

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[1] C. C. Madhya XXII, 25 [2] ibid. III. 3.46 [3] Vyavahârika Guru Bhakti Sandarbha. 210 [4] ibid. III.3.43 [5] Krishnamrita Mahârnava 36
[6] Bh. R. S. Purva II. 108 [7] Mbh T. P. N. XXIX. 21. [8] C.C. Madhya XVI.70

MADHVA'S VIEW ON THE CASTE OF A VAISHNAVA

Sri Madhva says that if even a Chandāla (lowest caste) wears *Urddhapundra* (Vaishnavite Tilaka mark) on his forehead, he should be worthy of veneration[1] or if an untouchable becomes a devotee, he must be venerated and that no Brahmana who happens to be a non-devotee should be respected[2]. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas developed this principle of Madhva to an extreme degree and fully brought it in effect[3]. According to Gaudiya Vaishnavism "Those who identify a Vaishnava with his caste, will be drowned in the lowest hell at every birth[4]."

THE SRI VAISHNAVA SECT OF RĀMĀNUJA

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas are greatly indebted to the Vaishnavite writings of the Āchāryas of the South as a whole and Sri Vaishnavas in particular. The followers of Rāmānuja are called Sri Vaishnavas. In his Tattva Sandarbha[6] Sri Jiva Gosvāmi distinctly admits that he has gathered the material for his famous Sada Sandarbhas, the first great book on Gaudiya Vaishnavite philosophy, from the writings of the Āchāryas of the South, and alludes to the reference to the Bhāgavata[6] that "there would be numerous Vaishnavas in the South in the Kali age". He particularly mentions that he has accepted the views of Rāmānuja's Sribhāsya (commentary on the Vedānta Sutra) in formulating his philosophical doctrine[7]. Moreover he tells in the very beginning of his Sada Sandarbhas, that they (Sada Sandarbhas) are merely the complete and systematic treatment of Gopāla Bhatta's book in which the latter gathered the essence of all philosophical systems of the Āchāryas of the South. Gopala Bhatta's family formerly belonged to the Sri Vaishnava sect and he was brought up in his early years under its influence. It was Sri Chaitanya Himself Who stayed for four months with their family at Srirangam, which is the headquarters of the Sri Vaishnavas, in the course of His tour of the South, and converted this noble family to Gaudiya Vaishnavism by transferring their

[1] Krishnamrita Mahârnava. 223. 8 [2] Mbh. T. P. N. XXIX. 21. [3] C. C. Antya IV. 66-67
[4] C. Bh. Madhya X. 102 [5] ibid. 24-28 [6] ibid. X1. 5. 38-40 [7] T. S. 24-28

worship of Lakshmi Nārāyana, to that of Rādhā Krishna. Gopāla's father and uncle became ardent followers of Sri Chaitanya Who mixed freely with the Sri Vaishnavas, so it is expected that the first philosophical book of the Gaudiyas written by Gopala Bhatta who first belonged to the Sri-Vaishnava sect and lived at its headquarters, must have been greatly influenced by that sect. Rūpa Gosvāmi also cites verses from Kulasekhera's Mukunda Stotra Mala,[1] and Yamunāchāryas's Stotra[2]. Krishnadās Kavirāj also quotes many Slokas from Yamunāchārya's writing in support of his views[3]. So it is clear that the earlier Gaudiya Vaishnava writers were greatly influenced by the literature of the Sri-Vaishnava sect. The present Gaudiya Math has installed the image of Sri Rāmānuja for daily worship at their headquarters, introduced Sri-Vaishnavite literature into their theological schools, and published many of them, with their Gaudiya commentaries, and adopted the *Tridanda Sannyās*, following their example. Let us give a short account of Rāmānuja and his sect before we discuss his philosophical system by way of showing the relation between the Sri-Vaishnavas and the Gaudiyas.

ĀLVĀRS

The earliest known Vaishnavas of the South are perhaps the famous Ālvārs or the poet-saints. They were the ardent devotees of Vishnu-Krishna-Nārāyana and the divine *Avatāras*. They used to worship the Deities in the temple, and sang the names and glories with fervent love and devotion. The idea to love God as a Lover may be found among these Ālvārs. Āndal or Godā was the lady Ālvār. She is believed to have been married to the Deity Ranganātha of the Srirangam temple and to have vanished into the Image of the God. Her Image is daily worshipped in the said temple. The photograph of this Image of her has been published in "Dvādasa Ālvārs" by S. Vidyāvinode of Calcutta. They were the first to introduce what is known as *Kirtana* into the Gaudiya sect. They composed songs in

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[1] Bh. R.S.D. V. 15 [2] ibid. Purva II. 91; D. 54.
[3] C.C. Adi III. 86, 84; Madhya I. 203, 206, VIII. 73, X1, 151, Antya III, 81

Tamil in praise of God in which they expressed the fervent feeling of love and devotion. These Tamil songs have been compiled by Parasara Bhatta son of Kuresa, disciple of Rāmānuja. This is now known as *Prabandham* and regarded as the Tamil Veda or *Panchama Veda*. We find striking similarity in feeling between the *Prabandham* and the Gaudiya Vaishnavite *Kirtana* songs. An account of these Ālvārs may be found in Upadesaratnamāla by Srikantopayantar, Upadesaratnamālai by Sri Manavala Mahāmuni, Guruparampara Prabhandham by Pimvadagiyajiyara, Divyasuri Charitam by Garuda Vahana Pandit, Prapannāmrita, a full length biography of Rāmānuja, Pravandasara Panaradi Vilakkam and so on.

Various lists give the different number of Ālvārs varying from 1 to 12 whose date ranges from the *Dvāpara era 862900* (Cira 4202 B.C.) to the Kali era 397 (B.C. 2706.), which is obviously unbelievable. Prapannāmrita[1] tells us that "there were ten Ālvārs, but according to some, the number is 12 including Coda (Andal) and Madhura Kavi (Madhurakavigal) It includes Yatindra Rāmānuja as one of the last two excluding either Goda or Madhura-Kavi" Yatindra Rāmānuja is much later than the Ālvārs and belongs to the Āchārya line, which succeeds the Ālvār line. The last of the first ten Ālvārs is named Chatuskavi or Parakal (Tirumangai Ālvār in Dravida). It seems that the first ten and Goda and Madhura Kavi are the recognised ancient Ālvārs. Tirumangai Ālvār has been placed last. It seems that they flourished at different times. Tirumangai praises in a decade Paramesavara Vinnagara at Kānchi detailing the achievements of the said Pallava ruler[2]. Dr. Hultzch considers the said king to be the same as Paramesvara Varman II from the name of the shrine. Dr. H.C. Ray Chaudhuri makes Tirumangai a contemporary of Narasimha Varman I of Kānchi who reigned from 625 to 645 A.D[3]. The last named Tirumangai is very important. He composed about 1361 songs of Prabhandham, which contains four thousand songs in all. The earlier Ālvārs were

[1] Chapter 74.15 [2] Beginning of the S. Indian history by Krishnasvami Aiyanger p. 39
[3] R.C's Vaishnava etc. P.111

emotional devotees given to love and devotion to God but the attack upon them by the Saivite, Buddhist and other hostile sects, caused them to become philosophically equipped to defend their *Bhakti*. Tirumangai vanquished his Saivite rival Tirugnana Sambandhar and demolished the Buddhist monastery at Nagapattinam and robbed it of its wealth with which he made the fourth road round the Srirangam and added some buildings.[1]

THE AGE OF THE SRI-VAISHNAVĀCHĀRYAS

Nāthamuni may be regarded as the first historically known Āchārya of the Vaishnavas in the South. He was also known as Nāthayogi or Nādamunigal in Tamil. He has been placed next to Tirumangai Alvar in the list of *Gurus* of the Sri Vaishnava sect from God Nārāyana and Lakshmi to Vedandadesika (Upadesaratnāmālā Prapannāmrita) but the dates of the predecessors of Nāthamuni are hardly believable, so Nāthamuni is the first dated Āchārya. He was a native of Viranārayanapuram or Kattumannera Kovil in the North Arcot district He was still alive when his grandson Alavandar afterwards the famous Yamunāchārya, was born in 916 A.D. (The date has been changed from the Kali era given in the list) So he may have died a few years later, as he was already very old. Nāthamuni extremely fought against Shankara's *Māyāvāda*, which was attacking Vaishnavism in the South. The *Nyāyatattva* is attributed to him. It is a philosophical treatise based on logic, dealing with the philosophy of the *Vishishtādvaitavāda*. It cannot be said that Nāthamuni was the first writer on *Vishishtādvaitavāda*. In the beginning of his Sribhāsya Rāmānuja tells us that he elaborated the system *Vishishtadvaita* which was already dealt with in the *Vritti* of Bodhyayana, which he had secured from the Sārada Math of Kashmir. There still exists a manuscript of the Bodhyayana *Vritti* in the Sringeri Math of Sankarāchārya.[2] Rāmānuja mentions many previous teachers and thinkers on the system such as Tanka, Dramida, Guhādeva,

[1] R. C. 's III. A. Bh. p. 475 [2] Gultav's Vol. II. p. 296 No. 4774.

Koperdin, Bharuchi, and so on. But the writings of the Āchāryas are not available, so Nāthamuni's Nyāyatattva is perhaps the earliest available treatise on the *Vishishtadvaita* system. Nāthamuni is said to have visited Mathurā, Vrindāvana and so on.

Pundarikā is next mentioned in the list. He is called Ujjakondara in Tamil. He is said to have been born in Kali 3927 (826 A. D.) at Tiruvallarai about ten miles north of Trichinapally. His successor was Vala Mishra or Monakkala Namvi in Tamil who was born in Kali 3970 (870 A.D. at Manakkal about 10 k.m. east of Trichinapally. The Next Āchārya was the famous Ālayandaru alias Yāmunāchārya.

Yāmunāchārya. He was born in Kali 4017 (916 A.D.) at Kuppanguli, about 2 k.m. from Kattumannara Kovil (N.Arcot) He was the greatest Āchārya of the line among the predecessors of Sri Rāmānuja Āchārya. He was a vigorous preacher of the *Vishishtādvaita* -school and took up his abode at Srirangam, which were the headquarters of the sect from the very ancient times of the Ālvārs. He organised the community and gave a definite system by the *Vishishtādvaita* doctrine, assimilating the *Pancharātrika* system, the philosophy of The Gitā and other classical literature, and the Tamil devotional songs of the Ālvārs. He is really the first founder of the sect in the sense that he made it exclusive and independent, supplying all that was necessary for the sect. He paved the way for the great Rāmānuja, who fulfilled the desires and unfinished works of Yamuna Muni. Yamuna fought Māyāvadism with great ability. He wrote his famous Āgamāprāmanya, a very thoughtful treatise on Pancharatra to silence the Sankarite *Māyāvadins* and the followers of Kumaril[1] who opposed the *Pancharārika* doctrine. His very important work is Siddhitraya containing three sections headed as *Ātmasiddhi*, *Sambitsiddhi*, and *Svaprakāsāsiddhi*. In it he refutes the Sankarite theory of *Māyā*. Rāmānuja wrote his Vedānta Samgraha to complete the purpose of Siddhitraya. Yāmunāchāya offered the

[1] Kumarila's Tantravarttika. I.3. 4

devotional exposition of the Gitā in his Gitārtha-Samgraha. Mahāpurusanirnaya is also another of his works. His devotional writing is Stotraratnavali, which the Gaudiya Vaishnavas cited in their numerous writings. Chatu sloka is attributed to him[1]. The greatest Āchārya of the sect is Rāmānuja Āchārya, the grand disciple of Yamunāchārya.

RĀMĀNUJA

Our biographical account of Rāmānuja has been mainly based on Prapannāmrita by Anantarya, descendant of Andrapurna who was a contemporary of Rāmānuja.

Lakshman Desika, afterwards called Rāmānuja, is dated as having been born in the Kali year 4118 (1017 A. D.) in Sriperambudur, Sri S. Rādhākrishnan assigns his birth to 1027 A.D.[2] but Prapannāmrita, Guruparamapara Prabhavam and other lists give us 1017 A.D. as the date of his birth. He was the son of Kesava and Kantimati, a very pious Brahmana family. His mother Kāntimati was the elder sister of Saila Purna, one of the disciples of Yamunāchārya. Saila Purna gave name of Lakshmana. Lakshmana had unflinching faith, in Vaishnavism from his very boyhood, and used to pay his respects to Kānchipurna whom he invited to dinner. Kanchipurna was a great disciple of Yāmunāchārya but born of a non-Brahmana family. Kānchipurna seems to have exorted a great influence on the boy's religious sensibilities.

Lakhsmana was a boy of extraordinary intelligence. He married a girl named Jamamba who came of a non-Vaishnavite Brahmana family in his early youth. His father died not long after this marriage. He went up to Kanchipuram for his higher scriptutural studies and placed himself under Yādavāchārya, a renowned Sankarite scholar. His Guru was struck with his marvellous intellect and became very uncomfortable on account of his firm faith in Bhakti. One day while he was rubbing oil on his Guru's body, the latter was explaining to him a *Sutra*[3], *"Tasya yatha*

[1] Râdhâkrisnan's Ind. Philo. Vol. II. p. 668. [2] Ind. Philo. Vol. II. p. 665
[3] Chândogya. Up. I. 6.7

kapyasam pundarikasho mevamaksini" saying that, according to the commentary of Shankara, the two eyes of God Pundariksha are like the red butts of the monkey. His comparison of the eyes of God with the butts of the monkey so much wounded his feeling that be burst into tears, which fell on his Guru's person. The Guru was terribly angry to learn that his explanation proved shocking to the feelings of Lakshmana, so asked him to explain it otherwise if he could. Lakshmana analyzed the word *"Kapyasam"* into *"Kapih"* and *"Asa"*. *"Kapih"* also means Surya or Sun *(Kam Jalam pivati iti) "Asa"*, means "bloomed", the meaning of the sentence being that the two eyes of God are like that which are brought to blossom by the sun i.e. the lotuses. His Guru felt ashamed at the disciple's explanation. On another occasion, Lakshmana opposed his Guru in his absolutely monistic explanation of the verse *"Satyam jnanam Anantam"*[1] and established that there are distinctions in the absolute Brahman. Lakshmana became so great an exponent of the personality of God distinctions (*Savisesha*) in the *Brahman* against the non-dual doctrine of his Guru Yadava that the latter felt on compunction in attempting to cause his death. Rāmānuja's first-cousin Govinda, was his fellow student. He understood the evil motive of his Guru wishing to kill Lakshmana as the latter used to defeat him. Govinda disclosed the plot to Lakshmana, who immediately fled from his Guru, went to Kānchipuram and related the whole story to him.

His fame as a great theistic scholar spread throughout the province and reached the ears of Yāmunāchārya who made up his mind to bring him into their fold. Yāmuna happened to meet him at Kānchipuram while the latter was still with Yādava. Yāmuna realised that a great scholar like Lakshmana should take his place as the head of the *Vishistadvaita* sect after his death. He sent some of his disciples headed by Purnāchārya to sing his devotional poems *Stotraratna* at the Varadarāja temple at Kānchipuram with a view to attracting the attention of Lakshmana to his faith, Purnachārya impressed Lakshmana

[1] Anandavalli 2

describing the greatness of Yāmunāchārya whom he now wished to meet and went to Srirangam with Purnachārya but only arrived to find Yamuna dead. A story is told of him that when he approached the dead body of Yamuna he found three out of the five fingers of his right had folded. His disciples told him that three of his desires had remained unfinished, indicated by his three folded fingers. As soon as Sri Rāmānuja, promised that he would make the people adhere to the religion of *Prapatti* (surrender to God) by initiating them by means of *Panchasamskāra*; would write the commentary on the Vedānta Sutra; and an encyclopedia of the Purānas, the three fingers straightened out.[1]

Lakshmana returned to Kānchipuram and requested Kānchipurna to initiate him, but the latter regretted his inability saying that Lakshmana was a Brahmana and a great scholar while he was a *Sudra* by caste, and not fit to initiate him. Lakshmana insisted on being initiated by him and said that many Ālvārs such as Tiruppan and others had been born into a Sudra family but had become worthy of veneration even by the high caste Brahmanas. Lakshmana's intention was to establish the Vaishnavite principle that a Vaishnava of whatever caste or family is superior to all, and fit to be a Guru. Our Gaudiya Vaishnava writers Krishnadāsa Kavirāj[2], Sanātana Gosvāmi[3] re-echo the very same thing.

Kānchipurna advised him to go to Mahāpurna, another disciple of Yāmunācārya, for initiation and conveyed to him the following messages with which he was desired in a vision by the God Varadaraj of the Kanchipuram temple, to charge Lakshmana Desika; God says, "I am a Purna Brahman and the cause of all causes of the world. The difference between God and individuals is eternal; salvation lies in surrender to Me; salvation of devotees is sure and certain even if they fail to remember Me at the time of death. I confer on them the highest object on their death. Take shelter under Mahāpurna, the abode of all good

[1] Gaudiya Vol. V. p. 108 [2] C.C. Madhya VIII 127 [3] Haribhaktivilâs II.7

qualities". These messages are nothing but the cardinal points of Rāmānuja's teachings. Lakshmana was initiated by Mahāpurna by means of *Panchasamskāra*, or five sacraments at *Agrahāra*. He lodged his Guru in his own house. Mahāpurna was not a high class Brahmana. Lakshmana's wife objected to his mixing with and respecting Mahāpurna and Kanchipurna who were lower than them by caste. Lakshmana found his religious life intolerable with his proud wife, who persisted in insulting the wife of his Guru Mahāpurna referring to her lower caste. Lakshmana sent his wife to her father's house by a trick saying that her father requested him to send her on account of the marriage of her brothers and thereupon renounced the world by accepting *Tridanda Sannyās* in remembrance of Yāmunāchārya. He was now named Rāmānuja.

Having accepted *Sannyās*, he devoted himself to the vigorous propagation of the *Vishistādvaita* doctrine. He never failed to win over the rival sects in scriptural disputations. His first disciple was his nephew (sister's son) Dasarathi. His next and greatest disciple was the famous Kuresa. Rāmānuja further received the *Mantra* from Gosthipurna, another disciple of Yāmunāchārya. The latter's disciples; Maladhara and Vararanga were also his *Siksha Gurus*. Gosthipurna's son Saumya Nārāyana was initiated by Rāmānuja. His old Guru Yādava Prakāsa, who, had once made up his mind to kill him, became his disciple on the advice of his mother. Yādava was then named Govindadāsa. Many *Māyāvadin Sannyāsins* were initiated by him, as a consequence of their defeat by him in scriptural disputations. One great Sankarite *Sannyāsi* named Yajnamurti challenged Rāmānuja to a discourse, Yajnamurti was a *Digvijayi* or -conqueror of all in intellectual fights. Rāmānuja defeated him on the strength of the arguments of Yamuna's Siddhitraya. He initiated him by means of *Pancha Samskara* and thus converted him from *Māyāvadism* to Vaishnavism. Yajnamurti was then known as Devamannātha. Rāmānuja made him the principal of a great Vaishnava monastery.

Rāmānuja went to Kashmir with his disciple Kuresa

and secured the *Bodhāyanavritti* from Shankara's Sārada Math. It was snatched away from them but fortunately his disciple Kuresa is said to have learnt by heart the whole of the *Vritti* during the month when it was in his possession. He wrote it out from memory and gave it to Rāmānuja, who wrote his commentary on the *Vedānta Sutra* following the *Bodhāyanavritti*. Kuresa was his right hand in his literary productions. Rāmānuja went out on his missionary tours with his disciples, with a view to defeating the rival sects and establishing the Vaishnava faith. He visited Kumbhakonam, Madurai, Kurukapuri, Kurunganahari, Malabar, Trivandrum, Dvāraka, Mathurā, Vrindāvana, Haridwar, Badrikāshram, Pushkar, Nimsar, Kurukshetra, Ayodhya, Prayāg, Magadha, Gaya, Benares, Puri, Kurmāchal, Simhāchal, Ahobila and other places. He installed the famous Nrisimha Image at the last named place, which is still to be found. He is said to have built a temple on the tomb of Vilvamangala at Kurmāchal and installed the four-handed image of him in the temple. The said image is still worshipped in the temple. He returned to Srirangam having visited Tirūpati and other places. He converted many temples of Shiva to those of Vishnu, removing the Sivalingams. His other disciple Dhanurdāsa, who was a *Sudra* by caste, became famous on account of his great devotion and was respected by the *Brahmanas*. Rāmānuja's Guru Mahāpurna respected Maraneri Nambi, a *Sudra* disciple of Yāmunachārya, regarding him as a Brahmana. It created a great sensation in the community, that the Sudras were raised to the position of the *Brahmanas*, by Rāmānuja and his adherents, Rāmānuja initiated any and every one, whether a *Sudra* or a *Brahmana*, without any distinction by means of *Pancha Samskāra* and made them equal. He established the position of a *Vaishnava* as supreme over all social considerations. His teachings were to worship the *Vaishnavas*, identifying himself with their servants[1]. His extremely radical teachings irritated the orthodox priests and the Saivaite Chola Kings. The priests tried several

[1] Prapannâmrita 65/24

times to kill him by poisoning his food. He was saved on many occasions, but once he swallowed it and fell ill. In Divyacharitam, Garuda-Vāhana tells us that he treated him and saved his life. Garuda Vāhana was the doctor of the Srirangam temple[1]. The Chola King Krimikantha sent several soldiers to bring Rāmānuja to the royal court by force. Kuresa understood the King's evil motive, so he presented himself at the royal court in the guise of a *Sannyāsi* saying that he was Rāmānuja. He was forced to become a *Saiva*, but he refused to give up his faith. The cruel King caused his two eyes to be plucked out. Rāmānuja was over whelmed with grief at the King's cruel treatment of his dearest disciple Kuresa who passed the remaining days of his life at Srirangam. Sri Rāmānuja left this world in Saka 1059 (1137 A.D) at Srirangam. He established his principal Maths in 108 places, which are frequented by the Sri Vaishnavas on pilgrimage. (For detailed account of this places and their identification.

Rāmānuja wrote numerous books among which the following are very important:- 1) Sribhāsya, a commentary on the *Vedānta Sutra* 2) Vedāntasāra 3) Vedāntadvipa 4) Vedārtha Samgraha 5) the commentaries on the Vishnu Purāna and the following Upanishads:- Isa, Prashna, Mundaka, Svetasvatara, Katha,Chāndogya. He also wrote *Stotras* in praise of the Vishnu Images as well as Divyasuris or Ālvārs. These works were inspired by the *Vedas*, the theistic Upanishads, the Mahābhārata, the Gitā, the Vishnu Purāna, the Pancharātras, the Prabandhams of the Ālvārs and the works of Nāthamuni and Yāmunāchārya.

After the demise of Rāmānuja, his faithful followers continued the movement with remarkable vigour and produced many literary works. Parasara Bhatta and Sudarsanāchārya also known as Srutaprakāsikachārya or Vedāchārya may be mentioned among the later writers of the sect. The very important later Āchārya of the sect is perhaps the famous Vedāntadesika who was born in the year 4369 of the Kali era (1268 A.D.) (Saka 1191)

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[1] Vaishnava Manjusa Part 1. p. 70 [2] Vaishnava Manjusa, Part II. p.5-10

(commentary on the Vedānta Desika Vaibhava Prakāsika) His disciple Doddachārya has written his biography, called Vedānta Desika Vaibhava Prakāsika. Vedānta Desika also mentions his disciple Doddāchārya in an inscription on the Srirangam temple, referring to the reinstallation of the Deity by Doddāchārya, which was moved from place to place in fear of desecration by the Mohammedan iconoclasts.[1] Vedānta Desika was a great polymathic writer. The following books are attributed to him:- 1) Paramatabhanga 2) Rahasyatrayasāra. 3) Pancharātraraksha on Pancharātra, 4) Tattvavātika, 5) a Sanskrit commentary on Sri Bhāsya, 6) Tātparya Chandrika, 7) Saccharitra Raksa. 8) A commentary on the Gitā, 9) Sesvara Mimāmsa, 10) Nyāyasiddhajnāna, 11) Tattvamuktaphala with its commentary Sarvārthasiddhi, 12) Chatudushani. All these books except the first two, are written in Sanskrit.

Vedāntadesika died in Saka 1293 (1371 A. D.) at the, hoary old age of 102.[2] During the life time of Vedāntadesika, the schism took place among the followers of Rāmānuja who were subsequently divided into two groups named *Vadagalai* and *Tengalai*. The former places the Tamil *Prabandham* is superior to the Sanskrit work and depends on God's grace more than *Sadhana* or effort on their own part. They were more emotional than philosophical like the Dasakuta section of the Madhvas. The *Vadagalais* attach more importance to the Sanskrit and philosophical literature than the Tamil emotional books. God's grace and *Sadhana* on the part of the devotees are equally important in the life of the *Vadagalai* sect. Vedāntadesika has been accepted as the first leader of this section (*Vadagalai*). The two groups are very hostile to each other. Brahma-Tantra Svatantra Jiyara Svami has written a book called Guru Parampara Prabhana Dipika, supporting the Vadagalais sect against the Tengali group. Pillai Lokan Jiyada has written his Yatindra Pravana Dipika in support of the Tengalai group, the first Āchārya of which is Manavala

[1] Inscription published in Vaishnava Manjusa Part I. p. 70
[2] Bhâsya on V.D.Vaibhava Prakasika Quoted in V. M. Part I.p. 93

Mahāmuni alias Rangajamatara or Saumya Jamatara who was born in Saka 1293 when Vedāntadesika died. Manavala Mahāmuni wrote Upadesaratnāmālai in Tamil. Padanadai Vilakkam by Anna Apangara is a protest against the locustandi of the Vadagalai group apart from its obedience of the Tengalai group.

It is interesting to note here new ideas about devotion to God were introduced into the *Tengalai* section. Rāmānuja's teaching was to serve Lakshmi Nārāyana as Divine Master in the spirit of his servant. Lokāchārya alias Jagadāchārya, also called Ulāgariyan in Tamil, has written his "Navavidha Sambandha" demonstrating the different kinds of *Rasa* by which it is to be loved. We find similarity of spirit between this book of Lokāchārya and the Gaudiya Vaishnavite books in devotion. Lokāchārya was born at Srirangam in Saka 1291 (1213 A.D.)[1]

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RĀMĀNUJA

To explain the relation of the finite to the infinite is the great philosophical crux over which the religious philosophers have been fighting, from time immemorial. Rāmānuja's contribution towards its solution is very important. Shankara, in order, to save the *Jivas*, asks them to lose themselves in the undifferentiated impersonation and for this consummation, fancies this time-space-cause world to be a more dreamland. There is nothing but barren absoluteness, which consumes all, as fire burns a bundle of grass. On the mechanical sense of some *Sruti* texts – "That art Thou" and "I am Brahman" a relationship of identity of the *Jiva* with the Brahman is conceived. The Brahman, it is assumed, being enshrouded by *Avidyā* thinks itself to be Jiva. So Shankara's emancipation points to the dissolution of the subject-object distinction. In truth, according to Shankara, there is nothing besides conditioning the Brahman.[2] But the next moment he invents *Māyā* as the conditioning confining principle to explain the position of the *Jivas*. To mistake the rope for a snake is

[1] V. M. Part I. p. 88 [2] Ch. Up. III. 14. 1

exactly similar to mistaking the Brahman for *Jiva*. That is really not *Jiva* but the Brahman. This is realisable as soon as the misconception, like that of mistaking the rope for the snake, is gone. Shankara could not really construe the relation of the Absolute to the atomic soul. He is self-contradictory in his "reflection and rope-snake theories" in which he tacitly adopts the fallacy of the son of a barren mother, an undifferentiated Brahman. What is the position or *Avidyā* as a reflection in which *Isvara* and *Jiva* evolved out of the Brahman? *Māyā* must be different and distinct from the Brahman, which requires her for the purpose of reflecting himself as an illusory *Isvara* and *Jiva*. The Brahman being Absolute, there cannot be any thing to cause It to be reflected. The identity of snake and rope presupposes two distinct realities, which is incompatible with Shankara's absolute sameness. The Brahman, being indeterminate, cannot come under *Upādhi*. *Māyā*, according to Shankara, is neither identical with nor different from the Brahman, which at the same time, requires her for Its illusion as the phenomena world of cause- space-time. The Brahman could not assign an independent place to *Māyā* for reflecting itself lest it should be accused of accepting dualism. Shankara, holding *Māyā* to be unreal, could not therefore establish her relationship to the real. If *Jivas* are identical with the Brahman, how can the infinite come out of itself into the relative and finite? If the whole of Brahman may be resolved into atomic souls, the Brahman is not complete; or if a part is transmuted into the world, the Brahman is liable to partition and is, therefore, not Absolute; or in other words, the Brahman is the partial or total substance of the world, which, however is mere illusion, according to Shankara. It is no longer its own substance nor is it independent of the world. All this goes against his fundamental principle of the Brahman. So all efforts of Shankara to show the connection between the Brahman, as it is and as it should be, and the finite without involving its direct contradiction, have resulted in failure, and so the relation between them is allowed to remain hopelessly shrouded in mystery.

Shankara's own Illusion is proved to be real by Rāmānuja, who sees oneness of the Brahman in and through the differences and distinctions, which are equally real. According to Rāmānuja, identity is a relation requiring both subject and object; and the negation of their distinction renders the identity impossible. His system is called *Vishishtādvaitavāda* because of the fact that the atomic soul and matter are nothing apart from the Absolute who is capable of sustaining the plurality of forms. In this system, distinction (*Vishesha*) is as real as identity. The atomic souls and matter are comprehended within the unity of the, Absolute's essence which is related to them as substratum is related to its attributes (*Visheshanam*)[1] or as a soul is to its body.[2] He is the Supporter, Controller and the very Essences of them who are His modes and accessories. He is Immanent and lives with the *Jivas* as their Self; so His absoluteness is possible.[3] Though the souls and matter are attributes (*Vishehsana*) of God, it does not mean according to Rāmānuja, that they are not themselves substance, capable of possessing attributes in their turn. It does not affect His absoluteness who has organic relation to the plurality of the spiritual individuals having their particular place and function. According to the *Vishishtādvaita* system, God, soul and matter are three distinct factors as regards their inherent differences, but one in respect of their identity of substance. Identity means actually inseparable existence.

The atomic souls and matter are attributes (*Visheshana*) in their relation to God, but they in themselves are substance co-existing with God Who is their Ratio-assendi sustaining them as they are[4] Shankara conceives the Brahman to be simply an immanence, which has now differenctiated Itself into the innumerable Jivas, who will subsequently have to be absorbed into the undifferentiated sameness of God.

Rāmānuja's God is greater than that of Shankara, having

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[1] V.T.S. Vol. p. 25. [2] V T.S. 14, p. 24;16. p. 27
[3] Bhâsya on Sve. Up. V1. 16. 16 V.T.S. 23. p. 33. [4] V T.S.14.P.25

transcendental aspect in addition that of His immanence within the world of souls and matter. He is not merely a totality of *Jivas*, but a Being distinguishable from them. They cannot be confused in any way with His transcendental personality. God as the Brahman is the indwelling and central unity of souls. The "That art Thou" does not destroy the metaphysical identity of the souls in whom the indwelling God, known as Brahman is particularized. There are particularities of God and souls in addition to their common ground. The famous but one-sided sentences mentioned above only bring out the comprehensive nature of the Brahman, Who has the individuals inhering in Him.[1] According to Rāmānuja, Shankara's "One is the other" presupposes a difference between the two because judgment is nothing but a synthesis of distinctions. According to Rāmānuja, the Brahman and the individuals are related to each other as *Visheshya Visheshana* (Substance to attribute). They are also referred to as Soul and body.[2] The absoluteness of God is distinctive so as to admit within His universal unity free souls who draw their essence as parts from the whole, yet possess all that which constitutes them as individuals. Their attributes are of the sustaining substance - Brahman while both are equally the truth, though possessing their distinctiveness. *(Samāna-adhikaranam visheshanam ādhārabhutānām Visheshyam).* This system admits of three truths; God, *Chit* and *Achit.*

GOD:

The possibility of God possessing the characteristics of personality along with absoluteness is beyond Shankara's comprehension. The spiritual consciousness of Rāmānuja tells us that Shankara's God is no God at all. Rāmānuja's God is a synthetical whole possessed of *Chit* and *Achit* (*Chidachid Vishistasya Brahmanah* etc.)[3] The qualities of *Sat* (being), *Chit* (consciousness) and *Ānanda* (Bliss) constitute His supreme personal character, while the individuals are also personal in a way peculiar to them. The distinctions necessary for characterization are implied

[1] V.T.S. 14.p.23 [2] V.T.S.7.p.9 [3] VT.S.7.p.11

within Himself. The other qualities of God are being knowledge, power love, etc. These qualities are different from the souls and matter, which are also called *Visheshanam* or attributes.

In His absoluteness God keeps His personality capable of communion in fellowship with the distinctive souls, who may be in touch with God by virtue of their sameness, while their distinctions keep them always separate and subservient to Him for His divine sports (*Lilā*), God is accessible through *Bhakti* or *Prapatti*. Rāmānuja's God is identified with Nārāyana along with his Divine Consort Lakshmi; living in Vaikuntha, which is made of *Suddha Sattva*.[1] He, for the sake of communion with individuals manifests Himself in the fivefold mode. 1) *Para* as the Brahman or Nārāyana living in Vaikuntha. 2) *Vyuha* as Vāsudeva Shankarshana Pradyumna-Aniruddha for the sake of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world, and also out of tenderness for the devotees. 3) *Vibhavas* or projections or *Antaryāmin* as supreme indwelling over-soul and inner ruler all, 4) *Archa* as divine symbols and the like. The Supreme Lord Nārāyana reigns in Vaikuntha in all glory and grandeur, possessing the sixfold perfection knowledge, energy, strength, lordship vigour and brilliance (*Sadaishvarya*).

CHIT:

Shankara's difficulty to understand how it is possible for the finite to come out of the infinite is surmounted by Rāmānuja. God is above the rules of *Karma*, which bind the *Jivas* to pain and suffering[2]. Though God is the whole of the parts or individuals, their imperfection cannot contaminate His spiritual perfection[3]. By part he neither means a portion cut out of the whole, nor does he, mean the whole as the totality of the parts, but in the sense of *Visheshana* or quality as light issuing from the luminous body.[4] The *Rāmānujiya* conception of *Jiva* in relation to God as sparks to the fire or as rays to the Sun is taken verbatim by the Gaudiyas as we find

[1] V. T. S. 18 p. 29; 23. p. 33 [2] V. T. S. 11. p. 1 7
[3] Sribhâsya. I. 1. 1; II. 1. 15. V. T. S. 16, p. 27 [4] V T. S. 14. p. 24

in the following line: 'The principle of God is like that of a blazing fire while the soul of *Jiva* is like a spark, the living soul is but an attribute of God[1]." According to Rāmānuja, the distinguishing attribute is a part of a thing because it resides in it. *(Ekavastveka-desatvam hysmsatvam visistasyaika-vastuno visesan amamsa eva.)* Though Rāmānuja places the substance and its attributes-God and the individuals-in the relation of the whole and its parts, yet they differ in essential character. The souls are some-times regarded as the effects of the Brahman which is quite different from Shankara's - *Vastu Parināma* or modification of Brahman,[2] The effects-the souls are not evolution of the Brahman Who is the material and efficient cause of their existence. The Jivas are not the produced effects as Shankara thinks. On the contrary, the cause always remains as such producing the effects without undergoing any change in the form of contraction and expansion (*Sankuchita* and *Vikasita*) like a spider which remains as it is in spite of producing the threads out of itself for spinning its web.[3] The Gaudiyas are of the same opinion[4] Rāmānuja's absoluteness does not cancel the *Jiva's* freewill which is the cause of his bondage to matter and *Karma*.[5] Rāmānuja succeeds in dealing with human freedom and God's sovereignty -these are possible at one and the same time, without any hindrance to each other. According to Rāmānuja, there are three classes of *Jivas* or *Chits* namely 1) *Nitya* - they who live in Vaikuntha with Nārāyana as His close associates, free from *Karma* or the qualities of *Prakriti*, 2) *Mukta* who liberated themselves through *Prapatti* 3) *Baddha* – those who are bound in *Samsāra* to the cycle of birth and re-birth. But in essence all souls are of a like kind. The Gaudiyas also divide the *Jivas* into three groups such as *Nityamukta* (Ever free), *Sādhana Siddha* (Freed soul through devotion) and *Baddha* (or in bondage).

ACHIT:

The non-conscious substance is also threefold- 1). *Suddha Sattva*, which works under the will of God in Vaikuntha for

[1] C. C. Adi. VII. 116 V.T.S. 14,24 [2] Sribhâsya. I. 4.27 [3] Tattva-Traya 23-26
[4] C. C. Madhya VI. 171 [5] V. T. S. 14. p. 24

His *Lilā* or sports. The variety of things necessary for His *Lilā* is its work. 2) *Sattvasunya* or *Kala* - which is responsible for the form of existence of relational distinctions, 3) *Mishrasattva* which through the threefold mood - *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas* compels the *Jivas* to work, and thereby bind themselves to the cycle of birth and re-birth.

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas owe their gratitude to Rāmānuja in so far as, he establishes the distinction in absoluteness which Shankara makes barren or something indescribable. Rāmānuja gives the first distinct principle of devotion as Master and servant in relation of God, to man. According to Gaudiya Vaishnavism, *Bhakti* is practised in five-fold *Rasa* or in others words, God, is served as a master by his servants, as a friend by friends, as a son by his parents, and as a lover by his consort and mistresses. Rāmānuja's God is served in Vaikuntha in awe and reverence. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas do the most confidential service, in *Madhura Rasa* to Krishna in whom they find the object of highest devotion of all. Rāmānuja, having uprooted the thorny jungle of *Māyāvadism*, laid the foundation of the *Bhakti* temple to be further constructed by the later Āchāryas headed by Sri Madhva and to be finally completed and decorated most artistically by the Gaudiyas. The conception of *Jiva* in Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy is clearer than that in *Vishishtādvaitavāda*. It is really difficult to grasp how God as the cause and whole, is not affected by the imperfections and effects of the parts. According to Gaudiya philosophy, the *Jivas* and this world are the result of evolution not from the Brahman but from two *Shaktis* of the Lord, who is responsible for their workings

SOME SIMILARITIES OF PRACTICES AND TEACHINGS BETWEEN THE SRI VAISHNAVAS AND THE GAUDIYAS

Rāmānuja accepted Kānchipurna and others as his *Siksha-Gurus* who were all non-Bramins. His Guru Mahāpurna served a non-Brahmin disciple of Yāmunāchārya, named Maranritambi in the same way as one Brahmana did another. Rāmānuja's non-Brahmin disciple Dhanurdāsa received homage from the Brahmanas. Yāmunāchārya, was

a very high class Brahmana but paid his respect to Satakopa, an Ālvār who was born in a non-Brahmin family, praying that, "the whole treasury of his life and father, mother, wealth and everything of his descendants are nothing compared with the dual feet of Satakopa.

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas practise the same principle. Even the Mohammedan convert Haridās Thākur was and is worshipped by the Gaudiya Vaishnava Brahmanas, Sri Chaitanya gave him the highest respect. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas give all the rights of a Brahmana to the converts after their initiation.[1] According to Rāmānuja's teaching, the following incur eternal hell: - Those who consider the images of Vishnu and devotees only as stones; who consider Guru and Āchāryas as only men; those who consider castes among the Vaisnavas (distinguishing *Sudra* from the Brahmanas); those who regard the water in which the feet of a Vaishnava is washed, is ordinary water; those who regard the *Mantra* as but sounds, and those who regard Paramesvara, like the minor gods."[2] These are regarded among the Gaudiyas as the great offences against God. Sri Chaitanya seems to repeat the teaching of Rāmānuja saying that those who do not admit *Sri Vigraha*, are sinners and punishable by Yama. They are untouchable.[3] The Gaudiya Vaishnavas teach that the dust of the feet of the Vaishnavas, the water in which their feet are washed, and the refuse of food left on their plate, are venerable and the strength of the *Sādhana*, so they should be consumed without hesitation or pride.[4] Rāmānuja taught his disciples not to consider the *Prasād* (food already offered to God) as *Ucchistha* (refuse in the sense of hatred). The sanctity of divine food and its superiority to common food are spoken of[5] Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's conduct with Vasudeva Sārvabhauma in this regard is the practical application of Rāmānuja's principle mentioned above.[6] Rāmānuja says "Do not converse with men who love money and lust. Converse always with the Bhāgavatas."[7] Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings in this regard are contained the

[1] H. Bh. V.II.7 [2] Prapannâmrita. 65/86 [3] C.C. Madhya VI. 166-167 [4] C.C. Antya. XI. 57-61 [5] Prapannâmrita, 65/62 [6] C. C. Madhya VI. 218-234 [7] Prapannâmrita, 66/67

followings among others: "To eat food from the worldlings, is sure to blacken the mind and if the mind is blackened, it cannot recollect God." -Those who accept food from any worldlings (*Vishayi*) are to be disappointed in their religious life.[1] "To shun the society of those who keep companionship with women and who are averse to God, is the conduct of a Vaishnava.[2]" All other conduct of a Vaishnava life in the Gaudiya sect is the same as that of the Sri Vaishnavas. Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu may have gathered these practices from the Sri Vaishnavas with whom He lived and had discoursed during his long missionary tours in the south.

THE VISHNUSVĀMI SECT

Both Jiva Gosvāmi in his Bhāgavata Sandarbha and Krishnadāsa Kavirāj in his Chaitanya Charitāmrita.[3] look to Sri Vishnusvāmi for inspiration to establish the essential difference between God and individual souls, and quote the following verse from Vishnusvami's Sarvajnasukta or the commentary on the Vedānta "God is all intelligence, all-existence and all-bliss, in the embrace of *Hlādini* and *Samvit* (*Shakti*) whereas *Jiva* is enveloped in his own *Avidyā* which is the abode of all sufferings". Neither Rāmānuja nor Madhva is satisfactorily clear in introducing *Shaktis* by way of explaining how God creates *Jivas* without being Himself modified. Rāmānuja tacitly assumes and mentions *Shakti* simply by referring to some passages of the Svetāsvatara Upanishad to that effect in his writings.[4] The Gaudiya Vaishnavas have borrowed the *Hlādini* and *Samvit*, two of the three aspects of their conception of *Parāshakti* from the above verse of Vishnusvami's Sarvajnasukta. The *Sandhini* aspect of *Parāshakti* has been taken from the Vishnu Purāna[5] to which they refer in another plane.[6] The Gaudiyas are indebted to Vishnusvami in so far as the conception of *Parāshakti* and the difference between God and jiva is concerned.

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[1] C. C. Antya. VI. 271-279 [2] C. C. Madhya XXII. 84 [3] C. C. Madhya XVIII. 114
[4] V T. S. 23. p. 33 [5] I. Ibid.12. 48 [6] C.C.Adi IV. 63

THE HISTORY OF VISHNUSVĀMI

Vishnusvami is the Āchārya-founder of the Rudra sect, the mythical first Āchārya of which is believed to be Rudra. The Rudra or Vishnusvami sect is supposed to be the oldest of the four recognised Vaishnava sects; the others being the Rāmānujiya, the Madhva and the Nimbārkiya Biographical data concerning him are too few to enable one to reconstruct any history of his life and career. He does not seem to have written many works except his Sarvajnasukta and a few others so far as our knowledge of his work goes. There is a manuscript of *Tattva-Pradipa* in the library of the Nimbārkiya headquarters at Salimabad. The authorship of this *Tattva Pradipa* has been attributed to Vishnusvami,[1] It is Sridhara Swami who tells us that Vishnusvami's commentary on the Vedānta is styled Sarvajnasukta, from which he quotes verses in his commentaries on the Vishnu Purāna[2] and the Bhāgavata.[3] The earliest book containing the incidental reference to Vishnusvami's philosophical system, is perhaps the Sarvadarsana Samgraha of Sayana-Madhva (14th Century). In the course of explaining the conception of the body as eternal through the efficacy of quicksilver according to the Mercurial system (*Raseshvara Darshana*), the author of Sarvadarsana Samgraha says the following "This (this conception of body) is not to be regarded as unprecedented, for the adherents of the doctrine of Vishnusvami maintain the eternity of the body of Vishnu as halfman and half lion" (Narasimha). Thus it is said in the Sakara Siddha "I glorify the man lion set forth by Vishnusvami whose only body is existence, intelligence eternal and inconceivably perfect beatitude. "If the objection be raised that the body of the manlion, which appears as composite and coloured, is incompatible with real existence, it may be replied how can the body of the manlion be otherwise than really existent, proved as it is by three kinds of proof; 1) by the intuition of Sanaka and others; 2) by the Vedic texts such as a thousand heads Purusa; and 3) by the *Purānic* texts such as, "That wondrous child lotus

[1] Gaudiya Vol. VI. p. 268 [2] I. 12. 70. [3] I. 7. 6; III. 12.1-2

eyed, four armed, armed with the conchshell, the club and other weapons. Real existence and other like predicates are affirmed also by Srikanta Mishra, the devoted adherent of Vishnusvami. Let then, those who aspire to the highest end of personal soul, be assured that the eternity of body which we are setting forth is by no means[1] a mere innovation.

The date of the oblation of the author of Sarvadarsan Samgraha to the Gadi is believed to be 1331 A. D.[2]. From the above references we can gather the following main historical clues: 1) Vishnusvami's doctrine was prevalent earlier than the *Raseshvara Darshana* because the learned author mentions Vishnusvami's conception of the eternity of God's Body only to emphasise that it was earlier than that of Raseshvara Darshana. 2) Sākāra Siddha is a book of the sect dealing with the teaching of Vishnusvami 3) Srikanta Mishra was another later doctor of the sect. 4) Nrisimha is the official deity of the sect. Sridhara quotes another passage from Vishnusvami's Sarvajnasukta referring to Nrihari (Nrisimha)[3]. From the very nature of scanty reference to Vishnusvami by Sayana and from the fact that he has exhaustively discussed the other fifteen systems such as the Rāmānujiya, the Madhva and so on, it seems that Vishnusvami belonged to a very past remote or at least, earlier than the origin of *Rasesvararite* practices and doctrine. The *Raseshvarites* used to drink *Pārada* (mercury) and Mica identifying them with *Hara* and *Gauri*, with a view to increase the longevity and maintain youth. It gives the further shore of metempsychosis; it is styled *Pārada* because it is employed for the highest end by the best votaries.[4] Cowell has drawn our attention to the fact that this practice of drinking mercury (*Pāradana*) among a sect has been mentioned in Shankara Dig-Vijaya. (F. 29.)[5] If Shankara met with the practice of the *Rasesvarite*, they must have flourished before his time and it must have originated long before Shankara, whose date is circa 8th

[1] Cowell's edition. p. 141-142 [2] Cowell's introduction [3] Commentary on the Bhâgavata I.7 [4] For detail vide Sarvadarshana Samgraha
[5] Sarvadarshana Samgraha p. 137. Note

century. If this practice was originated among the *Rasesvarites* long before Shankara, we have to admit then that Vishnusvami must have flourished several centuries before Shankara.

We have already observed that Vilvamangala who was the younger contemporary of Shankara belonged to the Vishnusvāmi sect after his conversion to Vaishnavism. So the belief that Vishnusvāmi was the earliest of all Vaishnava Āchāryas seems to have some truth in it.

The Vallabhi sect traces its origin to Vishnusvami's, so they have tried to give us an account of Vishnusvāmi in Vallabha Digvijaya by Kanaiha Lal and Sampradāya Pradipa by Gadādhara who was the disciple of Viththala, son of Vallabha. Sampradāya Pradipa was written in 1554 A. D. Vallabha Digvijaya assigns the birth of Vishnusvāmi to a very hoary antiquity saying that be was born in the Dravida country after the completion of the Janamejaya's sacrifice and Vilvamangala belonged to the Vishnusvāmi sect. [1] Sampradāya Pradipa echoes them. Another Vallabhi book called Vaishnava Vrittamāla by one Srinātha Devesa, informs us that Vallabha's great grand father belonged to this sect.[2] Leaving aside the exaggerated date of his birth in the beginning of the Kali age, it may be accepted that Vilvamangala, may have belonged to this sect.

In the biographical account of Vishnusvāmi, Paramahamsa Sri Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Thākur gives us the following information: "There were three Āchāryas bearing the same name of Vishnusvami in this line. The first of the three is called *Adi* Vishnusvāmi who is said to have been born about the third century A. D. in the Pandyan country. Vishnusvami's father Devesvara was the royal priest and minister. Devatanu, as he was known before he took the *Sannyās* name of Vishnusvami, was trained by his Vaishnava father in a vigorous theistic education to fight Buddhism. The Pandyan king exerted all his influence to crush Buddhism in particular and other non-Vaishnavite sects in general. King Pandya Vijaya and his minister

[1] Vallabha Digvijaya III. 1. 2. p. 164 [2] H.P. Sastri's catalogue of Samskrit MSS in Govt collection under A.S.B Vol. IV. p. 106-107

Devesvara went to Puri and recovered the Hindu deities of Jagannāth, Balarāma and Subhadra, which had been turned into the Buddhist Dharma Buddha and Samgha the Buddhists. The King Pandya Vijaya and his minister Devesvara removed the deities from the main temple to Sundarachala, about 3 k.m. away in a car. This is said to be the origin of the car festival of Jagannāth. Now the ceremony of conveying images from the temple to the, car is named Pahandi or Pānduvijaya which seems to suggest the incident of the Pandyan King taking the images. The word of *Panda* now applied to the priests of the Jagannāth temple, is said to have been derived from the word "*Pandya*" The images were again brought to the temple after Buddhism had been suppressed to some extent."

"He (Vishnusvāmi) was the first to adopt *Tridanda Sannyās* which he brought into practice among his seven hundred *Sannyāsi* disciples. It was he who introduced the *Astottara Satanāmi Sannyās* (108 designations of *Sannyāsins*) including the *Dasanāmis*, which were adopted by Shankara in his sect. It was not Shankara who invented it, as some scholars think. Muktikaponisad and the Sattvatasamhitā give us the list of the hundred and eight *Vedic* designations of *Sannyāsins*.[1] Vyasesvara was the last of the said seven hundred *Sannyāsins*, after whom the line became almost extinct, until it was revived by Raja Gopala who also assumed the name of Vishnusvami in the beginning of the 9th Century and whose *Prasishya* was Vilvamangala".

Svāmi Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Thākur had given us much new information but he has not referred to the material source of his views. He is said to have toured in the Pandyan country, collected many *Paddati* works of the sect and other fragmentary information. Let us say a few words on this. He does not seem to be altogether wrong in placing the date of the first named Vishnusvāmi in the ancient times, if not before Christ and in connecting him and his sect with the royal family of the Pandyan country. It seems to be a fact that here flourished a Vaishnava

[1] For details vide Gaudiya Kanthahara p. 288

movement in the South before and in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Ranaghat inscriptions seem to establish Vaishnavism was prevalent in the south before the Christian era.[1] The China stone inscription of the time of Gautamiputra Satakarni[2] goes to show its continuation in the early Christian centuries. The Silappathikaram, and other poems refer to the temples dedicated to Krishna and Balarama at Madura, Kaviripattinam and other cities.[3] Kulasekhara refers to the Govinda Rāya temple in the Chitrakuta of the Tirunnelvelly district. Another Alvar Tirumangai also refers to it, saying that the Pallava- King made some dedication to the said temple.[4] In Saka 500 Mangalisa, the early Chalukyan King of the Deccan, built the temple, installed the Vishnu Images of Narasimha and Ananta, and made an endowment for its permanent service.[5] Who was responsible for this movement? The date of the Ālvārs cannot be as early as it is believed to be. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar remarks "The earliest Ālvārs may be placed at about the fifth and sixth centuries but there is nothing to show that Vaishnavism had, not penetrated to the Tamil country earlier i.e. about the first century.[6] If we believe that Kulasekhara, the King and the author of Mukundastotramala, is the same as the Alvar Kulasekhara, we must admit that he may have flourished in the 12th century. Mr. A. Govinda Wariyar and Mr. Pisharoti place Kulasekhara in the 7th century,[7] Sri R.G Bhandarkar's Kulasekhara seems different from the 7th Century Kulasekhara. Anyhow the Ālvārs could not be responsible for the introduction of Vaishnavism in the South. Theirs was a developed form of emotional Vaishnavism. Shankara fought many Vaishnavas. Most of the Ālvārs were given to personal love and devotion to Krishna-Vishnu Krishna, Narasimha and so on. There is very little sectarianism in its literal sense. Who then was responsible for combating Buddhism in the South and later converting the disciples of Shankara to Vaishnavism?[8] There must have been an

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[1] Luders No. 1112. Epi. Indi. Vol. IX. [2] Luders No. 1340
[3] Kanakasabhai's Tamil 1800 years ago p.13,26 [4] Krishnasvâmi's Beginning of S. Indian History p.39 [5] Ind. Ant. III. p.305; VI. 363 [6] Vaishnavism etc. p.50
[7] Ind. Hist. Quar. June 1931 [8] I.H.Q, June. 1931. p. 339

Āchārya to form the background of these activities and the developed form of the Alvar's Vaishnavism. Paramahamsa Svami Sri Saraswati Thākur's surmise that he was born in the Pandyan country and influenced the royal family has some sort of truth in it. The Bhāgavata Purāna says that in the Kali age there will be found men here and there devoted to Nārāyana but in large number in the Dravida country there flows the rivers Tamraparni, Kaveri and others. That is to say, Pandyan country.[1] Whom does the Bhāgavata mean by this statement? There were certainly many Vaishnavas in the Pandyan country at least at the time of the composition of the said Purāna. We have already noticed that the said Purāna has been mentioned in sixth century books, so it may have been composed before the fifth century. The Bhāgavata could not mean any Āchārya and his host of disciples of the Pandyan country except Vishnusvami. It seems to indicate the 700 Vaishnava Sannyāsi disciple of Vishnusvami. By that statement that the Vaishnavas in the Pandyan country would be numerous, the Bhāgavata does not seem to mean one or two Ālvārs because most of them flourished long after the composition of the said Purāna.

Uttaramantri Madhurakavi under the patronage of King Jatila Parantaka Nedunjadayam of the Velvikundi grant, built a stone temple for Vishnu Narasimha in the Annamalai hill about 9 k.m. East of Madura in 770 A. D. The King Jatila Parantaka also built a very big Vishnu temple at Kanjivaypperur and was called Parama Vaishnava as evidenced in Madras Museum plate.

Even later on, Hemacchadanaraja Jataverman Sundarapandya built the shrines of Narasimha and Visvaksena and covered them with gold. Mr. Kanakasabai tells us that in Puram (21) the valour of the King Manmara is campared with that of Baladeva Vishnu, (1800 years ago. 140-150). We are not concerned with Mr. Kanakasabai's accuracy in giving the date of the king. It seems from the above instances that these kings of the Pandyan country were well disposed to Vaishnavism and particularly to the

[1] Bh.XI. 5. 38-40

Image of Narasimha, the favourite deity of Vishnusvami's devotion. But it does not mean that the Images of other incarnations or *Vyuhas* have not been accepted in the sect. Every Image of any incarnation of Vishnu is the object of the same devotion; it is only the personal individual or personal choice, which prompts one to devote oneself to a particular Image of Vishnu. For instance, Madhva's favourite God was Bala-Gopala (Boy Krishna) but he installed the Images of Rāma-sita, Vithaladeva's Nrisimha, and so on. The full-fledged ten *Avataras* of Vishnu already became the object of devotion before or at least about the 7th Century. The Pallava inscription in the *Pallava Grantha* characters on the lintel above the Image of Nārāyana in the rock cut varendah of the *Varaha* temple at Mahābalipuram, contains a verse referring to the ten *Avataras* of Vishnu. It is dated in the reign of Paramesvara Varman. Circa 670-90 A.D.[1] We cannot believe that such a movement would have taken place in the South without any activities or influence or an Āchārya. It is generally believed that the Bhāgavata Purāna was composed in the South. It is clear that there were Vaishnavite activities in the South, from before the Christian era down to the period of Shankara and if Vishnusvami was not born in the pre-Christian era, he seems at least to have flourished a few centuries before Shankara.

Paramahamsa Sri Saraswati Thākur next tells us that Rāja Gopāla Vishnusvāmi revived the old Vishnusvāmi sect in the beginning of the 9th Century. He began the active propaganda, with renewed vigour and enthusiasm. He installed the Varadaraja temple in Kanchipuram, the famous Ranchorlal in Dvarka, and many other images in different places of Pilgrimage. The *Suddadvaita* system of Vishnusvami again came to prominence under his care. We know that Yamunāchārya visited this temple at Kanchipuram where Kānchipurna passed most of his time. Ramanuja is said to have received the divine message from this god through Kanchipurna. It is a fact that a Vaishnavite revival took place just after the death of Shankara. This

[1] Memoirs of Archaeological survey of India No. 26. p. 5.

Vishnusvami may have been its leader. Rai Amarnāth Rāya Bāhādur remarks, "it is said that Padmapada, the distinguished disciple of Shankara, was a devotee of Nrisimha, nay a Nrisimhasiddha. Chitsukhachārya, author of the Tattvapradipika and Nrsimhasarma, the author of the "Bhedadhikkara" and the "Bhavartha Prakasika" are found making obeisance.to Nrisimha[1] This Chitsukhachārya has been identified with Vilvamangala and placed second in the list of Āchāryas of Shankara's Dvarka Math.[2] the first being Brahmasvarupāchārya, the direct disciple of Shankara. Mr. A. Govinda Wariyer shows that many direct disciples of Shankara were converted to Vaishnavaism; thus writes about their devotion to Vishnusvāmi's God Nrisimha. In an age of religious revival, the disciples of Shankara himself founded the Math at Trichur dedicated to God Vishnu manifestation of Parthasarathi and Nrisimha"[3]. There must have been a great personality behind this movement, which could convert the disciples and grand disciples of Shankara, like Padmapada, Vilvamangala and so on. The dates of all other Vaishnava Āchāryas are more or less known to us, so may assume that it was this Vishnusvāmi who revived Vaishnavism just after the death of Shankara. If we do not agree with Paramahamsa Sri Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Thākur that the Vishnusvāmi lived in the pre-Christian era, at least his surmise about this Vishnusvāmi seems probable.

He further tells us, "after the death of Vishnusvāmi a great feud took place between this community and that of Shaiva Sivasvami who regards Rudra as an independent God while the former holds Rudra as a Guru and the favourite friend of Vishnu Narasimha.[4] The Shaiva sect opposed it vigorously. People failing to appreciate any very subtle point of theism in the *Suddhādvaita* system of the Vishnusvāmi sect, became inclined to Shaivaite monism which was then embraced by general population. This Shaivaite community taking advantage of the situation,

[1] A. Bh. R. I. Vol. XIV. p.170-171. [2] V. M. Part IV. p.41 [3] I.H.Q. June 1931 p.339
[4] Sridhara's commentary on the first verse of the Bhâgavata.

tried to misappropriate Vishnusvāmin's Sarvajnasukta, which they modified to a great extent to suit their system. The third and the last revival came under Andhra Vishnusvami in the fourteenth century, and his successors were Garva Srikanta Mishra, Vala Bhatta, Premankara, Lakshmana Bhatta and so forth; the last named being of Vallabha Bhatta."

Another very recent book Āryavidysudhākara by Yajnesvara tells us that Vishnusvami is said to have been the son of the councillor of the Dravida chief dependent upon the emperor of Delhi.[1] Nābhaji in his Bhaktamala makes Jnānadeva, Nāmadeva, Trilochana and lastly Vallabha as his successors.[2] From these accounts, Sri R. G. Bhandarkar surmises that Vishnusvāmi must have existed about the middle of the 13th Century. Sri R. G. Bhandarkar and all others think of only one Vishnusvāmi. Vallabha's birth took place in 1479 A. D. There are at least four historical books of the Vallabhi sect dealing with Vishnusvāmi - but neither of them tells us that Vishnusvāmi was born in the later century. It is very clear from the mention in Sarvadarshana Samgraha (1331 A.D.) that Vishnusvāami was already archaic. If he had been born in the 13th Century, Sayana would have so mentioned. Charita Chintamani by Devakinandana Bhatta tells us that Vallabha's great grand father Yajnanārāyana Bhatta was a follower of the Vishnusvāmi sect.[3] If there were any other Vishnusvāmi after the composition of Sayana Madhva's Sarvadarshana Samgraha, he would have been very near to Bhallava's date and naturally the writers of his sect or other contemporary writers, would have mentioned him. Sridharasvāmi (late 14th Century) gives us only a very few references to Vishnusvāmi's views from Sarvajnasukta in his writings which suggest that he was far removed from him chronologically. We have no reliable or definite evidence to prove that there was an important Āchārya of the sect bearing the name the of Vishausvāmi from the 13th Century onwards.

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[1] Âryavidyasudhakara p.228 [2] The Ksemaraja edition. p. 95-98
[3] I. H. Q. June 1931 p. 180

VISHNUSVĀMI'S PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM

It is extremely difficult to form an adequate idea of his philosophical views, as his Sarvajnasukta is practically lost. We have to gather the references to several passages of his Sarvanjasukta to be found in the writings of others. We have already quoted a passage from Sākāra Siddha to which Sāyana refers by way of giving Vishnusvāmi's conception of the body of God Nrisimha, which is regarded as "existence, intelligence, eternal and inconceivably perfect beatitude". In another passage of Sarvajnasukta already quoted God has been conceived as the embodied form of existence, intelligence and bliss in the embrace of His twin powers called *Hlādini* and *Samvid* through whose instrumentality this eternal body is capable of indulging in Sports (*Lilā*) with freed souls.

The difference between God and *Jiva* is that the one never comes under *Māyā* or *Upādhi* while the other is liable to be influenced by her. *"Sa isoyadvase māyā sa jiva yasiayardditah svāvirbhutah paranandah svāvirbhutah suduhkhabhu"* [1]. Sridhara further made this point clear in another place following the doctrine of Sri Vishnusvami to whose sect he belonged [2]. The author of Chaitanya Charitāmrita gives the literal translation of this verse (*Sa iso*) by way of demonstrating the difference between God and Jiva.[3] God is ever free and never comes under *Upādhi* nor submits to any modification. *Shruti* passages declare Him to be devoid of the mundane qualities of *Sattva, Rajah* and *Tamah* but He possesses the transcendental qualities viz. *Sat, Chit* and *Ānanda*. He is all-knowing (*Sarvajna*), all powerful (*Sarvashaktim*), Lord and Regulator of all (*Sarvesvaram sarva niyantaram*), He is the only object of all devotion and worship and awarder of the fruits of all Karma (*sarvopāsyam sarvakarmaphala pradātaram*). He is really the abode of all beneficent qualities.[4]

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[1] Quoted from Sarvajnasukta by Sridharasvâmi in his commentary Bhâvârthadipika on the Bhâgavata, I,7.6. [2] Bhâvârthadipika. X. 87. 2.
[3] M. VI 162 [4] Samasta Kalyâna Guna Nilayam, Sayings of Sri Vishnusvâmi, culled by Sridhara. Bhâvârthadipika. X. 87. 2. etc., I. 7. 6

According to the following *Shloka* containing Visnusvami's view "*Vastuno'mso Jivah vastunah saktirmāyā cha vastunah kāryam jagaccha tat sarvam vastveva na tatah prithagiti*"[1] there is only one reality called *Vastu* Who is God, so the system is called *Advaita* but is not the same as Shankara's absolute or undifferentiated monism which does not admit activities but tacitly assumes some sort of force which he calls *Māyā* to explain and trace the world of the individuals. They place *Māyā* outside Brahman. So the Shankarites are not pure monists like Āchārya Vishnusvāmi. Unlike Shankara's Brahman, Vishnusvāmi's God creates the world without being modified in his essential nature. Brahman does not become a product for giving rise to the world, which, according to Vishnusvami, is the *Kārya* of God and not that of *Māyā*, Shankara's second entity. So it cannot be illusory because it is the eternal function of God. It would have been so had it not been the action of God.

The world is regarded as the activity of *Vastu*. (*Vastunah Kāryam Jagat*). The activity does not necessarily mean that the cause is modified which, on the other hand, remains the same in the course of modification. As gold remains such though ornaments change their shape in the course of modification, so God is always the same whether before or after His *Kārya*. The action may be changeable but is as real as its cause. The temporary evolution of action is not its absolute absence, as we cannot deny our existence in our sleeping state. Creation is nothing else but the manifestation of the world, the capacity for which is always in Brahman. In other words, the world is always within Brahman. Whether it is manifested or unmanifested is not vital, but is all the same if looked at from God's point of view. Whenever God uses His *Avirbhāva Shakti* or power of evolution, there is creation, which returns into him and remains in Him in a dormant state whenever He withdraws His *Shakti*. So He is both the material and efficient cause of His action in the evolution of the world.

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[1] Sridharasvâmi's Bhâvârthadipika on the Bhâgavata I.I .2

A difficulty may arise at this point. If He is the material cause, how does He remain as such while being at the same time a modified cause? or in other words, how is it possible for His not being identified with the modified action? World, as effect, is only the changed form of the same cause which as effect, is no longer the cause of itself, it may be the cause of some other cause. This apparent difficulty may be removed if we dive a little. Modification may be of two kinds, as milk when it becomes sour in this case the former is changed into an effect and cannot revert to its original condition because it has lost its essential character. But modification, as applied to God, is quite otherwise. God remains all along the same, whether before or after the modification takes place. The wind can only make waves on the surface but the depth of the sea remains unaffected though waves heave and disappear. Brahman always remains, "*Sacchidānanda*" though, in conjunction with His will, His power becomes modified into the world, so the world is not unreal. If it were so, as, Shankara thinks it to be, how can he establish a relation between reality and an unreality which he thinks, arises out of a force lying outside Brahman Vishnusvami's *Māyā* is the power of *Vastu*, (Vastunah Saktirmāyā) and not in any way separate from Vastu. The actor is always the actor and never identified with his action. So creation and destruction are due to His power or *Shakti*.

Jivas, according to Vishnusvāmi, are constituent parts of the only one *Vastu* or substantial reality. (*Vastuno'mso*). The individuals are of identical essence with God, so in this respect there is no real difference, as there is only one *Vastu*. But they are atomic in size and consequently are liable to be overpowered by the force of *Avidyā* while God is the Lord and regulator. (*Svāvidya-samvirto jivah samklesanikarāakarah.)* Here lies the difference but not in regard to essential character as both are of the same stuff or essence. Sri Vishnusvāmi employed the analogy of sparks to their source, the fire, to indicate the relation of Jivas to God as we find in the Brihadāranyaka.[1]

[1] II. 2. 20 and IV, 3, 9.

In the scriptures *Jivas* are sometimes called Brahman. These passages mean that the essence of both is of the same nature. Again some passages declare the individual to be different from Brahman. They are certainly so. The parts are very, very small in comparison to the whole. In the next place, they are called the activity of Brahman. *Jivas*, like the sparks are not something different in character from Brahman. So they are same qualitatively without being identical in every respect. Sparks though issuing from fire are different from its source, or again *Jivas* like individual rays of the sun possess the burning quality in an infinitesimal degree which may be affected or clouded by something or some power; while God is like the great Sun by virtue of His qualities - *Sat, Chit* and *Ānanda* in their infinite fullness which burn all unwholesome qualities of *Māyā* if she happens to be aggressive. Here is a very real difference. The infinitesimal parts are liable to become the victims of a limiting power, which is however absolutely powerless before God Himself. So Vishnusvāmi defines *Jivas* as *Svavidya Samvrito* etc. God is always blessed and blissful, while *Jivas* are placed in the place of miseries (*Samklesanikarākarah*) due to their inclination and liability to be inclined to attachment to *Māyā*. In short, according to Vishnusvāmi, there is only one *Vastu*, or reality who has reserved His personality of beneficent qualities apart from the *Jivas* who issue from Him, and are always connected to remain as they are. So they are not as second entity, nor do they disturb His privacy The world being His activity never ceases to exist, because He is never inactive and because He is ever the inexhaustible fount of never-ending energy. There is nothing unreal in the whole system, which is not in any way working independently apart from Him. The parts are complete in themselves in their own way, being energised by God, while He is the complete whole, not depending on the parts to be so. It is not the parts that make the whole; but on the contrary, it is the whole who makes and maintains the parts as they are.

By *Mukti*, Vishnusvāmi means the devotion to God by assuming body. ("*Muktaapi Lilāyā vigraham kritva*

bhāgavantam bhajante") quoted from *Sarvajnasukta* by Sridhara Svāmi in his commentary on the Bhāgavata. CX. 87. 21) In other words he keeps the absolute distinction between God and individuals all through after *Moksha*, but according to Shankara, there is absolute identity of the Brahman with the freed souls.[1] In short, Shankara differs from Vishnusvami in all respects. According to the former, Brahman degrades itself into *Isvara* or, *Jiva* in association with *Māyā* or *Avidyā*. [2] But Vishnusvamin's God never comes under *Māyā*.[3]

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas, avoiding the difficulty that may arise, as to how Brahman, being the efficient and material cause, remains unmodified in His nature while giving rise to the world and *Jivas*, make Him only the, efficient cause who energises His *Shakti*, which is immediately and materially responsible for the world being evolved. The *Jivas*, according to the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, owe their existence to His *Tatastha* or *Jiva Shakti*. In other words, the *Jivas* and the world are the result of the evolution of His two *Shaktis*, *Tatastha* and *Bahirangu*, which derive their energy, so to say from Him and this is His activity. The evolution of His *Shaktis* does not mean any transformation of the potential person-God.

We do not get the early history of the development of the conception of devotion to God in the earlier period of the sect but Vilvamangala represents, to a very great extent, the conception of divine love which may have developed in this sect before him whose date, as we have observed, may be placed in the ninth century. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas are supremely indebted to the Vishnusvāmi sect through Vilvamagala's Krishnakarnāmrita, and also in respect of the philosophical background of their view on God, God's *Shakti*, the difference between God and Jivas and so on. If we believe that Sridhara Svāmi belonged to this sect, we have further ground to hold that the Gaudiyas respected this sect more than any, through Sridhara whom they regarded as the " world teacher" (Jagat Guru.)

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[1] His Bhâsya on the Vedânta I. 4.21. [2] Bhâsya on Ch. Up. III. 14. 2
[3] Sridhara's Bhâvartha Dipika. 1. 7. 6; X. 87, 2

THE NIMBĀRKA SECT

Another of the four recognised Vaishnava sects is that of Nimbārka alias Nimbāditya who traced the origin of his sect to the mythical sages, Sanaka brothers. It is very difficult to assign any precise age to him or give any convincing historical account of his career, because there is no ancient and authentic biography of him nor are any of his books dated, nor do any writers of the sect suggest any clue to his date. A Sanskrit biography of him called *Nimbārka Charita* has been published from the Ukhara and Auranghata monasteries of the sect (Bengal) but it is very recently written on traditions, and contains no account of historical importance. The only material that can help us in suggesting his period are some lists of the names of the Āchāryas of the sect, kept in some monasteries, but all of them are of a later date, and there is no certainty that they are accurate. Again they differ from one another. Sri R.G. Bhāndarkar assigns the death of Nimbārka to about 1162 A.D. calculating from two lists. He says: "This (one of the two lists) contains 37 names. There is another list in manuscript 709 of the collection of 1884-7 which contains 45 names. These two lists agree up to 32 Hari Vyāsa Deva. After then, while the first has only five names and the 2nd has 13 names, and none of these agrees with any of the five, so that after Hari Vyāsa Deva, the line appears to have divided itself into two branches. No.709 of the same collection was written in Sambat 1806 corresponding to 1750 A. D. when Gosvāmi Dāmodara was living. He was the thirty third after Nimbārka in the new branch. The 33rd in succession after Ānanda Tirtha died in 1879 A.D. Ānanda Tirtha himself died in 1276 A.D. So that his thirty-three successors occupied 603 years. Supposing that the thirty-three successors of Nimbārka occupied about the same period and allowing about fifteen years of life to Dāmodara Gosvāmi, who was living in 1750 A. D. and subtracting from 1765 A.D. 603 years, we have 1162, which is about the date of Nimbārka's death".[1] This calculation and view seem open to objection. First the

[1] Vaishnavism etc. p. 62-63

second list, which corresponds to the other list up to 32 Hari Vyāsa Deva, contains 45 names i.e. 13 more names after Hari Vyasa Deva or 12 names continuing from Dāmodara whose death is supposed to have taken place in 1765 A.D. The second text seems to have been dated, according to Sri R. G. Bhāndarkar in 1813 A.D. So he has given 603 years for the first 33 *Āchāryas* or more than 18 years to each and only 48 years to the last 12 *Āchāryas* giving 3 years to each. Secondly he bases his calculation on the date of Ānanda Tirtha's death, but we already observed that he (Ānanda Tirtha Madhva), may have died in 1317 A. D. instead of 1279 as given by Sri R.G. Bhāndarkar. Thirdly the thirty second Āchārya Hari vyasa Deva is the *Prasishya* of Kesava Kashmiri, the 30th *Āchārya'*. The Salimavad Math list[1] or the Anuragavalli list (1696 A.D.) agree to the fact Kesava Kashmir is the 30th *Āchārya*. We know that Kaseva Kasmiri the 30th *Āchārya*, was already a great *Pandit* when he met Sri Chaitanya about 1504 A. D.[2] It is apparent that Dāmodara, the third *Āchārya* from Kesava Kashmiri could not have been alive in 1765 A.D. as Sir R.G. Bhāndarkar assumes.

Manoharadāsa in his *Anurāgavalli* differs from all these lists, which are certainly later than his, in placing Nimbārka among the Āchāryas in the list. The Nimbārkaite lists place Nimbārka first among the Āchāryas and next only to its mythical divine founders but Manoharadāsa puts him in the twenty first place and calls him the disciple of Sravana Bhatta and Guru of Bhuri Bhatta, the 20th and 22nd *Āchāryas* of all the lists, placing Srinivāsa first, but all other lists which are of course later than that of Manoharadāsa, calls Srinivāsa the disciple of Nimbārka, the human founder of the sect. Manoharadāsa tells us that he acquired the list from the headquarters of the Nimbārkiya sect at Mathurā-Vrindāvan. Manoharadāsa was a historian and has given us a short notice of the four sects in his *Anurāgavalli*, which is a historical work of the Gaudiya sect. It is certain that this list (1696. A.D.) is the earliest of all that are now available. If Nimbārka were the

[1] Gaudiya VI.p. 267 [2] C.C. Adi. XVI. Bh. R.K. XII. p. 863

first founder and had written all the books that are attributed to him at the present, Sāyana is expected to have mentioned him or his philosophy in his famous Sarvadarshana Samgraha in which he gives us an account of the philosophical systems of Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vishnusvāmi and others.

We have observed neither Madhva nor Rāmānuja were the first Āchāryas of their respective sects. They were the greatest of all Āchāryas in their respective lines, so their sects have been named after them but their sects are also called the Brahma and Sri Sampradayas after their original leaders respectively. We are not sure whether it was not the case with Nimbārka.

If we credit the *Anurāgavalli* list, we have to admit that Nimbārka preceded only those 8 *Āchāryas* who lived between Nimbārka and Kesava Kashmiri, so if the latter lived in the early 16th century, as he did, Nimbārka may have lived in the last quarter of the 14th century assigning 15 years to each of the 8 intervening *Āchāryas*. If he were earlier than Sāyana Madhva or even Sridharsvāmi, they would have mentioned him or referred to some of his writings, but he was conspicuous by his absence in any literature earlier than the 16th Century. The later Vaishnavas may have placed his name at the head of the list to give him the highest honour; in his Gaura Ganoddesadipika Kavikarnapura also mentions the sect by the name of that of Sanakas, not of Nimbārka, So it seems that Nimbārka was not the original founder. But there is an objection to placing Nimbārka in the 21st place, and Srinivasa at the head of the list, because Śrinivasa is said to have written his Vedānta Kaustubha on the Vedāntasutra following the Vedānta Parijata Bhāsya, which is ascribed to Nimbārka. Therefore Srinivāsa ought to be contemporary of Nimbārka. In this sense the other lists seem right in placing Srinivāsa next to Nimbārka. But it is certain that his sect or philosophy was too unpopular in the period earlier than the 15th or 16th Century. It is also doubtful whether the many books which are now ascribed to him, could actually have been written by him. No earlier writer gives us any

clue to the existence of these books. If we believe in the genuineness of the lists of *Āchāryas* preserved in the Nimbārkiya Maths, we should assign him to the 12th Century allowing 15 years to each of the 28 successive *Āchāryas* who lived between Nimbārka and Kesava Kashmiri, who lived in the 16th Century. Nimbārka calls himself the disciple of the mythical sage Nārada whose Gurus were Sanat Kumaras [1].

Nimbārka's parents were Jagannāth and Sarasvati, a very pious Brahmana couple belonging to the Trailenga order of the south of India, The editor of the Gaudiya tells us that Nimbārka's birth-place is the modern Mungerapattam.[2] According to the current tradition in the sect, Nimbārka was the son of Aruni and Jayanti. He lived his devotional life at a place called Nimbāgrama near Govardhana at Vrindāvan. Sri R.G. Bhāndarkar does not seem right in identifying this Nimbagrama with Nimbapura in the Bellari district.[3] Here at Nimbagrama near Govardhana, he is said to have defeated a great Jain Pandit in a discussion and performed a miracle before him. The Jain had refused to dine with him saying that the Sun had already set and they would not take any food. At this, Nimbārka is said to the have made the Sun appear from the Nimba tree to Jain who then accepted his hospitality.[4] The pious writer believes that his name Nimbārka or Nimbāditya has been derived from his miracle of *Aditya* or *Arka* (Sun) from a Nimba tree, He is also known as Niyamananda and Haripriyāchārya.

He was a great ascetic of the *Tridanda* order. He is said to have been the author of Vedānta Parijata Saurabha on the Vedāntasutra, which he interpreted in the light of Dvaitādvaitavāda. He is believed to be the author of the 1) Gitābhāsya, 2) Sadāchāra Prakāsa, 3) Dasasloki, 4) Savishesha Nirvishesha Sri Sri Krishna Stotra, 5) Prātah Smarana Stotram (or Vedānta Garbhita Stotram) 6) Shrutisiddhantam. 7) Vedānta Tattvabodha and so on.[5] His

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[1] Vedânta Pârijata Bhâsya; I. 3.8. [2] Gaudiya Vol V1. Part 4
[3] Vaishnavism etc. p. 62 [4] Anurâgavalli VIII [5] Notices of the manuscripts of the Salimavad Math. Gaudiya Vol. VI. P. 268, 58.)

immediate successor is believed to be Srinivāsāchārya who is said to have written Vedānta Kaustubha, a Bhāsya on the Vedānta. His another work is Ādhyātma Charitāvali. Nimbārka's Vedānta Pārijata and Srinivāsa's Vedānta Kaustubha have been cited by the sixteenth century writer Kesava Bhatta in his the Vedānta Kaustubha Prabha.[1] Devāchārya is the next important writer in the line. He wrote his Vedānta Siddhānta Jāhnavi, a commentary on the Vedānta and 2) Samksepa Paddati. The next famous writer is Kesava Kashmiri, who is known as "the conqueror of all", (*Digvijayi*) in Bengal and who was singularly defeated by Sri Chaitanya in an intellectual contest. He is said to be the author of 1) Vedānta Kaustubha Prabha, 2) Kramadipika 3) a commentary on the Bhāgavata, 4) Laghu Kesava.[2] A running commentary on the "Vedānta". 6) Bhuchakradigvijaya.[3] Kesava Kashmiri's Parama Guru was Kesava Bhatta but as Kesava was one of the greatest *Pandits* of the day, it is not unreasonable to attribute the authorship of the Vedānta Kaustubha to him. It was through Kesava Kashimiri that the Gaudiyas came in contact with the Nimbārkas. Sri Sanātana Gosvāmi quotes at least 22 verses from Kesava Kramadipika in his Haribhaktivilāsa to suppport his Smriti principles. The next important writer of the sect is Hari Vyāsa Deva, the commentator on Dasasloki. He was a great preacher. One of his disciples, Parasurama, founded the Salimavad Math the present headquarters of the sect. His other disciple Sobhurama established another monastery at Budia.[4] Among the later writers, the most important are 1) Sri Madhva, the author of Parapaksa Girivajra, a Vedānta treatise, 2) Sri Anantarama, the author of Vedāntaratna Manjusa, 3) Sri Purusottma Prasad who wrote Srutyantasuradruma.

The adherents of the Nimbārka School are very few in the south of India. They have got their numerous establishments in Bengal and northern India. Their chief seat is at Salimavad, a few miles from Kisengada in Udaipur. There are innumerable followers of this sect in about Mathurā, Santadāsa Babaji, a Bengali, who was formerly

[1] Aufrect's C.C. p. 384 [2] Bh R.K. XII. [3] Gaudiya. VI. Part. 17. [4] Anuragavalli. VIII.

an advocate of the Calcutta High Court, is the present leader of the Paramartha Math at Vrindavana. There are also prosperous centres in Cuttack, Puri, Bundelkhand, Raniganj, Rajputana and the Punjab. The following is a list of the prominent Maths of this sect n Bengal:

1) Rayapur Rajganj in Burdwan, which is the most ancient of the Maths in Bengal, 2) one at Ukhara near Ondal, 3) Yugal Kisora Math at Ananghata, 4) Vaikunthapura Math at Chaituga near Ghatal in the Midnapur district, 5) Asmanpur Math near Alamdanga in the district of Nadia, 6) Kenduli Math, 7) Lohagunj Math near Ajimganj in Mursidabad. 8) Vinodalala near the Ajimganj Railway station. 9) Vastunagara, near Raniganj on the E.I.Ry. 10) Ulsi Math near Nabharan on the Khulna line of E.B.Ry.

There are striking similarities between the Gaudiyas and the Nimbārkas with regard to their devotional principles, practices, rites, astronomical systems, and so on, Both the sects live side by side in Bengal, Puri, and Vrindāvana and they seem to have influenced each other or developed their devotional ideas on the same principles. The Nimbārka sect cannot be compared in any way with the Gaudiya sect whether in number of adherents or popularity or in the production of literature. They were almost unknown even in the sixteenth century though they could produce several very important works of the literature on the Vedānta. No contemporary sect took notice of them until our Gaudiya Vaishnava writer Manoharadāsa threw some new light on them in the end of the 17th Century.

NIMBĀRKA'S PHILOSOPHY

Nimbārka's teaching derives its origin from the 7th Prapathaka or chapter of the Chandogya Upanisad as found in the form of instruction imparted by the four Sankas the traditional founders of the sect. We should like to sum it up here in the following lines:- 1) The Purānas are taken up as the fifth Veda.[1] 2) The Brahman is the highest and only acknowledged Lord.[2] 3) devotion to whom with firm

[1] VII. 1.4 [2] VII.15. 1

faith (*Sraddhā*) and attachment (*Sraddhā Nisthā*) is praised[1] 4) and to such devotion there is nothing equal or superior[2]. 5) there is an eternal kingdom of God.[3] 6) God is the independent reality.[4] 7) With whom the emancipated souls live in close touch for His personal happiness.[5] 8) God's advent and disappearance take place at his mere will and not in any way as the effect of any causal action[6] 9) devotees are eternal and transcendental[7] 10) it also glorifies the grace of God[8].

Nimbārka's idea of God, souls, and service is also found, in a nutshell, in *Dasasloki*, which is believed to be his own composition, but it is very doubtful. His philosophical system admits of both monism and pluralism at the same time. God is the only independent and indwelling reality of all realities both animate and inanimate who are His integral parts and absolutely depend on Him for their existence[9]. There is one plenary consciousness forming the background and unity of all infinitesimal souls and *Prakrti*, who, being His parts, are always so, and never lose their character on the whole, who is absolute and therefore self-sufficient and self-contained.

Nimbārka's God is personified in Krishna as the Supreme Being of all Existence, Intelligence and Bliss in their infinite degree[10]. He posseses a celestial Body (*Aprākrita*), an abode of all beauty, tenderness, charm, sweetness, and lives in a celestial city (*Vyomapura*) Vraja where Vrisabhānu Nandini Rādhā, Beauty of all beauties, most beloved of all loved ones, attended by Her graces and beauties in the form of Her female friends, serves Krishna most lovingly. 'Krishna, being the only Lord of all lords, receives worship from Brahmanyadeva, Rudra, and other gods. The Brahman Krishna has Vyuhas and Avatāras and on this point Nimbārka, followed Rāmānuja and eventually the Pancharātra Samhitās.

The individual soul are numerous and are regarded as atoms possessing also knowledge and bliss, being the

[1] VII. 19.20.1 [2] VII. 23.1.5 [3] VII. 24.1 [4] VII. 24.2 [5] VII. 25.1 [6] VII. 26.1
[7] VII 26.2 [8] VII. 26.2 [9] Vedânta Pârijâta. II.3-42 [10] Dasasloki Verse I

servitors of Krishna,[1] Because of their smallness, they are liable to be in association with the beginningless *Māyā* of threefold quality who is one of the, powers of God[2] The souls are of three kinds, 1 *Muktas* who are always supremely blissful being in perpetual association with God[3]. They are again of two kinds such as A) Nārada, Visvaksena B) Krishna's flutes, garlands etc., which latter are represented as Personified, 2) *Baddha Mukta* who are freed from the cycle of birth and rebirth by the grace of God. 3) The *Baddha* who are bound or conditioned, and indifferent to God's commands contained in the sacred books, and worship other inferior gods and spend their life and time on worthless things[4]. The relations of *Jivas* to God are clearly shown in his Vedānta Pārijāta Bhāsya.[5] In a word, the soul is different but not separate from God and thus makes a compromise between the two contradictory views of the Upanishads and the Vedānta that Jivas are identical with the *Brahman*[6] and that Jivas are different and distinct from *Brahman*.[7]

According to the third stanza of Dasasloki the inanimate objects are of three kinds, 1) the same which is called *Visuddha Sattva* in the Gaudiya vocabulary viz. the elements forming God's kingdom, garden and all surroundings in *Vyomapura* 2) those that are derived from *Prakriti* as we find this world 3) Time. The first class is not to be confused with matter of the second class.

Nimbārka has taken up the sixfold *Prapatti* and ninefold *Bhakti*. He teaches us to give up all *Karma* for the sake of service of God, resulting in self-surrender to Him. Who is the object of the fivefold relational service, which exhibits specific feelings peculiar to the respective relations. The system as a whole represented in Dasasloki is obviously more or less a replica of the Gaudiya Vaishnava thought, though the latter, in addition, emphasises the separation aspect of divine love. Dasasloki seems to be a later work. The philosophical system and outline of devotional mode

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[1] ibid. verse I [2] Vedânta Pârijata II.3.42; Dasasloki II
[3] Vedânta Parijata Bhâsya II. 3.42, Dasasloki II [4] Dasasloki II. [5] II. 3.42
[6] Ch. Up. VI. 8 7. Brihada Up.VI. 4.5 [7] Vedânta Sutra II.1. 22

of the Nimbārkiya sect seem to be more or less a combination and assimilation, in their own way of Rāmānujiya and Gaudiya Vaishnavite doctrine and tenets respectively. Their devotional conception of love to God as represented in *Dasasloki* seems to be of latter origin and not given by Nimbārka himself.

SRIDHARASVĀMI

Sri Chaitanya paid supreme honour to Sridharasvāmi in acknowledging unquestionable obedience, on account of his commentary on the Bhāgavata, Sri Chaitanya Deva accepted his commentary as the most authentic, and introduced it as such, into his own sect. Vallabha Bhatta or the famous Vallabha Āchārya, with a view to getting credit from Sri Chaitanya submitted to Him his own commentary *Subodhini* on the Bhāgavata for His approval, in which he criticised Sridhara's commentary and found inconsistencies in it to show his scholarship as superior to Sridhara's; but instead of admiring his commentary, Sri Chaitanya Deva gave him a disheartening answer in the following lines "Those who do not obey Svāmi (meaning husband) are counted among the harlots,"[1]. Sri Chaitanya Deva says that He could not bear that anybody should find fault with Sridharasvāmi, He says, "It is only through the grace of Sridhara, world teacher, that we know the meaning of the Bhāgavata". Nobody should accept any book, which evinces hostility to Sridhara. He advised Vallabha-Āchārya to study the Bhāgavata in obedience to Sridhara's commentary and write his books accordingly, if he would expect his books to be accepted in the society.[2] Sri Chaitanya Deva denounced Vallabha Āchārya who repented for his pride, Sri Chaitanya Deva gave His consent to his request that he should be initiated by one of His associates Gadādhara Pandit.[3]

Sri Jiva Gosvāmi not only mentions Sridharasvāmi among those whose writings influenced him in forming the Gaudiya system of philosophy, but calls him the

[1] C.C. Antya VII, III. [2] C.C.Antya VIII [3] ibid. 148-167

defender of *Bhakti*, in the beginning of his Kramasandarbha which is the further elaboration of Sridhara's commentary. Another authentic writer of the Gaudiya sect Sri Visvanath Chakravarti offer's allegiance to Sridhara at the outset of his commentary, Sārāthadarsini on the Bhāgavata. Sri Rūpa Gosvāmi also quotes several Slokas from Sridhara and his God-brother Lakshmidhara in his Padyavali. It is therefore quite obvious that Sridhara's writings greatly influenced the Gaudiya thought.

It is difficult to say with certainty to which Vaishnava sect be belonged. He says of himself at the end of the commentary Suvodhini on the Gitā that he was a *Sannyāsi* (*Yati*) and disciple of Paramānanda. He further pays his homage to his Guru, at the end of his Bhāvarthadipika on the Bhāgavata, in which he supremely eulogizes *Tridandi Sannyās* evidently in preference to *Ekadanda*.[1] He may have been a *Tridandi Sannyāsi* instead of an *Ekadandi*. As Tridandi Sannyās has been adopted in the Vishnusvāmi, Rāmānujiya and and Nimbārkiya sects and *Ekadandi* in the Madhva Sect (and also in the Sankarite sect), he must have belonged to one of the first named sects. In the very beginning of his commentary Bhāvārthadipika on the Bhāgavata, he salutes Nrisimha. Next he says that according to the rule of his *Sampradaya* or sect and custom of his predecessors, he should make obeisance to Madhava and Umadhava (Rudra) who are almost identical with and dear to each other (*"Parasparatma"*, *"Parasparanatipriyā"*)

We know that the Vishnusvāmins accept Rudra as the first Āchārya of the sect, the official deity of which is Nrisimha. He therefore may have belonged to the Vishnusvāmi sect. Sridhara also wrote a poem called *Vraja Vihara* dealing with love of Krishna and the Gopis. Rūpa Gosvāmi has called several such verses of Sridhara in his Padyavali. We know that from before the time of Vilvamangala, the Krishna Gopi cult was introduced into the Vishnusvāmi sect. But Rāmānujiya adheres to Lakshmi Nārāyan and similar deities from which it seems that Sridhara may have belonged to Vishnusvāmi sect.

[1] Pujyataman Tridandivesham; XI.18.28

There is nevertheless some difficulty in establishing his position. The Vallabhi's though identified with the Visnusvāmi sect, are hostile to Sridhara. Vallabha flourished in the 16th Century whereas Sridhara lived in the 14th Century' and the Vishnusvāmi sect was established long before. Vallabba was at first the disciple of Gadādhara Pandita of the Chaitanya sect. His son Viththala separated his sect from the Gaudiyas and identified themselves with the Vishnusvāmi sect. It is a fact that Sridhara was an ascetic but Vallabhi Gurus are householders and indulge in pleasures and enjoyment. The Vallabhi sect is not direct continuation of Vishnusvāmi sect, but a branch of it, so that it might differ from Sridhara or from the main line.

The second objection to identifying him with the Vishnusvāmi, sect is that M.M.H P Shastri has drawn our attention to Sridhara sect is that Swami's "*Dvaita Nirnaya*" in the following lines of his report on the research for Sanskrit manuscripts (1901, 1902-1905-1906. P.16) The commentator of the Bhāgavata and others (Sridhara) is known to have been a follower of Shankara's non-dual theory but his *Dvaita Nirnaya* deposited at Nimapada in the district of Puri (Orissa) shows that in his advanced state, he gave up non-dual theory and adopted the dual theory. The general belief that he was a Sankarite non-dualist, which the great Pandit has referred to, has no justification. The *Suddhadvaita* system of the Visnusvāmi sect has been misunderstood as the *Kevalādvaitavāda* of Shankara. We do not find any clue to justify us in calling Sridhara a Sankarite *Māyāvadi*. Sridhara criticises Shankara's *Māyāvadism* throughout his writings which are the Bhāvārthadipikā, the commentary of the Bhāgavata, the Suvodhini, the commentary on the Gitā, and the Ātmaprakāsa, that on the Vishnupurāna. He accepted *Pancharātra*[1] while Shankara was hostile to it. We have no reason to believe that Sridhara was a Sankarite *Sannyāsi* or follower.

His *Dvaita Nirnaya* is a treatise on the *Dvaita* system of philosophy, of which Sri Madhva is the official founder.

[1] Bhavarthadipika 1.3.8

It may be that Sridhara was influenced by Madhva's system. There is no fundamental difference between the four Vaishnava sects with regard to the relation of God to *Jiva* and the world. In every Vaishnavite system, the difference between God and individuals has been emphasised, and they did so in varying degrees and form different points of view, but the ultimate object that God has personality and the *Jivas* can serve him in fellowship after attaining *Mukti* keeping up the distinctions, is common to all sects. As Vishnusvāmi was the oldest of all *Āchāryas*, his sect was likely to be influenced by the later Vaishnava sects. Madhva died in 1317 A.D. and was followed by a series of very strong exponents of the *Dvaita* system. Sridhara possibly flourished in the latter part of the 14th century and may have been influenced by the Madhva sect without having belonged to it. His distinct reference to the fact that "according to the rule of my sect and the custom of my predecessors I am devoted to Nrisimha, and bow to Madhava and Umadhava (Rudra) who are almost identical with and dear to each other" seems to establish that he was a Vishnusvāmi Vaishnava. Nrisimha and Rudra are not accepted in any way in which Sridhara did, in any Vaishnava sect except that of Vishnusvāmi.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF BENGAL IN THE 15TH CENTURY AND MADHAVENDRA PURI, THE PREDECESSOR OF SRI CHAITANYA

After the defeat of Lakshmana Sena at the hands of the Mohammedans, the political importance of Navadvipa receded into the background. The deserted city was later on created the seat of a Kazi who was appointed to govern it. Navadvipa had meanwhile, become the famous university town. After the demolition and ruin of the famous Buddhist monasteries of Nalanda, Vikramasila and Uddhantapuri by the Mohammedans the renaissance of Hindu culture and education dawned and developed in Navadvipa. The new system of logic called *Navyanyāya* was founded by Bengali scholars of keen intellect. Logical reasoning reached its formal perfection in this system. Both students and professors flocked to Navadvipa from distant Benares, Punjab, Kashmir and other places of learning, to study logic and give finishing touch to their education. Hundreds of *Tols* (Sanskrit academics) were set up in Navadvipa with hundreds of professors and scholars. Navadvipa became like the university towns of Oxford and Cambridge. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata gives us a glowing description of the flourishing condition of Hindu learning and culture of the Navadvipa of that day[1]. "One's education unless one studied in Navadvipa, was never complete. It was the fashion of the day to study in Navadvipa".

[1] C.Bh. Adi I.57

But there was one serious defect in this sort of intellectual life, that of a Godless education. *Navyanyāya* is skeptical it interprets even the devotional books like the Bhāgavata not in the light, of faith, but, in a skeptical way, to destroy, all faith in God. *Shastras*, both secular and spiritual were read and studied with great assiduity. Pandits took the greatest possible delight in controversial disputations with one another. The only ambition of a scholar was to defeat his rivals at the open meeting by the subtle logic of *Navyanyāya*. They employed this new science, of reasoning the misrepresentation of the scriptures for their sordid ends. The excessive culture of such polemical art of argumentation made them arrogant. The educated were either sceptical or pantheistic. They never uttered the name of God, a very few did it only on rare occasions. The intellectual vanity, coupled with material prosperity made Navadvipa a hot bed of atheism.

The merchant classes were very rich; the town being situated at the confluence of the Ganges and Jalangi, and also being close to the very prosperous commercial centres, Triveni and Saptagrama it was naturally an important place of commerce and trade. There lived in large numbers the *Tantis* (weavers), and *Shankhavanikas* (dealers in conch and shell), – *Gandhavanikas* (perfumers and dealers in spices), *Tāmbulis* (who deal in betel leaves and nuts) and other commercial castes. They were inclined to the worship of the *Tantrika* gods and goddesses Visahari, Mongal Ghandi and such-like. Their religion was to sit up whole nights over songs of these *Tantrika* spirits. Some worshipped semi-Buddhistic goddesses like Vasuli, Aparājita, etc. The vestige of Buddhistic worship was still extant in Bengal, among the uneducated merchant classes. Others worshipped *Yaksha*, the god of wealth, with liquor and meat.[1] They passed their time in devilish dances, shouting and laughing. The religion of the masses was changed into vulgar superstition and gross sensual enjoyments. They squandered away their riches in making grand dolls for worship and show and on the marriages of

[1] C.Bh. Adi II

their children. Some rich Bengalees until very recently spent immense sums of money on the funny marriages of pet animals cats and monkeys and were very proud of clumsy vanities. These were the religious practices prevalent in Bengal before the Birth of Sri Chaitanya. These merchants and *Tantrikas* spent the whole night in *Bachanalian* revels, which were the fashionable worship of the day. The liquor was drunk by way of religious ceremonies and various domestic animals were unscrupulously killed.

Navadvipa was then thronged by a vast number of pseudo-ascetics. They were engaged in abstract contemplation by the riverside. Vile motives were hidden beneath their apparent asceticism. They sat ostensibly for the purpose of meditation, under the trees planted on the river-side bathing places, in order to obtain a glimpse of the naked beauty of females bathing in the river. They haunted the temples only to cast their lustful glance upon the women who frequented the places of worship to offer their devotion to the deities. The utmost license was found to prevail among the religionists of Bengal in the 15th Century. Some of them practised very severe asceticism in manifold form, which were sometimes of a brutal character, such as horrible mutilations; but they failed, to achieve the conquest of the flesh and ultimately fell headlong into gross sensuality. Many *Tantrika Sannyāsins* cultivated their five *Makaras*. Many people were lured into the devilish worship of *Tantrika* goddesses.[1]

Atheism combined with shrewd hypocrisy gave rise to apotheotic movements at this period, particularly in Rada and east Bengal. Many declared themselves to be gods Raghunath, Gopala, Nārāyana and ordered their disciples to sing their names. They committed atrocious sins under the veil of religion. Selfishness and immoral design were behind this development.[2]

The henotheistic worship of the five gods (*Panchopasana*) was also prevalent in Bengal. These gods

[1] Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nâtaka act II. [2] C. Bh. Adi XIV. 82-87

or goddesses were worshipped with elaborate ceremonies. The worship consisted in offering food, cloths and other luxuries to images of particular gods whom they worshipped, on particular occasions, for short periods. The images of these gods and goddesses made usually of hay and clay, were invoked by means of some vocal formulae by which the inanimate beings were supposed to become alive. The images were in the end thrown into the water. The purpose of this worship was to concentrate the inconceivable absolute in a finite form, which was otherwise impossible, and ultimately believed to become identified with the object of their worship. They believed that there is only one reality which is infinite and absolute. The individual identities of the worshippers are like mere illusory bubbles on the surface of the water, which are required to mingle in the stream, In other words, they desired to be finally absorbed in the universe of Being which is one and formless. To know God is to merge in it. It is not possible to conceive the infinite at the present stage of our being, so the henotheists, to conceive inconceivable in order to be fused with the latter, give the formless Absolute a temporary form which is required to be ultimately ignored; because, in truth, there is but one formless Brahman. Henotheism is a curious method of destroying the form of the individual by putting the formless infinite, into a false form given by the created being to one that is eternal, infinite and absolute. The henotheist worships any of the five forms knowing them to be false, only to consign them to the watery grave. To know nothing is neither knowledge nor ignorance which henotheists strive to conceive and attain. It is no knowledge because it is not possible for knowledge to exist without subject and object, which lose their respective character in henotheistic prospect of worship. To attain a state, which provides no thought, is the henotheistic knowledge. If it be can called so at all, or if it conveys any meaning, knowledge, worship, devotion and so on, are always relative terms and so meaningless if they are stripped of their subject and object. It cannot be called ignorance according

to the henotheistic view because only so long as one perceives oneself to be anything, one is in ignorance. So they are neither ignorant nor learned because to learn anything is nearer to ignorance. They are either beyond or under the two possibilities Knowledge and Ignorance. These forms of worship is the extreme development of Shankara's idea of worship. The five gods of this henotheistic worship otherwise called *Panchopasāna*, are the following: the Sungod, Ganesha, Rudra, Shakti and Vishnu (different from Krishna-Vishnu). It is different from theism the purpose of *Panchopasāna* is either pray for some worldly or heavenly gain or primarily to merge in the object of their worship. This mode of worship was practised mainly by and confined to the Brahmana and the wealthy classes of Bengali society. To the ego-centric *Pandits*, there was no religion whatsoever. The 'religion' of devotion seemed perfectly useless to the *Māyāvadin* ascetics. Life ceased to be real to them. Negation was the only fact-the rest, dream. The general populace worshipped the petty gods of sacrifices in verity they had no religion. Superstitious fears and gross sensual enjoyment took the form of religion of Bengal. In short, the religious atmosphere of Bengal during the 15th Century was heavy with the fog of labyrinthine intellectual atheism superstitions, doubts hypocrisy, pessimism and gross *Tantrika* cults.

Fortunately some pious Vaishnavas were shedding their light around Advaita in the later part of the 15th Century. They were the disciples of the famous Mādhavendra Puri who is, really the founder of the pre-Chaitanya Movement. In spite of the prevalence of atheism and false religions in Bengal we find a great personality appearing at that time. Sri Mādhavendra Puri who was solely responsible for starting the Vaishnava movement, which was subsequently taken up by Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabu. Mādhavendra Puri cult was the actual predecessor and forerunner of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's Vaishnavism. It was his disciples Advaita and others who actually founded the small Vaishnava society a little before or about the time of Sri

Chaitanya Deva's Birth and accepted the latter as their leader and God and worked under Him, identifying themselves as his faithful followers. It will not be out of immediate place to give a short notice of Mādhavendra Puri, the immediate fore runner of Sri Chaitanyaism.

MĀDHAVENDRA PURI

Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's burning but tender love-in-separation of God finds its counterpart in the *Bhramaragitā*[1] *Mahishigitā*[2], some *slokas* of the 49th chapter of the tenth canto of the Bhāgavata, and also in Vilvamangala's *Krisnakarnamrita*, Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda*, in the poems of Vidyāpati and Chandidasa, and also in some scattered *Slokas* by an unknown author or authors, which Rūpa Gosvāmi has collected in his *Padyavali*. But the distinctive note of his mood is traceable in embryo to a single *Sloka* of his grand preceptor Sri Mādhavendra Puri. Sri Chaitanya Dev very often uttered it in the fullness of his devotional heart *"Ayi dinadayārdranatha! he Mathurānātha! kadā avalokyase?Hridayam tvadlokakataram dayita bhrāmyati kim karoniyaham?"*

"O compassionate Lord of the poor and humble. O the Lord of Mathurā! When Shall I behold Thee? Thy absence has made my afflicted heart ache beyond endurance O my Lord! What shall I do?" What a heart-rending pathos for a single glimpse of the Lord of divine love is vividly expressed in this simple couplet. It was the pathetic cry of Rādhā for Krishna who had left her alone for some time in Vrindavan. Sri Krishnadāsa Kavirāj says, that as the diamond Kaustubha is most precious amongst all rare and valuable gems so this couplet is invaluable in the whole treasury of poetry. Its intoxicating flavour of which Rādhā once drank deeply, caused emotion to pass through the devotional heart of Mādhavendra. Sri Chaitanya Deva revealed its sweetness to mortals. No person in this human world could otherwise know the taste of it.[3] It breathed its magic upon the heart of Sri Chaitanya. He could not resist

[1] Bhāgavata X. 90, 15-24 [2] Bh. X. 30 [3] C.C. Madhya IV. 193-195.

the overwhelming influence of its pathos so he simply fainted whenever it was recited to Him.

Krishnadāsa Kavirāj and other Vaishnava writers described Mādhavendra as the seed of *Bhakti* and Sri Chaitanya Dev as the trunk and cultivator of its tree.[1] Mādhavendra Puri belonged to the Madhva sect but his emotional devotion so conspicuous by its absence in the said sect, was traceable only among those who were somehow or other connected with the great personality of Mādhavendra Puri whose supreme contribution to mellowness of devotion has distinguished the Bengal Vaishnavas from other all Indian religionists. Mādhavendra Puri disciples, Sri Ranga Puri of Pandarpura and the Sanodia Brahmanas of Mathurā whom Sri Chaitanya Deva met in their respective places, discovered their common preceptorial connection only from the psychological expression of Sri Chaitanya Deva's emotional cry and trance, which singularized Mādhavendra Puri's devotion. Sri Chaitanya Deva asked the latter when and from whom he had got the treasure of this particular flavour of ecstatic love of God. The old Brahmana gave out all particulars about his spiritual relationship with Mādhavendra Puri to whom the Sri Chaitanya movement owes both the devotional principle and the history of its society as its immediate background. Mādhavendra Puri was the disciple of Lakshmipati Tirtha of the Madhva sect. We know from Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's discussion with the Madhva leader of Udupi that the Madhva Vaishnavas were then no better than the *Karmins* and *Jnānins* (not Sankarite *Jnanins*). Mādhavendra introduced the mood of love- in-separation of God (*Viraha Sringara*) which turned the dust of the very common place religion into a golden haze. Sri Chaitanya Deva shaped it into the perfect and beautiful form of his fervent longing for the God of All Love. This branch of the Madhva sect is distinguished by its ecstatic love of God in contrast to *Karma* and non-pantheistic *Jnāna*, which characterised the then main branch of Udupi, and has become known as the Madhva-Gaudiya sect. What

[1] C.C. Adi XI. 10-12

had existed simply in books was beginning to be offered in the daily lives of the Bengal Vaishnavas.

Mādhavendra Puri's intense feeling for God was best expressed on his deathbed, when he most pathetically wept, saying "O God! I would not behold Thee! I could not reach Mathurā!" Rāmāchandra Puri, his false disciple, seeing him in this plight, longing for God's presence, told him, "O master, Thou art *Brahmānanda* par excellence. Thou shouldst think of self as such. Why and what, being the full Brahman, dost thou cry for?" He mistook his devotional heart for a *Māyāvadin's*. His officiousness very much wounded Madhavendra Puri's broken heart and so much irritated him that he rebuked him saying, "Be off, be off, I could not receive Krishna's grace. I could not attain Mathurā. I have become restless, being over whelmed with grief for Krishna's sake. You have come to aggravate my already afflicted heart. Don't show me your face. Go away, wherever you like. If I died in your presence, I should go to hell. I am burning with pain for not seeing God. What a fool you are! You have come to teach me how to sink into the bleak vacuum of negative Brahman". The annihilation of self identity in the embrace of universal consciousness of Brahman was no attraction for Mādhavendra who was mad with love for the personal God Krishna. [1]

His most faithful disciple was Isvara Puri, the preceptor of Sri Ghaitanya Deva. He was his constant attendant till the last days of his life and served him very affectionately during his last illness, doing all menial work. Mādhavendra Puri was extremely grateful for his service and devotion and blessed him saying, "May Krishna be the treasure sought by your love." He breathed his last reciting the very Sloka beginning with *"Ayi Dina Dayārdranātha"*. The great ascetic Āchārya passed away before Sri Chaitanya could meet him. He heard all about his life and devotion from his preceptor Isvara Puri.

Mādhavendra was a very influential leader of the movement. His religious supremacy and hold over the

[1] C.C.AntyaVIII. 18-23

people were recognised throughout the country from west to east, He began the restoration work of Vrindāvana but it was fully carried out by Sri Chaitanya Deva's followers Rūpa and Sanātana. Many miraculous stories are told of his devotional life in connection with many of the principal shrines of northern and eastern India.

He passed most of his life in Vrindāvana and Orissa where his hallowed memory is still greatly honoured. He wandered from grove to grove in Vrindāvan, remembering the divine pastimes of Rādhā and Krishna and fainted in his ecstasy. It is said that he was ordained in a vision and dream to restore the Srimurti of Gopala, then hidden in a jungle, and install it on the top of the Govardhana hillock. Early next morning, he made it known to the villages who under his guidance, cut through the thick jungle and made an entrance to the grove and found to their great wonder the beautiful Srimurti of the Boy-Krishna lying underneath. It was removed to the hill top and duly set up with great pomp and reverence. He issued an appeal to the people to arrange a grand festival called Govardhana Puja or Annakuta in honour of the occasion. His wish was promptly complied with, and all the people of the surrounding and even of the far-off villages came with their offerings with which the innumerable varieties of food were prepared on a grand scale and heaped like hillocks before the Deity. This ceremony of offering of the peak of food to the Boy-Krishna Gopala, originally instituted by Mādhavendra Puri more than four centuries and a half ago, has now become one of the most important festivals of the Vaishnavas throughout India. In Bengal Sri Gaudiya Math of Culcutta performs this celebration every year on a very grand scale. More than two thousand varieties of food both cooked and sweets are made with great skill and offered to the deities and kept in heaps in the very spacious hall in front of the temple, for public view. It is really a beautiful exhibition of the art of cookery.

The whole populace flocked to the newly installed Deity and wondered at the spiritual power of Mādhavendra Puri. Mathurā was then a very prosperous city. The rich

merchants sent costly offerings of gold, silver, cloths etc. One rich *Kshatriya* built a temple for Gopal at his own cost someone else built the kitchen, and another the walls. The inhabitants of Vraja each presented a cow so that the deity received ten thousand cows.[1] This big establishment was founded for the daily worship of Gopala by the destitute ascetic Mādhavendra Puri. He was held in high esteem in the circle of Mathurā. Two Bengali ascetic Brahmanas came to this new temple and became Madhavendra Puri's disciples. They eventually settled there and took charge of the service of the temple. Thus originated the influence of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas in Vrindāvan-Govardhana. Later on the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters of Vrindāvan put Viththala, son of Vallabba Āchārya in charge of the Deity and temple. At the end of two years stay in the new temple he came to Orissa. The principal temples of Orissa-the Gopinatha temple of Remuna, the Jagannāth temple of Puri and so on came under his religious influence. Each of these temples still maintains some sort of supernatural story bearing on the special favour of its deity towards the great Madhavendra Puri.

According to the monastic custom of the day, he made an extensive tour throughout India on pilgrimage. Nityānanda, during his tour on the same mission, happened to meet him in the west of India. Nityānanda went to Puri via Rāmeswaram while Mādhavendra Puri continued his journey in the opposite direction towards Ayodhya. Several disciples of his, such as Isvara Puri the future Guru of Sri Chaitanya Deva and Brahmananda Puri were with him on his tour.[2] Nityānanda went to Vrindāvana and thence arrived at Navadvipa to join Sri Chaitanya Deva who had already begun His mission in earnest. Mādhavendra Puri shortly completed the journey and reached Vrindāvana as if to breathe his last before his God Gopāla.

The burning pang of separation from God made Mādhavendra Puri almost mad, a constant flow of tears would stream down his cheeks and breast. His weeping

[1] C.C. Madhya IV. 102 [2] C.Bh.Adi IX.168

and restlessness for Krishna and forgetfulness of the world are the special characteristics of his stainless life.

In Bengal almost all the cultured Vaishnavas who formed the group of their own before Sri Chaitanya Deva, were all disciples of Mādhavendra Puri. Paramānanda Puri was one of his principal disciples of the province of Bihar. Sri Chaitanya Deva met him in the south at Rishavaparvat. He then wholeheartedly joined the Chaitanya movement and became Sri Chaitanya Deva's very favourite and confidential associate like Svarūpa Dāmodara and lived with Him at Puri. Many other disciples of Mādhavendra Puri gathered round Sri Chaitanya Dev and helped Him in the execution of His mission. The following among others deserve mention: Brahmānanda Puri, Vishnupuri, Kesava Puri, Krishnānada Puri, Nrisimha Tirtha, Sukhananda Puri, and so on. Sri Advaita became his disciple on his way to Puri. Another outstanding figure of the movement was Pundarika Vidyanidhi of Chittagong who had also been graced by Madhavendra Puri. In short all the Vaishnavas of the circle and of Kshetramandala (Puri) and of Bengal were connected somehow or other with the great personality of Mādhavendra Puri.

ACTIVITIES OF THE DISCIPLES OF MĀDHAVENDRA PURI IN BENGAL

A few disciple of Mādhavendra Puri, headed by Sri Advaita formed themselves into a group for the cultivation of Vaishnavism. They came to Navadvipa from Sylhet, Chittagong a few from Jessore while the rest were the residents of Navadvipa and its neighborhood. Sri Advaita was the recognised leader of the group. He was a reputed scholar of the day and had a Sanskrit Tol (academy). Srivasa and his three brothers were the earliest colleagues of Advaita. Isvara Puri used to meet them occasionally. Nandanāchārya, Chandrasekharāchārya, Vāsudeva Datta and others were also important members. Sri Chaitanya Dev's elder brother Visvarūpa was the constant companion of Advaita. He next renounced the world, accepting *Sannyās*, and left Navadvipa forever. His *Sannyās* name

was Shankāraranya Puri and he left this world while he was at Pandarpur in the west of India. Another conspicuous figure of the small group was Thākur Haridās, the Mohammedan convert and friend of Advaita. Srivasa's house was the meeting place of them all. The Vaishnavas used to read the Bhāgavata and the Gitā, and interpreted them in the light Bhakti. They introduced the congregational chanting of the Name of Krishna as the best means of worshipping God. Their morality, enduring humility and devotional fervour were a great contrast to the religious callousness of the non-and anti Vaishnava communities of Navadvipa. They could not appreciate and tolerate what Vaishnavas practised among themselves. This small Vaishnava group became the subject of severe persecution and had to struggle for their very existence. Some of them like Thākur Haridās had to suffer terribly at the hands of the Mohammedan rulers. These Vaishnavas also had to run the gauntlet of their merciless Hindu critics. The anti-Vaishnavas took a fiendish delight in flinging mud at them. They were reckless and vulgar in their speech and towards this small Vaishnava group, because they innovated a new type of devotional practice, which consisted in the emotional singing of God's Name and Glory with music and dance. The anti-Vaishnavas of Navadvipa firmly determined to spare no pains however shameful, to suppress the movement of Advaita. They felt no compunction of conscience, not only to charge them with false allegations of sins and absurdities, in the form of writing ballads, but actually sued them in the Mohammedan Kazi's court in order to stop the movement and blindly believed that the congregational chanting and singing of the Name of God would anger the Most High (Who is believed to sleep in quiet during the period from the *Sayana Ekādasi* to *Utthāna Ekādasi*, from August to November) who retaliate, cause country to suffer natural calamities such as famine, earth-quake, plague, etc. They also believed, and reason to beheve, that anti-Hindu rulers of the country would wreak vengeance upon them all for the active propaganda of the Vaishnava movement. The

rulers were also fanatical in the extreme, and could not bear that any other religion should flourish in the country. Vaishnavas had to fight against these Hindus and the Mohammedans alike. The anti-Vaishnavas determined to demolish and throw the residence of Srivasa in the river.[1] It is a wonder how they bore up under such enormous difficulties and hostile opposition, till Sri Chaitanya Dev assumed its leadership and turned the tables on its favour. The small group of Vaishnavas simply invoked God in their distress to come down and set right the irreligious society. Bengal was then intolerable for them to live in. It is pleasing to note that these few enduring Vaishnavas were able to continue the movement, however feebly, until Sri Chaitanya Dev turned Vaishnava and relieved them of all anxieties by assuming its leadership. He turned it into a gigantic movement in a very short time, as if by the touch of a magic wand. All the members of the earlier Vaishnava group accepted Him, not only as their leader but also as God, and served Him with unflinching faith and sincerity. It must be admitted that as Yamunāchārya paved the way for Rāmānuja and Achyutapreksa for Madhva, so did Madhavendra for Sri Chaitanya Deva. Sri Advaita and Srivasa deserve our affectionate admiration for their faithful service to the movement from Sri Chaitanya and even after Him. We shall deal with their lives later on.

[1] C. Bh. Madhya II. 225-238

[illegible] were also fanatical in the extreme, and could not bear that any other religion should flourish in the country. Vaishnavas had to fight against these Hindus and the Muhammedans alike. The anti-Vaishnavas determined to demolish and throw the residence of Suvasa in the river. It is a wonder how they bore up under such enormous difficulties and hostile opposition. Sri Chaitanya Dev assumed its leadership and turned the tables on his favour. The small group of Vaishnavas simply involved God in their distress to come down and set right the irreligious society. Life was then intolerable for them to live in. It is pleasing to note that these few enduring Vaishnavas were able to continue the movement, however feebly, until Sri Chaitanya Dev turned Vaishnava and relieved them of all anxieties by assuming its leadership. He turned it into a gigantic movement in a very short time, as if by the touch of a magic wand. All the members of the earlier Vaishnava group accepted Him, not only as their leader but also as God, and served Him with unflinching faith and sincerity. It must be admitted that as Vaishnacharya paved the way for Nityananda and Advaitacharya for Madhvacharya so did Madhvacharya for Sri Chaitanya Deva. Sri Advaita and Suvasa deserve our affectionate admiration for their national service to the movement from Sri Chaitanya and even after Him. We shall deal with their lives later on.

[illegible]

[illegible] Madhya 11. 225-238.

CHAPTER SIX

BIOGRAPHIES OF SRI CHAITANYA

Several biographies of Sri Chaitanya were written in Sanskrit and Bengali and also in vernacular of Orissa. The two Sanskrit biographies, namely Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya by His very friend and life - long follower Murāri Gupta and other one by Paramānanda Kavikarnapura and the first Bengali biography Chaitanya Bhāgavata by Vrindāvanadāsa Thākur were the pioneer works which has been used by Krishnadāsa Kavirāj and Lochanadāsa in their respective narratives. The dairies and memories of Sri Chaitanya's constant companions and attendants, Svarūpa Dāmodara and Raghunathdāsa Gosvāmi have been accepted as the main source of material in regard to the latter part of His life. All the authentic biographers Vrindāvanadās, Krishnadās, Lochonodāsa were the direct disciples of Sri Chaitanya's favourite followers and associates who lived and moved with Him and participated in His activities, the biographers also obtained the materials from their mouths.

Besides, there exists a good deal of *Stotra* literature such as Sri Chaitanya Chandramrita by Prabadhananda Sarasvati, Sri Chaitanyastaka by Vasudeva Sarvabhauma, Sri Chaitanyastaka by Rūpa Gosvami, Sri Chaitanya Kalpavriksa by Raghunathdās Gosvāmi, and Sri Chandradaya Nātaka by Kavikarnapura have been written in praise of Him, glorifying His Life and Activities. The Bengali poems of Narahari Sarkar, Vāsudeva Ghosh and so on, also give us some historical facts of His Life. Nityānandadās in his Premavilāsa, and the eighteenth

century Narahari Chakravarti in his Bhaktiratnakara and others supply us with additional information. From these we can gather a fairly clear idea of the Life, Activities and Teachings of Sri Chaitanya Deva. We have decided to notice His earlier biographies together with a short biographical account of their authors. We should also mention other works of these authors in this connection.

SRI CHAITANYA CHARITA MAHĀKĀVYA BY MURĀRI GUPTA

The earliest of all biographies is Murāri Gupta's Sri Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya written in Sanskrit. Murāri was born in Sylhet[1] and came to Navadvipa to study and subsequently settled down there with a view to living on the holy Ganges (Bhāgirathi) and inaugurated the medical profession of his caste. We find Sri Chaitanya Deva teasing Murāri in the Sanskrit academy of Gangādāsa at Navadvipa where both were fellow students. Murāri Gupta was a good scholar in Sanskrit. Sri Chaitanya could not beat him at the school.[2] Dr. D. C. Sen has assigned his birth to 1471 A.D.[3], which would make him at least 15 years older than Sri Chaitanya Deva. In which case Murari would not have studied grammar under one so much younger than himself, or played with him.[4] In sanskrit learning grammar is the first thing to master before any particular branch such as Kāvya, Darshana and so on, is taken up. As Sri Chaitanya and Murāri were fellow students at the same school, the difference in their age canot be as great as Dr. Sen suggested. Murāri was at first the friend and later on the most devoted follower of Sri Chaitanya Deva whom he regarded as his divine Master, identifying Him with God Rāma Chandra whose devotion appealed to him most to his heart. He used to worship Sri Chaitanya Deva with the prayer and *Mantra* of Rāma. As Rāma was pleased with Hanuman, so Sri Chaitanya was affectionate towards Murāri[5]. Finding unflinching faith and devotion to Rāma in Murāri, Sri Chaitanya Deva tattooed the name of Rāma on his forehead.

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[1] C.Bh. Adi II. 35 [2] C.Bh.Adi X.21-35 [3] C & A. p. 108 [4] C.Bh Adi. X.
[5] C.Bh. Madhya III.19

Murāri's intense love and devotion to Rāma may be appreciated from the following story. Once Sri Chaitanya tempted him to be devoted him to Rādhā Krishna in the sentiment of maidenly love which is more charming than the sentiment of servitude for Rāma Chandra, extolling the love for Krishna[1] Gupta said "I am thy servant. I must do what Thou bidst me. I am absolutely dependent on Thee." But Murāri had no peace of mind thinking that he should have to give up his devotion to Rāma and restlessly passed the night crying "How can I leave the lotus-feet of Raghunāth (Rāma)? Kill me to-night, O Lord!" His personal fascination was for devotion to Rāmachandra, the Divine Master, in preference to Krishna, the Divine Lover; but the bidding of Sri Chaitanya in whom he used to see the vision of his God Rāma, on the contrary, was too precious to be disobeyed. Early in the morning he ran to Sri Chaitanya and cried clasping his feet, "I have given up myself at the feet of Raghunāth. I cannot withdraw. It is too painful to do so, but your command will be disobeyed and I am helpless." Both the alternatives were equally imperative to him. Now he said to Sri Chaitanya; "Have pity on me, O kind Master. Let me die before Thee, so that this dilemma may end". At this Sri Chaitanya embraced him affectionately and said, "Good, good, Gupta, deep is your devotion. Even my words have not shaken it. Such devotion to the feet of the Master is welcome. I urged you to leave Rāma only to test the intensity of your devotion. You are Hanuman himself. Why should you leave the lotus feet of Rāma? It is Murāri Gupta and Anupama Vallabha, younger brother of Rūpa and Sanātana, who preferred Rāma to Krishna as the God of their devotion among the whole community of the followers of Sri Chaitanya. Murāri is believed to have seen the personality of Rāma in Chaitanya. He used to place Sri Chaitanya on his shoulders as Hanumana and Garuda did Rāma and Nārāyana respectively. Murāri's sentiment for Sri Chaitanya is best expressed in the following prayer of his on the great occasion of what is known as *Sapta Paharia Bhāva*[2].

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[1] C. Bh. Madhya XV. 138-143 [2] C.Bh. Madhya X. 20-24

"I do not covet anything except that I could sing Thy glory. I do not mind where I am born again, if could bear Thy memory. May I live with them who are Thy servants at every birth. Be graciously pleased to promise not to cast me away in a place where there is no sentiment that "Thou art the Master and I am Thy servant. May I be Thy servant at every place where Thou makest Thy appearance with Thy entourage". Sri Chaitanya is said to have revealed His divinity of *Varaha Avatara* to him in his house.[1]

Murāri's love and affection for Sri Chaitanya was so intense that he made up his mind to kill himself while Sri Chaitanya was still alive lest he should survive him to mourn his death which would be too painful and heart-rending to bear. But lucklily Sri Chaitanya saved him in time from the attempted suicide.[2] Dr. D.C. Sen is not correct in saying that "on hearing the news of his resolution to take Sannyās, Murāri attempted to commit suicide[3]. Murāri was one of the Most faithful follower of Sri Chaitanya and took part in every act and means which Sri Chaitanya adopted to further His mission. We find him acting with Haridās in the theatrical drama at the house of Chandra Sakhara, and dancing in the *Kirtana* procession to chastise the inimical Kazi. Murāri wept like a child lying in the courtyard when Sri Chaitanya took *Sannyās*.[4]

Murāri Gupta was a typical Vaishnava displaying extreme humility, which as Sri Chaitanya said, would break His heart. When Murāri met Sri Chaitanya at Puri for the first time after the latter's *Sannyās*, he presented himself holding two blades of grass between his teeth as a mark of Vaishnava-humility, and when Sri Chaitanya was about to greet him with an embrace, he shrank back saying "Touch me not, my Lord, I am a sinner, my body is not worthy of your touch". Sri Chaitanya replied "Away with your humility at the very sight of which my heart bleeds"[5] Krishnadās Kavirāj, has nicely drawn his character briefly in the following passage: - "Sri Murāri Gupta is the store-

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[1] C Bh. Madhya III.18 [2] C.Bh. Madhya XX.116 [3] C.& C. P.109
[4] C. Bh. Madhya XXVIII.85 [5] C. C. Madhya XI. 154-157

house of divine love and the Lord's heart melted by listening to the expression of his humility. He never accepted any gift from any body but maintained his family by the sweat of his brow pursuing his own medical profession. Whomsoever he treated out of his unbounded kindness was relieved of his physical ailment as well as attachment to worldliness." [1]

All the later biographers of Sri Chaitanya have invariably paid Murāri Gupta supreme gratitude for having written the life of Sri Chaitanya, expressing his love for Him. Vrindāvanadās highly praises even the maids and servants of Murāri for their good fortune in sharing his joy in the service of Sri Chaitanya.[2] He has devoted the twentieth chapter in the middle part of his Chaitanya Bhāgavata to describing the greatness of Murāri and his devotion to Sri Chaitanya. Kavikarnapura has dedicated a sloka to Murāri as acknowledgment of his gratitude for the materials of his book Chaitanya Charita MahāKāvya borrowed from Murāri's book[3]. Lochanadās's Chaitanya Mangala is much the same as Murāri's book which he has accepted, not only as the model and authority but also as the source of some passages translated from it. He was the only biographer who constantly lived with Sri Chaitanya during the first twenty-four years of the latter's career in Navadvipa, and used to live four months a year at Puri until his disappearance. He was in intimate personal touch with Sri Chaitanya from His birth to the end. Murāri was the disciple of Chandrasekharāchārya a follower of Sri Chaitanya[4].

Being childless, his family became extinct after him. Sri Chaitanya Math has raised a beautiful temple on the site of his home at Sri Māyāpur and installed the Images of Sri Rāma and Sita, the Divine pair of Murāri's devotion. Murāri's exact scholarship, his profound knowledge of Vaishnavism, his enthusiastic interest and genuine desire for its furtherance, his singularly sweet and attractive personality, and above all, his melting humility and Sri

[1] C. C. Adi. X. 44-51 [2] C. Bh. Madhya XX. 73 [3] C. C. XX. 42 [4] C.C. I. I.21

Chaitanya's loving affection for him, and his immortal biography of Sri Chaitanya left an indelible impression of his practical Vaishnavism on the community, and a memory which will ever be cherished with respect by all who have the privilege of knowing Vaishnava culture and literature.

Murāri Gupta wrote the first biography of Sri Chaitanya at the request of Srivasa in the form of a dialogue, which may or may not be an actual report between Dāmodara Brahmachari, an ascetic follower of Sri Chaitanya and Murāri Gupta. The extant edition contains a detailed account of Sri Chaitanya's life up to His return from Vrindāvana, which occurred about Saka 1437-38 (March-April 1516 A.D.[1] and other events in brief that happened subsequently to Saka 1437. The present (third) edition published by Mr. Mrinala Kanti Ghosh contains a colophon, which gives Saka 1435 as the date of its completion. This date is not tenable in view of the fact that the whole of the fourth part and the last two chapters of the third part describe events after that date. It also refers to Sri Chaitanya's disappearance in one verse in the first part.[2]

We should either accept the said date as genuine and reject the said parts and the verse or vice versa. Both the date and the questionable parts cannot be maintained at the same time because of their chronological inconsistency. Let us see which of the two may be reasonably tenable. The present edition describes Sri Chaitanya's married life in the first two parts and *Sannyās* life in the remaining two parts.

Krishnadās Kavirāj definitely refers to Murāri Gupta's book as containing only the early period of Sri Chaitanya's life, by which he means infancy, boyhood, adolescence, youth and married life and next He took *Sannyās* in Saka 1431.[3] So we cannot but reject the last two parts of the extant edition as spurious, as they describe subsequent events and accept the date found in the colophon as probable. Kavikarnapura in his Chaitanya Charita (Saka

[1] C.C. Madhya I. 249 [2] ibid. I. 2. 14 [3] C. C. Adi XIII. 152

1464) seems to verify this view by saying that Nārāyana Pandit besought Sri Chaitanya while still at home before his *Sannyās*, to bless and inspire Murāri Gupta with sufficient spiritual power to write the account of his career. Murāri seems to have resolved to begin his biography before Saka 1431. It is more reasonable to assume that he would have finished his book in 1435 Saka as given in the colophon, than sometime after Saka 1455 as the last two parts would suggest. Furthermore, we notice many discrepancies between the last two parts and the books of Kavikarnapura, Lochanadās and Krishnadāsa Kavirāj who definitely say that they followed Murāri's book. Thus for example, in Murāri's book King Pratāpa Rudra is made to meet Sri Chaitanya after the latter's return from Vrindāvana in 1516 A.D., whereas Kavikarnapura and Krishnadās Kavirāj describe at great length, the king's conversion and arrangement of a great reception and farewell throughout his territory which Sri Chaitanya passed on His journey to Bengal, previous to his visiting Vrindāvana the following year. We have observed that the King's conversion must, have taken place in 1511 when Murāri Gupta and other Bengali devotees were present at Puri and witnessed it. It is unlikely, that Murāri Gupta may have wrongly placed this very important incident. Kavikarnapura who accepted Murāri's book in, unqualified terms as an authority on the life of Sri Chaitanya, could not have disagreed with him in this regard. Kavikarnapura's book closes with the return of Sri Chaitanya from Bengal, which took place about Saka 1436. Had he found a book of *Murāri* like the extant edition which describes His life almost to the last (Saka 1455) he could not have refrained from giving forceful descriptions for lack of exact materials. Krishnadās Kavirāj absolutely depended on Svarūpa Dāmodara's memoirs with regard to Sri Chaitanya's later life and could have mentioned Murāri's book in this connection, as he did with respect to the early life of Sri Chaitanya. What is probable is that both Kavikarnapura and Krishnadās Kavirāj depended on Murāri's book so far as Sri Chaitanya's early life is concerned.

Lochanadās was tempted to write the biography of Sri Chaitanya from his perusal of Murāri's book.[1] Not only is he not as prolix in his descriptions as Murāri but also occasionally contradicts him. The extant edition of Murāri's book describes two attempts of Sri Chaitanya to journey to Mathurā. But in the first instance He returned from Rāmakeli and Kānāinātsala in Bengal via Shāntipur, and the second journey, which He made the next year was successful. Had Lochanadās faithfully followed Murāri's book, as he confessed at the outset, he could not have hopelessly confused the first unsuccessful journey with the second one. Lochanadās again omitted to mention Sri Chaitanya's visit to Rāmakeli which has been found described in the present edition of Murāri's book. In another place Lochanadās contradicts Murāri as far as the latter part is concerned by saying that Rūpa and Sanātana met Sri Chaitanya at Prayāg (Allāhābād) on His outward journey to Vrindāvana[2] but the present edition of Murāri's book is very clear in this regard, and is in agreement with Krishnadās Kavirāj that the two brothers met Sri Chaitanya at Prayag and Banares respectively on the latter's return journey from Vrindāvana.[3] Had Lochanadās found Murāri's' book in the same enlarged form as the present one, he would not have confused the facts and contradicted Murāri's book, which, as he says, he followed and accepted as the most reliable authority. So far as the early life i.e. the first two parts are concerned, Murāri and his literal followers Kavikarnapura, Lochanadās and Krishnadās are perfectly in harmony with one another. It is certain that the latter portion of the extant portion of Murāri's book was not the common source of both Kavikarnapura and Lochanadās because of inconsistency between themselves. Moreover we have no reason to doubt the most unambiguous and express reference made by Krishnadās Kavirāj that Murāri Gupta wrote only the early period of Sri Chaitanya's life.[4]

Besides, Murāri Gupta need not have told Dāmodara the latter life of Sri Chaitanya, which forms the last two

[1] Sutra Khanda 56 [2] Sesha Khanda p.181 [3] IV.1.6, 21 [4] C.C.Adi XIII. 15

parts of the present edition because Murāri lived in Bengal and Dāmodara constantly lived with Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Dāmodara seems to have known Sri Chaitanya's life better than Murāri did. If we accept only the first two parts of the present edition as genuinely written by Murāri, we have no difficulty in assigning its completion to the same date Saka 1435 (1513 A.D.) as in the colophon.

The book, a very good piece of Charita Kāvya written with an easy command of the language, has undoubtedly attraction for qualities of its own. His method is very simple and direct. Throughout, the author has tried to convince his readers of Sri Chaitanya's divinity and its final words are enthusiastic declarations to that effect. It may be accepted as a work of literary art being both scholarly and entertaining. The present edition consists of four *Prakaranas* or parts containing 16, 18 and 26 *Sargas* or chapters respectively. The contents of the first two genuine chapters are as follows: -

FIRST PRAKARANA

Sarga

i) Obeisance to Sri Chaitanya and His Incarnation. (28 verses)

ii) Dāmodara's inquiry about Sri Chaitanya's life and Nārada's sorrow for the prevailing vices in the world. (29 verses)

iii) Nārada's visit to Vaikuntha and his question to Nārāyana. (23 verses)

iv) *Avatāra* of Sri Chaitanya with His associates and an account of various *Avatāras* of Vishnu. (33 verses)

v) The advent of Sri Chaitanya with all the marks of Divinity in an auspicious moment. (29 verses)

vi) Infancy of Sri Chaitanya, he teaches the philosophy of sacredness to his mother, indication of his Divinity. (35 verses)

vii) Account of Viswarūpa, elder brother of Sri Chaitanya, and playfulness of Sri Chaitanya's boyhood. (27 verses)

viii) Disappearance of Sri Chaitanya's father Jagannāth Mishra: his funeral ceremony, grief of the family. (28 verses)

ix) Sri Chaitanya's studies first under Vishnudās Pandit and next under Gangadās; arrangement and preparation of His marriage with Lakshmipriyā, daugher of Vallabhāchārya, by a match-maker named Vanamali Ghatak (38 verses).

x) The ceremony of His marriage and return with the bride to His own house (27 verses).

xi) Sri Chaitanya's journey to East Bengal to earn money: passing away of His wife through snakebite on her feet (28 verses)

xii) Proposal by Kāsināth Pandit of Sri Chaitanya' s second marriage with Vishnupriyā, daughter of Sanātana Pandit and its preparation (30 verses)

xiii) Performance of marriage ceremony. (33 verses)

xiv) His pilgrimage to Gayā and meeting with Isvara Puri and His initiation from him (19 verses).

xv) The offering of *Pinda* (funeral) to His father and ancestors, and return from Gaya (20 verses).

SECOND PRAKARANA

Sarga

i) The author's prayer to Sri Chaitanya; the expression of Divine perturbation in Sri Chaitanya (30 verses).

ii) Sri Chaitanya's singing and dancing with the Name of God in company of Srivasa and others; His revelation of Divinity as *Varaha* in the house of the author; the author's prayer with a *Vedic Mantra* (36 verses).

iii) Account of Gadadhara: Sri Chaitanya stops rain to continue *Kirtan* undisturbed (27 verses).

iv) Account of simple worship and prayer and religious lives of Suklambara, Mukunda, Srivasa brothers and others (35 verses).

v) Sri Chaitanya's meeting and discussion with Advaita, and an account of His divine love (33 verses).

vi) The worship of Sri Chaitanya by Advaita (27 verses).

vii) Sri Chaitanya's revelation of Divinity; the author's worship of Sri Chaitanya with eight verses of praise to Rāma; Sri Chaitanya writes the Name of Rāma on his forehead; brotherly affection between Srivasa and his brother Srirama (27 verses)

viii) Sri Chaitanya meets Sri Nityānanda with devotees at the house of Nandanāchārya; Srivasa's invitation to Nityānanda, Sri Chaitanya reveals the six-armed divinity to Nityānanda (30 verses)

ix) Sri Chaitanya accepts offerings from the devotees (23 verses).

x) Dance of Sri Chaitanya with the devotees (27 verses).

xi) Sri Chaitanya under the Divine possession of Nrisimha; he rides on the shoulders of a Siva devotee under the inspiration of Siva; one Brahmana lady takes the holy dust from Sri Chaitanya's feet and He throws Himself into the Ganges out of grief for her act (25 verses).

xii) Worship of Sri Chaitanya by His devotees under the assumption of what is called Mahāprakāsa (17 verses).

xiii) One Brāhmana, who was hostile to Srivasa suffers from leprosy as the consequence of his hostility to Srivasa. Sri Chaitanya's anger and curse on him; a Brāhmana being denied admission to the house of Srivāsa during the *Kirtana*, curses Sri Chaitanya saying that he should be deprived of His married life (23 verses).

xiv) Sri Chaitanya under divine inspiration and possession of Balabhadra (26 verses.)

xv) Sri Chaitanya's Gopi dance in a theatrical performance at the house of Chandra Sekhara with other devotees (19 verses).

xvi) Theatrical performance (23 verses).

xvii) Divine brilliance lingers for a week after the performance at Chandra Sekhar's house; greatness of

the Name of God; Murāri's anxiety about the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya (19 verses).

xviii) Sri Chaitanya dreams that a Brāhmana gives Him the *Sannyās-Mantra* his determination to take *Sannyās*; Kesava Bharati comes to Nadia; his meeting with Sri Chaitanya; grief of Mukunda, Srivās and others. Sri Chaitanya asks Murāri to serve Sri Advaita after his *Sannyās*, His acceptance of *Sannyās* (33 verses).

PARAMĀNANDADĀSA KAVIKARNAPURA AND HIS BOOK CHAITANYA CHARITA MAHĀKĀVYA

He is one of the best of the voluminous writers of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. Dr. D. C. Sen has assigned his birth to 1528 A.D.[1] But when he was only seven years of age, he went Puri with his father and met Sri Chaitanya, from the Chaitanya Charitāmrita text by Krishnadāsa[2] it seems that his meeting with Sri Chaitanya took place in the year of the latter's disappearance 1534 A. D. So he must have been born at least in 1526 A. D. if not earlier, and consequently Dr Sen's date seems wrong. Before his birth, his father Sivananda Sen came to Puri during the car festival, which takes place in the rainy season. Sri Chaitanya proposed "Puridāsa" (abridged from of Paramanandadāsa as the future boy. The boy was born after his return from Puri[3]. Sivananda used to remain at Puri with a view to observing the four-month vow, which ends in the third week of November; it will not be unreasonable to assume that Kavikarnapura might have been born in the winter of 1526 A.D. He refers to him as a child in his Chaitanya Charitāmrita Mahākāvya[4], which is dated as having been completed in Saka 1464 (1542 A.D.) This reference to his age is quite justifiable because he was then sixteen, and a boy of that age might be so called. The Late Rāja Rājendra Lāl Mitra has given 1524 A.D. as the date of his birth, in the preface to his edition of Kavikarnpura's Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka. If he had been born in Mitra's date he would have

[1] C. & C. p.117 [2] C.C. Antya XVI. 75 [3] C.C. Antya XII. 50 [4] C.C. Mahakavya XX. 42

been eighteen years of age in 1542 A.D. when his book was composed. But his reference to himself as *Sishu* or child would suggest that he was sixteen as we have assumed rather than eighteen at which age he could hardly call himself "*Sishu*". Dr. D.C. Sen seems wrong in dating its, composition as 1572 A.D. [1] which is evidently the date of Chaitanya Chandradaya Nātaka.

Some would identify Kavikarnapura, son of Sivānanda Sen, with the father of Kavi Chandra, who thus says of himself in the following colophon of his book "Kāvya Chandrika"- "Thus the sixteenth Prakāsa of "Kāvya Chandrika" composed by Kavi Chandra, born of the Datta family, an inhabitant of Dirghankagrama, son of Vidyavisarada's son Kavikarnpura and Kausalya." This apparent identification, only on account of similarity of name, is impossible not only for chronological but also for social reasons. Kavi Chandra's verses have been inserted in the Padyavali[2] an anthology of poems, which Rūpa Gosvāmi edited and quoted in his Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, which was written in 1541 A.D. when our Kavikarnapura was a child of fifteen years of age; so he could not have been the father of Kavi Chandra, who seems senior in age to our Kavikarnapura. Kavi Chandra says that he was an inhabitant of Dirghankagrama, and was born of the Datta family. But Sivānanda Sen's son Kavikarnapura belonged to Kumarhatta-Kānchrapada and came of the Sena family. This difference between their respective families decidedly suggests that Kavi Chandra's father Kavikar napura was a different person from and older than Sivananda Sena's son Kavikarnapura. Kavi Chandra Datta, author of Kāvya Chandrika seems identical with Kavi Datta whom our Kavikarnapura mentions in his, Gauraganod-desadipika (207), and was certainly not his son.

Kavikarnapura during his infancy, when, he could hardly walk, he was taken to Puri by his parents and placed before Sri Chaitanya Deva for consecration and blessing. Sri Chaitanya Deva put his toe into the child's mouth,

[1] V. L. M. B. p. 73 [2] Verse No. 160 of the India office manuscript No. 823a

which he sucked. This is the first time that he was blessed by Sri Chaitanya Deva. Next he met him in his seventh year, when Sri Chaitanya Deva gave him *Nāmamantra*.

One day when Chaitanya Deva commanded the seven-year old boy to recite a *shloka*, instantly he recited the following verse of his own composition-

'Sravasoh kuvalayah akshnoh anjanam urasah mahendramanidāma/

Vrindāvanaramaninam akhilam mandanam harih jayati //

"Glory to Hari, Who has the lotus ear ring to the ear, the collyrium paint to the eyes, ornament of the damsels of Vrindāvana and the great Mahendra diamond on the chest". His recitation of the verse filled all present there with wonder. This is the first verse of the young poet who opened his mouth for the first time at an early age under the happy augury of Sri Chaitanya Deva's presence and inspiration. His definition of Kavi *"Savijohi Kavijneyah sa sarvagāma kovidah/ Sarasa pratibhāsali yadisyaduttamastada"*// refers to his own inborn genius. By *"Savijohi"* he means *Praktāna Samskāra* or poetic impression of previous births. The definition means that the best poetry comes from one who succeeds in combining genius for describing in a lively manner the ever-new things from impressions derived in preceding births.[1] Kavikarnapura had in himself all poetic elements with which, according to him, a true poet should be endowed. Had he not been a born-poet he could not have composed a beautiful verse in his seventh year and produced his Chaitanya Charita a masterpiece of *Kāvya* literature at the early age of sixteen. Besides, he was an erudite and voluminous writer on poetics in all its branches. His *Kāvya*, *Alamkara*, *Rasa*, and drama are in perfect harmony with the canons, which he himself set forth in his Alamkāra Kaustubha.

Kavikarnapura has made *Rasa* the very soul of *Kāvya* and built up almost a different system of poetics on the

[1] 1. Alamkâra Kaustubha I.9.

basis of *Rasa*, which forms the absorbing theme and main current underlying the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. This *Rasa* doctrine of the Gaudiya-Vaishnavas seems to have nothing to do with physical or mental or so-called personal or impersonal pleasures in which sense, all other writers on *Rasa* except the Gaudiyas, had used it. Kavikarnapura adopted the following definition of *Rasa* given by his predecessor Rūpa Gosvāmi in his Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu:-[1] "That dominant sentiment which is tasted in the bright heart, absolutely purged of all worldliness by *Suddha Satva*, which (*Rasa*) is the fountain of that striking, varied, charming sweetness, which is beyond the realm of thought is *Rasa*." This conception of *Rasa* is higher than Abhinava Gupta's *Laukika* and *Alaukika Rasas*. *Suddha Sattva* is employed to destroy *Sattva, Rajas and Tamas gunas*, which give, rise to selfishness, either gross or subtle. *Prema Rasa* springs up only on *Anarthanivrti* or elimination of all worldliness.

The *Rasa*, which Kavikarnapura has meant, and introduced into his definition of *Kāvya*, is spiritual in character and unlike that of all other writers on poetics. This Rasa is best understood as *Sringara*, which in its different aspects is the under-current of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature.

Kavikarnapura identifies the best *Nāyaka* or hero of Sringara with Krishna[2]. The best and greatest *Nāyaka* is the Lord of Gokula who is the seed of all purified, *Rasas*, Who is the crest-jewel of all *Nāyakas*, who is endowed with all supernal qualities.

He says the Deep Divine bliss that wells up in the heart on account of the mind's application in course of describing the exquisite sportive qualities of Krishna, is the *summum-bonum*.[3] As a *Kāvya* writer and theorist, Kavikarnapura deserves a very high place in the literature of poets because of having presented noble ideas and giving a new mould to old views on *Kāvya* and making a perfect union of *Dhvani* with *Rasa*. So far as *Rasa* is concerned,

[1] Bh.R.S. I. Daksin V. 79. [2] A.K.V.27 [3] A.K.II.14.

Kavikarnapura and his immediate predecessor Rūpa categorically differ from all other writers on the subject in treating it with it's necessary doctrine of *Nāyaka* and *Nāyika* in an exhaustively scientific and psychologically analytical way and from a different point of view.

Kavikarnapura has described the noble deeds of Sri Chaitanya, which are historical facts in his Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya which has been named after Him whom he described as *Dhirodatta* here[1] whom he defines in his Alamkara Kaustubha[2] as one who avoids self-importance and self-glorification, who is kind, generous, grave, calm, in disposition, gentle in manner, sweet in speech and so on. Chaitanya Charita is divided into twenty *Sargas*. It evinces a marvellous display of metres, which change at the end of each *Sarga* to suggest its coming end. For example, the *Mandākrānta Chanda* in the thirty eighth and the next *Sloka* of the twentieth *Sarga* is suddenly succeeded by the *Sikharini Chhanda* in the fortieth *Sloka*, which, in its turn, is followed by the *Vasanta Tilaka Chanda* in the next four *Slokas*. The said *Sarga* ends with *Sārdula Vikridita* metre.

Kavikarnapura opens his *Mahākāvya* with obeisances to its hero, Sri Chaitanya Dev and its *Vastunirdesa* or indication of the contents, which are the life, and deeds of Sri Chaitanya. In this connection our poet could not but express the deep pathos of hundreds of Sri Chaitanya Dev's weeping followers together with his own at the demise of Sri Chaitanya Deva, which took place, about nine years, before the composition of the Chaitanya Charita *Mahākāvya* when the sadness was still rife.

As regards the *Alamkāra* of the book it would be no exaggeration to say that the poet has few rivals and is scarcely any superior in this respect. His every word is pregnant with significance and suggestiveness and adorned with most shining elegance which marvelously enhances the beauty of his *MahāKāvya*. Figures of speech and of thought are perfect. His similes, metaphors, allegories, and

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[1] Vide XX.47 [2] V.27

so on, are well-cut, clear, familiar and striking at the same time. His descriptions possess a feminine grace and charm and send a thrill of joy into the hearts of his readers. Neither metaphysical hardness nor dogmatical didacticism nor dry history, nor disagreeable asceticism nor prolixity has been allowed to mar the beauty of the book or the character of its *Kāvya*. Kavikarnapura maintains all through from first to last a perfect unity between melting sentiment and its self-same expression. The art of the poet manifests itself in the wonderful unity of the two.

In his description the things of nature are no less human than Paramananda Puri in exchanging feeling and sympathizing with Sri Chaitanya Deva in His deep love-in-separation for God on the way from Puri to Bengal. Our author's poetical genius lies in the fact that the touch of Nature's art perfectly harmonises with the emotions of the hero's soul; seasons greet Him with the flowers and songs of their birds. His imagination expands and exalts us. In nature, our poet is very sensible of the sweep of the celestial stream, which seems to permeate the whole world. He has infused a kind of joyous intoxication and volatility into nature, which is made to dance with Sri Chaitanya Deva.

Kavikarnapura has painted the towns of Puri, Navadvipa and so on in glowing colours and luxuriously described *Ratha Yātrā* and *Dola Yātrā* festivals in keeping with the poetic mood of the hero. Every line is suffused with *Bhakti Rasa*. The Gaudiya Vaishnava writers wrote and developed all branches of literature to teach the doctrine of their Vaishnavism and popularise, the life of Sri Chaitanya Deva. So it has a peculiar characteristic of its own which has differentiated the literature of this school from the rest of Indian literature.

Kavikarnapura sings the glory of the faith, in and through the grace of *Kāvya* and voice of drama. Unlike the Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krishnadās Kavirāj, it has no over intellectualism nor philosophical didacticism. Kavikarnapura equally exults in "Family happiness" as well as in the asceticism of Sri Chaitanya Deva. There is no

harshness of asceticism. Both aspects of the hero's life are rendered equally sweet at the hands of our poet. Krishnadās does not stop to describe Sri Chaitanya Deva's wife and married life. But Kavikarnapura describes in glowing colours the attractive grace and charm of Laksmipriyā's beauty and gives her an air of chastening romanticism in her marriage and life. Krishnadās has not presented the tale of the married Sri Chaitanya, which according to Kavikarnapura, does not conflict with his asceticism. The whole story of Sri Chaitanya Deva's life up to His return to Puri from Bengal is described in this Sanskrit *Kāvya* with equal dramatic force and psychological penetration. Both are equally transparent. The book as a whole breathes pure spiritual air.

Unlike all other secular *Kāvya* books, which are written for *Artha*, which *Bhamaha* prefers, or any of the four *Vargas*, which all *Alamkārikas* emphasise, Kavikarnapura's book is free from such selfish motive, and is intended to destroy the threefold affliction[1], which torments mandkind for cherishing such desires.

It is one of the most exquisite specimens of typical Kāvya literature for which the name of young Kavikarnapura is worthy of being remembered. The admirable soft quality of its language together with its clear music and the dancing movements of its metres have the limpidity and brightness of a running stream.

SOURCE OF THE BOOK

The poet pays his homage to Murāri Gupta in the following *Sloka* by way of acknowledging his gratitude for the book Chaitanya Charitamrita Mahākāvya which formed the source of his book Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya.

"I, a child, have composed it from what I have found written by one high-minded soul, under the good name of Murāri, who is an authority on the character and deeds of the Lord. I make my obeisance to Murāri who is responsible for the life of Sri Chaitanya known to the world."[2]

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[1] Vide XX. 48 [2] Vide XX. 42-43

ITS SUMMARY

The Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya contains 1911 *Slokas* in twenty *Sargas*, the contents of which areas follows

Sarga

I) Obeisance to Gaura (Sri Chaitanya); description of general pathetic feeling at the demise of Sri Chaitanya; author's personal sorrow for the same. (29 *Slokas*)

II) Description of Navadvipa; an account of Srivās; marriage of Sri Jagannāth Mishra with Sachi Devi, of Sri Chaitanya's Birth, and his infancy, childhood; his brother's *Sannyās*; his father's demise and the bereavement of the family. (122)

III) His study with Vishnudāsa and Gangadāsa; His marriage with Laksmipriyā; His married life; His professional tour in East Bengal; demise of His wife by snake-bite, His return; and second marriage with Vishnupriyā. (144)

IV) His professorship; his pilgrimage to Gayā and initiation from Isvara Puri; His return in the month of Pausha and assumption of preaching since the next month. (77)

V) His devotional fervour; His revelation of divinity in the house of Srivās, their worship of Him. (129)

VI) His *Kirtana* and dance, His miracles; Nārāyana's request to Sri Chaitanya to bless Murāri so that he could write His life; His meeting with Nityānanda and His manifestation of divinity to him.

VII) Sri Chaitanya's dream of God and wailing; His revelation of six-armed divinity to Nityānanda; and four-armed divinity to Advaita; greatness of Nityānanda.

VIII) Sri Chaitanya's curse on the enemy of Srivas; His spiritual activities at the house of Srivās. (63)

IX) Srivās's description of the love of Gopi for Krishna by way of reciting Sri Chaitanya's identification with Krishna. (95)

X) The same topic continued. (80)

XI) Theatrical performance, Sri Chaitanya's determination to accept *Sannyās*; His acceptance of Sannyās; His coming to Shāntipur, His journey to Puri.

XII) The conversion of Sri Sarvabhauma by Sri Chaitanya. His revelation of four-armed Divinity to him; His journey to the South; His visit to Kurmachal, deliverance of a leper. His wandering in the Godāvari forest. (334)

XIII) His coming to the Caveri and Ranganāth; His meeting with Paramānanda Puri; description of immorality and sins then prevalent in the South His attendant Krishnadāsa's moral fall; His visit to Rāmesvaram, His return to Godavari, His meeting and conversation with Rāmānanda Rāya, His stay with him; his return to Puri; His journey to Alalnāth, thence to Rāmānanda Rāya at Godāvari; His return to Puri; greatness of Kāsi Mishra; surrender of devotees of Puri to Sri Chaitanya; Account of His associates; His devotees meet Him from different parts of the country.

XIV) Coming of the Gaudiya devotees to Puri; their meeting with Sarvabhauma at Yajpur, praises of Advaita, Haridās, King Pratap Rudra's reception to Advaita, Sri Chaitanya's reception to them, description of *Snān Yātrā* etc. (135)

XV) Sri Chaitanya's intense love- in -separation for God; the sweeping ceremony of the Gundicha temple; description of the Car festival; songs and dance before the car etc. (110)

XVI) *Ratha Yātrā* continued. (49)

XVII) Meeting of Rūpa, Sanātana and Anupama with Sri Chaitanya at Puri; their personal humility; songs of Vāsudeva, Mukunda, Murāri etc. (66)

XVIII) An account of the mode of living of the devotees at Puri with Sri Chaitanya etc. (Various ceremonies) etc.

XIX) Sri Chaitanya's intention to visit Mathurā via Bengal. Rāmānanda Rāya's grief; His affectionate behavior with

Svarūpa Dāmodara; His farewell; description of His journey and grand reception throughout the way arranged by King Pratapa and Rāmānanda Raya etc.

XX) The description of the journey; Ramananda's leave taking at Badresvara; subsequent death of Rāmānanda Rāya on account of grief; Sri Chaitanya's visit to Panihati, Kumarhatta, Shāntipura etc. His journey towards Mathurā, His return to Puri His stay at Puri; Murāri Gupta's biography; the author's obeisance to Murāri; His humility; His autobiographical touch, quality of the book its date.

CHAITANYA CHANDRODAYA NĀTAKA

The next dated book of Kavikarnapura is the famous Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka, a biographical drama dealing in great detail with the whole life and philosophy of Sri Chaitanya Mahāpraphu. It is a vivid description written for consoling the aggrieved followers and also for popularizing the life and teaching of Sri Chaitanya through dramatic representation. It is of supreme historical importance in tracing the development and success of the movement. It also presents the contemporary religious condition of India, which is in striking contrast to the religious fervour and purity of character of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. This book is very well knit and full of interest, obvious truth and readable qualities. This historical drama, by the excellence of the writing and judiciousness of selection of deeds, contrives to give a celestial character to Sri Chaitanya Deva while not failing to convey even to the lay reader the greatness and spiritual import of its Hero. Its ornate language does not obscure its simplicity or tire the reader. It is more historical and doctrinal than dramatic.

The play consists of ten acts and begins with a *Nandi Sloka* or benedictory verse to Gaura Chandra and a prologue which describes the deep pathos of King Pratapa Rudra at the ascension of Sri Chaitanya Deva amidst the joy and mirth in the public on account of the festivals at Puri, and his desire to see the life and deeds of Sri Chaitanya dramatized.

Next come *Sutradhāra* and his companion and they enter into conversation. The former gives an excellent conception of Sri Chaitanya Deva in reply to the latter's inquiry into the same, characterizing His philosophy of *Bhakti* and its accompanying *Kirtana* of the Name of God in sharp contrast to *Brahma-Jnāna* or absorption in undifferentiated Brahman. By way of introducing Sri Chaitanya Deva to the audience, *Sutradhāra* takes notice of Mādhavendra Puri, Isvara Puri, Advaita, Avadhuta (Nityānanda), Vakresvara, Svarūpa Dāmodara. They retire from the stage after having discussed the characteristics of the *Kali* age, which next enters the stage with *Adharma*. They relate the story of the miraculous activities of Sri Chaitanya which subvert the immoral and vicious activities of *Adharma*, and leads to the deliverance and purification of the notorious ruffians Jagai and Madhai, *Kavi* gives an account of Sri Chaitanya's Birth, spiritual power and asceticism which render the evil age absolutely powerless to exert his influence.

The second act opens with the introduction of *Vairagya* and *Bhakti*, the former describes his pilgrimage to all holy places which are full of false ascetics and philosophers practicing sins and vileness. *Bhakti* gives him the happy news of Sri Chaitanya's Incarnation, His superhuman activities and miracles in Navadvipa.

The third act introduces *Maitri* and *Prema Bhakti*, the former comes across in the course of fleeing from the oppression of irreligion, the latter encourages her in her sadness and fills her mind with hope and joy by informing her of the celestial nature of Sri Chaitanya Deva, their going to Navadvipa and witnessing the theatrical performance in which Sri Chaitanya dances in the role of Rādhā, an account of the performance.

The fourth act begins with the anxiety of Sri Sachidevi in anticipation of Sri Chaitanya's *Sannyās*, which she infers from His respect and devotion to Kesava Bharati. She relates it to her sister Bhagavati; Sri Chaitanya's consolation to His mother. His song and dance during the whole night before He leaves for Katwa for *Sannyās* with

Nityānanda, Āchāryaratna; grief of the town, Āchārya's return to Navadvipa with the news of His *Sannyās*, heart rending weeping of Sachidevi.

The fifth act describes Sri Chaitanya's coming to Shāntipur where He meets with His mother and other devotees of Navadvipa.

The sixth act begins with the wailing of Gangā to Ratnākara on account of her separation from Sri Chaitanya who leaves her banks after His *Sannyās*. Sri Chaitanya's dance, song and taking services of the devotees at Advaita's place at Shāntipur, His starting to Puri; Ratnākar relates to Ganga an account of Saḳshi Gopāl; Sri Chaitanya Deva arrives at Puri, Ratnākara and Ganga retire to their respective places. Sri Chaitanya visits the Sri Jagannāth Murthi and converts Sri Sārvabhauma and the latter's faith and praise of Sri Chaitanya.

The seventh act begins with King Pratap Rudra's inquiry of Sārvabhauma about Sri Chaitanya Deva. Sri Chaitanya Deva's journey to the South and its account. He returns to Puri.

The eighth act opens with a relation of Sri Chaitanya Deva's journey to Sarvabhauma, His stay at Puri, introduction of Utkala devotees to Sri Chaitanya; His other devotees joined Him at Puri; coming of the Gaudiya devotees to Puri, an account of the festivities at Puri etc., conversion of the King.

The ninth act opens with the talk of *Kinnara Purusa* to his wife with regard to Sri Chaitanya's celestial activities at the *Ratha Yātrā* which *Kinnara* came to see from heaven; he gives an account of the Gaudiya devotees to his wife; the threefold personality of Sri Chaitanya-Sakshat, *Avirbhava* and *Pravesa*. The king's grief at Sri Chaitanya Deva's departure from Puri for Mathurā, His royal reception; Sri Chaitanya Deva's visit to Bengal and Vrindāvana and return etc.

The tenth act describes the coming of the Gaudiya devotees to Puri reception to Advaita and others; greatness

of Haridās Thākur, Sri Chaitanya Deva's love-in-separation for Krishna; Svarūpa gives consolation; the cleansing of Gundicha temple; Sri Chaitanya Deva's dance and song before the car; *Herā Panchami*; Sri Chaitanya Deva's boon and farewell to the Gaudiya devotees. It ends with the autobiographical touch of the poet.

The last *Sloka* gives us Saka 1494 (1572 A. D.) as the date of the play. It has been rendered into Bengali metrical verses by Purushottama Siddhānta Vagisa alias Premadās in Saka 1634 (1712 A.D.), which date is given in the colophon at the end of the translation.

GAURAGANODDESA DIPIKĀ

His other historical book is Gaura Ganoddesadipikā written in Saka 1498 (1576 A.D.) as mentioned in the last *Sloka*. It consists of 215 Sanskrit *Slokas* and gives us an account of the principal followers of Chaitanya Deva most of whom have been identified with the associates of Krishna Who is believed to have incarnated as Sri Chaitanya Deva with His attendants and devotees for serving Sri Chaitanya Deva in their respective capacities in the way that was suitable to the present Incarnation of God. Apart from the question of theory and belief of the community, it has great historical importance of its own. The author says (Verse V) that it ought to be hidden form the atheists, skeptics, cunning sophists and materialists.

The account of the book is very authentic because its author personally had seen and heard of all the devotees living at Mathurā, Bengal and Puri before it was written (Verse V)

ALAMKĀRA KAUSTUBHA

Our author has written a large treatise on Sanskrit poetics under the name of Alamkāra Kaustubha the principles of which have been illustrated by verses in reference to lives and deeds of Rādhā and Krishna and Their associates. It is based on the Gaudiya Vaishnavite principle of *Rasa* in opposition to secular literature on poetics. It consists of

ten *Kiranas* or chapters headed as follows: 1) *Kāvya samanyoddesah* 2) *Savdarthavritti traya nirūpanah* 3) *Dhvani nirnayah* 4) *Gunibhuta vyangya nirūpanah* 5) *Rasa bhāva tadbheda nirūpanah* 6) *Guna Vivechanah* 7) *Savdālamkāra nirnayah* 8) *Arthalamkara nirūpanah* 9) *Riti nirnayah* 10) *Dosha nirnayah.*

ITS COMMENTARIES

Alamkāra Kaustubha with its commentary "*Suvodhani*" by Vishvanāth Chakravarti has been published by Rāma Nārāyana Vidyāratna, at Mursidabad. The India office library possesses a very good manuscript of another commentary "*Didhiti Prakasika*" by Vrindāvan Chandra Tarkālamkāra Chakravarti, son of Rādhā Charana Kavindra Chakavarti.[1] The Late Rāja Rajendra Lāl Mitra, has mentioned a manuscript of another commentary by Lokanāth Chakravarti.[2] Lokanāth begins his commentary with an excellent benediction to Sri Chaitanya Deva and seems to have been His enthusiastic follower. This commentator seems to be the same as Guru of Thākur Narottam. He was the elder contemporary of our poet Kavikarnapura.

ĀNANDA VRINDĀVANA CHAMPU

Another important voluminous work written by him is *Ānanda Vrindāvana Champu* dealing with the early life and amorous youth of Sri Krishna as we find in the tenth canto of the Bhāgavata Purāna. It is written, as *Champu Kāvya* partly in poetry and partly in poetic prose. Its style and imagery deserve high admiration, and it is an excellent addition to the Sanskrit literature of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas.

It is divided into 22 *Stavakas* or chapters, the first of which is devoted to the description of Vrindāvana and accordingly called "*Bhāgavata sthanatattva valli vistara*". The next seven chapters go by the names of "*Bālya* or

[1] 1 Eggling's catalogue No. 240
[2] Notices of the Sanskrit Manuscripts Vol. IV. No.1663 p. 238-239.

Kaumāra lilā latā vistara", and the remaining fifteen chapters deal with the amorous dalliances and sports of the Hero and are named '*Kaisora lilāa vistara*". The total number of verses comes to 3270.

Vrindāvana Chakravrti has written a commentary styled *Sukhavartini* on it.

SRI CHAITANYA BHĀGAVATA BY SRI VRINDĀVANADĀS THĀKUR

Dr. D.C. Sen assigns the birth of Vrindāvanadās to Saka 1459 (1537 A.D.), about four years after the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya. Mahāprabhu and says the following in quoting a passage from the Chaitanya Bhāgavata "Besides Vrindāvanadās has himself told us more than once in his Chaitanya Bhāgavata, that He was not born when Chaitanya was alive".[1] But the passage which he quoted in support of this view refers not to the demise but to the triumphant academic Life of Sri Chaitanya some years before His pilgrimage to Gaya which incident took about 1506 A.D. It will not be out of place to give the English translation of the passage.

"The Crest-jewel of Vaukuntha was in the midst of His pupils

who sat round Him making a ring on the banks of the Ganges.

All the lucky people watched on all four sides.

All Navadvipa was rendered free from misery by the Grace of the Lord.

Who can express the rare good fortune of those.

Who had the privilege of witnessing that joy'?

Even a sight of that favoured person who witnessed the rejoicing

destroys the bondage of the dreary world. My accursed birth did not take place at that time.

So I was deprived of that felicity.

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[1] V. L M. B. p. 74.

Let, O Gaura Chandra vouchsafe
unto me this favour
That the memory of that play (Lilā) may be mine at every birth.[1]

Dr. D.C. Sen has quoted only the last couplet but one without reference to the context, which describes Chaitanya Deva's academic triumph at Navadvipa. The said couplet, which occurs in the passages, expresses the author's feeling that he was not born at the time when Sri Chaitanya was at Nadia as literary genius. Dr.Sen seems to have distorted the meaning of the couplet by ignoring the preceding and following ones. In another passage[2] the author gives vent to the same feeling, "My accursed birth did not take place at the time, so I was deprived of seeing the great festival". Here also he refers to the joyous activities of Sri Chaitanya Deva at the house of his maternal grand father at Navadvipa before His *Sannyās* which took place about 1510 A.D. Sri Chaitanya Deva lived for not less than thirty years after He had given up His professorship and for twenty four years after his *Sannyās* and departure from Navadvipa, during which long period Vrindāvanadās may have been born.

Vrindāvanadās was the last disciple of Nityānanda Prabhu[3] who asked him to write the biography of Sri Chaitanya [4]. Nityānanda Prabhu expired very soon after, most probably within a year after the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprahu which occurred in the month of Māgha (February) in 1534 A.D.[5] Nityānanda Prabhu would not have told him to write a voluminous poem had he not already found poetic genius in him which he could not have probably displayed at least before he was fifteen. So his birth may be approximately dated in the year 1518 A.D. by subtracting fifteen from 1533-34 A.D. the year of his Guru Nityānanda's demise. This date of his birth may also be inferred from the age of his mother Nārāyani Devi who was only four about 1506 A. D. when Sri Chaitanya Dev is said to have revealed His, Divinity for the first time, to the

[1] C.Bh.Adi XII. 280-284 [2] C.Bh.Madhya VIII. 198 [3] C.Bh.Adi I. 11
[4] C.Bh.Adi I 80 [5] Bh.R.K. III

family of Srivāsa.[1] She may have given birth to him in the above approximate year at the age of about sixteen. It was probable because the girls bear children at an early age between fifteen and seventeen. It is apparent from the above facts that the supposed date Saka 1459 (107 A. D.) of his birth as given by Dr. Sen seems untenable.

Vrindāvanadās liked to be known only in relation to his Guru and those relatives of his who were the most devout followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. His mother Nārāyani Devi was Srivāsa's brother's daughter[2] but he did not care to name his own direct maternal grandfather. He mentions his mother and her uncle Srivāsa by way of an autobiographical touch only because of their enthusiastic faith in Sri Chaitanya Dev's Divinity and religion. In conformity with the Vaishnava principle supplied by the Bhāgavata Purāna[3] like all other typical Vaishnava writers, such as Rūpa, Santana, and others; Vrindāvanadās is always a little in the background, his deferential figure never presses into prominence and avoids touching on his pedigree lest he should violate the Vaishnava conception of humility which consists in avoiding all pride and consciousness accruing from high pedigree, wealth, pedantry and personal beauty. It is almost a law among the Vaishnava writers to take no notice at all of their family and more so if it happens to be non-Vaishnava and has no faith in the Divinity of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda, and Advaita. Vrindāvanadās, Krishnadās Kavirāj and others who strictly adhere to this principle of personal humility and dislike to the unbeliever, supply us with on clue to their family history. It is strange, for this reason that we cannot definitely make out the caste of such a voluminous writer like Krishnadās. They express themselves, if they do at all, only in relation to their preceptors.

According to Nityānandadāsa's Premavilasa, Vrindāvanadās's mother Nārāyani was the daughter of Nalini Pandit, the eldest brother of Srivās. Her parents died leaving their one-year-old child Nārāyani to the care of

[1] C. Bh. Madhya II.328. [2] C. Bh. Madhya II.321. [3] C.Bh.I.8, 26

Srivās and his wife who brought her up. She was married to a Brahmana named Vaikuntha of Kumarahatta where Srivasa settled after the renunciation of Sri Chaitanya; but unfortunately she became a widow while she was pregnant and Vrindāvanadās was born in due course[1]. Paramāhamsa Swami Sri Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvati Thākur in his introduction to the Chaitanya Bhāgavata tells us that Srivās's wife Mālini Devi managed to get the affectionate girl Nārāyani married into her father's family at Māmgachi, a village now in the Burdwan district, about 10 k.m. west of old Navadvipa. Here Vrindāvanadās lived his early life and installed the Images of his Guru Nityānanda and of Sri Chaitanya Deva. The Gaudiya Math has built a temple in this village in which they have placed the ancient Images of Vrindāvanadās's devotion, two other followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva, Vāsudeva Datta and Saranga Murāri also settled in this village. Vāsudeva Datta tendered all possible help to them. The anniversary of Vrindāvanadās's birthday is observed on the twelfth day from the new moon in the month of Jyaistha (June). The village of Māmgachi still bears the tradition of his hallowed memory. He next took up his abode at Denur, a village about three miles from the police station of Mantresvar in the district of Burdwan where many of his later years were spent in looking after the property which he had inherited from his father. Here also he built a temple and established the daily worship of the Deity. He lived a celibate life and spent the income accruing from his ancestral estate in the services of the Deities. He had hosts of disciples, the most important of whom were Rāmahari, a Rādhiya Kāyastha, and Gopināth Brahmachari, son of Gopala, grandson of Balabhadra who was the brother of Kesava Bhārati, the *Sannyās Guru* of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Vrindāvanadās made Rāmahari his heir to the property and the temple of Denur of which Rāmahari's descendants, who now bear the title of Mahanta, still in possession. The present descendants of Gopinath, who are tenth in degree from him, still live at Denur and bear the title of Brahmachari. Krishnadās Kavirāj wrote his

[1] Premavilâs XXIII.p.222

biography, Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita with the permission of Vrindāvanadās[1]. So he was still alive at least at the time when Krishnadās began writing his book possibly in the eighties of the 16th Century.

In his introduction to Gaurapada Tarangini, Mr Jagabandhu Bhadra has manufactured an absurd story in imitation of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, to invest Nārāyani and her son, our author, with miraculous character. The story is given thus. One day in Saka 1427 (1505 A.D.) Nityānanda blessed Nārāyani that she should become the mother of a male child without knowing her to be a widow. The blessing terrified the widow. The fact was placed before Nityānanda that his prophesy could not be fulfilled. But it should not go in vain. He said to her, "Don't be afraid. No shame will touch you. By my grace you will conceive by a miraculous power and give birth to a wonderful child as the result of partaking of the remnant of Sri Chaitanya's food." A few days latter, she became pregnant by eating the betel already chewed by Sri Chaitanya, and Vrindāvanadas was born in Saka 1429 (1507 A. D.) in Sylhet, after having passed 18 months in his mother's womb. Nārāyani came to Māmgachi with her eighteen - month - old child Vrindāvanadās in 1508 A.D. and thence used to come to Nadia to hear the *Kirtan* of Sri Chaitanya at the house of her father. Sri Chaitanya took *Sannyās* when Vrindāvanadās was two years old.[2]

Nothing is more lamentable than the manner in which Dr. D. C. Sen has written the life-history of our author in illegitimacy, solely basing his conclusion on the above incredible story and willfully distorting the meaning of one passage of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata to prove the scandal which he has imposed on our author. He further modified the story by some additions and alterations. He says, "Nārāyani was married to one Vaikuntha Chakravarti who died in November 1535 A.D. and 18 months after his death Vrindāvanadās was born in May 1537 A.D.[3]

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[1] C.C. Adi VIII. 92 [2] Gaurapada Tarangini. pp. 128-129 [3] V.LM.B.p.75.

We do not know from what source he and Mr. J. Bhadra got this curious information. Let us see in the light of sober history whether this concoction can be supported at all. According to Mr. Bhadra, Nārāyani conceived in 1505 A. D. We have already noticed that Narayani was four years - old some time after Sri Chaitanya's return from Gaya which took place about 1506 A.D.[1] So Nārāyani was certainly not more than four years of age in 1507 A.D. Sri Chaitanya Deva accepted *Sannyās* in 1510 A.D. Vrindāvanadās says in two places that he was not born when Sri Chaitanya was still at Navadvipa.[2] It is quite true because his mother had hardly passed her sixth or seventh year when Sri Chaitanya took *Sannyās* in 1510 A. D. So Mr. Bhadra's contention that Nārāyani used to come from Māmgachi to Nadia with her two-year-old child before Sri Chaitanya left home, seems incredible and so collapses. His further supposition that he was born in Sylhet is also incompatible both with literary and traditional evidence.[3] The Late Mr. James Fuller Blumbardt M.A. has reasonably said the following in regard to Nārāyani's age "Nārāyani was probably ten years of age when Sri Chaitanya became *Sannyāsi* in Saka 1431 (1509-10 A.D.)[4]

Vrindāvanadās was the last disciple of Nityānanda and so must have been born at least fifteen years before the death of his Guru which took place about 1533-34 A.D., so Dr Sen's conjecture that he was born in 1537 A.D. seems untenable. Vrindāvanadās's father must have brought him up a full-grown young man of about seventeen or so if he died in Dr. Sen's date 1535 A.D.

The support of Dr. Sen's scandalous allegation against the saint-like Nārāyani and her son seems to have been based on his perverted interpretation of the epithet "Vyāsa" which has been added to him in Vaishnava literature in order to honour him. Dr. Sen says, "They imply this (scandal) by calling Vrindāvanadās, the sage Vyāsa of their age, the author of the epic poems the Mahābhārat and of

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[1] C. Bh. Madhya II. 321-325 [2] C. Bh. Adi XII. 284. M. VIII. 198
[3] Premavilâsa. XXIII [4] Catalogue of the Bengali and Assamese MSS in the library of the India Office

the Purānas, was born of a mother who was not the legal wife of Parāsara, his father.[1] "Dr. Sen seems to have willfully distorted the meaning of the term "Vyāsa" in which sense Vaishnava writers used it. By "Vyāsa" they have meant the phototype of the voluminous writer, and the archetypal Guru of all ages. To call a Vaishnava, a Vyāsa is the highest appellation that Vaishnavas can give to their preceptor. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj has used it upon Vrindāvanadās innumerable times by way of according to him his supreme gratitude and homage. Vrindāvanadās has been called Adi Vyāsa[2] in the sense that as Vyāsa described for the Lilā of Krishna in his Bhāgavata and other Purānas, so also Vrindāvanadās was the first to write Sri Chaitanya Mangal (Bhāgavata) the exclusive biography of Sri Chaitanya Deva the incarnation of Krishna, which ought to be called Bhāgavata and respected as such. It is only the quality of the ancient Vyasa, both as a writer and as a devotee, which has been applied to Vrindāvanadās. It is too obvious in Vaishnava literature. Thus Krishnadās pays homage to Vrindāvanadās in the following passage among, others. "Sri Vyasa sings the pastimes of Lord Krishna in the Bhāgavata while Vrindāvana figures as Sri Vyāsa in respect of the deeds of Sri Chaitanya. He narrated the auspicious deeds of Sri Chaitanya. It makes known the magnanimity of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda. And reveals the farthest limit of the doctrine of *Bhakti* to Krishna. All the cream of conclusions relating to *Bhakti* found in the Bhāgavata. He has called and written in it.[3] I also meditate on the lotus feet of Vrindāvanadās. I write about this book with his permission in which lies my good. He is the Vyāsa in the deeds of Sri Chaitanya, which are never intelligible, to any body except his grace.[4] Vrindāvanadās himself used the word "Vyāsa" on other writers of the sect". In the last part Gaurachandra the supreme Lord of all lords lived at Nilāchal for eighteen years. In the last part, the infinite display of Sri Chaitanya's deeds, VEDAVYĀSA is eternally engaged in describing. In any and every way to sing the

[1] 1. V.L.M.B.p. 75 [2] C.C. Antya XX. 82 [3] C.C. Adi VIII-33-41
[4] ibid. 81,82

glory of Sri Chaitanya.[1] "I write down a little of it I know. All will be known by Vedavyāsa" [2].

Dr. Sen further says "When Vrindāvanadās wrote his book, scandal was still rife and people annoyed him by referring to his birth. Our author occasionally betrays temper, writing in the unrestrained language of the vulgar. Thus "Those who in spite of all that I have said, spread scandal, should be kicked at the head for maligning us".[3] We fail to understand from what source or intuition Dr. Sen has considered that scandal was rife during the composition of the book, and how he has associated the so called scandal with the passage which he has quoted. He distortedly translated it into English with a view to misleading and giving the non-Bengali speaking people a false scent. The said passage is found to occur at least five times in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata text,[4] but in no case does it refer to the author himself. Vrindāvanadās has expressed his indignation in the said passages against those who were hostile and reckless in their speech and behaviour towards his Guru Nityānanda. It will not be out of place to render it in reference to its context to bring out its clear, plain meaning.

"All glory to the first lord Nityānanda .....

Those who know Nityānanda, have no evils/

Let those who like to be immersed in the ocean of Bhakti crossing the world of miseries/

Pay their devotion to Nityānanda, some say, Nityānanda seems Balarāma//

Others say, he is the most beloved of Sri Chaitanya//

Whether Nityānanda is an ascetic, or a devotee or a Jnāni/

Let them call him as they like//

Whatever Nityānanda may be to Sri Chaitanya/

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[1] C. Bh. Adi I. 179-181 [2] C. Bh. Antya V. 759 [3] V.L.M.B.p.77
[4] C. Bh. Adi IX. 225, XVII. 158; M.XI. 63

Let his lotus-feet lie in my heart//

In spite of that, if anybody bears malice /

He should be kicked on the head /[1]

It is quite apparent from the passages quoted above that the author hurled his vehemence at those who were hostile to his Guru Nityānanda. It contains nothing to suggest that people annoyed him by referring to his own birth. The passage provides no room for "spreading scandal" and "for maligning us", which Dr.Sen has thrust in the English rendering. No evidence whatsoever seems to exist at all except the creation of Dr. Sen, as to throw any doubt on Nārāyani's character.

Vrindāvanadās occasionally appears somewhat vehement, as we see in the above passage but he had reason to hurl defiance at the scoffers. He did so only when his God Sri Chaitanya and Guru Nityānanda were ruthlessly attacked by them. According to Vaishnava principle of devotion it is the most unpardonable offence on the part of disciples to let malicious outpourings against their God and Vaishnavas enter their ear. But if malice or even torture be directed to them personally, they should let it leak without a word of protest, as Haridās Thākur did. Jiva Gosvāmi, probably following the Bhāgavata Purāna[2] discusses the point as to what a Vaishnava should do according to their respective abilities in case they happen to hear malicious scoffing against God and His devotees; in the following lines of his Bhakti Sandarbha, (265): "Those who do not leave the place if they happen to hear the malice against God and His devotees will fall from their piety and go to hell. To leave the place in such cases is meant for those who are weak and disabled. But able men should cut off the tongue of the scoffer, and in the event of failure, should give up their own lives". Another Vaishnava writer, Narottama Thākur, has recorded almost the same principle that "Wrath should be employed against the enemy of God and of His devotees[3]. Vrindāvanadās seems

[1] C. Bh. Adi IX 214-225 [2] VII. 15.25.26. [3] Premabhakti Chandrika

to have rated the hostile atheists soundly for their vulgar scoffing but we should take into consideration that he wrote his book during the period of unparalleled hostility, which would have been infinitely damaging to Vaishnavism of which he was the exponent. He could not but be vehement to keep the enemies mouth shut. He is never without reason, Vrindāvanadas, Jiva Gosvāmi, Narottama, Baladeva Vidyābhusan could not bear that their *Āchāryas* of the community should be ruthlessly subjected to false and vulgar talks which they rebutted with vigorous speech and writings to save the prestige, stability and integrity of the Mission. Very lucky, very gallant and audacious Vrindāvanadās is extremely beloved, by the whole Gaudiya Vaishnava world for his successful defence of faith. His book is really an amusing but penetrating commentary on the difficulties and triumphs of the sect. What will at once strike the reader with overwhelming force is the astonishing armoury of reasoning with which he defended sect; the thoroughness with which he attacked its problems. His book evinces the ebullitions of his unflagging vitality and spirit. For the theistic cause as a whole, it was inevitable that he should stand invincible against the inroads of atheism. His occasional heat and bitterness are nothing more than was unavoidably necessary for him to rise to the occasion. He was a thoroughly worthy man of sound principle, stainless integrity and devoutly devoted to the tradition and practice of Vaishnavism. Adequate equipment and unflagging perseverance were the principal cause of his victory over the anti-Vaishnava scoffers.

HIS BOOK

It is a serious, carefully written book of supreme historical importance. The plan and method of the author are extremely orderly and elaborate. The reader who would enter clearly into the subject will find it handled fully and with accuracy of investigation and perspicuity of explication. Vrindāvanadās also gives us the true picture of the socio-religious condition of West Bengal in the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in which Sri Chaitanya was born, and brought religious regeneration by dint of his magnetic personality and sacrifice. Its importance lies not only in giving us the historical, geographical and biographical account of Sri Chaitanya Deva and his movement, but also in supplying us with the social outlook, political despotism, religious bigotry and dogmatism, sectarian rancour, communal hatred, general insecurity of life and property, cultural vanity coupled with narrow-mindedness, and so on, that prevailed in Bengal.

Unlike the perplexed author of the Chaitanya Mangal, Vrindāvanadās realises that he has dealt with almost mathematical precision. His vivid and lively description is expressed not in ornate phraseology but in the most simple and forceful style, that provides him with a sufficiently pregnant vocabulary. Both scholars and ordinary readers are sure to find joy in going through it without hindrance, which is the reason we set so high a value- on it in addition to its historical value; the author seems to have wonderful control of his faculties in putting the thing in proper shape with vivacity, without doing injustice to the literalness of factual subjects. Vrindāvanadās is an out and out Vaishnava and has firm faith in the divinity of Sri Chaitanya Deva and of his Guru Nityānanda, which he advocates throughout the poem with his characteristic talent, wit and argument. We notice in him the dynamic force and prophetic gift with which he sings the glory of his faith. He seems to convey a message to his readers through his very affirmative high poetry, which has the quality to enthrall and aCitāte the reader. From the Vaishnava point of view, Sri Chaitanya Bhāgavata is inestimable as a faith, a protest against the uproar of atheism on the one hand and the forceful representation of the Vaishnava faith in its unalloyed form on the other.

The principal aim of Vrindāvana's poem is to inform men of Sri Chaitanya's Divinity and the pious Vaishnava life, in contradistinction the prevailing atheism and its contributing vices. It is his healthy mind that has given

him a miraculous command of all means of uttering the thought and feeling that a sincere follower should advocate. He mastered the Vaishnava principle and saw the facts of Sri Chaitanya's life in relation to it. Vrindāvanadās was really a transporter whose function consists in revealing the celestial nature of Sri Chaitanya Deva to posterity. He seems to explain every detail of Sri Chaitanya Deva's life in the spiritual truth it envelops. His mind was deeply rooted in Sri Chaitanya Deva's Divinity, which with other family resemblances had wonderfully fitted the direction of his own. Every genius has a new compass, a new countenance and new thoughts, which separate, and singularize him from the average human being. We can call this speciality the style or bias of each individual. Nobody has ever accomplished anything commanding except by following his natural bent. None feels entire self-assurance until he can adequately express honestly and sincerely his own bent and what he has experienced in its pursuit. We feel in this piece of literature that the, author's soul is naturally endowed with the deepest devotion to Sri Chaitanya Deva and Nityānanda which he expresses with the utmost boldness. He was exceptionally courageous in upholding the cause of the Chaitanya Movement in fierce opposition to the *Smarta-Sakta* community who were reckless and vulgar in their attitude towards the Vaishnavas. What appear to be sometimes vehement in his biography are his prophetic words. We cannot but appreciate the wonderful potency of his mind in successfully maintaining his opinion against the scholastic atheism with the help of his sharp intellect and brave heart. There is something in him, which cannot be derided or daunted. The principle of Vaishnavism for which he stands, gives its authority to him adds to him a grander personality, gives him enormous valour and spiritual insight, so that his gods Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda seem to speak through his lips. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj thus remarks: "No mortal being could write such a blessed book, Lord Sri Chaitanya Himself is the speaker in his mouth, even if a Yavana happen to hear of Chaitanya Mangal (Bhāgavata) He is sure to become a great

Vaishnava"[1] Vrindavanadas argument is realty ingenious, his language copious, presentation brilliant. He has written what he knew and personally believed. He tried to translate the truth into his forceful language. The reader seems to hear the author's fullness of speech. The force of his representation makes them feel and treat the hero of his narrative biography as real, as if he were bodily in his pages. Vrindāvanadās does not seem to lose command of his readers. In every line he seems to rush to deliver his thought. The faith in Sri Chaitanya's religion is so generic, so specific to Vrindāvanadās's self and so marvellously impressed upon his sensibility that he finds himself fully at ease only in glorifying it and denouncing hypocrisy, superstition, religious apathy and scholastic atheism, by suggestions of infinite subtlety and vigorous reasoning.

First of all he describes the facts of Sri Chaitanya's life and next he pierces the outward facts to the core of the meaning within, in the course of which he expounds his interpretation and personal impression. He impresses his reader with his loyalty to an ideal of his spiritual honesty; to assert the Divinity of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda and uphold the Vaishnava faith was the Alpha and Omega of Vrindāvanadās's style, which sometimes appears somewhat aggressive for the defence of his faith whenever it was attacked by the anti-Vaishnava party. He was forced to create a technique to make his assertion effective, which leads some anti Vaishnava critics of the present day, not only to accuse him of advocating hot gospelling and holy roaring, but to manufacture an indecent story to humiliate our fearless writer.

The 24th chapter of Premavilāsa tells us that Vrindāvanadās was composing his Chaitanya Bhāgavata in Saka 1495 (1573 A. D.). A manuscript of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata exists in the house of Mr. Tirthanatha Vasu of Kaigrama, Burdwan, West Bengal, which bears Saka 1497 (1575 A.D.) as the date of its completion. It seems clear that Vrindāvanadās took more than three years to finish it. Mr. Blumhardt was of opinion that Vrindāvanadās wrote

[1] C.C. Adi VIII. 33-41

or at any rate began the composition of his biography in Saka 1457 (1535 A.D.) two years after the death of Chaitanya".[1]

Mr. Blumhardt has not mentioned his source of information. Vrindāvanadās does not seem to have been more than 18 in 1535 and it is doubtful whether he could have written such a book of abiding merit at an early age. Moreover his book evinces his thorough study of the Bhāgavata and other scriptures. Though the 24th chapter of Premavilāsa is questionable as to its genuineness, the date given in the above mentioned manuscript seems to corroborate the view of the Premavilāsa that it was begun in 1573 A.D. It is not probable that he would have finished it in 1575 A.D. if he had begun it in 1535 as Mr. Blumhardt has suggested.

Vrindāvanadās mentions several times that he heard and gathered the account of Vaishnavas from his Guru Nityānanda,[2] whose last disciple he was. This reference seems, to suggest that he began to write in Mr. Blumhardt date because Nityānanda disappeared about 1534-35 A.D. His mother's uncles Srivās, Srirāma and others who were Sri Chaitanya's companions in the early days of Sri Chaitanya's life and used to live with Him four months every year until His passing away, may have supplied him with material. The centre of Sri Chaitanya's activities in His Navadvipa days was at their house. He has made use of Murāri Gupta's biography. He met all direct followers of Sri Chaitanya.

Sri Chaitanya Bhāgvata is an exhaustive and precise account of a little more than the first half of Sri Chaitanya's life. He elaborately dwelt open all important incidents of His life and career upto His twenty fourth year which He passed at Navadvipa in the first two parts which together form more than three-fourths of the whole book. He devoted the remaining fourth to the latter half, the description of which also is mainly confined to those incidents that were

[1] Catalogue of Bengali and Assamese manuscripts of the library of the India Office.
[2] C.C. Madhya XX. 156

in relation to Bengal and Bengal devotees. He has omitted to describe the two very important missionary tours, one to the south and the other to the north, his daily life and religious experience which ought to have been discussed in the third part a good deal of which he has devoted to the description of his Guru Nityānanda's missionary activities in Bengal. In fine, the Chaitanya Bhāgavata is incomplete so far as Sri Chaitanya's later years are concerned. He cut short his description of it either because the book had already become very bulky or more probably because he may not have met Raghunathdās or Gadādhara Pandit and others, who constantly lived with Sri Chaitanya at Puri during the latter part of His life and kept diaries and memoirs which Krishnadās had inherited from Raghunāthdās and of which he made copious use in his biography. Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita, which is an account of His whole life and teaching, may be regarded as the supplement to the Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

The two works ought to be studied together. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj left out those incidents, which have been in the pioneer work by Vrindāvanadās; by merely referring to them he has described in detail the other incidents, which Vrindāvanadās either lightly touched or ignored or for which he could not get authentic material. The two works make up the deficiency of each other in this manner.

The Chaitanya Bhāgavata has taken in general for its vehicle that favourite national metre of Bengali poetry, the fourteen-word-Payar-couplet which, for the Bengali poets whose compositions give the most satisfaction in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; it was the established, one may almost say, the inevitable channel. This couplet is well suited to the narratives of epic pitch for continuous use in such poetry as Chaitanya Bhāgavata, which is pre-eminently rapid, direct, plain and noble, in the evolution both of its thought and expression. The long Payar is occasionally relieved ten-word ones and the *Tripadi*.

Vrindāvanadās has divided the book into three parts corresponding to the three distinct, epochs of Sri

Chaitanya's life. The first part called *Adi Khanda* is devoted to the description from His Birth to the pilgrimage to Gaya and initiation, the second *Madhya Khanda* to that part of His life at Navadvipa till the end of His 24th year, and the third called, *Antya Khanda* to that of His ascetic life of the last twenty four years.

A number of Vrindāvanadās's *Pada* songs have been collected in the eighteenth century anthology "Padakalpataru" of Vaishnavadāsa. Vrindāvanadās is said to have written another treatise called "Bhakti Chintamani" on the nine-fold *Bhakti* (Navadhā Bhakti.) This book consists of nine small sections but the British Museum manuscript[1] has 15 sections. It is very difficult to say with certainty that it was written by Vrindāvanadās because it neither bears his name nor does Bhaktiratnakara nor any of the Gaudiya Vaishnava books mention it to that effect. Some other books such as Nityānanda Vamsa Vishtara, Tattva Vilāsa and others seem to have been written by the interested parties and ascribed to him with the purpose of attaching authority to them.

SRI CHAITANYA CHARITĀMRITA BY KRISHNADĀS KAVIRĀJ GOSVĀMI

Neither the author nor any contemporary writer has thrown any light on the early life and family history of Krishnadāsa Kavirāj. Only on one occasion he says of himself that was also to show the greatness of Nityānanda. One Mina Ketana Rāmadās, an enthusiastic disciple of Nityānanda called at the house of our author at Jhamatpur (in Burdwan) on an invitation to the *Sankirtana* ceremony. All visitors present on the occasion honoured him on account of his discipleship to Nityānanda except the priest of the temple and Kishnadās's brother. The latter quarrelled with Ramadās as he had little faith in Nityānanda. His antipathy cut th heart of Rāmadās to the quick so he left the place in a fit o anger and disgust. This insult to Rāmadās, says the author caused his brother's ruin. His behaviour and

[1] or. 333. A

prejudice against Nityānanda whom Krishnadās regarded as an associated counterpart of His God Sri Chaitanya caused him extreme chagrin. He determined to shun his company in conformity with the Vaishnava principle, which he gives us in his biography to leave the company of non-Vaishnavas or evil people is the necessary duty of Vaishnavas[1]. He rebuked his brother who was said to believe in Sri Chaitanya, but not in Sri Nityānanda by telling him that Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda are the two divine brothers and constitute the same body of identical manifestation of Divinity. Your losing faith in Nityānanda will cause your ruin. It is better for you to remain an infidel disbelieving both Sri Chaitanya and Sri Nityānanda than to be a hypocrite having faith in one and disbelieving the other.[2] That very night Krishnadās had a dream in which Nityānanda is said to have appeared to him with all his Majestic splendour and Celestial suites and asked his to repair to Vrindāvana where he would find his desires fulfilled. The next morning he left home for good and started for Vrindāvana. His home was at Jhamatpur, a village close to Naihati, which is 3 k.m. North of Katwa, in the Burdwan district of West Bengal. The old Image of Sri Chaitanya probably installed by him before he left home for good, is still present at the house in the same village. He finally settled and lived his successful celibate, devotional life at Rādhākunda, with his Guru Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi. The cell in which he lived is pointed out on the north of the *Panchapandava Ghat*, which is north of the *Shyamakunda* and west of *Manasa Pavana Ghat.*

Sri Yadunāth Sarkar assigns his departure from home to 1533 A D.[3] It seems to have happened at least a year after that date. It is apparent that Nityānanda had already passed away before Krishnadās left home. Nityānanda's demise took place shortly after that of Sri Chaitanya, which occurred possibly in February 1534 A.D. The author of Haribhaktivilās mentions Krishnadās in the opening part

[1] C.C. Madhya XXII. 84 [2] C.C. Adi V. 174-177 [3] Introduction to his to translation of the middle part of C. C.

of the book which was certainly written sometime before 1541 A.D. the date of Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu; it mentions and cites verses from Haribhaktivilās.[1] He was alive till at least a few years after 1588 A.D. or 1592 A.D. the dates of Gopāla Champu which he mentions in his Chaitanya Charita.[2] He seems to have been born about 1515 A.D. or so.

Krishnadās was the disciple of Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi who came to Vrindāvana after the Disappearance of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Krishnadās studied the philosophy of *Bhakti* literature under Sanātana and *Rasa* literature under Rūpa.[3] He pays his homage to Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunath Bhatta, Gopāla Bhatta and Jiva Gosvāmi as his *Siksha Guru*[4] and Raghunathdas as his *Diksha Guru*.[5] At the end of every chapter of Chaitanya Charitāmrita he says "Putting his trust in Rūpa-Raghunāth's feet" "Krishnadās recites Chaitanya Charitāmrita" Raghunāthdās also mentions his most affectionate disciple our author in his Dānacharita.

Krishnadās was otherwise known as Kavirāj Gosvāmi by virtue of his title of Kavirāj. Its etymological meaning is king of poets. The title is generally conferred on Kāvya writers. Jiva Gosvāmi used to confer titles and honours, on Vaishnava students. Govindadās and Rāma Chandra gained the title of Kavirāj, on their poetical merit, from Sri Jiva Gosvāmi who blessed Srinivāsa and Narottama with the titles of Āchārya and Thākur. Krishnadās seems to have got the title of Kavirāj in recognition of his voluminous masterpiece of Kāvya literature Govindalilāmrita. It has been a custom among the Vaishnava Gurus to bless and encourage their disciples in their studies and devotion, which the disciples accept as a great favour. His Guru Raghunāthdās refers to him at the end of his *Muktacharita*, as Kavinripati, which is the same as *Kavirāj*. Thākur Narottama who lived with him at Rādhākunda for some time says the following in his *Prarthana*

"Krishnadāsa Kavirāj Connoisseur among the devotees.

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[1] Bh. R. S. Purva II. 42 [2] Madhya I 44; Antya IV. 230
[3] C.C. Adi.V. 203 [4] ibid. I. 36 [5] ibid. X.103

Who composed Sri Chaitanya Charita.

His Govindalilāmrita moves the stones to tears.

Alas, my mind is not directed to it.

Vrindāvan Chakravarti who has written the commentary Sadānanda Vidhayini (Saka 1701) on Govindalilāmrita, speaks of Krishnadās as *Kavinripati* on account of his Kāvya Govindalilāmrita. Yadunandanadāsa in his metrical translation of Govindalilāmrita (1610 A.D.) repeats the same. It is clear therefore that this title of *Kavirāj* was due to his poetical merit. His deep knowledge and high proficiency in all branches of Hindu scriptures particularly in *Sruti*, *Smriti*, astrology, astronomy and the culinary arts, as evidenced from his book Chaitanya Charitāmrita, which are regarded as necessary and almost exclusive studies and practice of the Brahmanas and to which Krishnadās's works bear striking witness, would suggest that he may have been a Brahmana by caste. The title of Kavirāj is also taken by the *Vaidyas* who practise the Ayurvedic system of medicine in Bengal. Dr. D. C. Sen (who is a *Vaidya*) likes to suggest that Krishnadās was a *Vaidya* by caste. We are not sure, in the absence of any evidence to that effect, that be belonged to the *Vaidya* caste and adopted medical practice as a profession. It is quite apparent from the contemporary and later writers that he was known as Kavirāj only on account of his Kāvya literature.

Krishnadās had a wonderful power of speaking without offending even when chastising his antagonists. The same religious 1ife and belief underlie both his Chaitanya Charitāmrita, and Vrindāvanadās's Chaitanya Bhāgavata, but one cannot appreciate the difference between them which lies not in their inherent qualities but in their setting. Both were fervent Vaishnavas and the two lives have a real resemblance but in the setting of the subject of their books there is a difference. One cannot but be struck with Krishnadās's infinite personal humility which never fails to draw the reader's sympathy. Vrindāvanadās seems to speak like a dictator but Krishnadās appeals with melting humility. Both the writers tried to attract the reader's

respect for Nityānanda but Krishnadās's method proves more effective than that of Vrindāvanadās. Krishnadās says, "I am more vicious than Jagai and Mādhai (the notorious ruffians whom Nityānanda reformed) more abominable than foecal worms, whosoever happens to hear my name loses his virtue, whosoever utters my name acquires only sin, who is there in the world to extend grace to me contemptible as I am, except Nityānanda? Being an embodiment of mercy and intoxicated with love of God, Nityānanda does not distinguish between the high and the low. He delivered and brought an unholy person like myself to this sacred place Vrindāvana and placed me at the feet of Sri Rūpa"[1] Krishnadās has been successful in drawing appreciation for Nityānanda by his personal humility which he has employed to magnify the greatness of Nityānanda.

Vrindāvanadās appears to threaten the anti-Vaishnavas who do not believe in the Divinity of Nityānanda. Krishnadās is more tactful than his predecessor in winning the sympathy of the reader.

Being a most erudite scholar and possessing high intellectual acumen and strict asceticism, he nevertheless thinks himself illiterate, mean, humble and worldly-minded. He provides no opportunity for critics to find fault with him. The current spirit of his biography is inexpressible personal humility together with selfless aggrandizement of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita and their followers. He says, "Though mean and unholy I am, still hopeful because of the strength derived from the commands of Vaishnavas. Such is the influence of the feet of Rūpa and Raghunāth that even meditating upon their feet fulfils all wishes and prayers".[2]

He invests a typical Vaishnava with the following qualities which he seems to have possessed in his own character, "Compassion, harmlessness, integrity, equanimity, gentleness, purity, selflessness, benevolence, patience, absolute surrender to Krishna, absence of desires,

[1] C.C. Adi V. 205-210 [2] C.C. Adi VIII. 83-85

modesty, mild temperament, control over the six passions, temperance, sobriety, humility, giving honours to all, gravity, kindliness, friendliness, poetic quality, dexterity and reticence". He was really humbler than a blade of grass and more patient than the tree. He is a good typical specimen of Sri Chaitanya's followers. Every line of his biography is suffused with his infinite humility and reveals his enthusiasm and deep devotion to Sri Chaitanya Deva and Nityānanda. The humility and appeal underlying his persuasive eloquence and logical argument, together with the force of his saintly character and selfless devotion to God, never fail to impress and excite the, sympathy of his readers with his zeal for personal humility and power of religion, what prudence in his counsels, what discernment what deep feeling! He has described the lives of Sri Chaitanya Deva, Nityānanda and Advaita and their followers. He is eminent by his genius, by his inborn force and fire, and is endowed with all the culture of Vaishnavism.

The most admirable of all biographies of Sri Chaitanya Dev is the Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās Kavirāj. It is lucid, accurate, well illustrated and well documented both in exposition and chronicling. The real quality of Krishnadās's work is natural simplicity. The expression of his noble thought is simple as light. He has united his noble nature and poetical gift with a grand simplicity of style to utter serious philosophical problems with limpid clearness. He is thoroughly sound and practical alike with his grand subject and plain style. His work evinces his wonderful mastery of all schools of philosophy, logic, Kāvya, Alamkāra, Rasa, Astronomy, astrology, mathematics. He was widely read in all the scriptures from the Vedic to the *Purānic*, Vaishnava literature belonging to different Vaishnava sects, and all *Bhakti* literature of the Gaudiya School to which he belonged. He thoroughly digested and interpreted them in the light of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. There is no room in his writing for difficulty and obscurity. He is perfectly plain in his speech, simple and intelligible. He has solved and expressed the knotty philosophical

problems that puzzle the veteran scholars, in the simplest language with signal ability. The way of his treating the subject and his conclusion are remarkable. The sagacity of his principle for scriptural interpretation, the power of analysis of the contents of the vast Hindu scriptures, and above all the interest of his reflections, have great worth of their own. His philosophy is not academic but very practical being identical with his spiritual life. He has crowned his intellectual life with a sacred transport, maintaining a perfect affinity, between the two. The sweetest and most blessed of all devout Vaishnavas, Krishnadās has bequeathed a wonderful treasury to generations. He has lighted up the obscure places in the scriptures, which puzzle and check our synthetical judgement. He brings brightness with his biography. He brings light to the eyes of his reader and fills them with a perfect clearness by which all problems seem illuminated. Krishnadās's Charitāmrita prepares us, makes us fit, to appreciate the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Deva. He is not like those authors whose praises belong to their own generations. His praise is forever and ever. He is a delightful and edifying genius. It will be no exaggeration to say that the success and popularity of Sri Chaitanya Dev's religion in Bengal is mainly due to the Chaitanya Charitāmrita, the grand mine of Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

All the Vaishnavas of Vrindāvana used to assemble in the temple of Govinda to listen when Haridās Pandit caused the Chaitanya Bhāgavata by Vrindāvanadāsa to be read out but it was incomplete so far as the last years of Sri Chaitanya Dev are concerned. So headed by Haridās Pandit, they jointly requested Krishnadās Kavirāj to describe the latter part of Sri Chaitanya's life and deeds. Being thus requested, says the author, he went to the temple of Madana Gopala to pay his devotion and receive the divine blessings for the success of his book. No sooner had he made his obeisance to the Deity than the garland of the Image dropped from His neck as if to accord his sanction and bless him with it. The priest placed the same round his neck amidst applause and the shouting of God's Name.

The author says that his composition is like the talk of a parrot. As the wooden doll is made to dance by the wirepuller, so also he composed whatever he was made to write by God Madana Gopāl.[1] He began his composition with the permission of Vrindāvanadās Thākur to whom the author accords supreme respect at every step by saying that he meditates on his lotus feet and also mentions him almost in every chapter. This is the beginning of Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās. The deeds of Sri Chaitanya Dev during the first twenty-four years at Navadvipa were written for the first time as we have noticed, by Murāri Gupta, while Svarūpa Dāmodara wrote down in His memoirs important incidents, teachings and biographical accounts of the twenty-four years of His hermit life, six years of which He spent in missionary tours and pilgrimages to the south and the remaining eighteen years at Puri. He has made use of these two records in chronological form.[2] He has closely followed and had the Chaitanya Bhāgavata before him during the composition of his work. Krishnadās referred to the incidents which had already been dealt with by Vrindāvanadās and described in detail those incidents which the latter had touched or left out for fear of the volume of his work swelling.[3] He had the rare fortune of getting the exclusive possession of the memoirs of Svarūpa Dāmodara from his Guru Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi together with the latter's diaries which provided him with the most reliable material so far as the later years of Sri Chaitanya Dev's life are concerned.[4] Raghunāthdās was the most affectionate disciple of Svarūpa Dāmodara (not *Diksha Guru* to whose care Sri Chaitanya had himself entrusted him. Raghunāthdās served Sri Chaitanya Dev for the last sixteen years of His life (Chaitanya's). Svarūpa Dāmodara bequeathed his memoirs and records of Sri Chaitanya Dev's life to Raghunāthdās from whom Krishnadās got them for the composition of his book. Krishnadās had the fortune to meet and live with Govinda and Kashisvara who were

[1] C. C. Adi VIII. 49-83 [2] C.C. Adi XIII. 17. [3] C.C. Adi XIII. 49,
[4] C.C. Madhya II. 84.

Sri Chaitanya Deva's constant attendants. The author says that he writes what Rūpa and Raghunāthdās knew from Sri Chaitanya Deva and in conformity with Svarūpa Dāmodara's views.[1] The author was then very old and doubted whether he could finish the book before his approaching death. Apprehending that he could not mention all the deeds of the latter part of Sri Chaitanya Deva's life if he began composing at great length, he enumerated all the principal deeds on a condensed form in the middle part (I&II) with a view to treating them with fuller and greater detail later on, if he should live to do so[2]. Luckily he was able to finish the description of those enumerated incidents more fully in the third part. Krishnadās has also made ample use of Kavikarnapura's Chaitanya Chandradaya Nātaka.

The author says that he describes Sri Chaitanya Deva's life and deeds as they are, reasonably and without passion and he is not actuated by prejudice or importunity or insinuation, the influence of which is a great bar to the representation of things in their true perspective.[3] Krisdanadās exults in the greatness and supernatural character of Sri Chaitanya Dev as well as records the restraint of Rāma Chandra Puri and Dāmodara Pandit on him.

DATE OF ITS COMPOSITION

The Gaudiya Math edition of Chaitanya Charitāmrita has a *Sloka* after the colophon, which states that it was completed at Vrindāvana in Saka 1537 (1615 A.D.) The following India office manuscripts No. S. 2311, 3258, 2858, also contain the said verse. Dr. D. C. Sen has given us another reading which would give the date Saka 1503 (1582 A.D.)[4] Dr. S. K. De has observed this verse in some manuscripts.[5] Premavilasa also contains the same verse referring to the date of Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās[4]. Besides there is another reading in the India

[1] C.C. Madhya III. 93, C.C. Adi X. 97 [2] C.C. Antya I.11 [3] C.C. Madhya IL 86
[4] V.L M.B.p. 63 [5] Haraprasad commemoration Volume. Article on Krishnadâs
[6] P.V. XXIV

office manuscript No. S. 3891. This would give us the date Saka 1531 (1609 A.D.) Let us see whether these dates could be tenable at all or whether these verses might be taken as that of the author Krishnadās. He twice mentions Jiva Gosvāmin's Gopāla Champu by name, the two parts of which are expressly dated as having been completed in 1588 and .1592 A.D. respectively. So, Dr. Sen's reading and date of its completion cannot be accepted on account of its reference to Gopala Champu.[1] It may be said that Krishnadās may have seen Gopāla Champu while it was in process of composition which may have been commenced several years before and the date of its completion may have been given after revision. We know from his letters to Srinivas Āchārya of Bengal that he used to revise his works several years after their composition. Krishnadās was Jiva's colleague so he may have seen it when was being written. The year 1537 of the Saka era (1616 A.D.) according to the Gaudiya Math edition and some India office manuscripts, already referred to, is also untenable, because Yadunandanadās's Karnananda[2] and Nityanandās's Premavilasa[3] mentions Krishnadās's Chaitanya Charitāmrita. These two works are dated as having been completed in 1600 and 1607A.D. So it seems to have been completed after the dates of Gopala Champu 1588 and 1592 A.D. and some time before that of Premavilāsa and Karnananda viz. 1600 and 1607 A.D. Therefore Saka 1531 (1609 A.D) as given in the India office manuscript No. S. 2891 may be ruled out.

It has already been mentioned that Krishnadās began his biography at the request of Pandit Haridās, disciple of Ananta Āchārya whom Krishnadās mentions as the principal of the Govinda temple.[4] The Sāhitya Parisad Patrika,[5] has published a list of successive principals of the said temple with the specific years in which they held office. This list is found in the said temple. It will not be out of place here to reproduce, it for our discussion, in order to assign the correct period of Haridās Pandit, on

[1] C.C.Madhya I. 44; Antya IV. 230, [2] V. VII [3] XXIV [4] C.C.Adi VIII. 58.
[5] Vol. X. Part II.

which depends the date when Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita was begun. 1) Rūpa 2) Gopala Bhatta 3) Ananta Āchārya 4) Haridās Pandit (55). 5) Govinda (20). 6) Nityānanda (22). 7) Rādhā Krishna (4). 8) Subharama (39). 9) Krishna Charana (24). 10) Govindacharana (15). 11) Jagannāth (30). 12) Hare Krishna (25). 13) Rama Charana (38). 14) Nilambara (7). 15) Balarama (3). 16) Krishna Charana (28). 17) Rama Nārāyana (17). 18) Govinda Nārāyana (3). 19) Hare Krishna (18). 20) Rama Chandra (11). 21) Shyama Sundara (30).

The last named principal Shyam Sundara died in 1904 A. D. The total amounts to 389 years but we should bear in mind that one was immediately succeeded by another and consequently the same year discounted both by the successor and the predecessor in their respective periods. We can subtract 16 years on account of 17 successors of Haridas and get 273 years that have actually elapsed between the accession of Haridās and the death of the last named Syama Sundara who died in 1904 A.D. So Haridas came to the Gadi or pontifical office in 1531 A.D. and either died or retired in 1586 A.D. after having held the office for 55 years. Though the Deity was installed by Rūpa Gosvāmi and the temple was built under his command, he never lived in the temple nor engaged in its actual management. He lived a life of recluse in a cell and wrote *Bhakti* literature. His name is given first because he was responsible for the temple and its Deity being installed. The next two Gopala Bhatta and Anantachārya, do not seem to have held the office, that is why the managerial or pontifical period is not put against their names. Rūpa placed his dearest friend Gopala in the service of Rādhāraman temple which he established for the latter, so he could not be pontiff of Govinda temple. Rūpa loved him as his own brother according to the wish of Sri Chaitanya, so his name is given beside him on the list.

It is a custom among the Vaishnavas to put the names of their Gurus if they happen to mention their own name on any memorable occasion or work. Haridās was the

disciple of Ananta Āchārya[1] It seems that Krishnadās probably began his composition before or about the date of Haridās's retirement which took place Circa 1586 A.D. and may have finished the first part and began the second part in which he mentions Gopāla Champu for the first time, at least immediately after 1588 A.D. when the first of Gopāla Champu was completed. There seems nothing to disprove that he took at least as long as three years in composing his book because the author himself says more than once that he was almost an invalid with his sickness and old age, and could not properly hold his pen. He was very much afraid that death might stand in the way of its completion.[2] Considering his old age and broken health, and the voluminous size of the work with its varied topics, difficult philosophy and complex theology, it would be ungracious to 'say that he took so long a period to finish it. Finally he seemed to begin his composition before 1586 A.D. It may be that he mentions Gopāla Champu when it was being written by Jiva. If it were completed before the completion of his Chaitanya Charitāmrita, he would have cited some verses from it in his book as he did from various works of the Gosvāmins.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE BOOK

The book is divided into three parts called the *Ādi lilā*, the *Madhya lilā* and the *Antya lilā*, which contain 17, 25 and 20 chapters respectively. The book contains 11,515 verses both in Sanskrit and Bengali, of which 915 Sanskrit verses are quoted from previous works in support of his views. He has composed and introduced 97 Sanskrit verses and the rest 10,503 in Bengali. The Gaudiya Math edition has five Sanskrit verses in the colophon, four of which are found in the manuscripts No.S. 2311, and one in No. 2858 of the India office. The first named manuscript has got two other verses; one begins with *Avirbhuam nijapārijanai*, and the other being the famous sloka "*Vancha Kalpataru*". The manuscript No.3758 of the said office has got another verse "*Srimati ..... Krishna Vamsi*" etc. which is not

[1] C.C.Adi VIII. 60 [2] C.C.Antya I. 11; XX. 93-94

found in the Gaudiya Math edition. Krishnadās has made an effective device to save the book from suffering at the hands of the later interpolators. At the end of each part (*Khanda*), he enumerates all the topics, which he has already described, with reference to their chapters. Again in the course of enumerating all the happenings in the 1st and 2nd chapters of the *Madhya Khanda*, he chances to mention all the points that have been described in the *Madhya* (middle) and *Antya* (last) parts. So, anything, which does not fall under those heads enumerated in the said chapters, may be regarded as spurious. The author has divided the whole book into three parts according to the three distinct epochs of Sri Chaitanya Deva's life. That is to say, he deals with his early life from birth to renunciation in the first part (*Ādi hlā*); the next six years of occasional pilgrimages in the middle part (*Madhya*); and the last eighteen years of his life at Puri in the *Antya lilā* or last part.

ITS COMMENTARIES

It is perhaps the only Bengali book which prides itself in at least three Sanskrit commentaries - i) Ānanda Chandrika, ii) Vaishnavapriyā by Jagamohanadās and iii) that of Vishvanāth Chakravarti. Paramahamsa Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Gosvāmi Thākur alias Sri Varsha Bhanavi Dayita Dās, the illustrious founder of Sri Chaitanya Math, Sri Māyāpur, (the parent organization of the present Gaudiya Vaishnava movement and its branches Sri Gaudiya Maths) has written an exhaustive scholarly commentary, under the name of *Anubhāsya*, partly in Sanskrit and partly in Bengali. He has cited numerous verses from at least 205 previous works in support of the Gaudiya Vaishnava view.

The author has also written a voluminous *Kāvya* literature called Govindaliamrita in Sanskrit, and a Sanskrit commentary styled Sārangarangadā on Vilvamangala's Krishnakarnāmrita. Both these works have been translated by Yadunandanadās into Bengali metrical verses. Vishwanāth Chakravarti has written a commentary called Sadānanda Vidhyāini on Govindalilāmrta.

SRI CHAITANYA MANGAL BY SRI LOCHANADĀS

The author of Sri Chaitanya Mangal is Lochanadās Thākur, who belonged to the Radhiya Vaidya family of Kograma village in the subdivision of Katwa, Burdwan, and West Bengal. We know from the autobiographical touch given at the end of his book that he was the only son of Kamalakara and his mother Sudanandi Devi was also the only daughter of Purusottama Gupta and Ananda Devi. Both his father and maternal grandfather belonged to the same village Kograma. Throughout the poem he records with pride the sentiment of glorious humility and discipleship for his preceptor Narahari Sarkar of Srikhanda, a very affectionate associate of Sri Chaitanya. He also gives us a short biographical account of Narahari particularly referring to his deep devotion to Sri Chaitanya and praises him as an *Avatara* of Rādhā's mate Madhumati,[1] possibly following Kavikarnapura's Gauraganoddesadipika. Like a typical Vaishnava writer Lochanadās avoids self-importance and expresses himself only in relation to his preceptor.

The purpose of his composing this beautiful narrative poem was not to thrust abstract philosophy and labyrinthine doctrine down the people's throat, but to impress the Divinity of Sri Chaitanya by working upon the aesthetic imagination. It was specially meant for the wandering minstrels who still recite it throughout Bengal after the fashion of the epic ballads of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata. Accordingly Lochanadās created a new style to make his book not a bare chronicle but a musical confession of faith dealing in some detail with simple principles and practices. The life-history of Sri Chaitanya Dev is brilliantly dressed up in songs with marvellous rhythm and fire which undoubtedly disclose the force and natural musical ability of Lochanadās, Sri Chaitanya Mangala is a *Panchali* book (*Sutrakhanda* 56) as the poet himself says, by which is meant a work that is composed in five metres. The poem displays the following kinds of metrical verses, *Payar, Laghu Tripadi, Dirgha Tripadi,*

[1] Sutra Khanda 645

Madhya, Tarja and Karuna. The music is stamped with this lyric poem to such an amazing extent that it has become distinctive possessing an unknown quality, which makes it pecuharly attractive. The poet-musician has adopted his narrative songs to the following modes of Hindu music in which they are still recited in Bengal, *Pathamanjari, Kedara Badari, Marhati, Dhansi, Sri Bhatiari, Vibhas Pahidi, Sindhura, Mallara, Vihagara, Suhai Lalita, Shyama Karunasri, Puravi, Ahiri, Ramakeli* and *Mangala Gurjjari*. It really creates the deepest and most lasting impression upon the audience through its varied sentiments. Lochanadās does not claim to be a doctor of theology. He was a musician like his preceptor and made music and directed his pre-eminent musical capabilities towards serving one mission viz., to impress the divine character of Sri Chaitanya on the popular mind and thereby rouse its religious sensibilities. Its language is particularly expressive and possesses a wealthy poetical vocabulary, forcible and pathetic, tender and bold. It is also stamped with his wonderful originality and he has certainly created a very pleasing style of his own. He sang the glory and divinity of Sri Chaitanya in lyric songs, which with their tender sweetness and the noble inwardness of their outbursts of religious sentiment together with the fluent ease of verse have made them the best *Kirtana* poetry up to the present time. The poem is remarkable for the strength and depth of pious feeling and sobriety. The reader of Chaitanya Mangala can realise what a wonderful imagination Lochanadās had. Sometimes be introduced legendary characters such as Nārada, and Vibhisana in order to enforce transcendental character, yet so real did he make them that one feels that they might be true. The impression one gets of this piece of poetic literature is that he has marvellously expressed and maintained the true Vaishnava spirit of deep humility and the glorification of Sri Chaitanya. The book has a quality that attracts those who are not at all concerned with sectarian controversies. He was successful in his mission in flooding the country with the songs, which are particularly useful both to the

wandering minstrels and those of poetic temperament who avoid the minute comprehension of the philosophical sublimities of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. But there is a serious defect, which mars the biographical quality of the book. The author seems to have no command of the factual subject and lacks historical vividness and accuracy.

DATE OF COMPOSITION

When Lochanadās began writing his narrative poem, the Chaitanya Bhāgavata had already carried Sri Vrindāvanadās's name throughout Bengal, Puri and Vrindāvana[1]. Neither, Lochanadās nor any contemporary writer, supplies us with the exact date of its composition, so we have no other recourse but to reasonable conjecture. It seems to have been written, contemporarily or more probably, after the Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata was originally called the Chaitanya Mangala and continued to be so called even during the composition of Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās, who had suggested and voiced, the popular Vaishnava view that Vrindāvanadās and his Chaitanya, Mangal should be called after the legendary sage Vyasa and his Bhāgavata respectively because he was the first to describe in detail the life and play (*Lilā*) of Sri Chaitanya as Vyasa extolled the pastimes of Krishna in Bhāgavata Purāna and also because Chaitanya was an Incarnation of Krishna[2]. Subsequently Chaitanya Mangala by Vrindāvanadās was known as Chaitanya Bhāgavata under which altered title Lochanadās has referred to it in his Chaitanya Mangala[3]. But Krishnadās refers to it only under its original title Chaitanya Mangala[4]. Lochanadās would not have given the same title Chaitanya Mangala to his biography had Sri Vrindāvanadās's biography still borne its original name. If Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās were written after Lochanadās's Chaitanya Mangala, they would have reversely referred to Vrindāvanadās work. Had Lochanadās written his biography at the time when his

[1] C.M. Sutra. 36 [2] C.C. Adi VIII. 34-35; XIII. 48 [3] Sutra p. 2136 Chaitanya Math edition [4] C. C. Adi II. 54 XV. 33; XVII. 138, etc.

Guru Narahari was still alive, and heard the facts just before he commenced his book, he would not have so hopelessly confused the important incidents as we notice in Chaitanya Mangal. He seems to have described from memory, vague and conflicting facts which he may have heard from his preceptor Narahari long before he actually began his biography. His accounts would have been systematic and clarified like that of Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās had his Guru Narahari still been alive, as he would not have allowed the confusion to pass. It is apparent that he could not get the help of a direct follower of Sri Chaitanya at the time of his composition to shape his wildly confused mass of facts. Dr. D.C. Sen gives the different dates of the composition of Chaitanya Mangala in his "Chaitanya and His companions" (p.101) and "Vaishnava literature of medieval Bengal" (p.81); the two works were published simultaneously.

In the former he assigns it to 1537 and in the latter to 1575 A.D. The former date seems to be absurd and untenable. Dr. Sen assigns his birth to 1523 A.D. (Bengali Language and Literature p.489). We know from the colophon that he spent his early youth in play and amusement without minding his studies at all. His grandfather finding him spoilt, taught him the alphabet with the help of the cane, when he was fully grown up. He seems to have begun learning the alphabet in his tenth or twelfth year, that is to say in 1533. It is beyond belief that he could have produced such a voluminous poem of abiding merit in 1537 A.D., barely two years after he had begun to learn the alphabet. It is certainly a work of his mature age. As Chaitanya Mangala comes after Chaitanya Bhāgavata by Vrindāvanadās it could not have been written in 1537. It cites verses from Kavikarnapura's Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya, which is expressly dated as having been completed in, 1546 A.D. Dr. Sen's other date 1775. A.D. does not seem accurate on the ground that Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās mentions Vrindāvanadās' book by its original name of Chaitanya Mangala and Lochanadās does by the latter name of Chaitanya Bhāgavata. We know

that Chaitanya Charitāmrita may have been written after 1588 or 1592 A.D. There is no historical evidence to contradict the supposition that Lochanadās may have written his book immediately after the Chaitanya Charitāmrita, by Krishnadāsa.

THE SOURCE OF CHAITANYA MANGALA

Lochanadās was a good Sanskrit scholar. He mentions that the recitation of the Sanskrit Gauranga Charita by Murāri Gupta charmed him so much that he could not resist the joy of singing the life and glory of Sri Chaitanya in Bengali metrical verses (p.4/56). Murāri Gupta's Gauranga or Chaitanya Charita and Vrindāvanadās's Chaitanya Bhāgavata inspired him and supplied him with material for his book Chaitanya Mangala. He may have heard of the life and activities of Sri Chaitanya from his Guru Narahari when he was alive, but he could not clearly bear the facts in his mind and reproduce them either vividly or systematically. Though he has not distorted the facts, he has so wildly confused them with one another that the reader is likely to feel that he seems to have drawn from a faded memory. He says that both Rūpa and Sanātana met Sri Chaitanya at Allāhābād on his way to Vrindāvana.[1] But this is not true. Sri Chaitanya met and taught them separately at Allāhābād and Benares respectively.[2] He makes Sri Chaitanya halt at Kulia and Navadvipa on His return journey from Vrindāvana to Puri. According to Krishnadāsa's Chaitanya Charitāmrita and Vrindāvanadāsa's Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Sri Chaitanya visited Kulia during his journey to Vrindāvana that was not completed as he returned from Ramakeli and Kānāinātsala.[3] He did not visit Kulia when he returned from Vrindāvan to Puri. Again Lochanadās makes Sri Chaitanya meet Rāya Rāmānanda at the royal palace at Kanchipuram and whom he described as prince, whereas he was the governor of Rājmahendry - Vidyanagara under Pratapa Rudra then king of Orissa.[4] and Sri Chaitanya met him on the Godavari.[5] But in spite of these in discrepancies the book has a value

[1] Sesha Khanda 181/38 [2] C.C. Madhya XIX; XX [3] C.Bh.Antya III; C.C. Madhya XVI [4] C.C. Antya X1. 122 [5] C. C. Madhya VIII. 12-14

of its own. We should not expect an accurate historical and topographical account of Sri Chaitanya's eventful life with system and precision from one who had never passed the boundary of Bengal and who wrote his biography at a time when none of Sri Chaitanya's direct followers seems to have survived to help him in arranging the facts.

Sri Caitanya Mangala consists of four parts namely 1) the *Sutra Khanda*, 2) the *Ādi Khanda*, 3) *Madhya Khanda*, and 4) *Sesha Khanda*. All the editions do not contain the same number of verses. The Chaitanya Math edition, which is considered the best of all, has 1628, 2846, 4372 and 1592 in four parts respectively. The Bangavasi edition contains 1526, 2962, 4726 and 1516 in respective parts. The Gaura-Vishnupriyā press edition contains some additional couplets, which describe that Sri Chaitanya disappeared in the shrine of Jagannāth at Puri, and that Sanātana, Haridās, Srivās, Datta Mukunda and others wept and sobbed outside the temple. These lines are neither found in the first printed edition published in 1852, nor in the Calcutta Sanskrit college manuscript, nor in any other editions. These couplets not only sounded very modern, they do not fit in well with the body of the poem and the statements contained in them also contradict history. At the time of Sri Chaitanya's disappearance in Saka 1455 (1534 A.D.) Sanātana could not have been there. He left Puri for Vrindāvana in March 1518 A.D.[1] The famous Haridās had already left the world. Sri Chaitanya Himself buried him in the sea-beach about ten years before His own disappearance.[2] It was one of the most memorable incidents in the history of the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect. Lochanadās must have heard it. There were two Haridās who lived at Puri with Sri Chaitanya. The Junior Haridās also died about ten years before Sri Chaitanya's disappearance from the world. His demise also was associated with a most striking incident. He committed suicide by throwing himself into the Ganges at Allāhābād in consequence of severe remorse for a grave offence on account of which Sri Chaitanya forbade him to appear in

[1] C.C. Antya IV. 207 [2] C.C.Antya XI. 68

His presence.[1] The fatal news struck the Bengal Vaishnavas with fear and wonder.[2] Every child born in a Vaishnava family knows these two incidents. Lochanadās could not deliberately have stated that Haridās and Sanātana were present at Sri Chaitanya's disappearance at Puri. This additional matter is undoubtedly spurious.

A good number of *Pada* songs of Lochanadās have been preserved in various anthologies such as Padakalpataru and others. He turned Rāya Rāmānanda's Sanskrit Jagannāth Vallabha Nātaka into Bengali verses.

SRI CHAITANYADAYAVALI BY PRADYUMNA MISHRA

This is a very short but good biography of Sri Chaitanya written by His cousin brother and follower, Pradyumna Mishra. He was an inhabitant of Sylhet. Vrindāvanadās says the following of him. "Sri Pradyumna Mishra ocean of Krishna's love, to whom Sri Gaurachandra gave His Feet.[3]

Pradyumna Mishra used to live occasionally with Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Once Sri Chaitanya sent him to Rāya Rāmānanda to listen to the doctrine of *Bhakti* from him, but he found him dressing up the dancing girls and teaching them dancing, and singing, rehearsing his Jagannāth Vallabh Nātaka which was to be performed in the temple before the Deity. He had some misgivings about Rāya's luxurious life, and told Sri Chaitanya what he had thought, Sri Chaitanya then disclosed to him the very high standard of Rāya's spiritual life. He was above the temptation of the flesh. Henceforth Pradyumna's respect for Rāya became unflinching and he was initiated by him into the mystery of the love of God. Krishnadāsa has given the following reflections in this connection.

"To destroy the pride of the ascetics and the Pandits
He caused the rehgion to be preached by low Sudras.
In spite of being a Grihastha, Rāya is not the slave of his senses.
Although a family man he was the instructor of the ascetics.

[1] C.C. Antya III. 145-147 [2] C.C. Antya III. 161 [3] C.Bh.Antya V.211

With a view to making His greatness known,
Sri Chaitanya sent Pradyumna Mishra to him." [1]

Pradyumna Mishra's Chaitanya Chandrodayavali gives us a table of Sri Chaitanya's pedigree, which is found in no standard biography except in Sri Krishnadās. It is of historical importance.

GAURA KRISHNODAYA BY GOVINDADEVA

Another Sanskrit biography of Sri Chaitanya under the name of Gaura Krishnodaya by the Odiya poet Govindadev has been published in 1913 A.D. by Sri Vimalā Prasad Siddhānta Sarasvati Thākur. Its manuscript was in the possession of Rai Saheb Gaurashyama Mahanti, agent to the Nayagada estate in Orissa. Govinda was a disciple belonging to the order of Bakresvara Pandit who was the direct follower of Sri Chaitanya. This book is in perfect conformity with the spirit of the standard biographies of Sri Chaitanya.

We find a Sloka at the end which gives us Saka 1680 (1758 A. D.) but we are not sure whether it is the date of the composition of the book or that of the transcription of the manuscript. It consists of eighteen Sargas or chapters.

AN ODIYA BIOGRAPHY - CHAITANYA VILĀS BY MĀDHAVADĀS

Mr. Bimana Bihāri Majumdar has given notice of a Chaitanya Vilās by Mādhavadās, an Odiya biography of Sri Chaitanya, in the Sāhitya Parisad Patrikā.[2] It was in the possession of Mr. Durga Charana Jagadeva of Puri. It is considered a good dramatic poem in Odiya.

The poet was probably the same as Mādhava Pattanāyak whom Devakinandanadās celebrated in his Vaishnava Vandana probably on account of his biography of Sri Chaitanya. "I bow to Hari Bhatta and Mahanti Balarāma, Obeisance to Pattanāyaka, whose name is Mādhava".

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[1] C. C. Antya V. 80-84 [2] Vol. XXX. p.12.

The poet says of himself that he was the disciple of Gadādhar Pandit in the following lines. "I will describe a little of the life of Sri Chaitanya. My obeisance to my Guru Gadādhar, the greatgod.

May my mind be devoted to his feet, who will fulfill my desire". We know that Gadādhar Pandit established the Gopināth temple at Puri and had hosts of disciples comprising Odiya, Bengali, Bihari and Southerners.

Mādhava seems to be a good Sanskrit scholar and philosopher at the same time. He begins his biography with Rūpa Gosvāmi's famous sloka *"Anarpita Charim Chirat"* etc.[1] The following second verse is the composition of our poet.

"Glory, glory to Krishna, the full embodiment, of intelligence who thinks Himself as Gaura, on account of His constant meditation on Rādhā, Who is charming beautiful, Who has become famous in the world as the deliverer of the fallen".

The third Sanskrit verse has been culled from the Brahma Samhitā (No. 62).

Mādhava has wonderfully adopted the spirit of Svarūpa Dāmodara, Jiva, Rūpa, Kavikarnapura, Krishnadās Kavirāj and Prabodhānanda Sarasvati. The said verse of his own is reminiscent of the famous Sloka *"Rādhā Krishna Pranayavikrit"* etc. of Svarūpa Dāmodara.

The poet was a typical Vaishnava. He wishes to employ all his senses in the service of Sri Chaitanya and feels very uncomfortable if His time is spent in anything else. In this connection he seems to have translated some *Slokas* of the Bhāgavata text from the third chapter of the second canto. Like the principal Gaudiya Vaishnava writers, he has denounced *Māyāvadism*, *Mukti* and the like, and established the transcendental personality of God Whom he places in the inner part of the kingdom of God. He identifies God Krishna with Sri Chaitanya, in the following lines:

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[1] Vidagdha Mâdhava Nataka. I.2.

"The deliverer of the fallen, Thou art Gaura Incarnate.
In every age Thou shouldst deliver men.
O, people, live at Vrindāvana, giving up all bad desires
Make your tongue glorified by singing the Name of Hari.
God Sri Krishna in the form of Gaura,
Makes Himself known and lives, all scriptures say so."

THE SOURCE OF THE BOOK

The poet says the following in regard to the source and material of his book:

That glorious character (of Sri Chaitanya), hardly attainable by Brahma and Siva,

Sri Thākur (Gadādhara) expresses in his own mouth,

What he said I recorded in the Utkala language,

About the Sannyās of the Lord,

Good people should take no offence; Mādhava's hope lies at Thy Feet.

Mādhava describes the life of Sri Chaitanya from His Birth to the settlement at Puri after His return from Vrindāvana. He, thus ends:

"In the company of devotees He passed the time upon the waves of Bhava.

He soon returned to Nilachala.

He spent His days in the pleasures of Krishna,

The minds of all devotees became very happy."

It seems to have been written not long after the Disappearance of Sri Chaitanya. The poet gives us an excellent description of the grief of Sachidevi and of Vishnu Priyādevi and their entreaties to Sri Chaitanya that He should not leave them. Sri Chaitanya's mother Sachidevi says to Him "Who taught you thus? Tell me, how your hard heart is not moved. You are the only staff to the blind, the necklace of the breast, and the eyelid to the eyes. How could I bear my life without seeing you?" Sri Chaitanya gives her one of His best teachings in the line. "Shyām is the world.

Life passes in a moment. Will they whom you call son, friend, superior, brother, accompany you? Love Krishna as you love Me. In My previous Births I was your father, May, be you were my sister in many births. In many births you may have been animals and men. Keep away all grief."

The following is part of Vishnupriyā's entreaties:

"Giving up the good embroidered cloth,

Dor and Kaupin will you wear, my wealth?

Fie on my life, let me die in a moment,

Let my body be split up.

Sachi's heart is as hard as iron!

She will give up life without you.

Since your infancy, you played with your friends

Have mercy on them.

How is your lotus heart soft?

You will go away hurling the thunderbolt at the heads of males and females of Nadia. Again and Again she fell crying,

Embracing the Feet of the Lord

Wherever you go, take me with you."

This book is divided into ten *Sargas* or Chapters. It bears a strong resemblance to Chaitanya Mangala by Lochanadās. For example, the sixth, seventh, eighth, and nine Chapters are almost the same as those of the Chaitanya Mangal with regard to the sequence of events and thoughts.

CHAITANYA CHANDRĀMRITA BY PRABODHĀNANDA SARASWATI

There are some semi-biographical books, which particularly emphasise the doctrine and supernatural excellence of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Of these, Chaitanya Chandramrita by Prabhodhānanda Saraswati is perhaps the best. Prabodhānanda is the youngest brother of Venkata

and Tirumalla Bhatta of Srirangam. When Sri Chaitanya Dev met them and was their guest for four months during His journey in the South in 1511 A.D. In 1510 A.D. they belonged to the Srivaishnava sect being devoted to God Lakshmi Nārāyana in the relationship of Master and servant. Prabodhānanda and the other members of the family accepted devotion to Rādhā Krishna and attained to Gaudiya Vaishnavism in consequence of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's influence. According to the wish of Sri Chaitanya Deva, Prabodhānanda taught Gopala Bhatta who was the son of Venkata, the Bhāgavata and other Bhakti literature and sent him to Rūpa and Sanātana at Vrindāvan. Gopāl mentions Prabodhānanda as his Guru[1] Prabodhānanda also left Srirangam and lived the rest of his life in absolute devotion and seclusion at Kamyavana near Mathurā where his tomb is to be found. Dr. D. C. Sen is perhaps wrong in identifying this Prabodhānanda Saraswati with the *Māyāvadi Sannyāsi* Prakashananda Saraswati of Benares. This Sri Vaishnava Prabodhānanda of Srirangam accepted Sri Chaitanya Deva's Vaishnavism (during the latter's stay in their family in the rainy season of 1511 A.D. while the Māyāvadi leader Prakashananda was defeated and converted by Sri Chaitanya Dev in the month of Falguna, (March) 1516 A.D. at Benares on His way back from Vrindāvana to Puri. Therefore Prabodhānanda is different from Prakashananda.

Kavikarnapura mentions Prabodhānanda in the following lines of his Gauraganoddesadipika (163): "Who was Tunga Vidya in Vraja is now Sannyāsi Prabodhānanda Saraswati who is well up in all scriptures and sings of Gaura". Kavikarnapura tacitly refers to Prabodhānanda's book Chaitanya Chandramrita on Sri Chaitanya Deva in the said verse by saying that "He sings of Gaura". Gauraganoddesadipika was written in 1576 A.D.

We know that Prabodhānanda was an elderly man in 1511 A.D. when Sri Chaitanya graced him at Srirangam. Prabodhānanda's book was written sometime after the

[1] Haribhaktivilâs I. 2

passing away of Sri Chaitanya Deva as he expressed in the book his deep grief at the latter's disappearance.[1]

Sri Gaudiya Math has published an excellent edition of Chaitanya Chandramrita with the Gaudiya Bhāsya by Paramahamsa Sri Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvati Goswāmi Thākur, which consists of the Sanskrit commentary and the Bengali explanation. The India office possesses a very good manuscript of Chaitanya Chandramrita with a Sanskrit commentary called Rasikāsvadini by Anandin, disciple of Narasimha.[2] The commentary is discontinued after the verse *Svapadambho* etc.[3] Anandin wrongly attributes Dāmodara's famous verse: *Rādhā Krishna pranaya vikriti hlādini shakti* etc. to Sanātana Gosvāmi.

Sri Gaudiya Math edition and the India office manuscript perfectly agree with each other in number of verses, which are 143. But Mr. Eggling has counted 134 verses in the said manuscript. It was perhaps through inadvertence that the wrong notice about the number of verses of the said manuscript has crept into the catalogue.

In Chaitanya Chandramrita the Poet's imagination keeps abreast with his feeling, and his words faithfully embody them. His style is direct and forceful. From first to last he praises Sri Chaitanya Deva as the best of all Incarnations of God. It evinces the poet's extraordinary eagerness and vivacity, and occasional pathetic touches bring out his infinite devotion Sri Chaitanya Deva.

Prabodhānanda has also written 1) Rādhārasa Sudhanidhi, on the love of Rādhā, and Krishna, or to be more precise, in praise of Rādhā, 2) Navadvipa Sataka in praise of Navadvipa where Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was born, 3) Vrindāvanasataka, 4) Sangit Mādhava. Rajendra Lal Mitra attributes the authorship of *Viveka Sataka* to our author. Some scholars attribute "Rādhārasasudhānidhi" to Hita Harivamsa but it is the work of Prabodhānanda.

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[1] Vide verse Nos. 138, 139, 140. etc. [2] Eggling a catalogue No. 1183a.
[3] Verse No. 102. Fol. 256. [4] Fol. 3b

CHAPTER SEVEN

LIFE OF SRI CHAITANYA

HIS BIRTH

In the month of Fālguna in Saka 1407, Sri Chaitanya was born, the tenth and youngest child of Jagannāth Misra, surnamed Purandara Misra and Sachidevi, the accomplished daughter of Nilāmbara Chakravarti, a famous astrologer of the day. He was born at the rise of the full moon in eclipse which according to calculation, took place on the twenty-third day of the said month corresponding to the 18th of February, 1486 A.D. of the Christian era: a most auspicious moment when all Hindus, as usual on the occasion of an eclipse, performed the ceremonial ablutions in the holy stream amidst the loud cry of the name of God Hari-Krishna. The first eight children of His parents were all daughters who died in their infancy. The ninth child, a son was first known as Visvarūpa and later as Shankaranya Puri.

Sri Chaitanya came of *Vaidika Brāhmana* family and was born at Navadvip. The present town of Navadvip is not the same as old Navadvip and consequently is not the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya which lies about two miles above the confluence of the Bhāgirathi and Jalangi whereas the present town is below the confluence of the said rivers. The old town covers the villages of Bāmanapukur, Sri Māyāpur, Srināthpur, Bhāruidanga, Ballaldighi, where the ruins of Ballal's palace, Ballal's lake, the tomb of Chand Kāzi who was the magistrate of the town during the time of Sri Chaitanya, and other places of historic tradition still bear witness to its great days of the past.

Sri Chaitanya was born at the most favourable moment of planetary conjunctions. The great astrologer Nilāmbara

Chakravarti and another Brāhmana colleague cast His horoscope and remarked that the child would be an intellectual genius, a saviour of the world, the unique preacher of the religion and would declare the dispensation for the present age.[1] His horoscope which has been compiled in co-operation with Srimad Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvati Gosvāmi Thākur, following the account of the constellations at His Birth found in Chaitanya Bhāgavata by Vrindāvandās and in Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krishnadās Kavirāj. The astrologers recognised on His Person all the signs of the superman both from the calculation of the constellations as well as from the auspicious marks on His limbs, for instance, His Feet were marked with the flag, thunderbolt, conch and fish, which according to Hindu astrology, only those who are of exceptional merit are endowed with.[2] He is said to have possessed the thirty-two marks of the superman (*Mahāpurasa Laksanas*) which Hindu writers on *Smriti* and iconography, as well as sculptors attribute to gods and saints. These marks are as follows: That their five parts: the nose, the arms, the cheeks, the eyes and the knees are long; five parts: the skin, the hairs, the knuckles, the teeth and the hairs of the body are short; seven parts: the corners of the eyes, the soles of the feet, the palms of the hands, the palates of the mouth, the lips and the nails are of crimson complexion; six parts: the breast, the shoulders, the nails, the nose, the waist, and the face are raised; three parts: the neck, the thighs, and the organ of generation are unusually short; three parts: the waist, the forehead and the chest are very broad; and three others- the navel, the voice and the mind are deep.[3] All the biographers present Him as a fine man with broad forehead, long eyebrows, large eyes like the petals of the lotus, a long and aquiline nose like the beak of a *Khagapati*, lips like a ripe *Bimbā* fruit, and teeth like pomegranate seeds. His throat was marked with three lines like a conch His chest broad and waist thin as that of a lion. His thighs looked like the stalk of a banana tree and His knees like the proboscis of an

[1] C.Bh.Adi III [2] C.C.Adi XIII.120 [3] C.C. Adi XIV. 14-15

elephant. His stature measured four cubits and a half by his own hands. Vrindāvanadās describing Him in the opening verses of his Chaitanya Bhāgavata says that He could touch His knees with either hand without bending. He was tall exceptionally handsome and very distinguished in appearance, with His brilliant ultra-fair complexion for which He was given the name of Gaura (one of golden complexion). Apart from the miraculous traits assigned to Him by His biographers in their multiplicity of supernatural details, there remain many qualities of heart and brain, are decidedly above the average. He was a shining gem in the intellectual crest of Bengal and a supremely gifted prodigy. The radiance that had magnetised the most intractable sinners and diabolical and murderous criminals like Jagāi and Mādhāi and others under the shock of an overwhelming emotion, emanated from His power of saintship. His personal magnetism was indeed extraordinary His psychological insight amounted to genius. He was the most loving of all saints and the embodiment of touching sympathies. His supreme characteristic that time can never minimise or make less inspiring, is the power by which He attracted from worldly ambitions hundreds of people in political and administrative posts such as Rūpa, Sanātana, Rāmānand Rāy and others; from princely youths such as Raghunāthdās to the blackest criminals like Jagāi and Mādhāi. Love and spiritual consolation streamed from His heart, penetrating and unifying all who came into contact with Him. He engrafted an element of glowing greatness into every act. He was a spiritual healer of suffering humanity. His spiritual promises and consolation to Subuddhi Rāy, and means of expiation of his sins at the tragic moment when the latter has worried himself into hopeless misery, are shining examples of His pity and encouragement. The divine and loving influence of His nature, the inherent goodness which so greatly endeared Him to His numerous followers, His mystical sensitiveness, His devout imagination, but above all His devotional ecstasy by means of which He impressed all

with whom He came in contact and which acted as a soothing remedy to rampant atheism; these were the outstanding qualities that contributed to His remarkable success and made Him an arresting personality today. His all pervading power may be gathered from the fact that it is His faithful followers whom He inspired with a new outlook who are solely responsible for the new culture and storehouse of literature both Sanskrit and Bengali, of which Bengalis are rightly proud and for which they now claim their high place in the religious history of India. All that is finest in literature, sweetest in music, is to be found in the Gaudiya Vaishnava community.

His Birth in a family famous for learning for generations, and in a university town steeped in traditional culture where a high level of general education was universally accepted as important formative influences as was His inborn genius, for they both contributed to His unrivalled scholarship though it cannot be said with any certainty that the influence of environment stimulated His religious views, in which asceticism and emotion were harmonized in a manner unlike the current religion of His family and of the day. True, His parents were very pious and God-fearing but they were not exclusive devotees of Vishnu in the strictly sectarian sense of the term, to which Sri Chaitanya was to give a truly catholic interpretation. For instance, His mother worshipped the minor goddess *Sasthi* on the day she left the lying-in-room in which Hindu women segregate themselves for a certain number of days after child birth.[1] She with other women of the family invoked the minor Buddhist goddess Aparājita to save the baby from evil spirits.[2] On one occasion Sri Chaitanya forcibly ate up the offerings which His mother was taking to the goddess *Sasthi* under a certain tree, to the dread of His mother lest her son should be subjected to the terrible wrath of the goddess. In this connection Lochandās puts one of the Vaishnavite principles into the mouth of Sri Chaitanya in reply to His mother's rebuke, that as watering the root of a tree develops the branches and leaves so

[1] C.Bh.Adi IV. 18-20 [2] ibid.I2

worship and devotion to Vishnu, the Supreme Lord of all, includes worship to all of them.[1] His mother was later converted to His religion of pure love and devotion after formal expiation of an unconscious offence against the great devotee Advaita.[2] It was Sri Chaitanya who persuaded her to observe the fast on *Ekādasi* day, which is the most usual but essential feature of Vaishnavism.[3] To all appearances, she was a liberal-minded Hindu woman who later on came under the special devout influence of Sri Chaitanya Who watched over her spiritual progress. Her offence against Advaita arose out of a misunderstanding of the asceticism of the religion of love.[4] Unlike Sri Chaitanya and His elder brother, His parents were inclined to a virtuous home-life and tried their utmost to make their sons adopt the same, but the sons were destined to be wandering ascetics. Though Sri Chaitanya was hardly more than five or six years old when His elder brother Visvarūpa renounced the world nevertheless the latter left an abiding impression on Sri Chaitanya's mind which we gather from the fact that during His wanderings in the south of India, He searched for him till he heard of his recent death which took place at the holy Tirtha of Pāndarpur in the Bombay Presidency.[5] It is also obvious from the following passages: "One day Sri Chaitanya, having chewed the offering of betel, fell unconscious and on regaining consciousness, narrated a vision that His brother Visvarūpa led Him away and asked to accept *Sannyās*, whereupon He replied 'I am the only stay of our parents and being a child, I know nothing of asceticism.'[6] It is not our purpose here to decide whether this is fact or fiction. Sri Chaitanya's admiration for His brother is implied in the story.

The desire for spirituality appears to have been born in Sri Chaitanya. He was ushered into the world amidst the universal chanting of the Name of Hari, which was the only thing that consoled Him and stopped His crying in His infancy, and with which His career became identified as its living exponent. His rosy golden complexion joined

[1] Adi. Balyalila.p.50 [2] C.Bh.Madhya XXII.117 [3] C.M.Adi.p.61
[4] C.Bh.Madhya XXII.II7. [5] C.C.Madhya IX.300 [6] C.C. Adi 17-19

to the marvel that He could only be quietened while crying, by the chanting of the name of Hari led the matrons to name the boy 'Gaura-Hari'. Sitādevi wife of Advaita gave the baby the name of Nimāi to protect Him from evil spirits and witchcraft and by this name He was commonly known before His *Sannyās*.[1] The meaning of Nimāi is bitter as the Neem tree, and implies an object of distaste to the evil spirits and the god of death who were responsible for the premature deaths of His eight elder sisters. He was formally named Visvambhar (One who sustains the world) by His maternal grand father Nilāmbara Chakravarti, in consultation with learned Pandits who considered the name most appropriate to the circumstances, as His Birth coincided with the advent of plentiful rains and a successful harvest which brought the famine and drought that were then raging in the country, to an end.[2]

HIS CHILDHOOD

The minutest details of his infancy have been noted with a superhuman touch and preserved with loving care by His biographers. He proved to be an unusually restless child. At the ceremony of His naming, when various articles such as books, paddy, fried rice, Chauri, gold, silver, etc. were held out before Him to foretell His future predilection in life, Nimāi caught hold of the Bhāgavata of which He was to become the great exponent, passing by the other articles. All present rightly remarked that the boy would be remarkably intelligent and a great Vaishnava easily attaining to a knowledge of the scriptures.[3] When He could crawl on His knees, He is said to have horrified all by catching hold of a cobra snake lying quietly on its coils. The Vaishnava biographers relate that He used to discuss deep philosophy with His mother when He was barely five or six years old. On one occasion He ate earth preferring it to the sweetmeats offered to Him, and argued that there could be no ultimate difference between the two as the latter were the transformation of earth, but he gave up the strange food,

[1] C.C.Adi XIII.117 [2] C.Bh.Adi IV.47-48 [3] C.Bh.Adi IV

on being convinced by His mother that the difference between the two was real, as the one sustains the body and the other destroys it, whereas a jar made of earth, may hold the water poured into it but if water put on a lump of clay, soaks in, so rice and sweetmeats may be transformed earth but they nourish the body while earth destroys it. Thus the difference between them is real in the practical sense.[1]

Another day He ate the cooked rice of an ascetic Brāhmana who happened to be a guest at the house, three times while the latter was meditated for offering it to his God Boy-Krishna. In order to convince the Brāhmana that He was the Boy Krishna whose devotee he was, He is believed to have revealed His identity to him.[2] On another occasion, being kidnapped by two thieves who attempted to rob him of His ornaments that He was wearing, the same thieves brought Him back to His father's house against their own volition.[3] As a boy He proved to be extraordinarily attractive with so great a sweetness and radiance that all the neighbours loved Him as they loved their own children. With the first development of intelligence, His religious passion revealed itself quite clearly. By falling at her feet, He induced His mother to give up eating cooked rice on the *Ekādasi* day when it is the duty of all Vaishnavas to fast and chant the name of God and to abstain from secular duties. Charming stories are told of his infancy, and boyhood, accounts of childlike pranks touched with spirituality. His intelligence was truly marvelous. After the ceremony of putting the writing chalk into His hand, He read all the letters of the alphabet at first sight to everybody's amazement. He learned all the compound letters in two or three days and began to write the names of God Krishna in series, all of which did not prevent His childlike pastimes from developing but they were always full of sweetness and grace.

His elder brother Visvarūp who was ascetic by nature, wished to adopt the religious vocation as a celibate. He spent his time chiefly in the company of Advaita and was

[1] C.C.Adi XIV.28-29 [2] C.Bh.Adi V [3] C.C.Adi XIV.38

completely indifferent to worldly matters. After Visvarup renounced the world on account of an attempt to force him to marry, Nimāi became aloof in his conduct and devoted Himself to His studies at the academy of Vishnudās Pandit. Visvarūp was a brilliant scholar in the Vedas, *Nyāya* system of philosophy and the Bhāgavata.[1] His studies were supposed to have been encouraged by his father Jagannath and his growing objections to domestic life led to his final renunciation of the world. Fearing that Nimāi might follow His-elder brother's example, His father stopped His studies altogether thinking that if his son remained untaught and consequently cut off from the light of the scriptures which might make Him ascetic, He would love home life. This act on the part of a father, distressed on account of the *Sannyās* of his elder child in the very bloom of youth, cannot be considered unnatural. Unfortunately it made Nimāi more turbulent and restless than ever, and one day He seated Himself on the top of a pile of litter and broken cooking pots which are regarded as unclean by Hindu ladies and special ablutions are necessary before one can be cleansed after contact. His biographers put into His mouth on this occasion the philosophy of good and evil, cleanliness and uncleanliness. When His mother asked Him to come away He refused arguing "The place where I am is all holiness. There abide the Ganges and all the holy streams. Purity and impurity is a matter of fantasy. To acknowledge a thing as impure according to the scriptures or public convention, such impurity cannot persist after My touch. No impurity resides in these pots in which thou hast cooked the offerings to Vishnu. The pots used in cooking for Vishnu can never be polluted. By contact with these pots other places also become holy"[2] Nimāi's real purpose in vexing and tantalizing His parents was to oblige them to let Him return to His studies. Therefore He said to His mother, "if I am not allowed to learn, you may be sure that I will never come down from this impure heap." The policy of His parents was generally condemned. Finally His parents allowed Him to resume His studies to

[1] C.C. by Murâri.I.2.9 [2] C.Bh.Adi VII.174-178

His great joy.

HIS ACADEMIC CAREER

Then came the time for the ceremony of purification of investiture with the sacred thread (*Yajnopavita*), but His biographers do not tell us how old He was when the ceremony took place though it may be assumed that He was in His eighth year, according to the custom and *Shastric* injunction. Vrindāvandās mentions that having thoroughly mastered the sense and purport of the scriptures at home, the Lord now wished to study with others.[1] He had made considerable progress before He was admitted to the famous academy of Gangādās Pandit, great scholar in the science of grammar at Navadvip. Nimāi's extraordinary intelligence, sharp wit and literary enthusiasm impressed His professors and fellow-students with wonder and admiration. He had a fine presence, a child like simplicity combined with a habit of puzzling both senior students and professors by His amazing logic, refuting all explanations preferred by His teacher and substituting His own views. He spent much of His time in developing His natural gift for argumentation and by His eloquence outshining not only senior students such as Murāri Gupta, Kamalākānta, Krishnānanda and others of Gangādās Pandit's academy, but also the students of the town. He challenged anybody and everybody whom He happened to meet either in the street or in the academy on the subjects of *Vritti*, *Panji* and *Tikā* on the *Kalapa Vyākarana*, which seem to refer to its *Vritti* by Durgā Simha, *Panji* by Trilochana Dās and *Tikā* by Susena Vidyābhusan Āchārya.[2] His religious development kept pace with the remarkable progress of His literary career; He regularly performed His ablutions in the holy stream of the Bhāgirathi, worshipped the Deity of Vishnu and offered water to holy Tulasi before partaking of a meal.[3] He made His own *Tippani* (annotation of the aphorisms of *Kalapa Vyākarana* in His school days at the grammar school of Gangādās,[4] a piece of work that earned Him a wide reputation as a great scholar, it was adopted as the text book throughout Bengal. Nimāi's

[1] C.Bh.Adi VIII.25 [2] C.Bh.Adi XIII.54 [3] C.Bh.Adi VIII.73 [4] C.Bh.Adi VIII.75

happy student life suffered a great shock by His father's sudden departure from this world. He was overcome with grief but succeeded in regaining sufficient calm to console His bereaved mother. The burden of maintaining the family now devolved on His young shoulders, but He remained undaunted and managed to continue His literary studies. He believed firmly in the wise providence of God and was able to earn the money necessary to support Himself and His mother, possibly by means of scholarships, writing and teaching at the academy[1] Whenever His mother required money for the maintenance of the family He gave her two Tolas of gold saying 'Krishna nourishes and He will provide.'[2] Vrindāvandās writes thus of his studious ways, "Whatever question Sri Gaura Chandra (Nimāi) put, no student could answer. Thereupon He Himself construed the *Sutra* and again refuted His own interpretation. And, when nobody was able to offer the explanation, He Himself established the same in the proper way. Whether at His bath, at meals or on His walks, the Lord attended to nothing but the *Shastra*. Thus did the Lord pass the time in the sweet exercise of learning."[3]

Sri Nimāi started His academy in the spacious temple-court of the residence of Mukunda Sanjaya, a very wealthy neighbour, and later a follower. A thoroughly efficient though somewhat, arrogant professor, with an exceptional gift for imparting knowledge, He soon began to succeed and attracted a great number of students. Nothing could convince Him that any professor was His equal or could stand the scrutiny of His keen intellect. The scholars of the town regarded Him as the greatest genius in the literary Navadip and avoided His academic challenge for fear being put to shame. A great scholar, He delighted in the society of other scholars and was invariably accompanied by students on His way to the academy, at which more than a thousand attended.

HIS MARRIAGE

Our cheerful young professor of spotless morals soon fell

[1] C.Bh.Adi X.7 [2] C.Bh.Adi VIII.171-179 [3] C. Bh.Adi VIII.193-197

in love with Lakhsmi Devi, daughter of Vallabhāchārya, a neighbour. A chance meeting with her on her way to the Ganges led to an instant recognition that they were destined for each other. At first His mother refused her consent when the match-maker Vanamali Ghatak proposed the marriage, on account of His youth and the unfavourable position of their family affairs, Sri Nimai, however, managed to persuade His mother to give her consent. The girl was exceedingly modest and full of grace. According to the Vaishnava biographers, she was sweetness itself and full of a gentle, attractive joyousness. Her brief married life was distinguished by unfailing goodness and charity. Young, fresh and beautiful Lakshmi was supremely happy in the household of her beloved husband, to whom she was a source of unmixed happiness. She excelled in the decorative arts, her favourite motifs being the Svastika, conch, and disc.[1] According to Jayananda's Chaitanya Mangal, Lakshmi painted a portrait of Sri Nimai on a canvas.[2]

By this time Sri Nimāi was the greatest scholar in grammatical literature and was paramount in the *Nyāya* system philosophy and *Alamkāra*. We find Him defeating Gadādhara and Mukunda, two renowned scholars in *Nyāya* and *Alamkāra*[3] Sri Chaitanya was, to all appearances, more intellectual than religious, and the Vaishnava group of Advaita fervently wished that He should definitely join their company believing that His unchallengeable dialectic skill if employed in the furtherance of their cause, would achieve unprecedented success.[4] During this period of Sri Chaitanya's intellectual supremacy in the university of Navadvip, Isvara Puri, a disciple of Mādhavendra Puri, paid a long visit to the town and stayed in the house of Gopināth Āchārya a member of the Vaishnava group of Advaita, and brother-in-law of the famous logician Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma. This Vaishnava Sannyāsi Isvara Puri, with his extreme asceticism intellectual gifts and ecstatic devotion to God, made an abiding impression on the heart of Sri Nimāi Who met him every day to hold religious discourse. This companionship gave a decisive impetus

[1] C.Bh.Adi XIV.41 [2] C.& His age.P.127 [3] C.Bh. Adi XII.14, 21-27 [4] ibid.40

to His devotional sensibilities. In reply to Isvara Puri's request that He should polish the language and correct the grammatical errors if any, of his "Krishnalilāmrita", a devotional *Kāvya* work on the love of Rādhā Krishna, Sri Chaitanya said that there could be no defect in the inspired writings and utterances of a great devotee such as he was and that those who actuated by pride of worldly learning should criticize them were certainly sinners.[1]

TRIUMPH OVER DIGVIJAYEE

Then came His greatest triumph in secular learning and scholarship. Kesava Bhatta of Kāshmir, perhaps the greatest scholar of India of the day, arrived at Navadvip in the course of his uninterrupted victorious tour with his host of elephants and horses, his wealth and the various presents which he had won from his vanquished rivals as tokens of their submissive homage. The famous scholars in *Nyāya, Sankhya, Pātanjala Mimāmsa Vaisesika, Vedānta,* of Tirhut Delhi, Benares, Gujrāt, Vijayanagara, Kānchi, Anga, Banga, Odhra and other places acknowledged his supremacy by admitting defeat at his hands.[2] Kesava offered two alternatives to the scholars of Navadvip, they were either to confront him in an academic duel at an opening meeting if they dared, or they were to give him a written acknowledgement of his superior erudition, a bold challenge which filled the whole university town with fear and caused a commotion at every gathering of the Pandits who wondered how they were to save the glory and tradition of their university.[3] No scholar except the young prodigy Sri Nimāi felt Himself entitled to accept his challenge to a learned contest remarking to His pupils that "God does not tolerate conceit and vanity." The subject of the controversy happened to be the rhetoric underlying the following verse:

Mahattvam gangāyāh satatam idam ābhati nitarām,
yatesā sri vishnoscharana kamalotpatti subhogā/

[1] C. Bh. Adi XI.105 [2] C.Bh.XVIII.160-161.119 [3] Ibid. 37 [4] C.C.Adi XVI.41

dvitiya - sri lakshmiriva suranaraih archya charanāh
bhavānibhartturyā sirasi vibhavatyadbhuta-gunāh// [4]

This verse Sri Nimāi picked out from a hundred verses, which the universal conqueror composed and recited extempore when Sri Nimāi asked him to describe the greatness of the Ganges. He wondered how Nimāi was able to memorize the said verse out of the hundred, which he had recited like a whirlwind. The meaning of the verse is as follows:- She (The Ganges) has the fortune to proceed from the lotus feet of Vishnu, and her feet are adored by the gods as well as by human beings, like a second Lakshmi, she has the privilege of reclining on the head of the husband of Sri Bhavāni and possessing wonderful qualities. Her greatness shines fourth at all times. Sri Nimāi pointed out five mistakes in rhetoric- two instances of an indistinctly specified epithet (*Avimrishta vidheyāmsa*), one instance of misleading interpretation (*Viruddhamati*), one of irregularity of order, (*Bhagnakrama*) and another of protraction of speech (*Punarātta*). Having analyzed the verse in all aspects by way of judging its merits and demerits, Nimāi, concluded by saying, "poetry jewelled with high sentiments and poetics if marred by a single blemish, is like a handsome body that has been rendered loathsome by white leprosy". We cannot discuss the whole speech in detail at present, but the successful rebuff from a young professor rendered the defeated conqueror motionless and speechless, and for the first time, the vanity of the conqueror suffered a setback. Sri Chaitanya remained gentle and gracious to His opponent throughout the debate. The delight of His younger days in perplexing others had developed into the pleasure of making others, even His defeated rivals happy by His great courtesy, and though mortified at the result of the contest, Kesava could not help being flattered by the unstinted praise of His poetical genius. It will not be out of place here to quote the words of Nimāi to Kesava "You must be a great genius and the crowning jewel of all poets since such poetry can issue from your lips. Your poetry flows like the stream of the

Ganges and I know of no one who is your equal. Even in the poetry of Bhavābhuti, Kālidās, and Jayadeva, there are blemishes, which are negligible in consideration of their merits and poetic genius. Pay no attention to my youthful exuberance as I am hardly fit to be your pupil."[1]

The following day, the vanquished conqueror met Sri Nimāi Who delivered him the following moral: -

"To conquer the universe is not the aim of learning/ Learning is said to be real if God is served thereby//

Listen; when one leaves the body neither wealth nor manliness is in attendance/ That is why great souls give up everything//

Worship the lord with every effort of the mind/

Know this for certain, that learning is a success if only the mind and all one's possessions are laid at the Feet of Krishna//

Giving up all vanity, devote thyself to the worship of Krishna, showing kindness to all souls".[2]

Vrindāvanadās thus remarks on the great change that came over the character of Kesava as a result of Sri Chaitanya's influence. "Whither sped the Brāhmana's arrogance of the conqueror of the universe? The Vipra became humbler than a blade of grass.[3] It is clearly to be seen from the above that the religious fervour of Sri Nimāi developed after His meeting with Isvara Puri who made of Him an exclusive devotee of Krishna in a few years. Kesava belonged to the Nimbārka sect. Krishnadās Kavirāj has placed this episode of Sri Nimāi's triumph at the time of His return from East Bengal.[4] But Vrindāvanadās states that it occurred before He left for East Bengal.

His fame after His victory over Kesava spread far and wide and increased the number of His admirers and patrons who offered Him money and presents. During Sri Nimāi's wedded life, His ever-growing hospitality, charity, and constant loving kindness never failed. His door was ever open to the poor and needy upon whom He freely

[1] C.C.Adi XVI [2] C.Bh.Adi XIII.173-182 [3] C.Bh.Adi XIII.185 [4] C.C.Adi XVI.25

bestowed food, clothes and money, for the sufferings of the poor distressed Him beyond measure. Everyday ten or twenty Sannyāsis arrived at the house whom He entertained with great generosity owing to which His resources became exhausted and He had to go to East Bengal to earn sufficient money for His widely distributed charities. He used to say "He who being a family man, does not entertain the guests, I consider him worse than the beasts which are without feelings".[1]

IN EAST BENGAL

In all probability when He was about twenty, Nimāi Pandit set off on a peripatetic tour in Eastern Bengal ostensibly for the purpose of earning money by teaching, taking with Him three other professors and leaving His academy to the care of His colleagues. According to Advaita Prakāsha, He visited the house of Lokanāth at Talkhadi in the Jessore district on His outward journey[2] The authentic biographers do not mention by name the places, which He visited. Murāri Gupta and other biographers say that He lived on the banks of the river Padma.[3] He visited Nurpur, Suvarnagrāma, Betel and Vitadia and other places, according Nityānandadāsa's Premavilās.[4]

The news of His arrival soon spread throughout Eastern Bengal and hundreds of pupils came to Him to study as His name as the greatest scholar, and author of the *Tippani* on the *Kalāpa Vyākāran* accepted throughout the country as the recognised textbook of grammar, commanded great respect.[5] He met with a cordial reception and wealth was showered upon Him by the pious rich of East Bengal. At this time a Brāhmana named Tapan Misra father of the great Raghunāth Bhatta Gosvāmi, directed by a dream, came to Sri Nimāi Pandit to obtain a solution of his doubts as to spiritual methods and objects of devotion (*Sādhya* and *Sādhana*), questions that appeared to be most perplexing owing to the conflicting interpretations of the different scriptures. Sri Nimāi told him that the *Sankirtana* or the

[1] C.Bh.Adi XIV.22 [2] C.&A. p.75 [3] C.C.by Murari.I.II.11 [4] XIV
[5] C.Bh.Adi XIV.78 [6] C.Bh.Adi XIV.139-149

chanting of the name of God was the only method as well as object of religious devotion; He further advised him to go to Benares and settle there for the progress of his spiritual life.[6]

The separation plunged Sri Nimāi's wife into a deep sorrow she was not to see her dearly beloved husband again, for she died presumably as the result of a snake-bite at Navadvip. She had waited by her mother-in-law morning, noon and night till her death, following her husband's wish. Nimāi Pandit remained in happy ignorance of the sad event until His return a year later, bringing a quantity of gold, silver, and many presents of rich carpets, rags, blankets and fine clothes with Him. The image of Lakshmi Devi was erected about 1895 A.D. for daily worship in the temple on the Birth-site of Sri Nimāi at Sri Māyāpur, Nadia.

HIS SECOND MARRIAGE

He then married His second wife Sri Vishnupriya Devi, daughter of the court-Pandit Sanātana Misra of Navadvip. Buddhimanta Khān a rich patron of Sri Nimāi voluntarily undertook to meet all the expenses of the wedding, which was celebrated with great pomp and splendour[1] The beauty of Sri Vishnupriya was as notable as that of Sri Nimāi. Her loving kindness, sympathy, and benevolence were equally remarkable. She possessed that rarest of all gifts-selfless devotion – this alone made her the central figure in Vaishnava womanhood and conduced to her adoption of a life of asceticism.

Nimāi Pandit now resumed His duties as a professor and conducted His academy with renewed vigour and enthusiasm emphasizing the importance of holy living and ritual observances. When He saw a student without the *Tilaka* mark on his forehead He immediately sent him home to be marked accordingly to the canon-law, remarking that the forehead of a Brāhmana without a *Tilaka* mark was like the charnel house.[2]

HIS PILGRIMAGE TO GAYĀ AND INITIATION

[1] C.Bh.Adi XV-72 [2] C.Bh. Adi XV.12

After His second marriage to Vishnupriya He went to Gayā on pilgrimage to offer the *Pinda* to His deceased father and ancestors. It is believed by Hindus who follow fruitive rituals that an offering to the deceased at the feet of the deity of Vishnu at Gayā delivers them from all worldly obligations and brings spiritual consolation. Apparently He passed through the districts of Burdwan, Birbhuma, and Bhāgalpur before He reached the Mandāra hill across the river "Chira", which is some 176 miles from Navadvip in a north westernly direction. Mandara hill is situated in the Bankā subdivision of the district of Bhāgalpur. Nimāi visited a temple on the hill and made obeisance to the Image of Vishnu named Madhusudana. The Deity was subsequently removed from the old temple (which is now in the possession of the Jains) to the neighbouring town of Vamsi (where the said Image is still worshipped possibly in fear of desecration by hostile Jains and the notorious iconoclast Kālā Pāhāra and other Muhammedans who swarmed over the place. Extensive ruins are scattered about the foot of the hill dating from the time of the Chola Kings, particularly of Rājā Chatra Simha who lived there before the coming of the Muhammedans.[1] To emphasise the holiness of the spot, the Bhāgavata Purāna[2] records a legendary story that the gods churned the ocean with this hill. The Gaudiya Math has installed the foot-prints of Sri Chaitanya in superb temple quite close to the old temple of Madhusudana, to commemorate the visit of Sri Chaitanya (Sri Nimāi).

Sri Nimāi next visited Poon-Poon on the way to Gayā across the river Falgu, which is roughly 80 miles from Mandara. On His way He fell ill with fever and is said to have been cured by drinking water in which Brāhmanas had washed their feet. This He did to convince His companions of the greatness of the Brāhmanas whom they had slighted on account of their bad manners. Passing from Poon-Poon He entered Rājagraha or old Girivraja, the ancient capital of Magadha. Bimbisara, rather of Ajātashatru is said to have built the city close to the old city of Rājāgriha. Here we find the famous massive well known as Jarāsindhuka Vaithāka,

[1] Martin's Eastern India.Vol.II [2] VIII.7

of great importance as one of the earliest extant monuments both from an archaeological and an architectural point or view. From Rājāgriha or modern Rājgir, Sri Nimāi went direct to Gayā where He conducted the funeral ceremony in honour of His father at the Brahma Kunda and at Chakraveda. The Foot-print of Vishnu was, and still is worshipped at the latter place by innumerable priests. Their recitation of the hymns in praise of the greatness of the Divine Feet of Vishnu made a profound impression on Sri Nimāi, and led to the change which developed into the most absorbing pursuit of the latter half of His life. Vrindāvanadās has described the effect of Sri Nimāi's visit to, and worship of, the Divine Foot print: "Hearing the power of the holy Feet from the mouth of the Brāhmanas, the Lord (Sri Nimāi) was overpowered by the bliss of ecstatic devotion. Streams of tears flowed from His two beautiful lotus eyes. Shivering came over Him at the sight of the Divine Feet. Due to the great good fortune of the world, Lord Gaura Chandra (Nimāi) began to manifest devotion and divine love. Perennial Ganges flowed in the eyes of the Lord. All the Brāhmanas saw this as the greatest of wonders."[1]

HIS INITIATION

That very moment Isvara Puri under whose spiritual influence he had come to Navadvip a few months earlier, chanced to meet Him and gave the final impetus to the process. How deeply, from the very core of His heart, Sri Chaitanya admired Isvara Puri is clear from the following words of His welcome to him "My pilgrimage to Gayā has borne fruit, the moment that I had the glimpse of your feet. By offering cakes of rice at the *Tirthas*, the departed souls are saved. In respect of this also, he alone is saved to whom the cake is offered. The moment I beheld you, crores of ancestors are instantly freed from all bonds."[2]

Therefore the *Tirthas* are never equal to you. You are higher than the *Tirthas*, and the fountain source of all blessings. May you be pleased to deliver Me from the ocean of the world. I surrender My body to you now and here.

[1] C.Bh.Adi XVII.42-45 [2] C.Bh.Adi XVII-50 [3] ibid 50-55

Make Me drink the mellow liquid of the ambrosia of the lotus Feet of Krishna. This is the gift I desire."[3] At the request of Nimāi, Isvara Puri initiated Him into the religion of the love of God by giving Him the ten-lettered *Gopāla Mantra*. Nimāi stayed a few days at Gayā during which His pure loving devotion grew stronger and stronger which made Him restless and extremely impatient for a glimpse of God. He rolled on the ground and cried aloud with heart-rending anguish, 'Krishna, My dear, Oh My life, whither hast Thou gone, O, Darling Krishna, stealing My heart and then abandoning me.' This vision He pursued to the last day of His life giving up His worldly name, fame, comforts, and even the so called inevitable necessities in its pursuit.

Sri Nimāi could not resist the absorbing influence of the '*Nāma Mantra*', which made Him smile, weep, dance, and sing, and lose His ordinary self-control. He asked His Guru Isvara Puri' by what *Mantra*, My master, hast thou initiated Me and what is this influence, that in the process of recital, it has robbed Me of wits, causing Me to laugh, dance, and weep?[1] He became an absolutely god-intoxicated devotee, having no desire for the ephemeral sensuous pleasures of the world, and determined to go to Vrindāvan full of the transcendental romance of the divine love of Rādhā and Krishna. Though His attending disciples tried to dissuade Him from doing but He replied "All of you may return home, I will not enter the world (family) any more. I am setting out to see Mathurā, to meet Sri Krishna Chandra, the beloved Lord of My life."[2]

At dead of night He began His solitary journey to Mathurā under the uncontrollable impulse of love for God with these words on His lips "Oh, Krishna, Oh My Darling! Where shall I find Thee? But did not continue His journey at the request of the celestial voice which entreated Him to return to Navadvip for the time being.

He started homewards with His disciples and seems to have passed through Mongyr and Bhāgalpur until He reached Kānāinātshāla, about five miles from Rājmahal, in the district of Dumka in the Santal Parganas. The temple of

[1] C.C.Adi VII.81 [2] C. Bh.Adi XVII.123-124

Kānai (Krishna) at Kānāinātshāla, which Sri Nimāi visited now, belongs to the Rāmait sect, the present Mohanta of the temple being Rāma Gariva Dās. The temple owned vast property, which was seized by the local Zamindar as a protest against this act of spoliation; its Mohanta Jānakidās starved himself to death. Sri Nimai is said to have experienced the beatific vision of juvenile Krishna playing on His flute, as a consummation of His spiritual initiation by Isvara Puri.[1] The Gaudiya Math has laid the foot-prints of Sri Chaitanya in a very beautiful temple close to the temple of Kānai at Kānāinātshāla. This was the first of a series of 108 similar shrines over His foot prints which the said Math are erecting all over India to perpetuate the memory of the visits of Sri Nimāi (Sri Chaitanya) to the *Thirthas*. The distance between Gayā and Kanāinātshāla is some 170 miles. Taking the southward course from the latter place to Navadvip through the district of Murshidābād, He returned home a different Man.

HIS DEVOTIONAL ECSTASIES

His proud gravity and profound reserve of manner gave way to a restless desire for God, filled with overwhelming love. He was to be found in floods of tears reciting the Name of Krishna. He was subject to violent shivering. Fits and deep sighs bore testimony to His anxiety. The only words spoke were about Krishna. The most striking characteristics, which marked His life after initiation at Gayā, were His all-absorbing love of God and an accompanying distaste for the world and its pleasures. At first the people mistook His strange sensitiveness and its expression for mental weakness, but were soon convinced of its spiritual significance. Secular learning now lost all charm for Him; He was tired of pedantic pride and sophistry.

His first action on His return from Gayā was to substitute spiritual teaching for scholasticism, and He tried to change the angle of vision of His pupils and arouse them to a clear perception of the value of that kind of learning,

[1] C.Bh.Madhya 11.179-185

which brings mankind in personal contact with God. This endeavour to restore to education and literature their real function of pointing out the necessity of pure devotion was loyally followed up by the later Vaishnava masters. Jiva Gosvāmi and Baladeva Vidyābhusana in their *Harināmāmrita Vyākarana* and *Vyākarana Kaumudi* could designate every letter, word, and formula of Sanskrit grammar as the names, plays, and pastimes of God Krishna, Vishnu, avoiding the secular nomenclature that does not suggest God and His service. Nimāi closed His academy after four months in *Vaisākh* (June-July) as His pupils failed to understand His methods.[1]

The Vaishnava group of Advaita enthusiastically received Him as the finest type of a Vaishnava. He had joined the group at a critical moment when it sadly needed the guidance of transcendental qualities of brain and heart. The existence of a few pious Vaishnavas had become almost intolerable owing to blasphemous libels of an outrageous nature by the anti-Vaishnava sections of the people of Navadvip.

From this time Sri Nimāi was the most modest and humble-minded member of the Vaishnava community Who rendered menial services to Srivās, Advaita and other devotees in order to teach the doctrine that the service of Krishna can only be gained by serving the Vaishnavas. Occasionally He received on His head the dust from the feet of the devotees, praying for their blessing and favour and soon led Srivās, Advaita, and others to accept Him as an *Avatāra* of Krishna and they began to worship Him as such. His great miracle was to organise the apparently weak group of the Vaishnavas into a gigantic proselytizing Mission by virtue of example, by personal qualities of a very high order. Behind all His brilliant gifts lay that purity and fullness of divine love that endeared Him to all, even to the misguided enemies of Vaishnavism. He put His principles into practice and did not deviate by a hair's breadth from His spiritual convictions. An important

[1] C.C. by Kavikarnapura

factor of His success was the far-reaching prudence which enabled Him to deal with the Muhammedan governors of the day, and though His religion is essentially masochistic, He never hesitated when His simple and popular mode of worship was opposed with violence by the Moslem administrator of Nadia, to move the masses to a demonstration in order to compel him (the Governor) to come to terms.

As a logician He silenced the sceptic scholars of Navadvip. In His early youth He was remarkably beautiful and was always handsomely clad. He possessed highly developed artistic gifts, chiefly observable in His poetical studies and He possessed a sweet voice, which later was to lead His hearers into a world of spiritual love as He sang the *Kirtana*. Most of His time was spent in the company of the Vaishnava group organising the *Kirtana*, or chanting the praises of the Name and glory of God as the best means of entering into mystic communion with God. The *Kirtana* Music of *Khola* and cymbals accompanied by a stately dance so impressed the people that they were lost to all mundane thoughts and feelings. The *Kirtana* music created and developed by Sri Chaitanya and the Vaishnava group and by the later Vaishnava leaders such as Srinivās, Narottam, Shyāmānanda, and others is highly original and interesting from a scientific point of view, its essence being devotion. The divine excellence seems to be visible through *Kirtana*, which if properly performed by those who sincerely follow the devotional process worked out by Sri Chaitanya, never fails to inspire the pious audience with divine love and adoration. In the supreme moments when *Kirtana* music reached its highest point, Sri Chaitanya held the people spellbound with a series of intensely dramatic dance figures. The *Kirtana* was held by Sri Nimāi every night in the house of Srivās and occasionally He led the procession through the town.

REDEMPTION OF JAGĀI AND MĀDHĀI

During this period, Nityānanda who identified himself with the Mission of Sri Nimāi joined Him at Navadvip.

Sri Nimāi employed Nityānanda and Haridās Thākur (the latter came of a Muhammedan family of high lineage) to preach the name of Krishna and the Vaishnava faith to every household of the town. Chant the name of God Krishna without ceasing, be more humble and modest than the grass, show respect to others without expecting the same for yourself, be patient and forbearing as a tree that makes no moan when abused or chastised by others. "Just as a tree never complains though it is cut down, and prefers death by drought to begging water from others, so also a Vaishnava should not ask any thing of anybody."[1] This is the spirit in which Sri Nityānanda and Haridās started their door-to-door preaching at the command of Sri Nimāi. On one occasion as Nityānanda and Haridās were having preached the name of God from door to door, were returning at night-fall to Sri Nimāi to report the result of the day's work, they met two implacable murderers, the brothers, Jagāi and Mādhāi. These two brothers, wicked to the marrow, indulged in every form of sinful acts drinking, robbery, adultery, etc. They fell upon the ascetic *Sanyasins* in the street who only escaped by flight. Nityānanda determined to reform these two notorious sinners. Another evening he again met them mad with drink, when in reply to their inquiry as to his name, the infuriated Mādhāi struck him on the head with a broken piece of earthen pot making a deep wound. Heedless of the wound, Nityānanda addressed them with compassionate words saying, "You may beat me, you may kill me. But sing the name of God, which will purge you of all sin, and vice. He was soaked in blood flowing from the wound but the sight failed to soften the criminals' heart. Another blow would have followed had not his brother Jagāi stopped him saying, "What good can come of killing a wandering Sādhu?" Sri Nimāi hastening to the spot was dismayed to find Nityānanda in a pool of blood, smiling, and preaching to his assailants. Nityānanda true to the Vaishnava principle of extreme humility and non-violence was trying to reclaim the criminals by telling them about God. Even Sri Ghaitanya

[1] C.C.Adi XVII.26-29

invoked the divine weapon (*Sudarshana Chakra*) but Nityānanda pleaded for the sinners saying; "Blood has flowed by chance. I feel no pain. Jagāi defended me. I beg of you the deliverance of these two persons. I am quite happy, be calm my Lord.[1] Nityānanda's prayer, Sri Nimāi's merciful love with its miraculous power, were answered, Jagāi and Mādhāi - the murderous and devilish rogues repented in all humility and were converted. It is recorded that this sudden conversion proved permanent till the last day of their lives. The two brothers detested sin with the same intensity with which in their earlier days, they had practised it. They became great ascetics and eminent Vaishnavas, displaying extreme humility and asking to be forgiven for their former sinful lives, of all those who bathed at their *Ghāt* which they constructed on the Ganges at the command of Nityānanda. The sudden reformation of Jagāi and Mādhāi convinced the people of Navadvip of the spiritual force of Sri Chaitanya's Vaisnavism, and influenced the general public in favour of the movement.

Sri Chaitanya introduced the religious play into the religious life of the Vaishnava society. The first play to be performed, probably the first stage performance to be given in Bengal comprised several acts from the story of Krishna's romantic marriage to Rukmini as we find it in the tenth book of the Bhāgavata Purāna. The performance took place in the house of Chandra Sekhar Āchārya a neighbour, follower, and relative of Sri Nimāi. Sadāsiva Buddhimanta Khān, a wealthy follower of Sri Nimāi ordered the correct costumes: The Play was remarkable for the dancing of Sri Nimāi and Gadādhar and for the exquisite songs. Sri Nimāi acted the part of Rukmini while Gadādhar appeared in that of Rāma in the first part of the play. First Srivās appeared as the divine sage singer Nārada, Advaita taking the role of Vidushaka with great success, Haridās and Murāri being the watchmen of Vaikuntha. After the exit of Srivās and Advaita, Sri Nimāi was seen as Rukmini writing a message to Krishna, imploring Him to take her away by force on her way to the temple the day before her

[1] C.Bh.Madhya XIII.188-189

marriage to Krishna's enemy Sishupāla. The play opened with a canticle by one of the famous singers of the day – Mukunda Datta, before a crowded audience and so overcome was Sri Nimāi's mother that she fell into a trance.

From the beginning to the exit of Rukmini the play took three hours. In the next act appeared Gadādhar as Rāma, with Brahmānanda as her (Rāma's) chaperon Suprabha. They meet Nārada and his companions. At the latter's request, Rāma (Gadādhara) performed the dance of the spiritual milkmaids in the Rāsa circle in the company of Krishna. Sri Nimāi appeared as *Adya Shakti* accompanied by Nityānanda as *Badāi Budi*. Sri Nimāi's appearance in this role proved the great event of the performance, which included the dance of the primal divine power. The performance lasted throughout the night and is described in Chaitanya Bhāgavata Madhya XIII.

Technically speaking there were two main elements in this play, namely dramatic and lyric, the first consisting of dialogues and comic episodes setting forth the plot of the play, and the second dealing with music, song and especially dancing which occupied about three fourths of the play, performed by Sri Nimāi and Gadādhara assisted by Nityānanda and Brahmānanda. The presiding Deity was the Image of Gopināth and the theme itself was the romance of Krishna, partly modelled on the pattern of the old Sanskrit drama. There was much that was new in its development. It was performed in the open air under a canopy, (*Khathia Chandoya*), the players entering the stage from the green room which was not in view of the audience. It is probably the first historically known instance of the Bengali *Yātra* and if this surmise be correct, it was a highly refined, decent, and artistic piece of work, whereas the *Yātra* has always been like the opera, catering for the taste of the populace and lacking and dramatic qualities.

It seems true, as Dr. N.K. Chattopadhyaya has tried to point out in his admirable thesis. The popular drama of Bengal that the *Yātrā* developed entirely or mainly in connection with the worship of Krishna, and that the

popular religious festivals are copies of the Bengali *Yātrās*. (pp.2.45.ff.). So far as our present historical information goes, we must regard Sri Nimāi as the originator of this popular drama, which was performed some years before His *Sannyās*, which took place in 1510.A.D. Some scholars trace its origin to the Vedic dialogue-hymns[1] J.L. Klein associates Gitagovinda with the Bengali *Yātrā*[2] Von Schroeder shares the views of J. L. Klein,[3] but this theory is unsupported either by chronological or historical evidence. The literal meaning of *Yātrā* is the act of procession connected with religious festivals such as *Rāthayātrā, Snānayātrā* of Jagannāth; *Dolyātrā, Kunjayātrā, Janmayātrā, Rāsayātrā* of Krishna, *Vijaya Yātrā* of Rāma and so on. This transformation of the religious *Yātrās* or festivals into dramatic performances may be attributed to Sri Nimāi (Sri Chaitanya) Who organised the plays for the Nandotsava festival of Nanda on the occasion of Krishna *Janma Yātrā*; the *Vijaya Yātrā* of Rāma Chandra or triumphal entry of Rāma after the victory of Lanka, Rāsa *Yātrā, Dipāvali, Utthāna Dvadasi* and other festivals.[4] At the Krishna *Janmayātrā* Sri Chaitanya impersonated Gopa or the divine cow-herd of Vraja, His disciple Kānāi Kuthiā taking the role of Nanda; emperor Pratāprudra himself and many other important followers of Sri Chaitanya took part in the performance. Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda made movements with *Lāthi* or staff as cowherds do. In this performance dancing preponderated over extempore acting at the Vijaya - festival. Sri Chaitanya acted the part of Hanuman or the monkey god.[5] Emperor Pratāprudra caused the *Hera Panchami* performance to be held on a grand scale to please Sri Chaitanya.[6] It was also a mimic performance in connection with a religious festival. It might accordingly be admitted on the available evidence that the Bengali *Yātrā* owes its origin, or at least its definite development, to Sri Chaitanya more than to anybody else. We have come a long way from our direct topic, to which we should now return.

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[1] Von Schroeder, Vienna oriental journal Vol.XXIII.pp.273 ff. [2] Geschichte des dramas Vol. I.p.97 [3] Indian literature and culture in historischer Entwicklung. p.580 [4] C.C.Madhya XV.17,33,36 [5] C.C.Madhya XV.33 [6] C.C.Madhya XIV.108

KAZI'S CONVERSION

Under the leadership of Sri Nimāi, the small group of Advaita developed into a gigantic society; He held the *Kirtana* in the house of Srivās every night with His chosen followers including Advaita, the four Srivāsa brothers Chandra Sekhara, Sridhara, Gadādhara, Mukunda Datta, Vāsudeva Datta, Murāri Gupta, Suklāmbara Brahmachāri, Garuda Pandit Gopināth Āchārya, Nityānanda, Vanamāli, Sriman Pandit, Haridās, Brahmānanda, Pundarika Vidyānidhi, and others. The number of members and supporters of the movement grew rapidly and consisted of both rich and poor. He asked the townsmen to sing the *Nāmamantra* to their families. He preached the Name of God with blades of grass between His teeth as symbol of abject humility and invocation.[1] They were profoundly impressed by the simple and appealing method of worship, so that every evening most of the city families sang the *Nāmamantra* to the accompaniment of the *Khol*, cymbal and conch. In order to popularize the movement, Nimāi took a bold step. For a long time, the Hindus had not been able to hold their religious ceremonies openly because of the attitude of the hostile Muhammedan rulers. Now the Navadvip was the seat of the Muhammedan judge-administrator called the Kāzi, who seeing the growing success of Nimāi's movement in Navadvip, determined to suppress it by force, the anti-Vaishnava, Hindus fanning the flame of the Kāzi's wrath. One evening the Kāzi and his men fell upon a *Kirtana* party, beat them, broke their *Khol*, desecrated their doors, and issued severe orders prohibiting the *Kirtana* under pain of loss of caste and forfeiture of property. His repressive measures and violence filled the citizens with great panic, but they were reassured by Sri Nimāi Who adopted a policy of forbearance and humility in addition to complete freedom of religious speech and then organised a public demonstration against the Kāzi's violence. Sri Nimāi was faced with two alternatives: He must either abandon the movement, and submit to the Kāzi's orders or persuade him to refrain from persecution.

[1] C.Bh.Madhya XVIII.87

He adopted the latter course and decided to lead His followers in a *Kirtana* procession to beg for mercy. Having published this decision He then asked the citizens to decorate and illuminate their houses and join the procession carrying lighted torches. Thousands formed themselves into groups of *Sankirtana* parties at Sri Nimāi's house to protest against the unreasonable orders of the Kāzi, by the method of non-violent civil disobedience in the shape of open performance of *Sankirtana* in the streets of the town. Sri Nimāi divided the great multitude into four separate parties the advance party was led by Sri Advaita, the leading dancer of the first group. They were followed by the second party with the dancer Haridās Thākur who had been persecuted and cruelly tortured by the Kazi of Anuamuluka a few years earlier. Srivās was at the head of the third party, the fourth and last being conducted by Sri Nimāi Himself, Nityānanda and Gadādhara.[1] Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krishnadās has placed Haridās in the advance party.[2] Further divisions were necessary on account of the length of the *Kirtana* procession. Sri Nimāi then performed a most wonderful dance, which stimulated the suppressed spiritual aspirations of the long-suffering Hindu community, to a pitch of frenzied enthusiasm. In periods of depression, more especially when a spiritual crisis had been reached, His *Uddanda*-dance never failed to inspire the people with indomitable zeal; so intense was their excitement and so exalted their confidence in God that they repeatedly shouted Hari and Rāma with a mighty voice as they advanced, with occasional mutterings against their persecutor; a certain number of the crowd striking the ground with fists and legs to show their feelings. Thus did Sri Nimāi use the occasion to organise a public expression in favour of religious liberty. The procession started from the house of Sri Nimāi passing along the bank of the Bhāgirathi until it reached Simulia through Gangānagara, and thence they took the road to the residence of the Kāzi who was surprised at the vast concourse assembled at his gates first he sent messengers to inquire

[1] C.Bh.Madhya XXIII.203-207 [2] C.C.Adi XVII.136

the cause of the musical demonstration, and then gave orders that the doors were to be closed and no one allowed to enter the house. The efforts of his household met with no success and the *Kirtana* force of Sri Nimāi swarmed into the residence, destroying the beautiful gardens and breaking down the outhouses. According to Chaitanya Bhāgavata Sri Nimāi gave the command that the Kāzi and his house were to be burned, and threatened to exterminate all the Mahammedans of Navadvip. His associates however persuaded him to refrain from any act of violence.[1] Krishnandās Kavirāja states that some of the more unruly elements broke into the Kāzi's house and ruined the gardens, but Sri Nimāi seated Himself by the door and sent for the Kāzi who was received by Him with great courtesy, and had asked why he had closed the door against one who had come as a guest, to which the Kāzi replied that as He had come with violence and, in anger, he had preferred to remain absent. The Kāzi then addressed Sri Nimāi endearingly as his nephew, by virtue of his village relationship to Nilāmvara Chakravarti the maternal grandfather of Nimāi who then embarked upon a doctrinal discourse upon cow-killing by the Muhammedans in which the following appears: "You drink cow's milk so she is your mother, and the ox tills the soil to produce corn so he is father. What justification have you for killing them?' The Kāzi replied 'Like your Vedas and Purānas, the Koran is our holy book, it gives us the choice of the two paths, one of enjoyment and the other renunciation, and it is only the latter which forbids the slaughter of living beings while the former approves of it, so there is no sin in killing animals for this has the sanction of our scriptures. Your Vedas also approve of the sacrifice of kine which has been put into practice by many Hindu sages" Sri Chaitanya said, "the Vedas forbid the slaughter of the cow and all Hindus abstain from doing so. Yes, there is mention of the sacrifice of kine in the Vedas and Puranas but only those who have the power to bring animals so sacrificed to life again. So the sages sacrificed old and decrepit animals to renew their

[1] C.Bh.M.XXIII.405-417.

life by virtue of the *Vedic Mantra*, and thus the poor animals had their lost youth restored to them and so derived profit and not extinction. As the Brāhmanas of this Kali age have lost this power, so no one kills these useful and innocent creatures. As you can only kill and not resuscitate, there is, for you no escape from hell.[1] It is reported that the Kāzi was converted to Vaishnavism and accepted Sri Nimāi as God, Nārāyana and recited the chant of the name of God Krishna Hari Rāma and explained that the very night they broke the Khola and forbade the *Kirtana* in the town he had had a marvelous dream about a terrifying God, half-lion half-man Who fiercely set upon him with a great roar and plunged his nails into his chest saying angrily "I shall destroy your heart as you did my *Khol* and as you forbade my *Kirtana*" I will annihilate you." The Kāzi is said to have shown Sri Nimāi the marks of the nails on his chest.

He added that his armed men told him that as soon as they tried to stop the *Kirtana* a volume of fire was miraculously hurled at their mouths burning their beards and scarring their faces.[2] Some of the armed men are said to have accepted the name of God Krishna; which they repeated continuously. The Kāzi also added that five or seven of the Hindus had waited upon him begging that as Sri Nimāi was issuing the *Kirtana* of the name of God and bestowing the right of recitation to those of low castes, contrary to scriptural injunctions, he would send for Nimāi and stop the *Kirtana*[3] After his conversion the Kāzi said mournfully 'My evil disposition has been cured by Thy mercy, I now pray Thee to confer upon me the grace that my devotion to Thee may endure through life. He further promised that he would bind his descendants by a solemn vow not to stop the *Kirtana* in Navadvip[4] after which he joined the procession following Nimāi. The tomb of the Kāzi is to be found at Bāmanapukur where both the Hindus and Mahammedans show respect and devotion to his memory.

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[1] C.C.Adi.XVII [2] C.C.Adi XVII.179-190 [3] C.C.Adi XVII.203-213
4 C.C. Adi XVII.220-242

The procession then passed through the *Sankha Vanika Pādā* and *Tantuvāyapādā* (localities of the conch dealer and weavers). Every house on either side of the streets was decorated with candles, and banana trees planted at every gate earthen pots filled with the holy water and with the green coconuts in them. The streets were covered with flowers and lovely perfumes filled air. Sri Nimāi was enthusiastically greeted with garlands and flowers were thrown at Him from all sides. The procession passed on through Gādigācha, Pairadanga and Mājdia, that is to say all the important streets of the scattered city.

The dwellers of every nook and corner thronged forward to greet their saviour, every one old and young man and woman bowed down their heads as He passed. The procession returned to the house of Nimāi after thus triumphantly claiming His greatness and glory. The *Nagara Kirtana* Procession is mass demonstration, which Sri Chaitanya adopted as His favourite method of making converts and sustaining enthusiasms. This memorable, procession gives us a definite means of estimating the numbers and sincerity of His followers and supporters. .Within two years or so after His return from Gayā, it was not only the Vaishnava group, who had accepted Him as God and worshipped Him as such, but also the majority of the citizens hailed Him as the saviour of the age. The favour He showed towards the non-caste Hindus whom He accepted on the same terms as others in the fold, greatly contributed to His rapid success. His learning, culture, personal charm, and magnetism, and above all His ecstatic love of God in contrast with the narrow bigotry of the professorate and the hatred of the priests towards the so called low castes, with the lack of religious life of the upper class of Hindu society, appealed to the heart of the common people. His successful rebellion against the fanaticism of the Kazi so increased His popularity that many joined His group, and all watched His every art in the light of His divinity. Sakara Mallika and Davira Khāsa, ministers of the king of Bengal kept up correspondence with Him, paying their highest respect.[1] It was at Srivās's house that His

[1] C.C.Madhyal.209 [2] C.Bh.Madhya XXVI.63

followers generally assembled to worship Him, whereas at the houses of Murāri Gupta, Advaita, Suklamvar and others, He is said to have revealed His divine forms namely those of Matsya, Kurma, Nrisimha etc.[2]

HIS SANNYĀS AND JOURNEY TO PURI

To lead a strictly moral life and chant the name of God in love and devotion was His simple message to the people at large. The essence of Sri Nimāi's Vaishnavism sprang from a universal principal: He believed in the individual personality and maintained the pre-eminence of faith over castes regardless of tribe and family. It led those who were opposed to Vaishnavism, headed by selfish priests and the dogmatic professorate, to oppose the movement with violence. The opposition of priest, professor, and student could not be tolerated and Sri Nimāi determined to win their sympathy and co-operation by the exercise of personal sacrifice and asceticism, and decided to enter the order of *Sannyāsins*, being convinced that there was no quicker way to win-the heart of the Hindus[1] He then informed Mukunda Datta, Gadādhara Pandit and others. The news came as a shattering blow to His followers as they would be deprived of His company and service. He tried to comfort His grieving mother by pointing out the way to God for He was her only hope in this life since her eldest son Visvarūpa had abandoned the family by accepting *Sannyās*.

The main purpose of His *Sannyās* was two fold: first as He Himself told Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, that distracted at separation from His beloved Krishna He had been compelled to give up family life.[2] And second that He had renounced the world in order to teach His followers the need of asceticism in the service of God: one of the basic principles of Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

The day before He left home for good, He asked Nityānanda to inform only His mother, Gadādhara, Chandra Sekhara, Mukanda and Brahmānanda, that He was going and gave the following advice to His followers of

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[1] C.C.Adi.XVII.267 [2] C.Bh.Antya III.67

Navadvip. "Recite the Name of Krishna, say Krishna, be devoted to Krishna, sing the Name of Krishna, think of nothing but Krishna, if you feel, affection for Me, sing nothing but Krishna, whether in sleep or at meals, or in the waking hours, day and night, think of Krishna recite Krishna"; He held a discourse on God with His devotees and until mid-night when He pretended to retire. Gadādhar and Haridās spent the night with Him and He rose about an hour and a half before the dawn, and as He was leaving the house found His mother seated at the door weeping. He consoled her with sweet words and the assurance that He would be responsible for both her spiritual and worldly welfare, She standing mute as the earth while the tears flowed from her eyes. All the biographers except Lochanadās and the Odiya biographer Madhava Dās make no reference to Sri Vishnupriya Devi's feeling about the *Sannyās*, her name is never mentioned either in this connection or any other. This is due to the entirely non-sensuous mentality of the followers of Sri Chaitanya, and moreover the *Shāstras* and custom prohibit the association of a wife's name with that of her husband after his *Sannyās*. The later writers Nityānandadās, Narahari Chakravarti and others, do give graphic descriptions of her asceticism and contribution to the further development of the movement in Bengal. The later Vaishnava leader Srinivāsāchārya paid her the highest attribute. Lochanadās and Mādhavadās describe with pathos how Vishnupriya besought Sri Nimāi with tears in her eyes either to remain at home for the sake of his mother and herself, or to take her with Him, whereupon He begged her to accept Sri Krishna as her eternal husband and worship Him as such. This she did leading a pure Vaishnava life of personal asceticism and whole-hearted devotion to God, which is still remembered by posterity. Sri Chaitanya appointed Dāmodar Pandit, a person of somewhat pedantic morality to look after the family (Sri Nimāi's) Vamsivadana Thākur rendering a similar service as Dāmodar to her.

Gadādhara had requested Sri Nimāi to take him to Katwa where He would accept *Sannyās*, but wishing to set out by

Himself, He asked him to follow the next morning, he thereupon made obeisance to His mother and hurried to Katwa a few miles from Navadvip on the further side of the Ganges, now a subdivision in the district of Burdwan. The news of His *Sannyās* spread like wild fire and His followers and the dwellers in the city headed by Srivās and Advaita set up a loud cry, Sri Vrindāvanadās gives an account of this incident. Even Nimāi's detractors, who were partly responsible for His determination to make the change, were moved to tears, and regretted the persecution of which they had been, guilty, but in spite of the general grief the great renunciation assured the success of the Movement.

According to arrangement, Nityānanda, Gadādhar, Brahmānanda, Chandrasekhar and Mukunda Datta, joined Nimāi at Katwa where He accepted *Sannyās* from Kesava Bhārati on the first day of the northern course of the Sun, in the bright fortnight of the month of Māgha (February) in Saka 1432 (1510 A.D), one month before He completed His twenty-fifth Birthday. The *Sannyās* took place amidst the *Kirtana* of the name of God by His favourite singer Mukunda Datta. Sri Nimāi spoke the *Mantra* into the ear cf Kesava Bhārati saying that He had received the same in a dream, and by giving the Vishnuite *Mantra* by which He Himself was to be admitted to the order, He made him His disciple. Some believe that Kesava Bhārati was a Sankarite *Sannyāsi* and consequently a *Māyāvadi*, but in view of His life-long, opposition to Sankara's *Māyāvād* Sri Nimāi could not possibly have taken *Sannyās* from him unless He had been converted to Vishnuite faith and Mantra.[1] Sri Nimāi asked Kesava Bhārati whether *Jnāna* is higher than *Bhakti* or vice versa, to this question, Kesava replied that the glory of *Bhakti* is supreme.[2] Kesava Bhārati danced and chanted the name of Sri Krishna rolling on the ground under the stress of emotion.[3] Had He been a *Māyāvādi*, He could not have given Sri Nimāi the name of Sri Krishna Chaitanya suggestive of deep devotion to Krishna; nor could He

[1] C.Bh.Madhya XXVIII.130 [2] C.Bh. Antya IX.133 [3] C.Bh.Antya I.15
[4] C.C.AdiVII. 41-42

Himself have recited the name of Hari Krishna, as no *Māyāvādi Sannyāsi* admits a personal God and certainly not of Krishna moreover the *Sankarite Sannyāsins* of Benares slighted Sri Chaitanya for His demonstrative devotional fervour song, and dance[4] for they read the Vedānta and indulge in meditation.[1] Had Kesava ever been a *Sankarite*, he was certainly now converted to Vaishnavism, and given to *Kirtana* song and practised Bhakti. His descendants now living at Khatundi near Katwa (where Kesava was born) worship the Image of Vishnu, which was installed, so they say, by Kesava, the Brahmachari family of Denur in the Burdwan district, who are said to be the descendants of Balabhadra, brother and disciple of Kesava Bhārati, are still in charge of the Gopināth Image at Denur which is said to have been erected by Balabhadra. To set up Images of Krishna would have been quite out of the question for a *Sankarite Sannyāsi* and his disciple. The learned editor of Vaishnava Manjusa suggests that Kesava may have been a life-long celibate and that the so called descendants of Kesava Bhārati are really the descendants of Ushāpati and Nishāpati two Brāhmanas who were Kesava's disciples and not his sons. The Simlai family of Kalavadi Gopālapur in Nadia and of Baghpur in Mursidāvād, the Bhattacharya family of Srivarapur in Midnapur, the Bhattacharya family of Guptipādā in Howrah, the Shankara Family of Krishnagar and Mamjoyani, are said to be the descendants of Kesava Bharati.[2]

Sri Nimāi became a *Sannyāsi* with shaven head, only wears a loincloth and a covering for His shoulders, and carried a water pot and the ascetic staff known as *Danda*. Kesava Bharati declared "Sri Krishna Chaitanya" as the name, which Sri Nimāi as a *Sannyāsi* was to bear in the future. Explaining that He had chosen the name because Sri Nimāi would extend the worship of Krishna throughout the world, and arouse the spiritual consciousness (Chaitanya) of the people by means of the Kirtana.[3] On the occasion of His *Sannyās*, Sri Chaitanya spent the night at

[1] ibid 68-69 [2] ibid. p.23 [3] C.Bh.Madhya XXVIII.175-176

Katwa and entered the woods of the *Rāda* country in an ecstasy of song and dance, His *Sannyās* Guru followed, unwilling to be separated from the new *Sannyāsi*. Vaishnava biographers object to call Sri Chaitanya any one's disciple, so they interpret Sri Chaitanya's relationship with Kesava Bhārati by saying that Sri Chaitanya bestowed grace upon him by accepting *Sannyās* from Kesava, and that the latter served him as His Guru.[1]

Sri Chaitanya was now entirely God-intoxicated and without any life apart from religious ecstasy) "Where is Krishna, the Lord and darling of My heart to be found" were the only words on His lips; He sobbed crying 'Krishna, Krishna'. To live bereft of the sight of beloved Krishna was a torture. He fell into trance after trance, His love for and devotion to Krishna was like that of Rādhā with whom He identified Himself. Sri Chaitanya sent Chandra Sekhara to the sorrowing family and devotees at Navadvip, with the news of His entry into the forest retreat Vrindāvanadās says that no language can describe the effect of the news on the devotees of Navadvip. Advaita was about to drown himself in the Ganges and mother Sachidevi laid senseless on the ground, everyone cried bitterly, striking their heads and breasts.

Sri Chaitanya accompanied by Kesava Bhārati, Nityānanda, Gadādhara, Mukunda Brahmānanda, and the gate-keeper Govinda started on His journey to Vakresvara wood in the Birbhum district, following an eastward course and reciting the famous song of the *Tridandi Bhiksu* "I shall cross the unpassable ocean of the world by means of devotion to the supreme being, and by the service of the lotus feet of Sri Mukunda."[2] As He passed through the country of *Rāda* He preached the Name of God and begged the people to make Krishna the Lord and wealth of their hearts, they were stirred to the depths by the inspiring song and dance of Sri Chaitanya Who spent the night at the house of a Brāhmana. When the others were asleep, Sri Chaitanya got up and resumed His journey alone,

[1] C.C.Adi XII.16 [2] Bhâgavata.XI.23.53

leaving, companions behind, who only found Him after an anxious search by His loud call upon Krishna in a distant wood. The party now changed the direction of their journey and moved towards the Ganges. Sri Chaitanya having decided to go on to Puri asked Nityānanda to return to Navadvip and bring His sorrowing devotees and mother to Shāntipur where He would meet them before proceeding to Puri. Krishnadās Kavirāj's version differs from the above by Vrindāvanadās[1] and Murāri Gupta (III.4), He stated that Nityānanda sent Chandrasekhar on the errand, and he himself led the God-intoxicated Sri Chaitanya to Shāntipur saying that he was leading Him to Vrindāvan. Vrindāvandās's account is the more probable as otherwise He would not have reached Shāntipur, which is not in the direction of Vrindāvan from the *Rāda* country. Moreover as Nityānanda himself gave the account to Vrindāvanadās, the latter is unlikely to have been mistaken.[2] Nityānanda arrived at Navadvip to the great relief of all and found mother Sachidevi in twelve days fast, which she had begun when Sri Chaitanya left the house. He induced her to break the fast and took her to Shāntipur. Sri Chaitanya reached Fulia where Haridās Thākur was living. All men and women, young and old including the former enemies of Sri Chaitanya now repentant, hurried in their hundreds and thousands to Fulia to pay their respectful homage to the great saviour of Bengal. Sri Vrindāvanadās says that the blind, the crippled and even those in a state of advanced pregnancy ran forward to be blessed. So great was the concourse and so earnest was the eager expectation of the vast crowd, that the ferry boats were unable to convey the people to the other side of the Ganges, their impatience was such that they refused to wait for the boats. Many swam across the river; others made a raft of banana plants; others again crossed the Ganges in large jars, and so on. The very thought that the God of Navadvip would never return filled them with dismay. Meanwhile Sri Chaitanya reached the residence of Sri Advaita at Shāntipur where He received a warm welcome, His host clasping the saviour's feet over

[1] Antya.I [2] C.Bh.Madhya XXVIII.184

which he wept. Led by Nityānanda, Sachi Devi and a great multitude from Navadvip arrived at Shāntipur, all deriving great comfort at the sight of their Lord. Mother Sachidevi finding Sri Chaitanya with shaven head and only a loin cloth cried out in a voice choked with tears, "My Nimāi, don't be cruel as Visvarūp whom I have never seen since he joined the order of *Sannyās*. Should you too do it will kill me". Sri Chaitanya consoled her with words of tenderness. "This body is yours, it is not mine. Ten million births will not suffice to repay My debt to you. True I have become a *Sannyāsi* in wisdom or in ignorance. But I can never be indifferent to you. I shall live wherever you wish. I shall carry out your orders, but it is not becoming a *Sannyāsi* to live with his kindred and in his birthplace. Let this reproach not be brought upon Me. Devise a means by which both objects may be attained." His mother acted with great wisdom saying, it was true that she would be happy indeed if He stayed at home, but if fault were to be found with Him, she would grieve deeply, and suggested He should remain at Puri for then she could hear from Him regularly.

For ten days Sri Chaitanya dwelt at Shāntipur, whither came a constant concourse of His followers and pilgrims to look upon their, Lord and every night Sri Chaitanya danced in the Kirtana performance while Mukunda Datta His favourite singer, sang the songs which expressed His varying emotions. As night approached he sang the following songs of unbearable separation from Krishna, Rādhā says to her friends "Woe to me, my beloved sister, what has happened to me; My love for Kānu (Krishna) wears away my body and mind like a poison. My heart burns day and night there is no happiness for me. O that I could fly where, Kānu is to be found!"[1] These lines expressed the feelings of Sri Chaitanya's heart for His God Krishna. Various emotions of love-in-separation, such as penitence, despondency, laughter, gaiety, jealous pride, and humility, were aroused, which He found so uncontrollable that He fell senseless to the ground, springing and dancing

[1] C.C.Madhya III.124-125 [2] C.C.Madhya III.209

the next moment.

After ten days at Shāntipur, He left for Puri with Nityānanda, Jagadānanda, Pandit Dāmodar and Mukunda Datta.[2] According to Vrindāvanadās, Nityānanda, Gadādhara, Brahmānanda, Jagadānanda, Mukunda and Govinda were His companions.[1] And Dāmodar joined Him later at Puri.[2] Again according to Krishnadās's Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita. Gadādhara joined Sri Chaitanya at Puri after the latter's return from the south.[3] His message to His followers before His departure from Shāntipur was that they should sing the name of God in their homes and that He would never desert them, either He would come gain to see them or He should go to Puri.

The journey being unsafe because of war between the kings of Bengal (Hossain Shah) and Orissa (Pratāp), Advaita tried to prevent Him from leaving Shāntipur but Sri Chaitanya refused to consider the danger and set out in a southerly direction along the bank of the Bhāgirathi (Ganges) by way of Chatrabhoga. He seems to have passed through Chakdah, Madanpur, Kānchrapādā, Naihati, Bhatpādā, Barrackpur, and other places on the route till He reached Athisara near Baruipur in 24 Parganas, W.B. where He was spent a night in *Kirtana* song at the house of a pious Brāhmana named Ananta Āchārya. Resuming His journey along the bank of the Bhāgirathi (also called Hugly), He reached Chatrabhoga. There is a Siva temple on the Ganges where Sri Chaitanya bathed; now this Siva temple is at Vadasi about one mile and a half from Chatrabhoga, which then included the place now called Vadasi within its jurisdiction. Chatrabhoga is some four miles and a half from Mathurāpur in the 24 Parganas, on the Diamond Harbour Railway line from Sealdah (Calcutta) from which it lies about fortytwo miles to the south. When Sri Chaitanya was engaged in devotional song and dance, Rāmachandra Khān, the Hindu chief of southern Bengal, happened to be present, and was struck with amazement at the sight of His passionate self-surrender and heart-rending cries for Krishna. He presented himself making

[1] C.Bh.Antya II.35 [2] ibid.685 [3] C.C.Madhya XI.84

obeisance and saying that he was a servant of His (Sri Chaitanya's) servant, his attendants telling Him that he was the chief of the southern districts. Sri Chaitanya promptly requested him for a safe escort to Puri. Rāmachandra informed him of the dangers and difficulties of traveling on account of the hostilities between the kings of Bengal and Orissa, no one being allowed to pass. The roads were thick with iron tridents and travelers from one to the other were arrested as spies and killed.[1] Sri Chaitanya remained unafraid, He knew that the divine weapon Sudarshan ever guards devotees of Krishna from all calamities, and insisted on going to Puri. Rāmachandra requested Him to take a meal, promising to make arrangements for the journey that night even at the risk of His life and property, for in case of any accident, He would be held responsible by His King (of Bengal) for having conveyed a party into the enemy's country when a war was on. Sri Chaitanya dined at the house of the Brāhmana spending most the night in the *Kirtana* song and dance to the satisfaction of the villagers, Rāmachandra ordered the boat to be brought to the landing *Ghāt* and Sri Chaitanya and His party went on board. The Gaudiya Math Mission has set up the footprints of Sri Chaitanya in a towered temple at Chatrabhoga to commemorate the visit of Sri Chaitanya to this village.

The boat crossed the Hugly river (commonly called Ganges or Bhāgirathi) from Chatrabhoga and proceeded on downward course southwest and passed by what is now called the James and Murray sands, and the mouth of Haldi river reaching a place called Prayag Ghāt with Nandigrama. Khajli, and other villages to the right. Here Sri Chaitanya disembarked and crossed the frontier of Orissa. Prayag Ghāt (This is not the Rāmachandra of Benaple who bore malice against Vaishnavism and was inimical to Haridās Thākur and Nityānanda) may have been a landing place further down the mouth of the Hugly river, possibly by Geokhali or Cowcolly and below Hijli in the Midnapur district.

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[1] C.Bh.Antya II.97

After bathing at the Gangā Ghāt and visiting a Siva temple, the party took shelter in a temple and Sri Chaitanya as a *Sannyāsi*, went-out to beg for alms. Jagadānanda cooking for the party and they all spent the night in the *Kirtana* performance. Early next morning they started off on foot taking a north-westerly direction towards Jallesvara, at some distance from the village they were stopped by the tax-collector who demanded the traveler's tax but as none of the parties had money or even food following the strict rules of Sri Chaitanya's order, the tax collector allowed the *Sannyāsi* (Sri Chaitanya) to pass and detained the rest of the disconsolate party. After proceeding a short distance alone, Sri Chaitanya's tears softened the heart of the tax collector. As soon as he heard that it was Sri Chaitanya Himself (of whom he had heard), and His disciples, the tax collector fell at the feet of Sri Chaitanya and apologised for detaining them.[1]

Vrindāvanadās says that the party reached the Suvarnarekha river in a few days, which they crossed before reaching Jallesvara, but as Jallesvara lies on the eastern bank of the Suvarnarekha, the party must have visited Jallesvara, first and then crossed the river, probably at Rājghat. Even the seventeenth Century map[2] places Jallesvara on the east of the Suvarnarekha, therefore Vrindāvanadās must have made a mistake. Before they reached Jallesvara, Jagadānanda who bore the ascetic staff of Sri Chaitanya, placed it in Nityānanda's charge and continued to beg for alms, whereupon Nityānanda considering the staff too heavy a burden for his Lord, broke it into three pieces. To show His displeasure at this act, Sri Chaitanya proceeded on His way alone, but after a few steps He waited and entreated him not to interfere with the rules of asceticism, but so great was Nityānanda's love for his Master (Sri Chaitanya) that he found it difficult to agree to these ascetic privations. The party held the *Kirtana* at the Jallesvara temple and stayed the night in the village, resuming their journey the next morning when they met a *Shākta Sannyāsi* on the Vansdah road with whom Sri Chaitanya exchanged

[1] C.Bh.Antya II. 182-184 2 Van Brouke's map

jokes. He invited the party to drink at his Math thinking them to be *Shākta*, and Sri Chaitanya duped him by saying that he might make arrangements for their, reception and that they would follow him to his Math, but as soon as the *Shākta Sannyāsi* had left them, Sri Chaitanya smiled pitifully at his request and they continued their journey until they reached Remuna, taking the old pilgrim route which according to Van Broucke's map came from further north, passing through Midnapur reaches Dāntan, keeping Tāmboli (Tamluk) and Bansja on the left or eastern side and continuing through Ramoena (or Remuna), Badreck (Bhadrak) before ending at Cuttack. Vrindāvanadās apparently refers to this route when he states that Sri Chaitanya met the *Shakta Sanyasi* on the Bansda road, a name which may have been given to the locality on account of the situation of the theft important town Bansda. The Bansda of Vrindāvanadās's description seems to be the same as Bansda in Van Broucke's map.

Sri Chaitanya visited the Gopināth temple of Remuna where Mādhavendra Puri, His grand preceptor, had lived and whose memory is sacredly associated with the Deity. No sooner did Sri Chaitanya call up the holy memory of Mādhavendra Puri and his famous verse "O Lord, kind to the humble! O Lord of Mathurā! When shall I see Thee, my afflicted heart has become unbearably impatient to see Thee, my beloved Oh, what shall I do?" Sri Chaitanya was so overpowered with impetuosity of His love, in separation for His God Krishna at the sight of Gopināth that Nityānanda took Him in his arms; His voice choking with emotion and tears streaming down His cheeks He trembled, perspired, wept, and lay motionless, expressing pathos, extreme grief, exaltation, and humility, in turn. The priests of the temple entertained Him with the *Kshira Prasad* and He spent the night performing the *Kirtana*, after which He set off immediately after attending the morning service of the Deity (*Mangala Ārati* or the rising up from slumber). The Gaudiya Vaishnavas, who come to Puri on pilgrimage, never fail to visit the temple of Gopināth, which enjoys special sanctity due to the visit of

Sri Chaitanya.

The next important place He visited after Remuna was Jajpur, which was reached in a few days, the distance between the two places as the crow flies, being about 60 miles. It is situated on the right bank at the Vaitarini, which marks the boundary line between the Cuttack and Balasore districts; rising in the hills in the northwest of Keonjhar State, it flows below Jajpur, joins the Brahmani river and falls into the Bay of Bengal under the name of Dharma. This river is regarded as the Styx Of the Hindus. Sri Chaitanya Bhāgavat also refers to it as such.[1] Jajpur a city of temples and palaces contains the remains of every kind of religious sect. The ruthless vandalism of the renegade Kālāpāhāra and Hossain Shah of Bengal and other Muhammedan iconoclasts can be traced in the disfigured faces and broken arms of the Images, the broken capitals and pillars and they destroyed temples. Many interesting temples and buildings are still to be seen among which the important, particularly from our point of view is the temple of Adi Varāha, the boar Incarnation of Vishnu.

Sri Chaitanya took His bath in the Vaitarini at the Dasavamedh Ghāt and visited the temple of Varāha with much pleasure, singing and dancing before the Deity in ecstatic love and devotion. He visited most of the temples and holy places alone rejoining His disciples the next day. The Gaudiya Math Mission has erected an elegant temple on the left of the Varāha temple and set up the footprints of Sri Chaitanya therein, for daily worship.

Sri Chaitanya walked about forty miles or so from Jajpur to Cuttack in a few days. Cuttack situated on the tongue of land formed by the Mahānadi and Cutjuri rivers is still the capital town of Orissa. He bathed in the Mahānadi, and saw the beautiful Shāksi Gopāl Image before which He danced, sang, and said a long prayer. Krishnadās Kavirāj has given the history of this important image[2] and records the curious tradition that two Brāhmanas of Vīdyānagar (near Rājahmundry), one of whom was very old and the

[1] C.Bh.Antya II.280-283. [2] C.C. MadhyaV

other young, went on a pilgrimage, the young Brāhmana served the other during the journey, for which service the latter promised him his daughter in marriage before the Image of Gopāl at Vrindāvan. The old man subsequently denied his promise the Gopāl Image proceeded on foot to Vidyānagar to give evidence before the arbitrators and later the Image was installed by the king of Vijayanagar and is called Shāksi Gopāl because it gave *Shāksi* (Evidence). King Putusottama Deva, father of Pratāprudra who was the follower of Sri Chaitanya, attacked and defeated the king of Vidyānagar and conveyed to Cuttack, considerable booty, including this Image of Shāksi Gopāl together with its diamond throne. The said throne was dedicated to the Jagannāth temple for the service of its deities and the Image of Shāksi Gopāl was installed in a temple at Cuttack, where Sri Chaitanya saw it. The Deity was subsequently installed in the Jagannāth Temple at Puri and finally set up in a beautiful temple at Satyāvadi, about twelve miles from Puri on the railway line from Khurdah to Puri, where it is visited by hundreds and thousands of pilgrims.

The party spent the night at the Shāksi-Gopāl temple at Cuttack, resuming their journey the next morning. The Gaudiya Mission has opened a Math and installed an Image of Sri Chaitanya, to commemorate His visit and to preach His doctrine. This Math enjoys a very high reputation in the province. Sri Chaitanya halted at Bhuvanesvar, the city of Saiva temples and performed His ablutions in the tank called Vindusarovar, which lies on the east of the great Lingarāj temple and north of the Ananta Vāsudeva temple (Vishnu temple). Sri Chaitanya visited all the temples, one of the solitary temples pleasing Him the most[1] that we are unable to identify with certainty. Bhuvanesvar presents all epochs of the development of Orissan temple architecture the Sikhara type, which has grown uninterruptedly, and here reaches its perfection. The following temples are the best specimens of the four epochs of temple architecture in Orissa, nay, in the whole of eastern India:

1) The Paramesvera temple (Circa 8000)

[1] C.B. Antya II.402

2) Muktesvara temple
3) The Lingarāj temple, which is the biggest of its kind, and
4) The Rājārāni temple,

Sri Chaitanya danced and sang in the Lingarāj temple, its splendour of ritual filling Him with delight. It may be assumed from Sri Chaitanya's connoisseurship that the Siva temple, which pleased Him most, may have been the Brāhmesvara temple, generally considered the most perfect specimen in the whole of India from the architectural point of view. He spent a night at Bhuvanesvar, from whence He walked to Kamalapur in happy mood, bathed in the Bhargi River and visited the Kapatesvara temple. Krishnadās Kavirāj differs from Vrindāvanadās in stating that it was here that Nityānanda broke the mendicant staff into three pieces and threw them into the Bhargi[1] The *Vishnu Chakra* wheel on the top of the Jagannāth Temple at Puri is visible from Kamalapur, which is less than two hours journey or six miles on foot; the sight of the temple-wheel so overwhelmed Sri Chaitanya with the deepest emotion that He took nine hours to reach Puri.

All the way from Kamalapur to Atharanālā Sri Chaitanya journeyed in ecstatic mood, dancing, singing, and reciting the verse 'Look, Sri Bāla Gopāl (Sri Krishna) stays on the top of the palace with a smile of infinite tenderness at the sight of Me', and covered the distance from Kamalapur to Atharanālā a distance of about five miles on His back, to make obeisance to Sri Jagannāthdeva, so great was His devotion to the Deity Sri Chaitanya's devotion lay in the love-in-separation of the Copis for Krishna after He left Vrindāvan to make them suffer the pangs of separation, and took upon Himself the role of the hero of the Kurukshetra fight. The love-bereft Gopis of Vraja subsequently met Krishna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra after years of suffering, and entreated Him with all the fervour of their loving hearts to return to Vrindāvan. It is

[1] C.C.Madhya V.141. C.Bh. Antya II.208 [2] C.C.Madhya XIII.124-125

with this feeling of the Gopis that Sri Chaitanya approached the Jagannāth Image at Puri.[2]

The bridge of Atharanālā is so called because of its eighteen arches spanning the small stream at the entrance of Puri. Here Sri Chaitanya suggested that either His companions should go before Him to see the Deity or that He should go first by Himself, for He wished to see the Deity alone His feelings and His soliloquy might be private; understanding His wish, Mukunda Datta asked Him to go in advance of the rest of the party.

The feeling aroused at the sight of the Deity expressed itself in a strange manner; He approached the Jagannāth Image with the suppressed ardour of a love-lorn girl for her lover after years of separation, and rushing forward in an ecstasy of emotion to embrace the deity, fell into a trance. The temple police, failing to understand His ecstatic condition was about to punish Him for apparently violating the rules of the temple, but fortunately Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma being present promptly stopped them. He had been deeply moved at the sight of Sri Chaitanya's transports and personal beauty and finding Him unconscious, had him conveyed by His disciples and the bearers of the Deity to his home to the south of the Jagannāth temple. Here Sārvabhauma was alarmed to find no signs of breathing and no beating of the heart, and anxiously held a fine piece of white cotton to His nose to ascertain whether life was extinct. The cotton moved very slightly to the great relief of the Sārvabhauma, who wondered whether such a radiantly pure state of devotion could exist in one who was less than a divinity. Nityānanda and the others who had followed Sri Chaitanya a little later met Gopināth Āchārya, a former follower of Sri Chaitanya and brother-in-law of Sārvabhauma, at the lion-gate of the temple, and all came to Sārvabhauma's house, where they found Sri Chaitanya still in the trance which lasted until evening, when Sri Chaitanya recovered and was entertained with His party to dinner, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, the court Pandit of the King Pratāprudradeva of Orissa, offered Sri Chaitanya a great variety of rich food on a gold plate; He

accepted nothing, but vegetables simply prepared. It is a religious obligation that married Hindus be reverent and hospitable to ascetic monks.

THE CONVERSION OF SĀRVABHAUMA

Sārvabhauma was perhaps the greatest *Māyāvāda* scholar of the day in eastern India. His brother-in-law, Gopināth, was an enthusiastic believer in Sri Chaitanya's divinity; such faith a rebellion against Sārvabhauma, who never admitted any form or attribute of the absolute, much less was he prepared to accept the doctrine that Sri Chaitanya was an *Avatār*. Sārvabhauma was anxious to convert Sri Chaitanya to *Advaitism*[1] and began to teach Him the Vedānta. For seven days Sri Chaitanya listened to him without making any comment, and only on the eighth day when Sārvabhauma inquired whether He understood, did Sri Chaitanya break His silence, replying that He understood the meaning of the Vedānta as Vyāsa (Bādarāyana) interpreted it in explaining the Upanishads, but that his fanciful interpretation was unintelligible and hid the real meaning of the aphorisms, for the Vedānta should be interpreted in the light of the Upanishads, Shruti being the chief of all proofs which he ought not to undermine by his own imaginative, elaborations. Sri Chaitanya added that the meaning of Vyāsa's aphorisms (Vedānta) was as clear as the sun and that it should not be hidden by a cloud of conjectural commentary; He then refuted all that Sārvabhauma had sought to establish by his interpretation in the light of Shankara's commentary on the Vedānta. According to Shankara's view the *Brahman* is devoid of all distinguishable features, possesses no attributes and has no internal variety. (*Sajatiya-Vijatiya Bheda Rahityam*). He denied that the *Brahman* as being or non-being[2]; the non-distinct *Brahman* being one universal consciousness in which everything is lost the knower, knowledge, and the object known, merge in unity losing their separate identities. According to the Shankarite

[1] C.C.Madhya VI.75 [2] Shankara's Bhâsya on Prasna Up. IV.I.

monistic view, the supreme personality of God is absurd, as it reduces it to the condition of limitations the absolute which should be *Nirguna* or indeterminate and quality less; the characters of personality and absoluteness being irreconcilable in the same entity; the *Brahman* is essenseless and not a substance[1]; the *Brahman* is one reality without a second, either within or without; so there is no activity no cause to give rise to action; the world is not different, nor is the *Jiva*, from the *Brahman* who is one and the same and admits no duality; the whole phenomenal world is an illusory appearance of the Brahman. Sri Chaitanya considered these tenets of Shankara one by one, for Sārvabhauma was the greatest of all the Shankarite Vedāntic scholars, perhaps in the whole of eastern India, his name being well known in all centers of learning of the day, such as Benares and so on, Prakāshananda Sarasvati of Benares, another leader of monastic-non-dualistic idealism of northern India, knew him to be a formidable scholar[2] Sri Chaitanya interpreted the *Brahman* as the infinite (*Vrihat*), but also as the Lord of everything and full of powers and attributes, He denied Sārvabhauma's contention that the *Brahman* was formless (*Nirākarā*), arguing that some Shruti texts describe the *Brahman* as *Nirvisesha*: or without variety, but what they did was to strip it of mundane Visesa or conditioned attributes and qualities by way of establishing the transcendental attributes in order to make the bliss possible, as He is also *Sacchidānanda*, i.e. *Sat* or existence, *Chit* or intelligence or consciousness, and *Ānanda* or bliss. The last, viz. *Ānanda*, requires a subject and an object to make it exist. *Ānanda* as understood by the Sankarite scholars, if they admit it all, is mere freedom from suffering, something negative. Vaishnavite scholars take it to be absolutely positive, requiring one to enjoy another, - the reciprocal activities of two entities Taittiria Upanishad (II) says that the *Ātman* (*Brahman* or God) exists, (asti), shines (*Bhāti*) and loves or pleases (*Priti*). How is *Priti* or bliss possible if the *Brahman* is divested of all activity,

[1] Vedânta Paribhâsa I [2] C.C. Adi XVII.119

duality, attributes and so on? Sankara argues in this regard that all action is actuated by desires, or more precisely by wants, but as the *Brahman* is devoid of all deficiency, no action is possible in His case. Sri Chaitanya argued that the *Brahman* is not *Nirviseshachinmatra* or undifferentiated consciousness alone, but also *Savisesa* or capable of accommodating all it's qualities, variety, activities, etc. without being limited as the individual is liable to be limited in the conditioned world. This is possible by virtue of infinite and wonderful potency. He cited verses from the Taittiria Upanishad (I.1.) in which the *Brahman* is held to have created the world with His glance. He cited another verse from Svetāsvatara Upanishad (III.19) showing that the *Brahman* has neither legs nor hands but walks with legs and takes hold with His hands, which means that the *Brahman* has not legs and hands like those of mortal man which are liable to change and decay, but that He (God) has spiritual legs and hands for His bliss-making activities. Some texts of the Shruti which call the *Brahman Nirvisesha* or quality-less, repeat this to guard against imposing on and investing, the absolute spiritual Brahman, with the mundane cause-space-time qualities. When the Shrutis speak of the *Brahman* as *Nirguna*, they mean to raise Him above the mundane *Gunas*, or limitations, or products, of *Prakrti* to which the *Brahman* is transcendent and of which He is the Lord. When He is described as *Savisesha*, as the Vaishnavas think Him to be, He is held to be possessed of a transcendental form capable of doing *Lilā* or sport, which is different from the activities of the conditioned individuals which are the effects of causes and associated with wants, or imperfections. *Lilā* is the activity of the perfect being, proceeding from His absolute nature, from the spontaneous overflow of the fullness of joy and bliss without any reference to want-fulfilling desires. It is merely the overflow of the abundance of His infinite, joyous nature. Sri Chaitanya explained this possibility of spiritual attributes in the *Brahman* in contradistinction to the limitations of the finite, and at the same time without any modification of the nature of *Brahman* in so possessing

His attributes, introducing His threefold *Shaktis*, Potencies, sport-making, or creative energy which are inherent in the *Brahman* as is heat in fire. Of these three *Shaktis* or potencies, *Chit-shakti* is directly and alone responsible to make Krishna known as God by virtue of her *Sambit* aspect, to manifest God's existence, His suites and paraphernalia, by virtue of her *Sandhini* aspect and to make bliss possible or, in other words, make God enjoy bliss by virtue of her *Hlādini* aspect. It is called God's *Svarūpa* or *Antaranga Shakti*. The second *Shakti* is called *Tatastha Shakti*, which evolves into individuals. It is so called on account of her lying between two *Shaktis-Svarūpa Shakti* on one hand and *Māyāshakti* on the other. Jivas have by nature the inherent aptitude either to serve God in obedience to *Svarūpa Shakti*, whose relation to Jivas is to employ them in the loving service of God which is the normal condition of *Jiva's* function, or for susceptibility to the influence of *Māyāshakti*, in which case they come to the mundane world and become liable to the pleasure and pain of the world. The third of the trio, *Māyāshakti* transforms itself into the mundane world and receives *Jivas* by giving them a dual casing, one subtle and one gross body, by which we mean our mind and body, to enjoy and suffer in the world. These three energies coexist with God and are neither earlier nor later than Him. They are inconceivably similar to, and different from God, at the same time, and affect God, their source-spring, in the course of their modification for manifestation or concentration, no more than rays affect the sun intercepted by the clouds. Sri Ghaitanya objected to Sarvabhauma's interpretation of God as devoid of potency (*Nih-Shaktika*), and incapable of manifestation without undergoing modification. Absolute monists prefer the conception of an undifferentiated Absolute Spirit to the potential absolute, lest it should come under the limitations of the phenomenal cause-space-time world. But there is a practical difficulty in explaining the world and individuals, either the possibility of their independent existence, or their relation to the solitary absolute who knows no object

- either inside or outside - because there is one truth and no other. It is really unbecoming on the part of Sankara to impose modification, or, in other words, imperfection, on the absolute *Brahman* in order to explain the world. In his commentary on the Vedanta (II.I.24), Sankara writes "*Kshiravad dravya-svabhava-viseshat*", 'As milk changes itself into curd, so God transforms Himself into the world. Here Sankara is self-contradictory in two points. He destroys the absoluteness of *Brahman* by making Him liable to transformations, which destroy it to give rise to the world, as milk destroys its own quality by being curd, which cannot again return to its former state. Secondly, he tacitly admits object other than the absolute to make it transform itself into the world, as milk requires warmth and other elements to modify itself into curd. According to *Māyāvadism* there is only one *Brahman* without any subject and object, so that Sankara without minimizing His position as the absolute monist cannot admit the element of otherness to explain creation. By admitting the transformation of *Brahman* to explain creation, and at the same time, the conception of appearance (*Vivarta*) to deny the reality of the world and save the position of *Brahman* as One, Shankara destroys his own fundamental basis and is open to the charge of making *Nirguna*, *Nirvisesha Brahman* liable to *Guna* or the limitation of the world. According to Sri Chaitanya's principle of potential absolute, His potency is the material cause of the world and God need not be affected in any way to create the world of which is merely the unconnected efficient cause, or, in other words, He simply energizes His potency from which He is different in the sense that rays are different from the Sun and can light the earth without bringing it down. If the *Brahman* changes as Shankara admits under the force of necessity, it ceases to be *Brahman par excellence*. Shankara should neither impose modification nor posit not self or otherness, by the side of the *Nirvisesha Brahman* to explain the world, in which case He must differ from all Srutis, and from His own fundamental notion of the Brahman. To

[1] Chand Up VI.2.3; Ait Up.I.1.1; Prasna. Up.VI.3.4; Mundaka Up.I.1.9

answer the charge of self-consistency and to explain the Upanishadic passages, 'He glanced', 'I will become many, I will procreate'[1] Shankara introduces two Brahmans, one *Nirguna* and the other *Saguna*) that is to say, *Nirguna Brahman* is above subject and object as it is *Chinmatra*, but when it deals with object as subject in relation to the world, He degrades Himself into *Saguna* Brahman, Whom Sankara calls *Isvara*, Who is said to have combined the natures of both being *(Brahman)* and becoming, (*Prakrti*). Again he speaks of the identity of *Isvara* and *Jiva* by saying that they are no more different beings of a whole, that is, the *Brahman*, than the kingdom of Magadha and Videha belonging to the same world[1], *Isvara* is made a mediating principle between the *Brahman* and the world. It is related both to the *Brahman* on the one hand and also to the object world on the other, so far as it is liable to limitation. Indeterminate *Brahman* becomes determinate *Isvara* in order to be the cause of the world. This *Isvara* conception of the *Brahman* is brought about by the introduction of *Māyā* and *Avidyā*. The former has been applied to transform the *Brahman* into *Isvara* and the other to change it into *Jiva*.[2] The *Brahman* and *Māyā* are combined together to fashion the world. Shankara could not give any tangible place to *Māyā* in relation to God except that it is the limiting adjunct or *Upadhi* of the Brahman. The *Brahman* is said to appear to be Jiva by reflection in *Māyā*, which is illusory and not real, but is necessary for the appearance of the world, which is actually not being or false in an absolute sense. The reflection of the *Brahman* in *Māyā* or in *Avidyā* to appear to be *Isvara* and *Jiva* gives rise to further difficulties because the *Brahman* is formless and absolute and beyond subject and object, so it can not reflect, nor does *Māyā* or *Avidyā* exist as a second entity either within or without because then the *Brahman* has to compromise its absolute character. To answer this question in a limited sense, *Advaitavādins* introduce the reflection theory and *Ghatākāsa Mahākāsa* theory. Shankara suggests the former theory in his commentary on Brihadaranyaka Upanisha[3]

[1] Sutra Bhâsya. III.2.31 [2] Vidyaranya's Panchadasi. 16-17 [3] III.4.12

that the individual souls as reflections of the *Brahman* in *Māyā* are no more real than the appearance of red colour in a white crystal caused by a red flower, so if *Māyā* or the *Jiva* is not real the position of the *Brahman* as that of absoluteness is not permanently destroyed, because *Isvara Brahman* or *Jiva Brahman* is really the *Nirguna Brahman* in the ultimate sense. As the sides and bottom of a box or a jar are removed, the space so limited, is merged in infinite space, so when the limitations or adjuncts of *Avidyā* were done away with, the *Jiva* becomes one with the absolute *Brahman*. As the space within a jar cannot be rightly called the modification of cosmic space because they are essentially same, so the *Jivas* are not really the modifications of the *Brahman*, but the *Brahman* itself. This *Māyā* or limiting *Upādhi* or adjuncts is no more real than to mistake a piece of rope for a snake. Jivas are jivas so long as the mistake of the *Brahman* for Jivas or limiting self persists. Shankara quotes some passages from Sruti which are as follows: "That art Thou (*Tattvam asi*), "I am Thou" and "Thou art I"[1] I am *Brahman* (*Aham Brahnāsmi*) etc. to show the ultimate identity of the *Brahman* and Jiva. Shankara attributes the world of appearance and experience including that of *Isvara* to *Avidya*.[2] But how is that possible? How can we be forced to believe the possibility of transformation of *Brahman* which *Avidyā* causes, when there is nothing besides the *Brahman* alone? The essence of *Māyāvadism* may be thus summed up; that *Māyā* is the limiting adjunct of *Isvara*, Who is the transformation of the *Brahman* in association with *Māyā*, is made up of *Sattvaguna* and helps Isvara in creating, multiplicities, and deludes individuals into the false belief that they are independent and separate entities. Thus she affects the individual by virtue of her aspect called *Avidyā*; in other words, the *Brahman* when associated with *Māyā* is called *Isvara*, and when with *Avidya* is *Jiva*. The difference between *Māyā* and *Avidyā*, which the later *Advaitavadins* make, is that *Māyā*, the adjunct of Isvara, is *Sattva* and dominates over *Rajas* and *Tamas*; and *Avidyā*, the

[1] Vedânta Sutra IV. 1. 30 [2] Bhâsya on B. Sutra.II.1.14 [3] Shankara's Bhâsya on the Vedânta, II.1.6

limitation of *Jivas*, is subordinate to *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Isvara* or personal or degraded *Brahman* has no absolute meaning. The name - and - form world is the effect of *Isvara* or *Brahman* in association with *Prakrti* and *Māyā*,[3] *Moksha* means the dissolution of illusion which *Avidyā* constitutes by deluding the individual into believing that they are different from *Brahman*, or which gives rise to duality. *Moksha* is the return of the individual to become one with the *Brahman*, which is the one and only reality, so all apparent realities with which individuals identify themselves are mere illusion; so is the world. To the liberated one, the space-time-cause world with all distinctions of individuals, *Isvara* and so on, is nothing but oneness of the Brahman. *Moksha* is pure knowledge in which both subject and object merge and lose their identities.

Sri Chaitanya protested against Shankara's view that the highest *Brahman* may be degraded into lower *Isvara* through association with *Māyā*.[1] *Isvara's* Body is made of pure existence and intelligence; therefore it is blasphemous to cause Him to lapse into *Sattva Guna* or quality of Maya. It is no God if God is put under adjuncts. All the Upanishads agree in saying that *Isvara* is, or *Brahman* is *Nirvikāra* (devoid of transformation), so the *Māyāvādins* should not in reason cause Him to undergo modification in order to explain how the world and the *Jivas* have risen. Sri Chaitanya said that those who do not believe in the eternal, untransformable transcendental body of Isvara are punishable by death, untouchable and unworthy of being seen. Vyāsa's *Sutra* admits theory of the transformation of *Shakti* and not of her locus God, in order to give rise to the world. God remains unaffected by the modification of his *Shakti* in the same way as the *Mani* or philosopher's stone produces gold while it remains unmodified. "You have established the theory of *Vivarta* or unreal existence by your mental speculations and the fanciful interpretation of the Vedānta, charging Vyāsa, its author, with the error. Individuals are wrong in so far as they identify their real

[1] Shankara's Bhâsya on Chand Up. III. 14.2

selves with their body. The world is not illusory as you think, but real, though it is subject to change. The difference between God and individuals is a real one. They are not identical as you imagine. The difference between them lies in the fact that one is lord of *Māyā* and the other is subordinate to her. The Gitā recognises Jivas as the power of God but you call them identical with Him. *Shakti* is different from *Shaktiman* who possesses *Shakti*." Sri Chaitanya quoted two verses from the Gitā in support of His statement.[1] "Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, *Buddhi*, and *Ahamkāra* or the empirical ego these eight are of My *Prakrti*, which is different from Me. Oh, Arjuna, My *Aparā Prakrti* (the eightfold modification of which I have told you) is *Jada* (inanimate), Know that I have got a *Prakrti* which as individuals fill the world". According to Sri Chaitanya's, philosophical system, God and His potencies or *Jivas*, who emanate from His potency, are inconceivably different and non-different at the same time, in the same way as sparks are related to fire or rays to the Sun. They are neither absolutely different nor absolutely non-different from each other. As the sparks are luminous like fire, so Jivas are identical with God in so far as they participate in the spiritual nature of God; sparks are not the fire itself nor are rays the sun, so *Jivas* are not God. God is infinite and the Lord of *Māyā* who is styled *Bahiranga*, He is free from the contamination of *Māyā* ever as the perfect light is free from darkness. But *Jiva* is Anu or atomic[2] and consequently liable to come under *Upādhi* or adjunct of *Māyā*. Both *Jivas* and God are real in the absolute sense, by which we should not mean that they are two independent realities antagonistic to each other, nor contradict the Upanishadic sayings that there is only One reality, for the supreme reality is not similar to the unproductive and deformed reality incapable of activities or accommodating relative absolutes within itself. Absolute reality is infinitely potential and can supply energy to make room for her products. *Jivas* are the product or modification of His *Jiva*-making *Tatastha Shakti* who can share the sport and

[1] Gitâ. VII.4,5 [2] Mundaka Up.III.19. Sveta Up. V.8-9 [3] Gitâ VII.5

enjoyment of the absolute beause of their spiritual character, which they have by virtue of their emanation from the *Parā Shakti* of God.[3]

Next Sri Chaitanya took up the question that a few *Sruti* verses such as "Thou art Thou" and "I am *Brahman*", etc., which are the chief *Shastric* proofs of Shankara's *Māyāvadism*, seem to speak of the identity of the *Brahman* with *Jivas*. He (Sri Chaitanya) said that these stray instances are merely partial and so should not be preferred to *Pranava* from which all the Vedas sprang in the world, which is the great saying (*Mahāvakya*) and which is the body of *Isvara*. This *Mahāvakya Pranava* speaks of the difference between God and individuals. When both difference and identity are admitted, the former is more pronounced than the latter. Sri Chaitanya proved imperfection and found fault with Shankara's *Bhāsya* on the Vedānta.[1] Sārvabhauma who, as we know, was a great *Naiyāyika*, defended the monistic position of Shankara, employing logical dilemmas, syllogisms, and devices, but Sri Chaitanya established his views, namely, that the philosophy of love and devotion to God is the logical outcome of the teaching of the Vedas and the Vedānta refuting all Sārvabhauma's opinions to the contrary. He pointed out that the Vedas teach three truths- *Samvandha*, *Abhidheya* and *Prayojana*, which aim *Krishna-Bhakti* or devotion to Krishna and Krishna *Prema* or love of Krishna respectively.[2]

It is interesting, to note that Sri Chaitanya unable to accept Shankara's views, which He ruthlessly refuted in order to establish theism proper on the solid basis of the Vedānta, found no fault with him personally and even honoured him as a Great Āchārya, saying, "Shankara was an Āvatāra of Siva commanded God to hide Him from the *Jivas*, to make them averse from Him by promulgating false theories so that the people should live in their conditioned state in the world, and never cease to produce endless posterity, that is to say, for the working of the mundane world. The author of the 'Padma Purāna' writes as follows:

[1] C.C.MadhyaVI.176 [2] C.C.Madhya VI.178 [3] Uttara Khanda, XXV 7

"Siva says to Pārvati, 'this theory of *Māyā* is a false doctrine, a veiled form of Buddhism, I myself, O Goddess, promulgated this false theory in the *Kaliyuga* in the form of a *Brahmana*."[3] This attitude of Sri Chaitanya towards Shankara, which may be the result of His gracious nature and penetrating psychological insight into the human mind, has been faithfully followed by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. On a close examination, the current tradition among the Vaishnavas that Shankara's *Māyāvadism* is crypto-Buddhism will be found more or less true. Both Buddhists and Shankarite scholars refuse to accept *Jivas* and *Isvara* as realities in an absolute sense, on which depends the first principle of theism or devotion. They are equally atheistical in the sense that both ignore the subject as well as the object of devotion. Shankara's *Moksha* which means the absolute identity of the *Brahman* with the *Jivas* is very much the same as the, "I am nullity" of the Buddhists. However, we are not here concerned with the differences between the universal consciousness of *Māyāvadism* and the void of Buddhism, it will suffice to say, by way of supporting Sri Chaitanya's view, that Buddhists are atheists because of their open opposition to the Vedas, and atheism such as that of *Māyāvādism* under the garb of *Vedic* sanction, is more than Buddhism;[1] that both aim at destroying spiritual love and service as the eternal function of *Jivas* towards the Personal God and that as Buddha differs from the Vedas so also the *Isvara* and *Māyā* theories of Shankara are incompatible with *Vedic* and Upanisadic teaching. Shankara no doubt sought help from the Upanisads to support his *Māyā* theory, which is more akin to Buddhism than to orthodox *Vedic* religion. This tendency to place Buddhists and Shankarites in the same class by Vaishnavas is further strengthened by the prevalent belief that Gaudapada, Shankara's Parama Guru, was himself a Buddhist, and wrote a commentary on the Buddhist book 'Madhyamika Kārikā'.[2] Dr. S. Rādhākrishnan remarks that, "Gaudapada's work bears traces of Buddhist

[1] C.C.Madhya VI. 168 [2] Das Gupta's Indian Philosophy, pp. 423-428
[3] Indian Philosophy, Vol. II. p.464

influence, especially of the Vijnanavada and Madhvamika."[3] This attitude of the orthodox Vaishnavas towards the Shankarite monists was certainly current at the time of the composition of the 'Padma Purana' in which Purana describes the Shankarite *Advaitism*, as *Avaidika* and crypto-Buddhism; if the said passages are not considered spurious. Yāmuna Āchārya also shows similarity between *Advaitism* and Buddhism in his "Siddhitraya", stating that *Advaitavādins* and Buddhists do away with the distinctions of knower, known, and knowledge, and that the Advaita traces them to *Māyā*, while Buddhists trace them to *Buddhi*.[1]

In course of His speech, Sri Chaitanya referred to a very important verse of the Bhāgavata[2] to convince Sārvabhauma of *Bhakti* to God as the *Summam bonum* (*Parama Purusartha*). The translation of the said verse runs: "So charming are the attributes of Hari that even the passionless, self-realised liberated souls feel for Him causeless devotion (*Ahaituki Bhakti*). Sārvabhauma requested Sri Chaitanya to interpret the verse, but the latter asked him to do so first. Sārvabhauma then explained it in nine different ways in conformity with the scriptures and logic, while Sri Chaitanya appreciated his scholarship but pointed out that there was another profound meaning; this Sārvabhauma wished to hear. Without touching upon the nine different meanings offered by Sārvabhauma, Sri Chaitanya gave eighteen other interpretations, first determining the meaning of each of the eleven words contained in the verse, and then the reference to the main word *'Ātmārāma'*. The philosophical and esoteric depth of the interpretation of Sri Chaitanya filled Sārvabhauma with surprise; he felt ashamed at his pride now exposed by the marvellous genius of Sri Chaitanya. His opinion of Him underwent a complete change and he thought that such greatness could not reside except in God. The rare psychological insight of Sri Chaitanya invariably impressed his audiences with the compelling force of His personality, and never failed to convince listeners that He was indeed

[1] J.R.A.S. 1910, p.132. Râdhâ Krishnan. p.471 [2] 1.7.10 [3] C,Bh.Antya iii. 107

divine. Sri Chaitanya is said to have revealed His six-armed divinity to Sārvabhauma.[3] Leaving aside the pious behef that He used to manifest His divinity, it is true that Sārvabhauma who was an out-and-out undifferenced monist, became one of the most enthusiastic exponents of Sri Chaitanya's divinity. On this occasion Sārvabhauma recited the hundred verses, which form celebrated hymn in praise of Sri Chaitanya known as 'Sri Chaitanya Sataka'. The earlier biographers of Sri Chaitanya sometimes quote these verses. This conversion contributed to the success of Sri Chaitanya's fellowship not only in Orissa but also throughout India. Sārvabhauma henceforth championed *Bhakti* against *Advaita Moksha* with the same intensity with which in his earlier days he had expounded the cult of *Moksha* to which he now had so strong an objection, and whenever he found the word '*Mukti*' in any scripture, he changed the reading to *Bhakti*, remarking, "To speak the word '*Mukti*' excites fear and contempt in me."[1] Krishnadās Kavirāj thus comments on the effect of Sārvabhauma's conversion to Vaishnavism: "It is really an act of grace of Sri Chaitanya that a lifelong student and teacher of *Māyāvadism* like Sārvabhauma should speak thus. As we learn, the philosopher's stone is known only when it transforms iron into gold, so all men, in view of Sārvabhauma 'a conversion to Vaishnavism, accepted Sri Chaitanya as God Krishna. Kāsi Misra[2] and numbers of the inhabitants of Puri took shelter at the feet of Sri Chaitanya."[3]

HIS PILGRIMAGE TO SOUTH

Sri Chaitanya reached Puri in the month of Fālguna (February-March), about one month after His *Sannyās*, the conversion of Sārvabhauma occurring at Chaitra (April), and in the beginning of the following month (*Vaisākh*) He decided to continue His missionary tour to the south of India. He told Nityānanda and His other companions that He would travel alone and that they were to remain at Puri till His return. To this plan Nityānanda objected lest some

[1] C.C.Madhya VI. 276 [2] Guru of the King of Orissa [3] C.C.Madhya 278-282

ill might befall Him and begged Him to take any two of His followers, offering himself as he was acquainted with stopping-places in the south. Nityānanda had toured the holy places of India for twenty years since his twelfth years of age and thought he might prove the best guide; Sri Chaitanya insisted on going alone because, as He said, Nityānanda had led Him to Shāntipur when He was proceeding to Vrindāvan and had broken His ascetic staff. Another devotee, Jagadānanda Pandit, always tried to supply Him with the comforts of life, to which He objected but felt compelled to accept dreading the anger of His devoted followers. Mukunda Datta shed tears of grief at the sight of Sri Chaitanya taking three baths in the winter, sleeping on the bare ground, and in the observance of the rigours of monastic life. Therefore Sri Chaitanya preferred to go alone and so avoid complaints of His strict asceticism and requests of a compromise. Nityānanda did, however, succeed in sending a Brahmana named Krishnadās to bear His water-pot and wrapper and to look after Him when in a trance, on the distinct understanding that He would never interfere in any way. When Sri Chaitanya asked Sārvabhauma's leave to depart, the latter deeply grieved, said with tearful eyes, clasping the feet of Sri Chaitanya: "I have gained your company as the consequence of the accumulated merits of my previous births, but now fate snatches you from me. I can bear the death of my son through the stroke of lightning but not this separation from You,"[1] whereupon this request to stay a few days longer was granted and his hospitality accepted. Both Sārvabhauma and his wife took unspeakable delight in feeding Sri Chaitanya, their living God, and the whole family was devoted adherents of the master. It would be the middle of *Vaisākh* (April) of year 1510. A.D., about three months after His *Sannyās*, that Sri Chaitanya set out on His journey to the south, paying homage to the Deity Jagannāth, and circumambulating round the temple with the *Kirtana* party of His devotees and followers before He left Puri. From the temple Sri Chaitanya journeyed direct to Ālālnāth along the seacoast, His host having supplied

[1] C.C.Madhya VII.48

Him with 4 pieces of cloth for His use.

Nityānanda, Gopināth Āchārya, and other devotees accompanied Him up to Ālālnāth where the people of the village and surrounding places flocked in great crowds, to see and worship the God Incarnate about Whom they had heard so much. Throughout the day people came and received His message and were converted to Vaishnavism. Sri Chaitanya held a *Kirtana* performance at the temple of Ālālnāth, an eleventh or twelfth century building of the Orissan type of Sikhara temple in stone; the four-handed Vishnu-Image called Ālānāth is believed to have been erected by one of the Ālvārs. The temple consists of the *Vimāna* (Sacrarium) and a *Yogāmohana*. Recently the Gaudiya Math Mission has thoroughly repaired the temple, built boundary walls, and raised a big lion gate in front of the temple across the spacious courtyard. The Mission has also opened a monastery and temple, on the left of the Ālālnāth temple, where it has installed Images of Sri Chaitanya and RādhāGopināth to commemorate the frequent comings of Sri Chaitanya to the place.

The next morning Sri Chaitanya started on His journey with Krishnadās, afterwards known as Kālā Krishnadās, leaving His associates at Ālālnāth to grieve at His absence. He journeyed, preaching the doctrine of *Bhakti* to, and converting, the people to Vaishnavism whom He charged to farther the cause of *Bhakti*. The author of Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita says that more especially those who entertained Sri Chaitanya became Āchāryas or religious teachers of their new faith to which they made many converts.[1] Proceeding to Setuvandha, His success in spreading His doctrines never failed, all those who joined Vaishnavism making converts of others. In this manner, Sri Chaitanya's followers rapidly grew in number. The said author appeals to his readers to believe in the sincerity of his statement, remarking that Sri Chaitanya's success in the south was even more striking than that at Navadvip. Those villages, through which He passed and preached,

[1] C.C.Madhya VII. 107

adopted the *Kirtana* after His manner.

After His departure from Ālālnāth, the next most important place of His pilgrimage was Kurmāchalam, about 17 miles from the Chikacole station on the B.N. railway line, or nine miles from the town of Chikacole, in the Ganjam district. Sri Chaitanya seems to have passed Berhampur, Itchapur Kinedi, Palconda, etc. to reach Kurmāchalam, which is about 150 miles from Alālnāth; He may possibly have taken the old route, which runs from Cuttack to Ganjam through the above places. Here Sri Chaitanya visited the famous temple of Kurmadeva or the Image of the tortoise Incarnation of Vishnu, re-installed by Rāmānuja. Prapannāmrita, a biography of Rāmānuja says that Rāmānuja came to Kurmāchalam from Puri, but finding the Siva Linga in the temple, retired to bed fasting. Orthodox Sri Vaishnavas never enter Siva temples and if they chance to meet images of gods other than that of Vishnu, observe a fast of expiation for the offence. Kurma Vishnu appeared to Rāmānuja in a dream and told him that the local people called him Siva through ignorance, but that He was Vishnu under the name of Kurmadeva with the characteristic weapons-conch-disc and lotus. The God commanded him to worship him and live there for some time as his priest.[1] It seems probable that Rāmānuja converted the Siva temple into a Vishnuite one. The temple subsequently came under the influence of the Madhva Vaishnavas in the time of Narahari Tirtha, who according to the temple inscriptions dedicated another temple, in front of the main temple of Kurmadeva, to God Nrisimha in Saka 1203.[2] It is curious that while the temple faces east, the presiding Deity, Kurmadeva faces the opposite direction, with His back towards the entrance. Tradition asserts that Vilvamangala Thākur, the immortal author of Krishna Karnamrita prayed to the back of the deity from extreme humility, but that the God graciously turned His face towards the worshipper, since when it has remained in the same position; a temple to the left of the main building is dedicated to the four-armed image of Vilvamangala. It is

[1] Chapter XXXVI [2] 1281 A.D. (Ep. Ind. Vol. pp.260 ff)

probable that the Sri Vaishnavas, who believe that devotees after their liberation vow themselves to the service of Lakshmi Nārāyana in Vaikuntha where both their God and His worshippers are said to possess four arms, may have installed this four-handed image of Vilvamangala Thākur in the memorable temple, said to have been raised over his grave. The Images of Rāma, Lakshmana, Sitā on one side and those of Govinda Deva and His Shaktis opposite are found in the main temple of Kurmadeva, and at the foot of the latter images of Rāmānuja and of two Ālvārs Tirumangai and Nammālvār are placed.

The temple authorities welcomed Sri Chaitanya Who charmed them by His ecstatic love of God, His songs and dances; a *Vaidic Brāhmana*, named Kurma inviting Him to dine, drinking the water in which His feet had been washed, and eating the fragments that were left from His meal with great reverence the whole family turning Vaishnavas. So great was the devotion of the converted *Brāhmana* to Sri Chaitanya that he insisted on following Him in His tour and for all time to come, declaring that He would never part from Him; but Sri Chaitanya appointing him the Āchārya of Vaishnavism for the district, gave him these instructions "Always recite the name of Krishna, stay at home. Teach the doctrine of Krishna to whomsoever you happen to meet. At my bidding, be a spiritual preceptor and save the land. The waves of the world will never affect you, you may see Me again."[1] Sri Chaitanya now performed a miracle, curing a leper named Vāsudeva by His embrace, His touch restoring his original beauty. This leper *Brahmana* was a great scholar in the Bhāgavata. Sri Chaitanya repeated His instructions, namely "Always recite the name of Krishna and save the souls by teaching the doctrine of Krishna. Krishna will immediately accept you."[2] Henceforth Sri Chaitanya was known as Vāsudevamrita for delivering Vāsudeva by a miracle. In December 1930 the Gaudiya Math Mission set up the footprints of Sri Chaitanya in a shrine, which lies on the southwest side

[1] C.C.Madhya VII.128-129 [2] C.C.Madhya VII.147-148

within the boundary of the Kurma temple.

In course of His pilgrimage, Sri Chaitanya reached Jiyada Nrisimha, now known as Sri Nrisimhachalam, so called from the famous temple of Nrisimha or the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu, situated-five miles to the northeast of Vizagapatnam, between Gopālapuram on the north and Chemudapalem on the south. He must have proceeded along the same route running from Cuttack, which continues through Vrisimha and Visākhapatnam in a southernly direction, passing through the Visākhapatanam from Ganjam to Sri Nrisimhachalam, a distance of about 70 miles. The temple is approached by some eight hundred steps, each one being six inches high, where the Deity also faces west while the building faces east. The Image of the famous lady, Ālvār Godādevi, is worshipped in this temple.[1] The body of the presiding Deity Nrisimha is annually covered by a thick layer of sandal paste in *Vaisākh* (July). Here also the Gaudiya Math Mission has built a temple where it laid the footprints in celebration of Sri Chaitanya's visit. This temple of Nrisimha and that of Kurmāchalam belong to the Mahārāja of Visākhāpatam.

HIS MEETING WITH RĀY RĀMĀNAND

He then followed the old route from Sabaran close of Nrisimhachalam, and entered the Rājahmundry district passing through Cossimcottah or Kāsnikotah, Yelmachilly, Toony, Aurimpody, Rājanagrāma to the bank of the Godāvari near the town of Rājahmundry. He crossed the river and seated Himself on the western bank where He met Rāy Rāmānand, governor of Rājahmundry under Pratāprudra, King of Orissa, who had come to the river to take his ceremonial bath.[2] Sārvabhuama had requested Sri Chaitanya before His departure from Puri, to meet Rāy Rāmānand on His journey for he was already a reputed Vaishnava of the highest order whose ecstatic devotion resembled that of Sri Chaitanya. The Master (Sri Chaitanya) recognized him as he came for his bath in state,

[1] Gaudiya Vol.X.p.633 [2] C.C.Antya 1.122

followed by musicians and *Brāhmanas*, numbering one thousand altogether. As he was very devout, Rāmānand Rāy catching sight of a young and handsome *Sannyāsi*, made his obeisance as a religious Hindu prince is expected to do. Sri Chaitanya inquired whether he was Rāmānand Rāy. Rāy replied "Yes, I am that unworthy servitor, a *Sudra* and most unfortunate."[1]; whereupon Sri Chaitanya embraced him, reciting the name of Krishna and overcome with emotion. They sank down on the ground calling Krishna. The attendants of Rāmānand Rāy surprised at finding them in such a state, wondered why a serious Mahārāja like Rāmānand Rāy had suddenly abandoned his gravity of demeanour at the touch of a *Sannyāsi*, and why the *Sannyāsi* should weep after embracing a *Sudra*.[2] Having recovered their composure, Sri Chaitanya told Rāmānand Rāy that Sārvabhauma had asked Him to meet Rāy and that He had been waiting for him. Rāmānand Rāy humbly thanked Him saying "Saviour of the fallen, such is the nature of the great that they unselfishly visit the homes of others in order to bring deliverance", it being the Hindu belief that saints come to the worldly-minded for their deliverance. Rāy added, "Thou art the very God; Thou hast come to deliver me". It should be remembered that on this occasion, Rāmānand Rāy's addressing Sri Chaitanya as God is merely the Indian courtesy usually shown to *Sannyāsi*, but later we shall see that this formal courtesy was to become his firm conviction. In return Sri Chaitanya said "A hard-hearted person like Himself had been moved to the love of God by his touch." The Master (Sri Chaitanya) then wished to hear Krishna lore from him so Rāy said "Be pleased to stay here for five or six days to purge my hard heart of all sin" and a *Brahmana* invited Sri Chaitanya to his house on the Godāvari Rāmānand Rāy returning to his residence at Vidyānagara promising to meet Him again.

In the evening Rāmānand Rāy accompanied by a single attendant met Sri Chaitanya at the house of his host and after the exchange of mutual courtesies, they started a discourse which lasted through the night, which lack of

[1] C.C. Madhya VIII.21 [2] C.C. Madhya VIII.26-27

space does not permit us to give in detail. Sri Chaitanya inquired into the philosophy, doctrine, and mysteries of the love of Rādhā Krishna, its object, and how this could be attained; to these questions Rāmānand Rāy answered readily. Several nights were spent in different discourses, the first and most famous dealing with the whole system of Gaudiya Vaishnava doctrine, which was compared with, and contrasted to, *Karma*, *Jnāna*; the different forms of devotion; Krishna is the supreme God of divine love and romance in union with His consorts; the supreme consummation of the blissful aspect of His *Svarūpa Shakti*; the head of three principal *Shaktis* of the absolute. The great truths of the dialogue are implicit in the causeless and spontaneous love of Krishna not actuated by any reference to the selfish wishes of the devotees themselves, nor due to the rules or commands of the scriptures, and owing nothing to gratitude and moral obligation. The love of Rādha Krishna, which is the highest can only be attained by obedience to, and in the spirit of a Sakhi or one of Krishna's loves. The love of Rādhā-Krishna is sharply differentiated from the earthly passion of woman for man or vice-versa.[1] The discourse of the second night embodied mottoes concerning the Vaishnavite conception of education, happiness, sorrow, song, music, salvation, the place of residence, etc. On the third night, Sri Chaitanya is said to have revealed His divine united form of Rādhā-Krishna (*Mahābhāva Rasarāja*). As a consequence of this continued discourse Rāmānand Rāy grew indifferent to the splendour of his life as governor and to his great wealth, and was exceedingly sad at the thought of separation from Sri Chaitanya who left on the eleventh day, saying to His sorrowing devotee "Give up your post, go to Puri. I shall soon return and we can then spend our days happily together in discussing Krishna-lore."[2] Rāy responded with enthusiasm to the wish of Sri Chaitanya, his God incarnate and remained His faithful disciple as long as he lived. Rāmānand Rāy and Svarup Dāmodar became Sri Chaitanya's two closest associates, living at Puri and

[1] C.C.Madhya VIII. 215-229 [2] C.C. Madhya VIII.297-298 [3] ibid.300

perfectly understanding the wealth of His inner devotion. Not only Rāmānand Rāy accepted Sri Chaitanya as God and became His devoted adherent, but nearly all classes of the *Vidyānagarans* followed the example of their governor[3] The Gaudiya Math has identified the meeting place of Sri Chaitanya and the great Rāy with the Gospada Ghāt on the Godāvari at Kovvur, where the people of Rājahmundry and neighbouring spots bathe on religious festivals and to which people attach a special sanctity. The above Mission has laid the foot-prints of Sri Chaitanya and opened a monastery at the Gospada Ghāt on the Godāvari at Kovvur, to preach the doctrine outlined by the discourse of Sri Chaitanya and Rāmānand Rāy as the best means of perpetuating the memory of the great devotee, after whom the monastery is named "Rāmānand Gaudiya Math" here the Images of Sri Chaitanya and Rāmānand are worshipped.

The author of Chaitanya Charitamrita (Krishnadās) admits and regrets his inability to describe the journey forward from Vidyānagara in strict chronological order, and it is impossible for any one who has never visited these province remote from those of northern India where Krishnadās lived all his life, to describe with accuracy what actually happened; therefore we must reconstruct the journey according to geographical sequence.

Leaving Vidyānagara Sri Chaitanya proceeded slightly towards the east and performed His ablutions in the Gautami-Ganga. The Godāvari divides into two streams at Rājahmundry, which fall into the Bay of Bengal, one of these streams called Gautami Ganga runs into the sea at Godāvari point near Coringa (Karonja) passing to the west of Chellar. He then passed through the Musalipatam district, crossed the Krishna river, possibly near Vijayawada and visited the famous temple of Pānā Nrisimha on the Mangalagiri hill, which lies about seven miles from Vijayawada in the Krishna district and is approached by six hundred steps. The presiding Deity 'Nrisimha' is believed to drink half the quantity of *Pānā* or cold drink offered by worshippers. Next He proceeded through the Guntur district crossing the borders of the

Nizam State and visiting Skanda. Thence He went to Mallikarjuna, also called Srisailam which is about 70 miles from Karnul, and visited the temple of Siva and converted the Saivas to Vaisnanaism, visiting another important temple in the district of Karnul namely Sri Nrisimha at Ahobil in Sarval Taluk. This, the most famous temple in the district, is built on sixty-four pillars each of which consists of several small columns. Passing Ahobil He took the southward course entering the Cuddapa district, and reaching Siddhavat or Siddout, which lies ten miles from Cuddapa on the Pennar river. The Krishnadās Kavirāj (different from the Krishnadās who was Sri Chaitanya's companion during the journey) cannot be right in mentioning Skanda as the place visited after Siddout for it is in the State of Nizam, and several hundred miles from Siddout, and lies near the route from Pānā Nrisimha to Mallikarjuna.

He visited the Rāmasitā temple at Siddout and was a guest at the house of an enthusiastic devotee of Rāmachandra, and from Siddout went to Trimat where there is a temple of Trivikrama Vishnu, which He saw, returning to Siddout and converting His Rāmasita-devotee host to Krishnaite Vaishnavism. Again Krishnadās is confusing in stating that Sri Chaitanya went to Vriddha Kāsi or Viruddhāchalam (in the south Arcot district) upon leaving Siddout, and from thence to Tirūpati and Tirumalla (in the north Arcot district) returning to south Arcot. It is more probable that passing from Siddout, He entered the north Arcot district immediately south of Cuddapa and visited first Venkata Giri which lies in the Nellore district, near the frontier where the three districts of Cuddapa, North Arcot and Nellore meet. From Venkatagiri He seems to have continued His journey towards the south, arriving at Tirūpati and Kālāhasti in the north Arcot district, visiting the four handed Bālāji temple, in a temple on the Venkatagiri hill and the Image of Sri Rāma at Tirūpati. Kālāhasti is famous for the temple of Vayulinga Siva.[1] After passing through Nagari from

[1] A.B.p.478

Tirūpati, He would arrive at Siva Kānchi or Conjiveram, which lies almost in the west corner of the Chengelput district on the way from Tirūpati and Kālāhasti to Trimalaya or Trimimalai. At Conjiveram He visited the Siva temple where He made many converts from among the *Saiva* and *Shakta* sects. He also visited Vishnukanchi about five miles from Conjiveram and recited a long hymn before the Varadarāja Image; (Vishnu Image) here He spent two days initiating in ecstatic devotion to Krishna.[1] The next place visited was perhaps Pakshitirtha or Tirukazhukundram, about nine miles to the north-east of Chengelput and south-west of Conjiveram; there is a famous temple to Vedagirisvara on the Vedachalam or Vedagiri hill, where it is said, every day two eagles come at a certain hour to take the offering from the temple priest, and therefore the place is known as Pakshitirtha (The place of the bird).[2]

From Pakshitirtha Sri Chaitanya went to Vriddhakol and visited the Image of the Varāha Incarnation of Vishnu, and pursuing a southerly course reached Vriddha Kāsi or Viruddhachalam via Tirumālai which lies on the south of the north Arcot district. We have made many alterations in Krishnadās's itinerary to preserve the correct geographical sequence. At Viruddhāchalam He entered the Siva temple and from thence went on to another village inhibited by a great number of Brāhmanas who accepted Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavism. In this part of the country Sri Chaitanya was fiercely challenged by the formidable leaders of the *Naiyāyikas, Mimāmsakas, Māyāvādins, Sānkhyas, Pātanjalas,* and by scholars in the *Smriti, Purānas* and *Āgamās,* in spite of which He successfully established the supremacy of His Vaishnavism, refuting all the arguments of His rivals; these vanquished leaders being forced to accept His faith.[3] Sri Chaitanya's triumph was proclaimed throughout the south. In a forest in this locality, a Buddhist leader and his disciples opposed the master (Sri Chaitanya) at an open meeting, but Sri Chaitanya's arguments completely destroyed their logic and tenets. They then plotted to bring about a deviation from

[1] C.C.Madhya IX.70 [2] A.B.478 [3] C.C.Madhya IX.42-45

His strict observance of the Vaishnavite rule of life, but fortunately and quite miraculously He defeated the evil intentions of the Buddhists; this was one of His many great triumphs for these Buddhists accepted the name of Krishna.

From these places near Viruddhāchalam, He resumed His journey farther south reaching Petāmvara, or Chidambaram in the same district of South Ārcot where He beheld the Siva temple, then proceeded in a south-easterly direction to Shiyali on the south bank of Colerun or Coleroon in the north-east corner of the Tānjore district. Still proceeding south He reached the bank of the Caveri river near its mouth and passed through the Tanjore district to Vedavana, visiting Go-Samāja and crossing the Kāveri, with Kārikal and Nāgapatam, on His left. Vedavana may be Vedaraniam[1] or Vadiraniyam[2], which is about five miles to the north of Calimere-Point. Here Sri Chaitanya visited the Amritlinga Siva temple and other *Saiva* temples making many converts among the *Saivas*. He held discourse with Sri Vaishnavas at Devasthāna and proceeded in a northwesterly direction to Kumbhakarna Kapāl or Kumbhakonam, 20 miles northeast of Tānjore. Pāpanāsam, south of Kumbhakonam and north of Tānjore[3] was His next important stopping place.

AT SRIRANGAM

From Pāpanāsam He turned westward along the bank of the Kāveri, arriving at Srirangam in the month of *Sravana* (July-August) where He stayed until the end of *Kartika* (November) to observe the four-month vow, (*Chāturmasya* which exacts that a Vaishnava, must remain in one place as traveling about prevents him from observing the strict rules of asceticism imperative at this time. At the request of one Venkata Bhatta and his two brothers Tirumalla, and Prabodhananda Sarasvati, famous in the Vaishnava world as the author of Chaitanya Chandramrita and other works, Sri Chaitanya dwelt in their house for the four months. Here is situated the Ranganāth temple one of the richest

[1] John's Royal Atlas 2 Phillips International Atlas 3 Keith's Royal Atlas. F.O.

and most famous of Indian temples which attracts a great number of pilgrims. It is the headquarters of the Sri Vaishnavas. Sri Chaitanya's desire to preach His faith to the many gathered here induced Him to remain at Srirangam.

His host's family belonged to the Vadagālai section of the Sri Vaishnava sect, but Sri Chaitanya's repeated discourses on ecstatic love and devotion to Krishna had their inevitable effect upon Venkata and his whole family, who were attracted to the worship of Vishnu through intimate and confidential love and devotion; they gave up their preference for the worship of Lakshmi Nārāyana, the object of worship of the Sri Vaishnavas, by homage and distant reverence. The distinction between Krishna and Nārāyana is that the former accepts worship in the shape of amorous love while the latter represents the supreme majesty of divinity in Vaikuntha, a barrier of dignity between the subject and object of devotion keeps the worshipper at a distance, in contrast to the unreserved confidence of loving devotion existing in the Vraja of Krishna. Krishna is the God of love Nārāyana is the God of veneration. One day Sri Chaitanya laughingly asked "Bhatta, do you know why Lakshmi Thākurāni, the crown jewel of all chaste women although she abides eternally in the bosom of Sri Nārāyana was so anxious for the company of the divine cowherd, the Lord of My heart, in as much as Lakshmi, in her anxiety, forgetting all her pleasure in Vaikuntha, became an ascetic to enjoy the love of Krishna.[1] Bhatta replied "My Lord, there is difference between Krishna and Nārāyana. Although the loveliness of Krishna exists in Nārāyana, the latter does not exhibit the lighter gaiety of Krishna. When, therefore, Lakshmi's association with Krishna does not cause her to deviate from her course of chastity, but, on the contrary, makes her a gainer by association in Krishna's *Rāsa* Dance, which is not to be found in the company of Nārāyana. "What harm is there in this?" Sri Chaitanya said "No, there is no harm, but Lakshmi would not be admitted to the *Rāsa* dance which

[1] Bhâgavata.X.16.33 [2] Bhâgavata X.5.54

is the exclusive right of the young girls of Vraja.[2] Bhatta requested Sri Chaitanya to enlighten him, which He did, pointing out that Sri Krishna has more charm and enchantment that Nārāyana, by means of which Krishna not only attracts the hearts of all, but even His own heart. The girls of Vraja do not look upon Him as a distant and revered God but as the Lord of their heart, the only dear son, the only dear friend, and approach Him as equals. Everything in Him is supremely lovely. Admission to the romantic land of love is possible in obedience to the graciousness of these girls; Lakshmi being disobedient, was not admitted. Krishna can attract the heart of Lakshmi to His love but Nārāyana failed to arouse the interest of the young girls of Vraja. These explanations revolutionized Bhatta's ideas and made him sad, Sri Chaitanya dealt, gently with him and at last converted him and his family including his brothers Tirumalla and Prabodhānda. The later mentioned turned out to become one of the most enthusiastic exponents of Sri Chaitanya's divinity and doctrine. It must be said here that Gopāla Bhatta, one of the six famous Gaudiya Vaishnava masters who greatly contributed to the literary elucidation of Chaitanya's teaching, and belonged to the group of Rūpa, Sanātana, Jiva, Raghunāth Bhatta, and Raghunāthdāsa, was the son of this Venkata Bhatta. The conversion of this learned family to His Vaishnavism and the acquisition of Rāy Rāmānand at Vidyānagara represent the most important results of about a year's perilous missionary expedition through jungles and forests haunted by wild animals, and through countries inhabited by a fanatical population hardened in orthodox practices. Krishnadās Kavirāj writes about His remarkable success at Srirangam, as follows. "From all quarters flocked hundreds of thousands of the people, and as they beheld the Lord (Sri Chaitanya), they chanted Krishna's name and no other. All became devotees of Krishna to the astonishment of all men. The Brāhmana residents of Srirangam invited Him on successive days."[1]

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[1] C.C.Madhya IX.89-91

Sri Chaitanya took leave of His devotees after a four months' stay and started off for Risava Parvata, taking the southerly course, either passing through, or keeping, Trichinapoly and Dindigul on His left. At Risava Parvat identified with the Pālani hill in the Mādura district, He met Paramānanda Puri, a disciple of Mādhavendra Puri, who was living there for the four-month vow, in the course of His pilgrimage in the South. Paramānanda then proceed to Puri and Bengal from whence he returned to Puri living with Sri Chaitanya as one of His closest associates. Sri Chaitanya left Risava Parvata for Srisailam after three days' sojourn; this Srisailam may be the same place as Sholavandan (Johnstone's map.E.o.), which lies on the outward journey from Pālani hill to Mādura. Krishnadās Kavirāj places Kāmakosthipur, which is directly east of Palani hill as the Master's (Sri Chaitanya's) stopping place on the way to Mādura. Kāmakosthipur is apparently Kauliarkovil to the east of Mādura, but Sri Chaitanya coming from further west, beyond Mādura, may have seen the latter place before He came to Kāmakosthipur which lies on the route between Mādura and Rāmesvaram. At Mādura He was entertained by a Brāhmana, a great Rāma-devotee, who was overwhelmed with grief that the divine Sita, consort of Rāma, had been abducted by the demon Rāvana, that he was observing a strict fast. Sri Chaitanya consoled him saying that Sitā being the essence of absolute spirituality, the physical senses were powerless against her, as Rāvana approached her, she disappeared in fire and flames and an illusory Sitā was left in her place, which Rāvana abducted; after the death of Rāvana, when Sitā was put to the ordeal of Fire, the false Sitā vanished and the real Sitā was delivered to Rāma.

Having taken His bath in the Kritamālā, which is called Vaigai, and passing through Mādura, Sri Chaitanya came to Durvasan, possibly via Kāmakosthipur. Durvāsan or Darvasayana is about 7 miles to the east of Rāmanād on the coast where is a temple of Rāma-Sita. He worshipped Parasurāma on the Mahendra hill before He reached Rāmesvaram, Dhanustirtha or Dhanuskodi, and

Setuvandha or Ādam's bridge, which places form a tongue of land jetting out into the sea, between the Gulf of Mannar and Peek Bay towards Ceylon. Sri Chaitanya bathed in the Dhanuskodi about 12 miles to the southeast of Rāmeswaram and visited the Rāmeswaram Siva temple. The nearest railway station to these places at the present day is Rāmnād on S.I.Rly line. At Rāmeswaram Sri Chaitanya heard the Brāhmanas reciting the story of Sitā from Kurma Purāna which contains the account of the abduction of Sitā, this He managed to extract from the volume and making a copy He took away the original, palm-leave version of the story as proof of the assurance of His explanation to convince the grieved devotee of Rāma-Sitā at Mādura, where He spent the night, resuming His southward journey the following day. He reached the bank of Tāmraparni River in the Tirunelveli district, visiting Tila Kānchi or modern Tilakāsi, which, lies, on the way from Mādura to the Tāmraparni river, north of Tirunelveli and south of the Chitur river. Rising from the hills in the Travancore State, Tāmraparni falls into the Bay of Mannar passing through the Tirunelveli district from west to east. The next important place He visited was Sri Vaikuntha where He beheld the Vishnu temple. Sri Vaikuntha about four miles north of Nayatripati, has been identified with Ālvār Tirunagari which lies south of Palayamkotta and north of Calcand.[1] According to the description of Krishnadās, from Nayatripati, Sri Chaitanya came to Chertalā near Nāgercoil in the southern-most corner of the Travancore State parallel with the southern frontier of the Tirunelveli district, and thence to Tilakānchi in the north of Tirunelveli, coming down again to see Gajendra-Moksha, Pānāgada, and other places which lie near Chertāla. Krishnadās Kavirāj is evidently unfamiliar with the exact topography of these places in their relation to the course of Sri Chaitanya's pilgrimage. It is unlikely that He would go to Tilakānchi in the north of Tirunelveli, which He had already passed from Mādura to Tāmraparni from Chertalā which lies to the south, without seeing such neighbouring places as Gajendra Moksha, Āgasta-Manai Pānāgada, Cape

[1] A.B.p.489.

Comorin; in all probability, He came down from Nayatripati of Ālvār Tirunagari to visit Āgasta Mālai (Philip's Map. M), Pānāgada, Chertāla, Gajendra Moksha and Cape Comorin.

At Āgasta Hill, southern extremity of the Mālaya hill, Sri Chaitanya recited the hymns to the traditional sage Āgasta and saw the Images of Rāma-Sitā at Pānāgada; this Vishniute temple of Rāma-Sitā about thirty miles to the south of Tirunelveli towards Trivandrum, has been converted into a Saivite temple. He is said to have seen the Images of Rāma-Lakshmana, probably at Enganur in the State of Travancore, before going to Ciyartala perhaps Chertala near Nāgercoil; where He also worshipped at the shrine of Rāma-Sitā. At Gajendra Moksha He saw the Vishnu Image; the *Saivas* now occupy the temple, which is situated about two miles to the north of Nāgercoil. At last he reached Cape Comorin, the most southernly point of India, and followed a northward course along the western side. Here again Krishnadās Kavirāj is somewhat confused for he says that Sri Chaitanya came from Cape Comorin and Āmlitalā to Mālavar (in which case He would have to go to through the states of Travancore and Cochin) and thence to the bank of Payasvini or Tiruvattur in Travancore and on to Sringeri Math in Mysore. (Passing through Mālābār). He may have entered the Travancore State from Cape Comorin, which lies to the immediate south of the State and then entering Mālāb ār, passed on to Mysore as they lie on His northward course; this is the route we propose to follow.

From Cape Comorin He went to Tamālkārtik and Vetapani and perhaps Āmlitalā visiting the Image of Kārtika at Tamālakārtik, 44 miles to the south of Tirunelveli. The temple of Rāmāchandra at Vetapani north of Nāgaracoil in the Tobal Taluk still exists. He then traveled along the of Payasvini or Tiruvattura river in the Travancore State, and visited the temple of Ādi Kesava on its bank in the Trivandrum district where He offered fervent devotion recited a long prayer and held *Kirtana*. At this temple He

acquired a copy of the famous 'Brahma Samhita' (5th chapter) to His great wonder and amazement. Resuming His journey, He visited the temple of Ananta Padmanabha in the Trivandrum district and then the temple of Janardana-Vishnu and ascended further north entered Mālabar where He met with an unfortunate incident. A gang of gypsies called Bhattathari (also called Bhattamari in some editions, which is wrong- thieves and kidnappers, enticed away Krishnadās (different from the biographer Krishnadās Kavirāj) by offering him a woman; they intended to beat and kill Sri Chaitanya who asked them to deliver up His companion, and was able to drag their victim away without any blood-shed. He is said to have seen Matsyatirtha, which may be the same as Mahe in the west of Malabar. Then He turned in a north-easternly direction and entered Mysore to visit the Sringeri Math, one of the four famous Maths founded by Sankara, passing through the southern half of the South Canara district. Sringeri Math is situated on the left bank of the Tungabhadra river in the district of Kādura, about 7 miles to the south of Hariharpur, in Mysore; and following a direct westernly course He came to Udipi on the coast in the South Canara district, 36 miles north of Mangalore, the capital town of the district. Here He saw the famous Image of the Boy Krishna erected by Madhvāchārya. The headquarters of the Madhva sect is at Udupi, and here Chaitanya engaged in a scriptural disputation with the head of the sect. Krishnadās Kavirāja does not mention his name but we may infer from the list of disciples of the Uttaradi Math (the head of eight principal Maths) that it was Raghuvarya Tirtha who is the thirteenth in succession from Madhva and was in office from Saka 1424 (1511 A.D.) till Saka 1471 (1559 A.D)

From Udupi Sri Chaitanya went north and entered the north Canara district where He visited Falgu Tirtha, Tritakupa, Surparaka Tirtha, Gokarna, Dvaipayani and Apsarā-Tirtha. Gokarna is a small peninsula at the mouth of the rivers Gangawalls and Tandri, which fall into the sea north of Kamt. Surparaka is apparently Supa on the river Kali in the same district, and lies on the route from

Gokarna to Kolhapur where He arrived after following a northerly course; it is now an Indian state, the chief of which is a patron of the Gaudiya Math. It is bounded by Satara on the north, the Belgaon district on the east and south, and Ratnagiri hill on the west. He visited the temples of Lakshmi and Ganesha–Parvati at Kolhapur and thence traveled north-east to reach Pāndārpur, about 38 miles from Sholāpur, directrly west where He visited the famous deity "Viththala Deva" and met Sri Rangapuri, a disciple of Mādhavendra Puri, who acknowledged the connection between the two leaders (Madhava and Sri Chaitanya) by His ecstatic devotion. Ranga Puri had been a guest at Navadvip possibly before Sri Chaitanya's birth or when He was very little, he praised the loving hospitality of His mother Sachidevi before he knew that He was her son. He told Sri Chaitanya that her worthy son took *Sannyās* at an early age under the name of Shankararanya Puri and died at Pāndārpur, after listening without interruption, Sri Chaitanya explained His relationship with the family. For the next four days He was entertained by a Brahmana visiting the Viththala Image and preaching His *Bhakti* cult. The influence of His example and preaching is found in the vernacular literature (Marhatta) of Pāndārpur, with an account of the vision of the famous saint Tukārām of Pāndārpur.

He visited many places and temples on the banks of Krishna Venva. *Venva* means Bhima, so by the banks of Krishna Venva, Krishnadās Kavirāj seems to mean the land between the Krishna and Bhima rivers which lies to the west of Sholāpur and comprises Nidal, Wala, Sulpa etc. In this part Sri Chaitanya obtained the famous Krishna Karnāmrita by Vilvamangala Thākur which book brought Him great consolation in His agony of love-in-insepartion for Krishna in His latter days.

He then came to the bank of the Tapti and proceeded further north as far as Māhismati in Broach. He then reached the Narmada River visiting many places on its banks of which our author Krishnadās Kavirāj has not given the names. From the banks of Narmada He followed a

southeasterly direction and visited Dhanustirtha, the Nirvindha River and Risyamukha hill. The Dhanustirtha of Krishnadās in this district seems to be the same as the Damon port, which lies to the west of Dandakāranya, which He reached next. The vast tract of forest which roughly extended over Khandesah in the north, Āhmadnagar in the south, and Nāsik and Āurangabad, also along the bank of the Godāvari in the western part of the Nizam's territory, has been identified with Dandakāranya where Sri Chaitanya visited many places, the most important of which were the Pampā lake, Panchavati, and the temple of Tramvaka Siva at Nāsik. The Pampā lake in Dandakaranya seems to be Pimpidgaon, north of Nāsik and Wazar; Panchavati has been identified with woods at Nāsik. He came down from Nāsik and visited Brahmagiri hill, and Kusavarta hill from which raises the famous Godāvari River. Kusavarta is Kasar hill south of Nāsik, from whence He followed an easterly course along the bank of the Godāvari through the northern portion of the Nizam's territory and reached Vidyānagar-Rājahmundry, visiting innumerable places and temples on the route.

Rāmānand Rāy received Him with great delight, and Sri Chaitanya gave him a full account of His long tour showing him the two manuscripts of 'Brahma Samhita' and 'Krishna Karnāmrita', the two teachers sitting up several nights studying the manuscripts. The news of His return to the place spread rapidly and the whole population flocked to have a glimse of the Master (Sri Chaitanya). Rāy told Sri Chaitanya that he submitted to the King his intention to leave his post and that as the King approved of his going to Puri, he was making preparation for the journey, to which Sri Chaitanya replied that He had returned to Vidyānagar only to take him away, but Rāy begged Him not to wait because he would have to travel with his army, horses, elephants, etc, and the necessary arrangements would take ten days or more.

From Vidyānagar Sri Chaitanya followed the same route as that which He had taken on His outward journey, to

[1] C.C.Madhya IX.337

ascertain how the people, to whom He had preached more than a year ago, were following His teaching. It is interesting to note that Sri Chaitanya was delighted with the results and all along the route He was greeted with general acclamation.[1] He returned to Ālālnāth where His followers of Puri had bidden Him farewell on the eve of His pilgrimage, and sent His companion Krishnadās to Puri with the news of His arrival. As soon as the tidings of good joy reached Puri, Nityānanda, Jagadānanda, Dāmodar, Mukunda, Gopināth and others hurried to Ālālnāth to receive their Lord, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma meeting Him by the sea. He was escorted to the temple of Jagannāth where He was garlanded and honoured by the temple piests and the Pāndās, after which Sārvabhauma led Him to his own house and entertained Him with all the warmth of his heart; here He spent the night relating the story of His long journey to Sārvabhauma, Nityānanda and other devotees.

Krishnadās Kavirāj says that the journey in the south of India took Sri Chaitanya two years[1] We know that He left Puri in the month of *Vaisākh* (April) in 1510, three months after His *Sannyās*, and reached Srirangam before *Sravana* (July and August) where He stayed for the next four months for the observance of the four-month vow. He left Srirangam in *Kārtika* (Oct-Nov) and returned to Puri before the *Snān Yātrā* festival,[2] which takes place in *Āsadha* (June-July), therefore He must have taken one year and three months. (*Vaisākh* to *Asadha*-3 months & *Asadha*) (at Srirangam) to *Āsadha* – one year). This period of one year and three months has been certified by the statement that Sri Chaitanya spent four years traveling of which two years were spent in His pilgrimage to the south and the next two years in visiting the *Ratha Yātrā* with the devotees of Bengal, and that in the fifth year He started for Bengal with the intention of visiting Vrindāvan when the Bengal devotees left Puri after the *Ratha Yātrā* in which year they did not stay the whole of two seasons, the rainy season and autumn, as usual[3] The second visit of the Bengal

[1] C.C.Madhya XVI.84 [2] C.C.Madhya XI.60 [3] C.C.Madhya XVI.84-86 [4] ibid.12

devotees of Puri took place in the third year of Sri Chaitanya's *Sannyās*.[4] So the first visit was in the month of July in the second year when He must have returned to Puri from the south, that is to say, in June 1511 A.D., counting from and including, according to Indian calculation, the year of His *Sannyās* i.e. January 1510 A.D. He started from Puri in *Vaisākh* (April) 1510 A.D. It seems from the above that the journey actually covered fourteen months, ending in the sixth month of the second year. According to Krishnadās Kavirāj, it would appear that the journey to the south was spread over the 1st and 2nd years, for he says that it took Him two years.

Though Krishnadās Kavirāj got this account of Sri Chaitanya's journey from Gopāla Bhatta of Srirangam with whom He lived at Vrindāvan, and from the diaries of Svarūpa Dāmodar and Raghunāth who lived with Sri Chaitanya (the former for 22 years and the latter for 16 years) and may have heard the account from His own mouth, yet so long a journey through most difficult country, visiting innumerable temples, and discussing with various sects, can only be accepted with difficulty. We must realise that throughout His journey He encountered many intrigues (from Buddhists) and stubborn opposition from the various religious sects of the south, whereas the Bengal, where He worked so long, His opponents were *Naiyāyikās*, *Shaktas*, and a few *Saivās*, and that in the south He used His learning on more than one occasion to silence His rivals and to make converts. The Vaishnavas that He met in the south included Rāmaites, Sri Vaishnavas and Madhvas, whose devotional beliefs were not such as to excite His sympathy, although He sympathised with the Sri Vaishnavas more than with the Madhvas-the branch to which He Himself belonged through Madhavendra Puri. By His sound philosophical position opened to His mind to what was best in all the systems, and these He welded into a perfect whole, and by the force of His marvellous devotion to Krishna He succeeded in converting many worshippers of Rāmasitā, Lakshminārāyana and single

[1] C.C. Madhya VIII.12

Krishna to His own Vaishnavism which consists in devotion to Rādhā-Krishna.[1] On hearing about His learning, many philosophical Pandits challenged Him to discussion but ended by acknowledging His supremacy. The accounts of His south Indian tour read like an open challenge to all sects – a challenge in which He was always the victor. Before closing our account of His journey in the south, it must be remembered that Dr. D. C. Sen has given a somewhat different version of the tour on the basis of Govindadās's Karcha, whereas our account is based solely on the Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krishnadās[1] which is generally accepted as the most reliable biography of Sri Chaitanya, a few inaccuracies in mentioning the stopping-places out of their strict geographical or chronological order are negligible; the details referred to are found to bear witness to his trustworthy description. Govindadās's account does not differ much from that of Krishnadās in so far as the area of the journey is concerned, as Dr. Sen has incorporated Govinda's account in his "Chaitanya and His companions" we have omitted it in our itinerary. Kavikarnapura and Murāri Gupta partly agree with Krishnadās, but not with Govindadās. Kavikarnapura gives us the new information that Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavism was accepted as the State religion of the Karnata country, all the people of which, whether Rāmaite Vaishnavas or sinners, were inspired by the ecstatic religion of Gaudiya Vaishnavism.[2] Govinda's *Karcha* records that many chiefs in southern India received Him with great honour and reverence; the Rājā of Travancore went bare-footed and humbly dressed, for which Sri Chaitanya received him kindly.[3]

HIS RETURN TO PURI

During His absence in southern India, His associates such as Nityānanda and others led by Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma spread His teaching in Orissa. The influence of Sri Chaitanya over the people at Puri, and the conversion of Sārvabhauma, reached the ears of the religious-minded

1 C.C.Madhya VIII.14 [2] C.C.Nâtaka. Act. VII [3] C. &. A.P.209

king Pratāprudra of Orissa, who sent for his court Pandit Sārvabhauma to learn all about Him. Sārvabhauma inspired the king with the greatest reverence of Sri Chaitanya and convinced the king of Sri Chaitanya's supreme divinity, which the King seems to have accepted him saying, "Bhatta, you are the greatest among the learned Pandits and I believe it to be so that He is Krishna because you say so."[1] Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma requested the King to find a suitable residence for Him isolated, but close to the temple of Jagannāth, at Puri; the king fixed upon the house of Kāsi Misra who was the Guru of the king and whom Sri Chaitanya had already converted.

On His return from the south, Sri Chaitanya took up His residence at the house of Kāsi Misra after one night's stay with Sārvabhauma. The remote garden with all its natural beauty delighted Him beyond measure and He lived there for the rest of His life. Kāsi Misra have dedicated all that he possessed to Sri Chaitanya, after receiving the revelation of the Master's four-handed divinity, he served the cause till his last day. On the second day after His return, Sārvabhauma presented the new converts with the words. "All these have been waiting in all eagerness to meet Thee. They are as eager as the thirsty *Chataka* bird crying in great anguish for water. Be graciously pleased to accept them." Those who were presented and received grace, included the following — Janardana, Krishnadās (stick-bearer of Jagannāth) Sikhi Maiti (writer), Pradyumna Misra (Maha-Soyar to the Deity), Murāri Maiti, Chandanesvara, Simhesvara, Murāri (not the Bengali Murāri), Vishnudās, Paramānanda Mahāpatra and Bhavānanda Rāy with his four sons. Bhavānanda was the father of Rāmānand Rāy. Bhavānanda left one of his sons named Vaninātha with Sri Chaitanya in His personal service, as a special act of devotion.

Sri Chaitanya discharged His attendant Kālā Krishnadās because of his moral lapse when with the Bhattatharis at Mālābār, and Nityānanda sent him to Bengal with the

[1] C.C.Madhya X.17

message of Sri Chaitanya's safe arrival at Puri. When Kālā Krishnadās reached Navadvip with the news Paramānanda Puri whom Sri Chaitanya had met at Risava Parvat and had persuaded to hve with Him at Puri, was a guest at the house of Sri Chaitanya's mother. He hurried to Puri with Kamalā Kānta Biswas, a disciple of Advaita, to meet Sri Chaitanya before the coming of the Bengal devotees; he has given a lodging in the Master's garden and a servant was provided to wait upon the venerable monk. In a few days Svarūpa Dāmodara, regarded as the "exact second half" of Sri Chaitanya joined him. An enthusiastic follower of Sri Chaitanya, he lived with the master at Navadvip under the name of Purushottama Ācharya; as the great scholarly ascetic refused to remain at Navadvip without his leader, he renounced the world, and like one demented accepted *Sannyās* at Sri Chaitanya's *Sannyās*, under the name of Dāmodar Svarūpa at Benares. Sri Chaitanya lodged him in an isolated room with the attendant, close to His own chamber. Inseparable from Sri Chaitanya's life and teaching, he and Rāmānand Rāy were in complete harmony with the teaching of the Master. Next came Govinda, an attendant of Isvara Puri who commanded him at his death to serve Sri Chaitanya, the Master hesitated to admit him to His service looking upon him as the disciple of His own Guru Isvara Puri, - an object of His veneration, but the command of His Guru prevailed. This Govinda henceforward became the constant attendant of Sri Chaitanya and served Him with all the fervour of his heart; his devotion, loving service, pure heart, and deep sincerity, made him an ideal Vaishnava, one to be perpetually remembered in association with Sri Chaitanya; Rāmai and Nandāi were Govinda's assistants. Next came Rāma Bhadrāchārya, Bhagavān Āchārya, and Kāsivara, Bhagavān Āchārya being the son of a wealthy man named Satananda Rāy of Halisahar (in 24 Parganas), who settled in Puri to serve and live with Sri Chaitanya; Sri Chaitanya divested Brahmānanda Bhārati of the last traces of his Māyāvādism and accepted him as one of His companions. After visiting the *Snān Yātra* of Jagannāth in June 1511 A.D. Sri Chaitanya returned to

Ālālnāth to spend the fifteen days between the *Snān Yāra* and *Ratha Yātrā* in prayer and solitude. During this period, the Deity of Jagannāth is not on public view.

Important events, which followed, were the conversion of the Emperor Pratāprudra and the visit of the hundred Bengali devotees to Puri. Vrindāvanadās says that when Sri Chaitanya was at Puri, Emperor Pratāprudra had gone to Vijayanagara to fight against its King, so that he could not have met Him then.[1] And that the meeting and conversion took place after the Master's return from Bengal about three years later[2], whereas Krishnadās Kavirāj places the event earlier. Unless Krishnadās's view be accepted, it is impossible to understand much of the Chaitanya Charita in which Krishnadās gives a graphic description of Sri Chaitanya's reception arranged by the king on His journey to Bengal. Kavikarnapur in his Chaitanya Charita Mahākāvya agrees with Krishnadās. Krishnadās's view in this regard may be further corroborated by the political history of Orissa in relation to that of Vijayanagara to which Vrindāvanadās refers. Sri Chaitanya returned to Puri, as we have noticed, in June 1511 A.D. The campaign of the Tulava King Krishnadeva Rāy of Vijayanagara against Orissa began in 1512 A.D. at Udayagiri, which fell in 1513 A.D. Prataprudra met Krishnadeva Rāy on the bank of the Krishna estuary in 1515 A.D., and was defeated on June 23, 1515 A.D. The war was concluded several years later.[3] The campaign of Prataprudra against Vijayanagara to which Vrindāvandās refers, took place long after this period of aggression to Krishnadeva against Prataprudra. So that Prataprudra was in the capital in 1511 A.D., when he apparently has met Sri Chaitanya and was converted, as Krishnadās records in Chaitanya Charitamrita. Furthermore Krishnadās's view may be accepted in preference to that of Vrindāvanadās that the king's conversion took place after Sri Chaitanya's return from Bengal in 1514-1515 A.D. The Prasasti at the end of Bhakti Bhāgavata Mahākāvya which was written in the 17th reignal year of king Prataprudra, by Jiva Deva Āchārya, a court poet and family priest of the Gajapati Kings

[1] C.Bh.Antya III.269-270 [2] 1514-15 A.D. (Ibid V.I39) [3] R. D. Banerji's History of Orissa Vol.I.p.229 [4] M.M.H.P. Sastri, report of the research of the Sanskrit MSS.1901, 1902-1905 and 1906. R15-16.

of Orissa distinctly alludes to the king's conversion in the following verse "The King (Pratāp) with long arms, weakened his enemies and increased his dominions. He purified his inner soul by the theory of nonduality but spread the dual theory at the Incarnation of Krishna (Chaitanya)"[4] As we know that the king ascended the throne in 1497 A.D. from (Banerji's History of Orissa), which must have been written in 1514 A.D., this being the case the king's conversion must have taken place some years earlier. It not only mentions the king's conversion but also his propagation of the faith, therefore Krishnadās is right in saying that the king was converted on the *Ratha Yātrā* day in 1511.A.D.

It is mainly due to the influence and mediation of Sārvabhauma and also of Rāmānand Rāy that the king became a devoted adherent of Sri Chaitanya. The biographers says that Sri Chaitanya repeatedly refused interviews with the king on the ground that it would not be becoming on the part of a *Sannyāsi* to meet the King, both from the religious point of view and in order to preserve the fine tradition of His mission, for fear that He should be subjected to the criticism that His intimacy with the King was due to mundane interests. The meeting of the King with Sri Chaitanya was brought about by gradual stages, in his anxiety and desire to meet Sri Chaitanya on His return from the south, he had written to Sārvabhauma from Cuttack on the subject but the answer he received was disappointing. A further request that his case might be put before the devotees and their help sought to procure him a blessing was sent the king wrote a most touching letter declaring that he would give up his royal power and his life in despair[1] But Sri Chaitanya remained obdurate, saying that his conduct would be condemned by the people. Nityānanda hit upon a plan to partially console the king by sending him a piece of Sri Chaitanya's wrapper of which the master approved, the king receiving it with great reverence and worshipped it as representing the master himself.[2] In the meantime Rāmānand Rāy reached Cuttack from Vidyānagara to submit his resignation saying that he

[1] C.C.Madhya XI.48 [2] Ibid.XII.38

would serve at the feet of Sri Chaitanya giving up all worldly concerns, and the king finding him so much devoted to Sri Chaitanya, not only consented to his request but said "The salary that you receive remains yours; serve at the feet of Sri Chaitanya, free from all worldly cares," adding his deep sorrow, "I am vile indeed, and unfit to have a glimpse of Him".[1] The king and Rāmānand Rāy came to Puri, when Rāmānand immediately met Sri Chaitanya informing Him that the king regarded Him with great veneration and love. On arriving at Puri the king sent for Sārvabhauma and asked him whether he had succeeded in inducing Sri Chaitanya to bless him but was filled with the deepest dejection to learn of his failure. Rāmānand Rāy then set himself to soften the heart of Sri Chaitanya, availing himself of every opportunity to beg Sri Chaitanya to bestow the longed-for blessings, but Sri Chaitanya persisted in His refusal saying "Such interviews ruins a hermit both in this world and the next and make Him an object of ridicule. Just as a spot of ink on a white cloth cannot hide itself, so the least fault of a *Sannyasi* is sure to be criticized.[2] At last Sri Chaitanya said "If you desire it so ardently, you may bring the prince, his son as his representative." Thereupon Rāmānand Rāy conducted the prince in the presence, and Sri Chaitanya embraced him and inspired him with devotion to God. The prince was commanded by Sri Chaitanya to meet Him every day; he became one of His devoted adherents.

Sri Chaitanya's method towards the king indicates His insight into the ordinary motives of human conduct, He betrayed no eagerness to meet the king lest the latter might misunderstand the favour shown, His purpose being to attract postulant more and more to the cause after having convinced himself of the sincerity of his conviction. It was to be expected that a worldly-minded person would soon desert the causes, if he accepted in a hurry and that such a desertion would seriously jeopardise the success of His mission in Orissa. The King was naturally doubtful whether He was God Himself, and he told Sārvabhauma

[1] C.C.MXII [2] ibid. XII.51

that if Sri Chaitanya was indeed God as he had emphatically proclaimed, he did not understand why He was not universally accepted as such and especially by the Pandits. Sārvabhauma, always ready with the correct reply, finally succeeded in convincing him of Sri Chaitanya's divinity. The Chaitanya Bhāgavat records that the king still failed to understand the ecstatic devotion of Sri Chaitanya which manifested itself in tears, sweat, groveling in the dust, rolling on the ground, etc., which differently was overcome by a miracle, for in a dream he saw Sri Chaitanya on the throne with God Jagannāth, when Jagannāth forbade him (the king) to touch Him as he had treated Him in the person of Sri Chaitanya with contempt at the sight of His Body covered with dust and perspiration. This dream convinced the king that Sri Chaitanya was the *Avatar* of Jagannāth, the God of Orissa.[1] It must be admitted that the genuine faith and devotion of the greatest Pandit (Sārvabhauma) and the greatest Minister (Rāmānand Rāy) of the court to the divinity of Sri Chaitanya, and the general conviction of the people, made an irresistible impression on the mind of the pious king. The conversion of the king was carried out after the arrival of the Bengal devotees, at the Car festival.

After Sri Chaitanya's return to Puri, the Bengal devotees gathered together at the house of Sri Advaita at Shāntipur and held a three-days feast in honour of their God. Narahari Sarkara and others of Srikhand Satyarāj Khān, and many others of Kulingrāma, Sivānanda Sen and others of Kumārhatta-Kānchrāpādā, with others from all quarters of Bengal assembled at Navadvip to set out for Puri with the permission and good wishes of Sri Chaitanya's mother. The party of two hundred devotees headed by Advaita reached Puri a few days before the Car festival. Sārvabhauma hastened to Sri Chaitanya Who was then at Ālālnāth, with the news of the coming of the Bengal Vaishnavas, and returned to Puri with him Sri Chaitanya sending Svarup Dāmodar and Govinda with garlands and flowers to receive His followers at Narendra Sarovara;

[1] C.Bh.Antya 149-182

the king was being much impressed by the enthusiasm and fervour of heart displayed by the Bengal devotees. He witnessed their arrival in procession from the terrace of his palace in the company of Sārvabhauma and Gopināth Āchārya, the latter pointing out each of the devotees, giving an account of their status and devotional position. Gopināth having asked Sārvabhauma to arrange lodging and food for the devotees, the king proposed to receive them as his guest and commanded Kāsi Misra and Tulasi Paricha to provide lodging, food, and other necessaries for their comfort, as it was his special wish to place himself, at their service, and by so doing please Sri Chaitanya.

Sri Chaitanya greeted His followers on the way between the temple and His residence, first embracing Sri Advaita and then the others, who all fell prostrate at His feet, overcome with happiness at the sight of their Master. The humility of Murāri Gupta and Haridās who stood after with blades of grass between their teeth and with folded arms, as a symbol of abject humility, professing that they were too impure to touch their Lord Sri Chaitanya, so moved His heart that He requested them to refrain from such humility which only caused Him deep distress. The Gopināth Āchārya, Tulasi Paricha and Kāsi Misra, conducted the devotees to their lodgings, Haridās being detained in an isolated room in the garden close to Sri Chaitanya's residence.

In the evening they all reassembled and Sri Chaitanya took them to the temple of Jagannath where the *Kirtan* was begun, after the service to the Deity, in four groups to the accompaniment of eight *Mridangas* and thirty cymbals. Sri Chaitanya danced surrounded by the performers of *Kirtana*, the people of Puri pouring into the temple to see the performance which the King witnessed from his terrace with an amazement that increased the intensity of his eagerness to meet Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya then perambulated the temple performing the Veda-dance; the four parties sang the song, divided into two groups, one preceding and the others following the Master who

exhibited all the eightfold *Sattvika* perturbations as He danced. Next He made the procession take its stand behind the temple, separating the four groups, each of which now sang independently of the others. Nityānanda, Advaita, Vakresvara and Srivās were selected to be the dancers of their four groups, Sri Chaitanya exhibiting the *Tandava* dance in the centre. The *Kirtana* continued till the hour for the *Pushpānjali* service of the Deity, when Sri Chaitanya returned to His residence with His followers. During the stay of the Bengal devotees, the *Kirtana* was held in the temple every day.[1]

Sri Chaitanya was still obdurate in His resolve not to meet the king whose eagerness did not abate; then Sārvabhauma suggested that the king, on the day of the Car festival Sri Chaitanya would be overpowered with the rapture and love in His dance in front of the Car and would rest in the flower garden while still under the ecstatic influence, should approach Him, divest of all royal robes and attendants, reciting verses from the Bhāgavata descriptive of the *Rāsa* dance of Krishna. Sri Chaitanya, being semi-conscious at the time, on hearing the name and pastimes of Krishna from his mouth, would embrace him and give him grace, supposing him to be a Vaishnava. He said to the king that Sri Chaitanya's stern attitude towards him had undergone a change as the consequence of Rāy Rāmānand's testimonials to His devotional aptitude.

The day before the Car festival, Sri Chaitanya with His many followers cleansed the Gundicha temple to which the Deity was removed on the festival day and where It remained for the next eight days after which It returned to the main temple. Sārvabhauma and the others objected at first to the proposal that the Master should cleanse the Gundicha temple, saying that such service was beneath Him but He succeeded in convincing them that any service rendered to God, however humble, is glorious. This service continues to be performed with great reverence by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas following Sri Chaitanya's example.

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[1] C.C.Madhya XI

RATHA YĀTRĀ

The next day Sri Chaitanya accompanied by His numerous devotees, assisted at the feast of the rejuvenation of Sri Jagannāth. While watching the ceremony of *Pandu-Vijaya* of the Deity (leaving the temple preparatory to mounting the Car) He was pleased to find that the king had undertaken to sweep the path over which the Car was to pass, with a golden broom.[1]

In the company of His devotees, the Master danced in front of the Car as it journeyed from the main temple to the Gundicha. The singers of the *Kirtana* were divided into seven groups, each of which consisted of one main singer, a dancer and a choir; Svarūpa Dāmodara and Advaita, Srivās and Nityānanda, Mukunda Datta and Haridās, Govinda Ghosh and Vakresvara, being the principal singers and dancers of the four main groups. Of the other three groups, one consisted of the devotees of Shāntipur, the second of those of Kulingrāma, and the third of those of Srikhanda in which danced Achyuta, Rāmānand and Satyarāj Khān; Narahari Sarkara and Raghunandan being the singers who sang beside and behind the Car. Sri Chaitanya who wished to dance Himself united the seven groups and placed Srivās, Rāmai, Raghunandana, Govinda, Mukunda Datta, Haridās Govindananda, Madhava, Govinda Ghosh under Svarup Dāmodar, and took His place in their midst; the other two groups singing and dancing around Him. With folded arms He prayed to the Diety and made obeisance reciting the verse from the Bhāgavata[2] and Vishnu Purāna[3] before beginning the *Urddanda* dance in which He moved in circles like a tee-totum, His movements being too swift to be recognized. This was one of the dances that caused great emotional manifestations such as joyous weeping, tremours, copious perspiration, stupor, pride, exultation and humility, one moment rolling on the ground then quickly rising to move in circles while the beholders were in a breathless condition. The king watched the dance with stupified amazement and formed a circle with his

[1] C.C.Madhya XIII.16-18 [2] X.90.24 [3] I.19, 48

suite to keep a clear space and prevent a rush.

Dances were the expression of Sri Chaitanya's various devotional moods, for instance, the *Tandava* represented His immense desire to meet His God as in the dance in front of the Car, and it also brought inspiration when His devotional exercises were obstructed as we have noticed in the procession to chastise with Kazi. Now He met His God in the *Tandava* dance of union, asking Svarup Dāmodar to sing a song suitable to His feelings. Svarup knowing exactly what was required began the famous song "I have met the Lord of my heart, for whose sake I have been burning in the fire of love." This dance was the dance of the damsels of Vraja when they met their divine lover Krishna at Krukshetra, Who had left them to mourn their separation at Vraja. These love-bereft maidens filled with deep feeling of gratification at His sight, fervently entreated Him to return to Vraja. Sri Chaitanya represented the hearts of these love-bereft maidens and this dance was a dance of entreaty to God Whom He was conducting from the lofty temple, which was Kurukshetra to Gundicha, which represented Vraja. Gently fixing His eyes on those of the Deities He besought with His hands the God to go to Vraja; Sri Chaitanya was always at His best in this dance of entreaty especially when accompanied by Svarup's song. By this dance Sri Chaitanya would express a complete story of mystery, and the romance of His devotional life by the flexing of His body and particularly the movement of His hands. He danced reciting in spirit of the following verse of *Kāvya Prakāsa* (I.4) "The darling who stole my virgin heart on the bank of the Reva is still my lover; These are the same nights of spring, the same *Mālati* flowers are sending forth their rich fragrance, the wind is blowing fragrantly from the *Kadamba* grove, and I am as before, and yet my heart yearns for those cane-brakes (*Vetasi Taru*) where our love was first inspired" Various emotions began to struggle in the heart of Sri Chaitanya, one rising and another subsiding. Krishnadās remarked that His body was a pure gold hill on which His emotions were like trees in

[1] C.C.Madhya XIII.73

blossom.[1] While dancing, He was about to fall on the ground in front of the king who held Him up in his arms; when Sri Chaitanya recovered His composure, finding Himself in the arms of the king He cried, "fie on Me that I am touched by a worldling" at which the king was afraid that he had committed a serious offence. Sārvabhauma standing beside the king consoled him and told him not to grieve, as the Master only wished to impose asceticism on His followers by this demonstration of antipathy, but that in fact he approved of him, and promised to intercede for him at their next meeting.

HIS GRACE UPON THE KING

As the Car reached Balagandi, which is between the main temple and Gundicha, where all, irrespective of caste and sex, are eligible to offer food to the Deity, a great crowd had gathered. Sri Chaitanya entered the flower garden near and laid Himself down for a little rest on the ground, whither devotees followed Him. He was still under His influence of His violent emotion. By the advice of Sārvabhauma the king had taken off his royal robes and was clad in the simple garb of a Vaishnava, unattended, he approached Sri Chaitanya and gently touching His feet, recited the verses from the Bhāgavat describing the *Rāsa* dance. Sri Chaitanya delighted to hear the verses, requested him to repeat them without knowing who he was, and at the repetition, the Master embraced the king in an impulse of loving devotion saying; "You have given Me priceless treasure and I have nothing to give in return so I am giving you an embrace". The recital of the verses caused Sri Chaitanya to be lost in a deep reverie and he asked, "Who are you who have given Me this great good? Who made me drink the nectar of the pastimes of Sri Krishna, coming here so suddenly?" The king simply replied, "I am the servant of your servant. This is my hope that you will be gracious and make me the servant of your servant" Thereupon Sri Chaitanya is believed to have revealed His divine power to the king forbidding him to divulge the

[1] C.C.Madhya XIV.19

secret to any one.[1] Thus the long cherished desire of Sārvabhauma fulfilled. Sri Chaitanya commanded him to do nothing except for Krishna, and to recite the holy name of God with the assurance that the divine weapon would protect him. He added that his decision to come to Puri was in order to commune with Sārvabhauma, Rāmānand Rāy, and himself (the king). Sri Chaitanya particularly requested the king not to preach or make Him known to the world as God, and threatened, that if he did so, he would leave Puri for good.[1] After this, the king, his family and kingdom, all worked in the service of the mission; he proved so devoted an adherent and so enthusiastic a patron of Sri Chaitanya's mission that he refused to sanction any other religion in his kingdom except that of Sri Chaitanya. Rāy Rāmānand and Sārvabhauma were his chief advisers in this matter among others. In the History of Orissa, Mr.A.Sterling has preserved the tradition of the king's persecution of the Buddhists whom he banished from the towns, obliging them to seek shelter in the hill woods.

The king sent large quantity of *Prasād* to the gardens, which Sri Chaitanya and His followers shared. The Car again began to move and soon reached Gundicha, amidst loud cries of "Glory to Jagannāth and glory to Sri Chaitanya". The Image remained in the Gundicha temple for nine days, Sri Chaitanya staying in the Jagannāth Vallabha garden nearby to worship in the spirit of Rādhikā as if He were, indeed in Vraja.

The *Herā Panchami* festival celebrated with great pomp and grandeur in honour of Sri Chaitanya, five days after the Car festival caused a prolonged discussion between Svarup Dāmodar and Srivās with Sri Chaitanya as mediator regarding the superiority and the difference between the loving service of the maidens of the Vraja and the quality of the devotion of Lakshmi; the *Herā Panchami* festival representing the anger of Lakshmi who Jagannāth had left to mourn His absence in the main temple during His absence. On her (the Image of Lakshmi) arrival at the Lion-

[1] Ch.Bh.Antya V.200-204

gate of the temple riding in a golden litter richly decorated with pearls and gems, accompanied by rows of women bearing flags, umbrellas, etc., with musicians and preceded by dancing girls, hundreds of Lakshmi's attendant bound the servitors of Jagannāth, dragging them to the feet of Lakshmi who inflicted a punishment as if they were thieves, and imposed a fine upon them. She beat them till they almost swooned and abused them in her anger. On this occasion Sri Chaitanya danced in the midst of the *Kirtana*.

Sri Chaitanya passed the next four months with His Bengal devotees in performing *Kirtana*, discussing Krishna-lore, in addition to daily acts of devotion. Each year the Master kept the Nandotsava in honour of Janmāshtami or the nativity of Krishna, in *Bhādra* (Sept), the *Vijayā Dasami* in *Asvin* (Oct), the *Rāsa Yātrā*, *Dipāvali*, *Utthāna Ekādasi* in October, and so on by dramatic performances in the company of His followers. Thus the four months from the *Ratha Yātrā* in July till the end of the four-month vow in the third week of November when the Bengal devotees returned home, were spent in great rejoicings, the king himself taking part in some of these performances.[1]

Before they started for home, Sri Chaitanya consulted with Nityānanda as to arrangements for continuing the movement in Bengal, and appointed Nityānanda head of the missionary activities with Rāmadās, Gadādharadās, and others as His helpers. He charged Nityānanda with great responsibilities, commanding him to go to Bengal freely to proclaim the gospel of devotion and love, Advaita to bestow on all persons down to the *Chandālas*[2] devotion to Krishna[3] Nityānanda and Advaita were thus appointed leaders for the furtherance of the cause in Bengal. He sent clothing etc., from the offerings that had been made to Jagannāth and His humble greetings to His mother for her consolation through Srivasa. On parting from His devotees He mentioned in His appreciative speech, Sārvabhauma's

[1] C.C.Madhya XV.20 [2] lowest class in Hindu society [3] C.C.Madhya XV.41-42

brother Madhusudan Vidyāvaschapati, Advaita, Nityānanda, the Srivās brothers, Rāghava Pandit, Sivānanda Sen, Satyarāj Khān, and others of Srikhand, Murāri Gupta, Vāsudeva Datta, and others who left Puri grief stricken at the separation. Gadādhara Pandit remained at Puri and Sri Chaitanya lodged him at Yamesvara placing him in the service of the Gopināth temple in 1513 A.D. Paramānanda Puri, Svarup Dāmodar, Jagadānanda, Govinda and Kāsisvara remained with Sri Chaitanya at the house of Kāsi Misra.

After the departure of the Bengal devotees, who had exclusively entertained Sri Chaitanya during the four months, Sārvabhauma entreated Sri Chaitanya to become his guest for a month as he and his wife would find unspeakable happiness in entertaining their family God, but for some days Sri Chaitanya refused the invitation until finally Sārvabhauma persuaded Him to dine in five consecutive days accompanied by other devotees.

When the *Ratha Yātrā* festival time came round again, the following year bringing number of pilgrims devotees, Sri Chaitanya begged Nityānanda after His observance of the four-month vow, not to neglect his missionary work in Bengal by attending the great festival at Puri: "listen Sripad, I pray thee to grant this request of Mine. Don't come to Puri every year but stay in Bengal to carry out My will, because I see none other to do this work. You alone can accomplish this most difficult undertaking.[1]

HIS VISIT TO BENGAL

In the fifth year of His *Sannyās* that is to say, in 1514 A.D., on the departure of Bengal devotees, after the Car festival, Sri Chaitanya announced His definite resolve to proceed to Vrindāvan requesting Rāmānand Rāy to give consent to His intention, He said that He had two objects of special interest in Bengal, one being His mother and the other the Ganges; both of which were equally holy. He would visit them on the way. The *Vijaya Dasami* day was fixed for His

[1] C.C.Madhya XVI.63-65

departure, Rāmānand Rāy being anxious, in the interest of easy traveling and the health of the Master, that He should not start until after the rainy season; therefore in October, 1514 A.D. in the early morning Sri Chaitanya started for Bengal enroute to Vrindāvan with Svarup Dāmodar, Paramānanda Puri, Jagadānanda, Mukunda Datta, Govinda, Kāsisvar, Haridās Thākur, Vakresvar, Gopināth Āchārya and others. Sri Chaitanya had already placed Gadādhara Pandit in the service of the Gopināth temple at Āitota in Puri, begging him to remain there, but in spite of the express wish of the Master to the contrary Gadādhar followed Him, unable to bear the separation from his well-beloved leader. A great quantity of *Prasād*, Sandal and other gifts were brought to Him for the journey and His Odiya devotees followed Him with an anxious heart. Sri Chaitanya succeeded with great difficulty in preventing them from accompanying Him. He halted at Bhavānipur where He dined and passed the night with His followers, resuming His journey the next morning reaching Bhuvaneswar, and from thence travelling to Cuttack where He was received by an Oriya devotee named Svapnesvara Vipra; Rāmānand Rāy entertaining the followers at his residence. As soon as the king heard the news of His arrival, he hastened to meet Sri Chaitanya, repeatedly bowing low at His feet and reciting hymns. Pleased at his deep devotion, the Master folded him in an embrace, whereupon he showed signs of extreme emotion and his eyes filled with tears of joy; again and again he made his obeisances reciting appropriate hymns. Sri Chaitanya gave him His complete blessings and henceforward the Master was called "*Pratāprudra Santrata*" or deliverer of Pratāprudra.[1]

After the king's retinue had paid homage to the Master, the king issued royal commands to all administrators throughout his kingdom that they should build new residences in every village through which the Lord was to pass, that they were to collect an abundance of the necessary articles, required to fill not less than half a dozen rooms at each stopping place, and personally were to conduct the

[1] C.C.Madhya XVI.108

Lord to the halts and wait on Him day and night. "Cane in hand" the King then appointed two of his highest officers Hari Chandra and Mangarā, to make all arrangements ordering them to "Get a newly-built boat. Have it waiting at the riverside. At the point of the river where the Master after taking His bath, crosses over to the other side, erect a memorial column to mark it as the holiest of all holy places. I shall bathe there at all times. May I also die there. At Chaturdvara choose the finest newly built residence. Rāmānand is to be always by the side of the Lord."[1]

In marked contrast to the Master's Journey to Puri four years earlier, He now passed on His way recognised as the State God and was received with the utmost enthusiasm on all sides. The king made his queens mount elephants from which they could catch a glimpse of Sri Chaitanya at the landing place on the Chitrotpala or Mahānadi. He left Cuttack in the evening and crossing the river by moonlight reached Chaturdvara where He spent the night. Chaturdvara, now called *Chaudar*, is a short distance from Cuttack. The following morning, the *Prasād* of Jagannāth arrived from Puri by the command of the king. Having finished His meal, Sri Chaitanya resumed His journey reciting the name of God. He prevented Gadādhar from accompanying Him with the greatest difficulty, sending him back to Puri with Sārvabhauma; when Sri Chaitanya embarked on His boat at Chaturdvara, Gadādhar fell down senseless on the bank. The two royal officers Hari Chandan and Mangarāj accompanied Sri Chaitanya to Jaipur from whence He sent them back, Rāmānand alone following Him to Remunā where Sri Chaitanya took leave of him.[2] Authorities differ as to the exact place of their separation, Kavikarnapura[3] and Krishnadās say that Rāy Rāmānand came to Bhadrak. The distance between Bhadrak to Remunā is about forty miles.

Sri Chaitanya was welcomed by royal officers on His arrival at the frontiers of Orissa, where He stayed for a few days to obtain a safe conduct from the governor to pass

[1] C.C.Madhya XVI.113-116 [2] C.C.Madhya XVI.153 [3] C.C.XX

through the territory of the formidable Mahammedan chief, beyond the Orissan frontier probably for Narasimhapura and Dāntan up to the mouth of the Ganges. The frontier between Orissa and the Ganges was an extremely dangerous zone on account of the ferocity of its then ruling chief; fortunately a Hindu spy of the Mahammedan ruler, who was at Cuttack when the enthusiastic demonstrations were made in favour of Sri Chaitanya, had been struck with wonder at the cordiality of His reception throughout the Orissan kingdom, reported to the Mahammedan chief that a great saint of the name of Chaitanya was coming towards his territory accompanied by hundreds of people. Wherever the Master went, He was followed by thousands who abandoned all their ordinary occupations for a glimpse of the holy Man (Sri Chaitanya). The Hindu spy excited the curiosity of his chief who was anxious to meet Sri Chaitanya. Krishnadās says that the spy's report caused a sudden change in the mind of the ruler who thereupon employed him to arrange a meeting with Sri Chaitanya. Doutbless the Mahammedan chief also availed himself of this excellent opportunity of gaining the good will of the neighbouring imperial power, to safeguard his own interests by receiving hospitably Sri Chaitanya, the State God of king Pratāprudra of Orissa. The spy accordingly went to Sri Chaitanya and the frontier governor of Orissa, and requested an interview between his chief and Sri Chaitanya assuring the Odiya governor that the Mahammedan chief was very eager to meet the holy saint, that he had no intention of making war and that he (the spy) had been sent with a guarantee that he should proceed through the territory in peace. The Odiya governor although suspicious about the sincerity and piety of his former enemy, agreed on condition that the chief came unarmed with only five or seven attendants. Robed as a Hindu, the Mahammedan interviewed Sri Chaitanya confessing his many cruelties in the past; as a result of the interview he was entirely altered, he was deeply penitent for his wicked deeds: this conversion was due to the power and might of the name of Krishna which he recited with reverence. Mukunda Datta seizing the opportunity suggested

that as a sign of good faith, they should be safely conducted through his dangerous country to the mouth of the Ganges to which the chief readily agreed. He then returned to his own territory after exchanging courtesies and presents with the Odiya governor, and sent the next morning a beautiful boat for the continuation of the Master's journey, accompanying him with ten boats full of soldiers to Pichalda along the dangerous river Mantresvar. Pichalda is about eighteen miles south of Tamluk and west of Nandigrama. His new Mahammedan follower took leave of Sri Chaitanya at Pichalda, from which places Sri Chaitanya reached the house of His loving adherent Rāghava Pandit at Pānihāti. The report of His arrival created a great sensation large crowds gathering by land and by water to welcome Him; at the landing place He was received by Rāghava who conducted Him through the vast concourse of people amidst tumultuous shouting and manifestations of joy. Bengal was full of pride that the head of the state religion of the Orissan empire should have had his birthplace in the country, and that so widespread a holy movement had originated there. Three years before Pānihāti had been made the centre of His preaching by Nityānanda who was successful in converting the population of Pānihāti and its surroundings to the ecstatic religion of Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya stayed for a night at Pānihāti and then proceeded to the house of Srivāsa at Kumārhatta. He then visited the houses of Sivānanda Sena and Vāsudeva Datta at Kānchrapārā and that of Jagadish Pandit at Yasda near Chākdah. The Images of Jagannāth and Goura-Gopāla (Sri Chaitanya) installed by Jagadish are still be found at Yasda in a dilapidated temple where the song by Gadādharadās, which clebrates the visit of Sri Chaitanya is recited daily.[1] Here we should remark that according to the Chaitanya Bhāgavat, the Master reached Vidyānagara direct from Puri, and then proceeded to Kulia when He reached Rāmakeli near Gauda, taking the route along the Ganges; from Gauda He turned back, reached Shāntipur, visited the house of Srivās at Kumarhatta, that

[1] Gaudiya Vol.III.p.14 [2] C.Bh.III.272, 379; IV5. 188;V.6; V.6; 75; 110; 123
[3] XX 18-25

of Rāghava at Pānihāti, and so on, gradually returning to Puri.[2] We have followed Sri Krishnadās's account, which is more or less the same as that of Kavikarnapura.[3] Vrindāvanadās does not seem accurate in this regard. It is improbable that He would go to Vidyānagara without visiting the important centres of preaching on the way.

From Yasda, Sri Chaitanya may have come to the house of Vidyāvāchaspati at Vidyānagar, which is north-northwest of Kulia, or the present town of Navadvip, via Shāntipur. Vidyāvāchaspati was the brother of Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma of Puri. The news of His arrival at the above place spread far and wide numbers flocked to greet Him, so great was the crowd that He had to leave the place secretly to avoid the rush, and went to Kulia, Vrindāvanadās gives a graphic description of His reception by the people[1] He stayed at the house of Mādhava Chattopādhyaya for seven days to receive the visitors and preached once more to the people of Navadvip, many of whom only five years ago had been hostile to His teaching. Convinced of His spiritual truth, they now confessed and begged for His forgiveness. To one who had consistently maligned Him and now desired to find grace, Sri Chaitanya said that He should use His music and poetry to sing only the glory of the Vaishnavas, and this with as much intensity as He had used them in His earlier life.[2] This man is perhaps the same as Vaishnavadās, the author of Vaishnava-Vandana. Because Sri Chaitanya excused many guilty of offences against the Vaishnavas, at Kulia, the locality has since been called the "place of the absolution of all offences" (*Aparādha Bhanjaner Pat*). Sri Chaitanya delivered one of His famous discourses on the Bhāgavat to convert a misguided scholar named Devānanda Pandit whom Vakresvara Pandit, an adherent of Sri Chaitanya, had already converted from *Māyāvādism* to Vaishnavism immediately after the *Sannyās* of Sri Chaitanya.

HIS FIRST MEETING WITH SANĀTANA AND RŪPA

[1] C.Bh.Antya III [2] C.Bh.Antya III.452-454

Sri Chaitanya started for Rāmakeli from Kulia passing along the bank of the Bhāgirathi, possibly through the district of Mursidavād. At Rāmakeli about eight miles and a half to the south of English Bazar, lived Sākara Mallik and Davir Khās (Rūpa and Sanātana) two ministers of Hossain, the King of Bengal. The enthusiasm roused in the inhabitants by the coming of the Master and their eagerness to join Him in His *Kirtana* at Rāmakeli, overlooked the probable fury and fanaticism of the Mahammedan King, a jealous enemy of Hinduism who had destroyed many Hindu temples and Images in Orissa.[1] So that Hinduism was almost extinct in and round Gauda. The Kotowal of police superintendent of the capital reported on Sri Chaitanya and His activities to the King, saying that hundreds of people were always with Him and that those who came, had no wish to return to their homes, so great was the magnetism of the saint. The King sent for Kesava Khān, one of his high officers, asking for particulars about Sri Chaitanya, with his personal views on the subject. Fortunately Kesava seems to have been a follower of Sri Chaitanya, and fearing the king's jealousy might be aroused against the Master who had converted many Mahammedans, and Who was an active preacher of the religion of love of the Sastras of the Hindus Whose creed the king hated, Kesava tried to convey to him that Sri Chaitanya, a poor wandering beggar Who lived under the trees, and therefore not to be noticed.[2] But the King was too clever to be hoodwinked and said "if He were an ordinary beggar hundreds of people would not be following Him without hope of any gain, adding, that if he refused to pay the salaries of his officers for six months, they would plot against him, and even his servants receiving regular pay, would engage in intrigues, therefore if Sri Chaitanya were a negligible person the populace would not follow Him as God. The king formed a very favourable opinion of Sri Chaitanya and circulated orders to his Kāzis and Kotowals that he was not be molested in any way. The king then interviewed Davira Khās (Rūpa) his minister, to

[1] C.Bh.Antya IV.7 [2] C.Bh.Antya IV.53

ascertain his views and he convinced him of Sri Chaitanya's spiritual greatness. The king's notice and repeated enquiries caused great anxiety to these high officers of the king, Sri Chaitanya's adherents; they took counsel together and were of opinion that the fancies of a despotic king might change at the instigation of some fanatical adviser in which case danger might befall Sri Chaitanya. Therefore they decided to ask Him to leave the neighbourhood of the capital as soon as possible, and sent an old Brāhmana to Him with their earnest request. Owing to the great concourse of people, the Brahmana could not approach the Master so he spoke to Nityānanda and others who shared the fear of the high officers. Sākara Mallik and Davir Khās (Sanātana and Rūpa) came incognito to Sri Chaitanya in the dead of night afraid that any open interest in the saint should excite the suspicion in the king's mind, for they had been corresponding with Sri Chaitanya and appear to have been in touch with the cause. They recited hymns to Him with folded arms and entreated Him in all sincerity to deliver them from the bondage of the world; they were very penitent about being associated with the Mahammedan king. Sri Chaitanya bestowed His grace upon them, and advised them to leave their posts and join His mission. He consoled their grief saying that Krishna would speedily deliver them. They entreated Sri Chaitanya to leave Rāmakeli as the Mahammedan King was not to be trusted, and not to go to Vrindāvan followed by so big a crowd. For long Rāmakeli was the residence of the three masters of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, Rūpa, Sanātana and their nephew Jiva, its sanctity being enhanced by the visit of Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya's visit to Rāmakeli may be regarded as the foundation of the greatest achievement of Vaishnava culture and literature.

Sri Chaitanya then crossed the Ganges to Kānāinātsala thinking that the presence of so many followers would interfere with His concentration on the beauty of Vraja in the true spirit of His devotional mood, and postponing the journey to Vrindāvan to the following year, He decided to return to Puri.

Sri Chaitanya returned to Shāntipur before the *Ratha Yātrā*, possibly in the last week of June because He had asked His Bengali devotees not to go to Puri that year as He had Himself visited them and He would set out for Vrindāvan after His visit to Puri.[1] He reached Puri a few days before the rainy season and after four months stay He started for Vrindāvan in the autumn i.e. in October 1515 A.D. We have already seen that He started for Bengal on the *Vijaya Dasami* day i.e. in October of the previous year. His journey to Rāmakeli may not have taken more than two months; He reached it in November or December in 1514 A.D., and from Kānāinātsala He retraced His steps to Shāntipur and ultimately to Puri where He arrived in June-July 1515 A.D. The question is, where was He in these seven months between the beginning of His return journey from Kānāinātsala-Rāmakeli to Shāntipur-Puri. Neither of Sri Chaitanya's biographers throws any light on this subject.

We have to thank Āssamese literature and tradition for a clue to what happened during this period. The famous Assamese writer Bhattadeva, a loving and learned disciple of Dāmodar (1488-1598 A.D.) tells us in his *Sat-Sampradaya Kathā* (accounts of the true sect) that Sri Chaitanya lived for some time in a cave, now called *Chaitanya Gopha* which lies at the foot of the Manikuta hill on the top of which stands the famous temple of the Image of Hayagriva Mādhava Vishnu. The Manikuta hill is at Hajo in the Kāmarup district of Assam. Here He bestowed grace upon Ratnesvara Vipra, giving him the title of 'Ratnapathaka', and introduced the recitation of the Bhāgavata and the *Kirtana* into the Hayagriva Mādhava temple. He went further into the interior and visited the famous Parasurama Kunda, and thence returned to His former abode at the foot of the hill in Hajo where He lived for some time. Here He taught the Bhāgavata to Kānthabhusan of Maguri, Kavisekhar, Kanthanara and others and introduced the *Kirtana* of the name of Krishna like Nārada, the divine sage. At this place Dāmodar, the poet's

[1] C.C.Madhya XVI.247-248

Guru, being sad and desolate at the loss of his boatmen and boat, came to Sri Chaitanya Who showed him His favour and consoled him by dwelling on the transitoriness of worldly interests. After teaching Dāmodar, the true faith, Sri Chaitanya returned to Orissa. Bhatta Deva refers to three old books; Chaitanya Samgraha, Krishna Bharati, and Nrisimha Krita as the sources of his book, "Sat Sampradaya Katha" we have not traced "Chaitanya Samgraha", but the other two viz. Krishna Bhārati and Nrsimha Krita exactly corroborate Bhattadeva's account.[1] These two books are certainly earlier in date than Sat Sampradaya Katha; that is to say, they may have been written during Sri Chaitanya's stay in Āssam. Further evidence is supplied by the biography of Dāmodar by Nilakanta Dās which says that Dāmodar met Sri Chaitanya at the Manikuta hill every day coming from his residence at Ratnesvara, and that Sri Chaitanya instructed him in the devout principles to be delivered to the world and thence went on to Orissa. A tradition still alive in the locality of Hajo tells us that Sri Chaitanya lived there in the cave, which has been called *Chaitanya Gopha* after Him. Local people point out two other places in front of the cave where He is said to have sat, and where He kept His holy water jug, etc. All these books say that Sri Chaitanya returned to Orissa from Āssam. This requires further elucidation for Sri Chaitanya never left Puri after His return from Vrindāvan in 1516 A.D. and did not visit Bengal again after His return in 1515.A.D. So He could not have visited Āssam at any other time except during this tour in Bengal. Now the question may arise why the biographers of Sri Chaitanya omit His journey to Āssam. We have seen that wherever He went, He met with the most unexpected success in establishing Vaishnavism, or to be more accurate, Krishnite Vaishnavism, and we know that Āssam was the birth place and distributing centre of *Tāntraism* which spread throughout India and even overseas. The Kāmāksha temple in Assam is the greatest of *Tāntrika* places of Pilgrimage. The current type of *Tāntraism* with its practices and

[1] S.P.P.XXII. P.P. 244-245

philosophy are diametrically opposed and repugnant to Vaishnavism. Sri Chaitanya may not have attained any decisive result in His mission in this stronghold of *Tāntraism* in so short a period, nor could the few Pandit converts whom Sri Chaitanya instructed, have wholly divested themselves of *Tāntrika* teaching, therefore they differed from the main orthodox Chaitanya school. For these reasons the orthodox biographers of Sri Chaitanya may have omitted the partial converts, and even the visit of Sri Chaitanya to Āssam, lest others should make capital out of this one failure and cast doubts upon the uninterrupted success of His career. The Chaitanya Panthi Vaishnava sect of Āssam, which may have been founded by the *Tāntrika* Pandits whom Sri Chaitanya is said to have converted, combined traces of Chaitanya's Vaishnavism with *Tāntrika-Shākta-Buddhistic* principles.

From Āssam, Sri Chaitanya reached Shāntipur either before, or at the beginning, of the rainy season and stopped there five or seven days before He started for Puri.[1] Sri Advaita celebrated the birthday of Mādhavendra Puri in company with Sri Chaitanya with great pomp. Raghunāthdās, son of Govardhan Majumdar chief of Saptagrāma, received instruction from Him at Shāntipur.

He returned to Puri with Balabhadra Bhattachārya, Dāmodar, and four or five others, leaving all His attendant companions in Bengal. He visited Kumārahatta, Pānihāti, Barāhanagar, and other places of His devotees on the way. He was received by His votaries of Puri with great delight and relief, and thus told them about the journey. "When I reached Bengal, thousands of followers gathered round Me. The crowds blocked My path. Wherever I stayed, houses and walls were broken down under their pressure, wherever My eyes rested, there was a sea of heads. With great difficulty I reached Rāmakeli where I met two brothers Rūpa and Sanātana. Sanātana spoke a riddle before He took His leave of me. "To be followed by a million men are not the right way to go to Vrindāvan". I

[1] C.C.Madhya I.232 [2] C.C.Madhya XVI.266-274

wondered over his words and thought that instead of going to Vrindāvan unattended like Mādhavendra Puri, I was going with an army beating drums, so I will now go to Vrindāvan alone."[2]

HIS JOURNEY TO NORTH INDIA

At the request of all the devotees and to the great delight of king Pratāprudra, Sri Chaitanya remained at Puri for the four months of the rainy season. He started for Vrindāvan in the Autumn of 1515A.D. Svarup Dāmodar and Rāy Rāmānand persuaded Him to take as His attendants two innocent Brahmanas, Balabhadra Bhattachārya and His Brāhmana servant. With them Sri Chaitanya secretly started from Puri along the Jhārikhand route without giving any opportunity for a public demonstration. He entered the forest keeping Cuttack on the right. This great forest route which spreads over Ātgharā, Dhenkanal, Angul, Lāhara, Chotanāgpur, Yaspur, Sargujā, was little frequented by travelers, was haunted by wild animals and inhabited by a rough population hardened in vicious practices. Sri Krishnadās Kavirāj has given a graphic description of His journey through well nigh impassable mountains, meeting deer, peacocks, tigers and elephants. Krishnadās Kavirāj may have taken the account of this journey from his *Siksa* Guru Sanātana who had it written by Sri Chaitanya's attendant Balabhadra.[1] The Vaishnava poet endeavoured to convince his readers that the wild animals of the Jhārikhand forest were made to recite the name of Krishna and embrace one another. Balabhadra cooked for the Master and His Brahmana servant bore His cloths and wrappers. Sri Chaitanya was perfectly happy in His solitude, His private devotions and with His simple food. His heart was opened to the sylvan beauty of the Jhārikhanda forest in the light of His high devotional imagination; the mountains appearing in the likeness of the holy Govardhan, the playground of His God Krishna, the rivers were even as the sacred Yamunā, and the woods were as those of

[1] C.C.Antya IV.210 [2] C.C.Madhya XVII.55-58

Vrindāvan.[2]

He reached Benares in very happy mood and took His first bath in the Ganges at the Manikarnitakā Ghāt where He met Tapan Misra, who had received religious instruction from Him during His tour in East Bengal and was now living at Benares according to His advice. Tapan Misra received Him with great delight and cordiality, Sri Chaitanya visiting the temples of Visvesvara and Bindumādhava in his company, and being his guest. Raghunāth, afterwards Raghunāth Bhatta Gosvāmi received grace from Sri Chaitanya. Another old follower named Chandrasekhar, a *Vaidya* by caste and writer by profession was also living at Benares. Tapan Misra and Chandrasekhar were close friends on account of their common relationship with Sri Chaitanya; they were the only Vaishnavas at Benares, the great stronghold of *Māyāvādism* in India. One Marhatta Brahmana became His follower at this time. These three devotees regretted the religious conditions that obtained at Benares informing Him that the *Māyāvāda Sannyāsins* headed by Prakāshananda had slandered Him, saying He was a cheat and that His sentimentality would find no partakers at Benares. Sri Chaitanya replied that He would either carry back the load of his sentimentality or sell it at a cheaper price.[1]

Here He met Subuddhi Rāy. Sultan Hossain Shāh before he became king of Bengal, was an employee of Subuddhi who once whipped him for neglecting his duties[2] Then he became king, his wife wished him to kill Subuddhi Rāy but this Hossain Shāh refused to do out of gratitude towards his former master. At last his consort prevailed upon him to destroy and defile his caste, which was done by putting unholy water into his mouth. Subuddhi Rāy sought the advice of the Brahmana Pandits as to how he could expiate his sin and was advised to kill himself by drinking hot Ghee (Clarified butter). Alarmed but still anxious to make atonement he asked Sri Chaitanya what he was to do, and was told to recite the name of Krishna

[1] C.C.Madhya XVII.144 [2] C.C.Madhya XXV 180 [3] C.C.Madhya XXV. 191

saying "The name of Krishna would lead him to the feet of Krishna, and not merely wash away his sins." Thus was Subuddhi Rāy relieved from his anxiety and remorse by receiving spiritual consolation from Sri Chaitanya, Whose advice he followed to the letter.[3]

Sri Chaitanya left Benares for Prayag (Allāhābād) after ten days' stay; His mind being bent on Vrindāvan. At the sight of the Yamuna, which meets the Ganges at Allahabād, Sri Chaitanya plunged into the water of the stream in the excitements of the divine sports of Vraja. But was fortunately rescued by Balabhadra; then visited the Mādhava temple, proceeding thence to Mathurā along the banks of the Yamuna, preaching to the people on the way. On the preaching of Sri Chaitanya Krishnadās Kavirāj remarks". On His way to Mathurā from Puri, at all the places where He stopped, Sri Chaitanya caused all the people to dance for the name and love of Krishna. As He had done when proceeding to the south, He delivered and converted these western tracts to Vaishnavism.[1]

HIS PILGRIMAGE TO VRAJAMANDAL

On arriving at Mathurā, Sri Chaitanya peformed His ablutions in the Yamunā at the Vishrām Ghat, and saw the Kesava temple at Krishna's Birthplace where He danced and sang in a spasm of ecstatic love. The people were thrown into wild enthusiasm on beholding Sri Chaitanya in this condition of overwhelming love and devotion. A certain Brāhmana joined Him in the dance, rolling on the ground and clasping the feet of Sri Chaitanya; their love for the Deity compelling them to embrace each other; the priest of the Kesava temple then decorated Sri Chaitanya with garlands. Taking aside the Brāhmana who had danced with Him, Sri Chaitanya asked him privately, "O, Brahmana, you are very simple and sincere, from whom did you receive this treasure of love?" He replied, "I was blessed by Mādhavendra Puri. He came to my house out of his mercy and made me his disciple and accepted the alms of food cooked by me. On hearing that he was the disciple of

[1] C.C.Madhya XVII.153

Madhavendra Puri, His grand preceptor, (as He had suspected him to be from his ecstatic love and devotion), Sri Chaitanya greeted the feet of the Brahmana but the latter, in a state of great fear, fell at Sri Chaitanya's feet, for the latter was a *Sannyasi*, was an object of great reverence. But Sri Chaitanya said "You are the Guru, and I am the disciple. It is not proper for one who is Guru to bow to his disciples". On hearing this, the alarmed Brāhmana said "Why do you speak such words being a *Sannyāsi*? But I gather from the love that I find in you that you bear relationship to Mādhavendra Puri. There is love for Krishna wherever there is relationship with Him. Except in Him nowhere else is to be found the least trace of His love". Balabhadra informed him of Sri Chaitanya's relationship with Mādhavendra Puri and the Brāhmana took Him to his home. He made Balabhadra cook for Sri Chaitanya as the Brāhmana who belonged to the *Sanodia* caste was under the ban of untouchability. However Sri Chaitanya insisted on eating food cooked by him saying, "Puri Gosvami has accepted your cooked food at your home, so I must also accept your cooking. "The Brāhmana fearing that the people would demonstrate against Sri Chaitanya, still refused, but Sri Chaitanya partook of food cooked by him in order to establish one of His religious principles, that no true Vaishnava could be regarded as untouchable. The Master bathed at the twenty-four bathing places of the Yamunā and visited all the holy places of Mathurā such as Ṣvayambhu, Visrama, Dhirgha, Vishnu, Bhutesvar, etc. and then started the round of the Mathurā circle consisting of the twelve great woods (*Vana*) and the twenty-four minor woods associated with the sports (*Lilā*) of Sri Krishna.

Krishnadās Kavirāj has described the state of Sri Chaitanya's feelings as follows: "Sri Chaitanya's mind was saturated with love for Krishna while He was staying at Puri. As He set out for Vrindāvan, His love waxed a hundred-fold during the journey. On catching sight of Mathurā His love underwent a thousand-fold increased, and while He roamed in the woods His love was augmented a million-fold. The very name of Vrindāvan served to make

Him overflow with love while He was living in other lands. His ecstatic devotional excesses may therefore be inferred from the fact that He was now wandering in the self-same Vrindāvan. His mind simmered night and day with the impulse of love. He bathed, ate, and attended to His other duties by force of habit. Such was the intensity of the love that manifested itself as He journeyed through the twelve woods".[1]

Accompanied His host the Sanodia Brāhmana and two companions, He began His circumambulation of the region of Mathurā, going to the woods of Madhu, Tāla, Kumuda Vahulā. He embraced and caressed the cows, deers, trees, and shrubs, under the compelling influence of His memory of the sports and games of Krishna. The neck of the peacock reminded Him of the charming hues of Krishna and He fell prostrate to the ground, overcome by love whereupon His companions splashed His body with water, fanned Him, and spoke the name of Krishna with a loud voice into His ear. On regaining consciousness Sri Chaitanya rolled convulsively on the bare earth, His body being pierced with the thorns that lay thick on the paths and made progress in the woods very difficult. His companions gently lifted Him up in their arms and carefully helped Him to recover. He stood up and danced crying Krishna and the Sanodia Brāhmana amazed at the sight of such a love-distraught condition was filled with anxiety for the safety of the Master's physical welfare.

He discovered the sites of the Rādhakund and the Shyāmakund lakes in the village of Ārit- sacred pools intimately connected with the love games of Rādhā and Krishna. Sri Chaitanya bathed in the water that had accumulated in the fields of rice and identified the old sites of the said Kundas. He visited Sumanoh Sarovar or Kusuma Sarovar, Govardhan, the famous Images of Harideva, Brahma Kunda, and was received by the priest of the Harideva temple where He spent the night. He wished to behold the Image of Gopāl installed by His grand

[1] C.C.Madhya XVII.226-230

preceptor Mādhavendra Puri, but this temple was at 'Annakuta' on the Govardhan hill, which He considered too holy to climb. The Image was, however brought down to the neighbouring village of Gatholi as the result of a rumour that the Mahammedan intended to attack the temple, so Sri Chaitanya danced and sang in front of It for three days until the Image was taken back to Its temple. No devout Gaudiya Vaishnava ever climbs the Govardhan hill to visit the Image.

Sri Chaitanya visited Nandisvara, Pāvana Sarovara, Khadiravan, Seshāsayi, Khelatirtha, Bhandiravan, and crossing the Yamunā visited Bhadravan, Srivan, Lohavan and Mahavan, returning to Mathura after visiting Gokul and other places. The Sanodia Brāhmana again received Him as his guest, and great crowds assembled to catch a glimpse of the Master, His reputation as a great prophet or deity having spread throughout the Mathurā circle. He accordingly left the city and lived in seclusion at Akrura so as to avoid the noise and bustle of visitors, repairing daily to Vrindāvan, visiting the lake of Kāliya, the Ghāts of the twelve Adityas, Kesighāt Rāsasthali, Ghiraghāt, Āmlitalā, etc., and spending the day from early morning to mid-day in personal devotions, returning to Akrura in the afternoon when He received visitors and preached His *Bhakti* to them. One day He met a Rājput chief named Krishnadās at Āmlitalā in Vrindāvan who was inspired with great devotion to Sri Chaitanya and became an additional attendant companion. The people now began to call Him God to which He strenuously objected and pressed invitations upon Him but their great disappoinment He accepted only one invition a day. Kānauji, south Indian and Vaidika Brāhmanas living in Mathurā, all humbly entreated Sri Chaitanya to accept their invitation, going to Akrura in the morning, where they cooked and offered food to the Master, the people flocking in great numbers to receive instruction. As He was sitting on the Akrura *Ghāt* one day, His memory strayed to the great vision which the people of Vrindāvan had beheld there, and He forthwith jumped into the water under the

impulse of emotion. The Rājput Krishnadās and Balabhadra rescued Him just in time. His companions took counsel together, as they were filled with anxiety for His safety in these increasing outbursts of emotional devotion, they decided to take Him away from Mathurā Vrindāvan where His feelings had been so uncontrollably excited and where the crowds waiting for an opportunity to speak with the Master, not to mention the offers of hospitality showered upon Him, were reducing Him to a state of complete exhaustion. Balabhadra therefore suggested that He wished to bathe at Prayag (Allāhābād) during Capricorn, this was the moment to leave Vrindāvan, to which suggestion Sri Chaitanya assented, not on His own account but to please His devoted attendant.[1]

CONVERSION OF THE PĀTHĀNS

In the month of Māgha (latter part of January, in 1516 A.D., Sri Chaitanya crossed the Yamunā from Akrura with Balabhadra, the Rājput chief Krishnadās and the Sanodia Brāhman, to revisit Mahāvana or Gokul on the way to Sorokshetra and Allāhābād. On the way, noticing a herd of cows grazing, and hearing the music of a pipe played by a cowherd, Sri Chaitanya fell in a swoon caused by over excitement at the memory of the recreation of Krishna, at the very moment, that a body of ten Pāthān horsemen rode up. Finding Sri Chaitanya unconscious, they suspected that His companions, had robbed and illtreated Him. After binding the party with chains, they threatened to beat and kill them. Balabhadra and His servant were struck dumb with fear. The Sanodia Brāhmana told the Pāthān that He lived at Mathurā where He had at least a hundred acquaintances at the court of their Sikdār and that it was His Guru who suffered from occasional fits who was lying on the ground unconscious. The Rājput chief Krishnadās said that he was the chief of the neighbouring territory that he possessed an army of two hundred turks and a hundred cannons and that his men would kill them and take their horses if he gave the signal, he also abused them for

[1] C.C.Madhya XVIII.152

attempting to rob the innocent pilgrims of their money. The Pāthān horsemen were however filled with doubt when Sri Chaitanya regained consciousness crying aloud "Krishna" and told the Master that His four companions were cheats and were about to rob Him of His money by poisoning Him with *Dhutura*. (Poisonous flower) This Sri Chaitanya denied saying that they were His faithful companions, that He was a *Sannyāsi*, therefore had no money and that He was subject to fits of hysteria during which they tended Him out of kindness.

One of these Mahammedan horsemen was a *Pir* (Mahammedan ascetic) clad in black and grave in disposition, who was touched by the spiritual fervour of Sri Chaitanya, he started a religious discussion advocating the pantheism of Sufism. He was a great a logician and well versed in Sufistic doctrine. Sri Chaitanya refuted his doctrine by arguments from the Mahammedan scriptures, (the Quran) giving him a different interpretation of the Quran which He said, contains two views: first it established the undifferenced universal absolute, and second it establishes the conception of a personal God possessing a spiritual body of all-existence, all-intelligence and all bliss; the latter being necessarily stronger than the former. After much discussion Sri Chaitanya asked how he could explain the latter part of the Quran. The Moslem *Pir* told Him that their sect preferred the undifferenced absolute to the personal God, but admitted that he was still in doubt as to *Sādhya* and *Sādhana* in spite of his learning in the Muslim scriptures. The *Pir* was finally convinced of Sri Chaitanya's knowledge and begged for englightenment in the matter of *Sādhya* and *Sādhana*, admitting that his vanity had been humbled. Sri Chaitanya's knowledge of the holy writings and His spiritual insight made a great impression on the Mahammedan *Pir*, who finally asked for His blessing and to be accepted as one of His followers. Here we have another instance of the never failing magnetism of Sri Chaitanya's personality. On his conversion this *Pir* was given the Hindu name of Rāmadās or servant of the God Rāma. The leader of the horsemen,

whose name was Vijlikhān, was the son of a chief. This young man listened to the discussion with the greatest interest grace was bestowed on him and his attendants, all of whom were initiated by the *Nāmamantra* of Krishna. This Vijlikhān is recognised as a great Vaishnava in all the holy places of the Hindus, he devoted his life to preaching the glory of Sri Chaitanya, and he and his fellow Mahammedan converts were known as the Pāthān Vaishnavas.[1]

Sri Chaitanya seems to have studied that Quran which enabled Him to interpret it in the light of His devotional theism in His discussion with Mahammedan theologians, on many occasions. We have noticed that He had a long discourse with the Kāzi of Navadvip and that He and the Mahammedan tailor of Srivās were converted to Vaishnavism, while He was still at Navadvip. Haridās Thākur, also a reputed Muslim scholar, was his constant devotee. His missionary activities required knowledge of the principles of other religions in order to establish the superiority of His Bhāgavata religions. Dr. D.C. Sen in his account of Govinda Dās has proved that Sri Chaitanya was an adept in some south Indian languages; no wonder that so great a scholar should have learned several languages and studied the different scriptures.

Sri Chaitanya visited Sorokshetara on his way from Mathurā to Allāhābād along the Ganges. The author of "Rāi Rāmānand" writes that Sri Chaitanya paid a short visit to Kurukshetra in the Karnal district of the Pānjāb. It may have taken place before He reached Allāhābād from Vrindāvan. The said author seems to have suggested this visit to Kurukshetra possibly on the basis of the particular devotional niceties of Sri Chaitanya connected with the memory of Krukshetra. In His dance before the Car of Jagannāth at Puri, He used to identify Himself with Krishna's consort, Sri Rādhikā, meeting Krishna at Krukshetra.

When proceeding to the temple of Vindu-Mādhava at

[1] C.C.Madhya XVIII.210

Allāhābād, so great was the demonstration of the people that Rūpa, who had come to make the great renunciation, could not approach Him. Krishnadās Kavirāj remarks that the success of Sri Chaitanya's Mission in Allāhābād is beyond description, that the united streams of the Ganges and the Yamunā could not submerge Allāhābād but that Sri Chaitanya flooded it with the love of God.[1] A south Indian Brāhmana with whom Sri Chaitanya had become acquainted possibly during His journey in the south, received Him as a guest, his house being at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamunā, and here Rūpa and his younger brother Anupama met the Master. The most memorable event of this visit was the teaching of the whole system of *Bhakti* from its beginning to its highest culmination contrasting it with other modes of worship. This detailed instruction by Sri Chaitanya is the basis of the vast storehouse of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature subsequently given to the world by Rūpa, the greatest of all Gaudiya Vaishnava Āchāryas. Holding two blades of grass between their teeth, the brothers fell prostrate on the ground as they caught sight of Sri Chaitanya on His return from the temple, falling again and again, and reciting the following hymns, "Obeisance to the most magnanimous, the giver of the love of Krishna, the very self of Krishna, the Lord bearing the name of Sri Chaitanya and all golden to look upon."[2] Sri Chaitanya embraced them and asked for the news of Sanātana, their elder brother, and was told that he was in prison by the king's orders; they implored His divine intercession for his release and were comforted on hearing that this would not long be delayed, and so it happened for Sanātana met Sri Chaitanya at Benares a few days later.

Vallabha Bhatta afterwards known as Vallabhāchārya was living at Ādāil, a village opposite Allāhābād on the far bank of the Yamunā, and met Sri Chaitanya who introduced him to Rūpa and his brother Anupama, whereupon he begged Sri Chaitanya and His attendant followers including Rūpa and his brother to be his guests, conveying them to his house by boat. On arrival Vallabha Bhatta showed his

[1] C.C.Madhya XIX.40 [2] C.C.Madhya XIX.53 [3] C.C.Madhya XIX.90

deep veneration for the Master by sprinkling the water in which He had washed His feet, on his head and on the heads of his family, Vallabha Bhatta himself tending the feet of Sri Chaitanya when resting in bed after a meal.[3] Attention must be drawn to the fact that Sri Chaitanya avoided all outward expression and manifestation of His ecstatic love before those who were not in full sympathy with His mode of devotion, so that although the darkness of the waters of the Yamunā aroused His devotional yearnings, for Krishna, He sternly controlled His feelings on account of the presence of Vallabha Bhatta[1] There is a *Vaithaka* or seat of the Vallabhi sect on the site of the house of Vallabha Bhatta where Sri Chaitanya visited and which is now in the village of Deorakh, about one mile and a half from the present village of Ādāil; or Ādeli. It is surrouned by massive walls, and the temple contains the seat or *Vaithaka* on which Vallabha sat to teach his disciples.

THE TEACHING OF SRI CHAITANYA TO RŪPA AND SANĀTANA

After returning to Allāhābād, Sri Chaitanya began His famous instruction to Rūpa Gosvāmi, which lasted ten successive days; the discourse took place at the Dasasvamedh Ghāt where Sri Chaitanya took Rūpa in order to avoid the crowd of visitors that thronged to His residence. Krishnadās Kavirāj has given the account from Kavikarnapura's "Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka", he may also have heard of it from the mouth of Rūpa Gosvāmi whose disciple and pupil he was. Krishnadās's short summary may be rendered as follows:

"Listen Rūpa, to the characteristics of the *Bhakti Rasa*. I shall speak briefly as it is impossible to give a detailed description. The ocean of the mellowness of *Bhakti* is deep and without bounds. Of this I shall only speak in short, so that you may enjoy its flavour. In this world, the number of *Jivas* (living beings) is infinite. They form the complete content of the world by their wanderings

[1] ibid.63-82-83.

through eighty-four lacs of births. The specific individual nature of the *Jiva* is infinitesimal in magnitude like the hundredth part of a hundredth part of the tip of a hair. They are divided into two classes, viz. 1) those without mobility, 2) those with mobility. The second comprises those who live 1) on land, 2) in water, 3) in the air; man forming an insignificant part of the total number of *Jivas* that live on land. Among men are to be found the *Mlechas*, *Pulindas*, *Buddhists*, *Savaras* etc. Among those who practise the religion of the Vedas, one-half profess to follow the Veda only with their lips but as a matter of fact, they commit the sins forbidden by the Vedas and do not care for religious observances. Most of those who act in accordance with the religion (of the Vedas) are addicted to *Karma*. It is rare to find a single seeker after knowledge (*Jnānin*) among a crore of *Karmins*. One only is truly *Mukta* (liberated) among a crore of *Muktas* is rare indeed. The *Bhakta* of Krishna is free from all selfish desires and yearnings; it therefore denotes calmness and equaninity (*Sānta*). All who desires enjoyment (*Karmin's Bhukti*) or *Moksha* (*Jnānin's* salvation) or power (*Yogin's* object) are full of unrest and discontent (*Asānta*)".

"It is rarely that any fortunate *Jiva* in the course of his wandering through his births in the world, many obtain the seed of the creeper of *Bhatki* by the favour of Guru and Krishna. If he sows the seed like a gardener and sprinkles the same with the nourishing water of hearing and chanting (of the name and glory of Krishna), the creeper of *Bhakti* shoots forth and growing swiftly, pierces through the mundane sphere and passing the stream of the Viraja (which separates the spiritual sphere from the Mundane world) as well as the dazzliy sphere of the *Brāhman*, attains to her resting place in the transcendental sphere (*Paravyoma*). The creeper continuing to grow in *Paravyoma* reaches the limits of the higher sphere of Goloka – Vrindāvan where she (*Bhakti-creeper*) reaches the purpose-tree of the feet of Krishna".

"The fruit in the form of *Prema* grows on the creeper of *Bhakti* only when she attains the feet of Krishna.

Throughout the gardener (devotee) continues to sprinkle the creeper with the water of hearing and chanting the name of Krishna. There is also a second function towards the creeper, besides watering. As the creeper begins to grow, after being watered for some time, wicked animals make their way to it and tear up the leaves, or the tender leaves dry up from excessive heat. Offences against the Vaishnavas (*Vaishnava-Aparādha*) are like hostile animals. Such offences result in destruction similar to that caused by the depredations of wild elephants. In which case the gardener (novice gardener), by means of fences or other protective methods tends the creeper with special care so that there may be no opportunity for the depredations of the wild elephants of offence against the Vaishnavas. Offence against the Vaishnavas identical with offence against the name of God is tenfold"

"There is another possible danger at this stage. As the creeper of *Bhakti* begins to grow, if there is luxurious growth of the secondary branches (weeds), such growth also causes mischief. The secondary branches are *Karma, Jnāna-Moksha*, addiction to forbidden conduct, cruelty to, or slaughter of living beings, wealth, worldly honour, pride, etc. If special vigilance is not practised the secondary branches will grow vigorously to the detriment of the principal stem of the creeper (of *Bhakti*) the result of sprinkling with life giving water being that the main stem is stunted and cannot grow. Therefore, it is the duty of the gardener to prune these mischievous tendencies in the form of secondary branches, from the moment of their first appearance, while applying the water of hearing and of chanting (the name of God), if this done the principal stem, continuing to grow, attains the Vrindāvan."

"The fruit of *Prema* then ripens and drops to the ground. The gardener now tastes the same. By the help of the creeper, the gardener is also enabled to teach the purpose-tree. He is then in a position to serve in Vrindāvan the same purpose-tree and to enjoy the bliss of tasting the luscious juice of the fruit of love (*Prema Phala*). This *Prema* is the supreme desideratum, the final

fruit of all activity of the soul. The fourfold objects of desire, viz, *Dharma* (Virtue) *Artha* (worldly possession), *Kāma* (objects of worldly desires) and *Moksha* (oneness with the absolute Brahman) are as chaff compared with it (*Prema*)."

"Love for God results from pure *Bhakti*. So it is necessary to describe the characteristics of unalloyed devotion. The positive nature of devotion is to seek to serve Krishna in the manner that lies in the conscious pursuance of God's wish and with the proper use of all the senses. The negative aspects of devotion are to desist from an immoral and irreligious life, worship of gods other than Vishnu-Krishna, the pursuit of *Jnāna-karma*. The seeker is to serve Krishna with all his faculties in a manner pleasing to Him. Such is unalloyed devotion. From such devotion alone love for Krishna is engendered. The Pancharātra and the Bhāgavata teach this. If the mind contains the least desire for mundane enjoyment (*Bhukti*) and *Mukti*, love for God (*Prema*) is not awakened even by the deligent observance of the worship of the Godhead enjoined by the scriptures."

"This form of *Bhakti* is worthy of cultivation (*Sādhana Bhakti*). Being duly cultivated, it gives rise to *Bati* (basic principle of Love). Concentrated *Rati* is *Prema*. By the process of gradual development, *Prema* becomes *Sneha*, *Māna*, *Pranaya*, *Bāga*, *Anurāga*, *Bhāva* and *Mahābhāva*. An apt analogy is furnished by the progression of the raw juice of the sugarcane, molasses, (*Gur*), unrefined crystallized sugar (*Khanda*), residual sugar, refined sugar (*Sarkara*), *Sitamishri*, and lastly crystallised sugar. These are varieties of the basic or permanent principle (*Sthāyi Bhāva*) in the operations of the mellow liquid (*Basa*) of the service of Krishna. If the basic principle *Sthāyi Bhāva* is conjoined with *Vibhāva*, *Anubhāva*, *Sattvika* and *Vyabhichāri*, the operations of the mellow liquid of the Krishna *Bhakti Rasa* give the most exquisite nectarine flavour in the same way as the mixture of curd with sugar, clarified butter, pepper and camphor, produces a most delectable refreshment."

"There are five *Ratis* (basic principle of Love) corresponding to the different types of devotees. The five varieties of *Rati* are *Sānta, Dāshya, Sakhya, Vātsalya* and *Madhura*. There are seven secondary *Rasa* (*Rasa* is the first stage of *Rati*) in addition to these principal five varieties. The secondary *Rasas* are: *Hāsya, Adbhuta, Vira, Karuna, Raudra, Rhayanaka*, and *Vibhatsa*. The five principal *Rasas* (*Sānta, Dāsya, Sakhya, Vatsalya* and *Madhura*) are permanent, and constantly permeate the mind of the devotee. The seven secondary *Rasas* are accidental and make their appearance when there is a reason."

"*Sānta Bhāva* (or *Rasa* or *Rati*) is exemplified by the conduct of the nine Yogindras (Sages) and Sanakas, etc. *Dāsya Rhāva* (Servitude) is met with everywhere in numerous votaries. Among *Sakhya Bhaktas* (friendship for God) are Sridam, Bhima, Arjuna etc. The *Vātsalya Bhaktas* (those have tender affection for God) include the parents and all superior relatives of God Krishna. In *Madhura Rasa* (Passionate attachment), the principal *Bhaktas* are the maidens of Vraja and also the orders of the royal consorts, and the Lakshmis whose number is beyond calculation."

"Then again Krishna *Rati* is two fold viz., (1) adulterated with the perception of God's Majesty and (2) unalloyed. In Goloka, *Rati* for Krishna is unalloyed, being devoid of the consciousness of His divine majesty. In the two royal cities (Dvaraka and Mathurā) and in Vaikuntha Divine Majesty predominates. Love shows reserve where the sense of majesty predominates. It is the distinctive characteristic of unalloyed *Rati* that it takes no interest in the Majesty of the Godhead even when the same is manifested to it. In *Sānta* and *Dāsya Rasas* the realization of Divine Majesty on rare occasion acts as a helpful excitant; in *Sakhya Vātsalya* and *Madhura*, it always acts as a deterrent. Krishna greeted the feet of Vasudeva and Devaki. The realisation of God's Divine Majesty filled the mind of both with fear. Arjuna was terrified on beholding the cosmic

form of Krishna. Rukmini was overwhelmed with fear when Krishna told her jokingly that he would leave her."

"But unalloyed love knows nothing of divine majesty. If she meets with any exhibition of majesty, she simply ignores all relationship with so majestic an Entity."

"In *Sānta Rasa* is found an exclusive attachment to Krishna due to the realisation of one's spiritual nature. The specific effort of a *Santa* devotee discards any longing except that for Krishna; hence no one can enjoy true tranquility of mind except the devotee of Krishna. The devotee of Krishna regards *Svarga* (Paradise) and *Moksha* as Hell. The two characteristics *Sānta Bhakta* are perpetual attachment to Krishna and the renunciation of all other desires. These two characteristics permeate all the devotees of Krishna just as the quality of giving forth sound permeates all mundane elements."

"It is in the nature of the *Sānta Bhakta* to be empty of any personal tie of love with Krishna, for the realisation of Krishna as the supremely great (*Parama Brahman*) and the Supreme Soul is paramount. In *Sānta Bhakta* only the realisation of the spritual nature of relationship with Krishna exists, whereas in *Dāsya Rasa* there is greater realization of the nature of Krishna as the Master possessing full divine majesty. In *Dāsya* (service of Master on a higher plane) there is exultation in the sense of divinity as possessing complete power and great dignity. The servitor by his humble ministration brings continuous pleasure to Krishna. In *Dāsya* are the two characteristics of *Sānta* with the addition of marked servitude. Therefore *Dāsya* possesses this two-fold quality In *Sakhya* (friendship) reside the qualities of both *Sānta* and *Dāsya*. But whereas in *Dāsya* the servitude is full of a sense of inferiority and a very high respect for Krishna, in *Sakhya* it is characterized by full confidence. The companions of Krishna cling to His shoulders make Him cling to their shoulders, engage in the game of fighting with Him, serve Krishna and make Krishna serve them in His turn. *Sakhya* is marked by a complete confidential relationship devoid of respect for, or of inferiority to Krishna.

Hence *Sakhya Rasa* possesses the three-fold quahty; there is a greater measure of the personal sentiment, a sense of regarding Krishna as one's own. This last characteristic forces the Godhead to submit to *Sakhya Rasa.*

"In *Vātsalya Rasa* are found the quality of *Sānta* and the ministration of *Dāsya*, which activities are know as "tending" (*Palana*); the quality of *Sakhya* consisting in the absence of restraint and respect, marked by the features of punishing and fault-finding due to the development of the sentiment of kinship, regarding oneself as a guardian and Krishna as ward. By this four-fold characteristic, *Vātsalya Rasa* is as sweet as nectar. Krishna Himself is immersed in that sweet bliss in the company of His devotees.

"In *Madhura Rasa* are constant attachment to Krishna, complete servitude, absence of diffidence in the companion, increased feeling towards Krishna as in the love of parents for their children and finally the service of Krishna through one's own body as consort. Hence *Mādhurya Rasa* exhibits five distinct qualities. An analogy is supplied by the five mundane elements. The quality of each element beginning with space (*Ākāsa*) is conveyed to the next in the order of the series and added to its own distinctive quality, till the last of the elements viz. earth is found to possess the five qualities, i.e. the four distinctive qualities of the preceding four elements in addition to its own specific quality. In the same manner all the *Bhāvas* combine in *Mādhurya*. For this reason its wider range of interest makes it so exquisitely sweet and desirable".[1]

After giving Rūpa instruction for ten days Sri Chaitanya departed for Benares, Rūpa insisting on following Him, as he could not bear separation from one for whose sake he had forsaken the splendour of his ministerial office. Sri Chaitanya however sent him to Vrindāvan, the field of His future activities, charging him with missionary duties and reminding him that he must obey His commands, and asking him to meet Him again at Puri later on. When the Master embarked, Sri Rūpa fell senseless to the ground,

[1] C.C.Madhya XIX [2] February 1516 A.D.

when he recovered the two brothers repaired to Vrindāvan.[2]

On arrival at Benares Sri Chaitanya was received by Tapan Misra on the outskirts of the town who conducted Him to his home, where a meal was taken. Tapan Misra begged Him to be His guest during His stay at Benares to which the Master gave His consent; quarters were provided in the house of Chandrasekhar Vaidya, another follower of Sri Chaitanya.

Meanwhile Sanātana had managed to secure his release by giving the custodian a bribe of seven thousand rupees, and had hurried to Benares in disguise, presenting himself to Sri Chaitanya at the residence of Chandrasekhar. Sri Chaitanya remained two months at Benares teaching him the doctrine of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, which formed the subject matter of Sanātana's Bhāgavatāmrita, Hari Bhakti Vilās and others. Krishnadās Kavirāj gives us the substance of what Sri Chaitanya taught Sanātana, in five chapters of His biography Chaitanya Charitamrita[1] This teaching begins and centres round the three questions of Sanātana: - 1) who and what am I? 2) Why am I troubled with threefold affliction, 3) What should I do to attain to eternal bliss? By asking these questions, Sanātana sought the truth bearing on *Sādhya* and *Sādhana*. After explaining *Jiva* or the soul, the Master unfolded the three main aspects of His doctrine –*Sambandha*, *Abhidheya* and *Prayojana* with reference to Krishna, Krishna-*Bhakti*, and Krishna-*Prema*. Under the first head of *Sambandha*, Sri Chaitanya described the vast and complicated system of Gaudiya Vaishnava theology. Under this head, God, His different manifestations, potencies, creations, etc. were discussed in the spirit and light of the classical scriptures and the Purānas. Under the second head He discussed *Bhakti* as the means to *Prema* the supreme desideratum, in contrast to other principles and influences hostile to it; its two main varieties – *Vaidha* and *Rāgānuga*; their respective natures and practices, and so on. Under the third head He taught Sanātana how *Bhakti* develops into *Prema*, its gradual concentration, its aspects and the delineation of two varieties of *Prema* (Madana and

[1] Madhya XX-XXIV [2] I.7.10

Mohana) in its highest stage of development. Sanātana asked many questions regarding the philosophy of Bhāgavata which Sri Chaitanya answered elaborating its many difficult problems. Sanātana then begged for an interpretation of the famous verse *"Ātmarāmascha"* of the Bhāgavata[2]. For the account of His eighteen different explanations to Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma had filled Him with an eager thirst for enlightenment. Ignoring His former eighteen interpretations, Sri Chaitanya gave Sanātana sixtyone new meanings, supplying different explanations to each word with reference to the verse as a whole. These seventy-nine different interpretations of a single verse of the Bhāgavata bear witness to the supreme intellectual genius of Sri Chaitanya and His perfect assimilation of the true inwardness of every word of the Bhāgavata, the supreme authority on Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

After two months' instruction, Sri Chaitanya appointed him and his brother Rūpa heads of His missionary legation at Vrindāvan saying "Before this at Allāhābād, I had discoursed on *Bhakti Rasa* to Rūpa and inspired him with the power to digest it. You also are to preach *Bhakti*, rediscover and restore the holy places in the Mathurā circle, install images in the temples, inaugurate Vaishnava practices, write expositions on the *Bhakti* creed and use them as texts"[1] Holding a blade of grass between his teeth and with folded arms, Sanātana prayed as follows:- "I was a servant of an unclean master and am myself a miserable wretch. Thou hast taught me truth, which are beyond the knowledge of Brahma, My mind cannot apprehend one of the oceans of nectar-like truth that is contained in thy teaching. If Thou art so minded as to make a lame man dance, be pleased to put Thy feet on my head and pronounce a blessing. May all that I have spoken shine forth through thee". The power to carry out Thy commands will come from Thy gift."Upon which Sri Chaitanya placed His hand on his head and gave the benediction: "May all that I have spoken shine forth through thee".[2]

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[1] C.C.Madhya XXIII.97-98 [2] C.C.Madhya XXIII.118

We have noticed that Sri Chaitanya had not so far taught him the *Smriti* doctrine but that He had asked him to write a treatise on it. Sanātana therefore begged for enlightenment on its special tenets, which were given in an aphoristic form with the command to support all the principles underlying the Vaishnava *Smriti* by quoting instances from the Purānas. This formed the subject matter of Sanātana's Hari Bhakti Vilās.[1]

CONVERSION OF MĀYĀVADI SANNYĀSIS AT BENARAS

It has already been noticed that Tapan Misra and Chandrasekhar made a joint prayer to Sri Chaitanya that the hard hearts of the *Māyāvādi Sannyāsis* might suffer a change. A Marhatta Brahmana follower of Sri Chaitanya accordingly arranged a meal at which Sri Chaitanya should meet the *Māyāvada Sannyāsis*, this was the first occasion of contact between them. Dr. D.C.Sen says that "Krishnadās incorporated the discussion between Sri Chaitanya and the *Māyāvādi Sannyāsins* in a work called "Panchatattvākhyān" which seems to be lost"[2] but which is referred to by Krishnadās in the 25th chapter of the middle section of his Chaitanya Charitamrita. By Panchatattvākhyan or the story of Panchatattva, Krishnadās apparently refers to the 7th chapter of the first part of his Chaitanya Charitamrita in which it is described that Sri Chaitanya as the personification of the five principles of devotion (*Panchatattva*) preached *Bhakti* to all irrespective of castes creed and Āshramas, converting Mahammedans, *Māyāvāda Sannyāsis* of Benares, etc. wherein he reproduced the famous addresses of Sri Chaitanya to Prakāshānanda and his followers of Benares at the house of the Marhatta Brahmana and at the Vindu Mādhava temple. Panchatattvākhyān is not a separate book by Krishnadās, but a chapter of the work "Chaitanya Charitamrita".

Full of humility in Himself and of respect to others, the Master bowed to the party gathered together on the dias

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[1] C.C.Madhya XXIV.319-322 [2] C&A. P.231

and sitting down in a lowly place He washed His feet. In reply to Prakāshānanda's question why He had chosen an unclean spot, Sri Chaitanya replied that He was unfit to take His seat among them. Prakāshānanda said, "How is it that being a *Sannyāsi*, you live in the town avoiding association with us? Why do you as a *Sannyasi* dance, sing, and chant the *Kirtana* in the company of ignorant people who exhibiting sentimentally and do not study the Vedānta and practise meditation enjoined upon the *Sannyasi*? Sri Chaitanya submitted with humility that He was entirely illiterate and had no aptitude for the study of Vedānta. His Guru, finding Him so dull, initiated Him into the *Nāmamantra* of Krishna telling Him that it would deliver Him from the world and lead Him to the feet of Krishna, for the Name of Krishna is the quintessence of all *Mantras* and there is no religion but the Name of Krishna in the Kali Age. He added further "In the course of chanting the Name, My mind was overpowered with ecstatic devotion and I lost all patience and became delirious. I smile, weep, sing like one under the influence of liquor. My Guru said, "It is ever the way of the Name of God, whosoever recites it is filled with love for Krishna (*Bhāva*) which constitutes the supreme desideratum of human life, and in comparison with which other aims such as the four *Vargas* (*Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Moksha*) are as negligible as a blade of grass. The great ocean of the sweet bliss of love of God is the fifth desideratum, compared with which the bliss to be found in absorption in undifferentiated *Brahman* is not even a drop in the ocean." Sri Chaitanya then said that His Guru (Isvara Puri) had taught Him the following verse of the Bhāgavata saying that it was the cream of the book."[1] The devotee engaged in the *Kirtana* of the name of his beloved (God) with overflowing love and attachment, sometimes laughs aloud, sometimes weeps, cries, or sings, and at other times dances, like one demented having no regard to any other."

The *Sannyāsi* then asked why He did not listen to the Vedānta; by which they meant its commentary by Shankara.

[1] II.2.38

Whereupon Sri Chaitanya gave His own interpretation of the Vedānta. He took up two contending views of exposition: 1) differencelessness or the universal consciousness of the absolute established by Shankara by means of his *Vivartta-Vāda*, and 2) the potent Absolute accommodating variety without undergoing modification. He brought out with the help of the Upanishads that the latter view is the logical and natural as well as the plain and direct meaning of the Vedānta (*Mukhya Artha*), proving that Shankara established the former view by means of a forced and fanciful interpretation not warranted by the text. (*Gauna Artha*). The Vedānta which was enunciated by God in the person of Vyāsa and consequently contains the sayings of God that are free from error, inadvertence, self-deception, and defective observation, ought to be interpreted in the light of the Upanishads, the idea of which has been contained in the Vedānta in an aphoristic form. The natural meaning, which finds complete support in the Upanishads is to be preferred to the new *Vivartha* view, which Shanakara established by his *Māyā* theory. Sri Chaitanya concluded by pointing out that the teaching of the seers of the Upanishads and the Vedānta are trustworthier than those of Shankara. Sri Chaitanya then turned to the aphorsism of the Vedānta and discussed their agreement with the Upanishads on the one hand and their incompatibility with the commentary of Shankara on the other. Throughout Sri Chaitanya argued to refute the validity of Shankara's view in the light of the Upanishads, according to the direct and natural sense of the Vedānta.

The *Māyāvādi Sanyasis* challenged Sri Chaitanya to establish his *Parināmavāda* to their satisfaction. Sri Chaitanya thereupon dealt with the aphorisms one by one and interpreted them in their direct sense, and after a long discussion established His view that if a material object such as *Chintāmani* or the philosopher's stone can remain unchanged while producing gold, why be surprised that God should possess the power to cause creation and to manifest Himself without suffering modification. *Brahman* is not without difference or without attributes nor is He a

deformed entity, more universal consciousness without subject or object, but Bhagavān Himself possessed of the six attributes (*Sadaisvarya*) without any trace of *Māyā* (which Shankara introduced to explain creation as an adjunct of Brahman). His powers are inherent in him who does not admit *Māyā*. This *Saktiman Brahman* is the theme of all the Vedas, therefore whosoever calls Him either impersonal or without difference (*Nirvisesha*) rejects His spiritual powers and so causes Him to suffer imperfection. Sri Chaitanya established that the nine kinds of devotion, such as listening, chanting the name of God, etc., (*Abhidheya* in the Vedas) are the means whereby the love of God is attained. From the practices of the *Abhidheya Bhakti* springs *Prema* or love of God. In possession of such complete love, all other attachment disappears. This love is the fifth desideratum (*Panchama Purusārtha*) and makes a devotee savour the liquid loveliness of Krishna. The favour of God is won by means of this love, through which comes enjoyment of the sweet bliss of the service of God. He summed up His discourse by repeating that the three truths 1) *Sambandha* (God) 2) *Abhidheya* (*Bhakti*) and 3) *Prayojana* (*Prema* or concentrated love), permeate all the aphorism of the Vedānta.[1]

This unique discourse filled the mind of the congregation of *Sannyāsis* with extreme penitence for their wickedness towards Him, and resulted in bringing about a change of heart and mind. It must be considered a great miracle that a highly intellectual brotherhood of *Sannyāsis* full of arrogance at having renounced the world, should have accepted the higher truth brought to them from an unexpected quarter. They accepted the name of Krishna from Sri Chaitanya, the chanting of which they had so long regarded as the ignorant mummery of a dotard sentimetalist. We have had occasion to notice that since His school days, Sri Chaitanya was very forcible and convincing in speech and arguments and He and that He invariably led His audience to adopt His conclusions. His controversial success with the congregation of the leaders

[1] C.C.Adi VII.146

of the *Māyāvādi Sannyāsis* changed the religious atmosphere of Benares, the greatest stronghold of *Māyāvādism* in India, where he had been subjected to adverse criticism and uncompromising opposition. The *Māyāvādi Sannyasins* not only accepted His views and the *Nāmamantra* of Krishna, but many of them subsequently became exponent of Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavism and of His divinity. One of the disciples of Prakāshānanda, so thoroughly imbibed the spirit of Sri Chaitanya's theistic exposition of the Vedānta, that he was permitted to bring his Guru Prakāshānanda to a deeper conviction of the supremacy of Sri Chaitanya's interpretation.[1]

This success caused a great sensation in the city. Many of leaders of other sects came forward to challenge Him to scriptural discussions, but Sri Chaitanya was always at His best in establishing *Bhakti* by refuting the arguments of His rivals. The *Sannyasins* engaged themselves in the discourses on *Bhakti* and gave up their studies of Shankara's Bhāsya.[2] Great crowds now began to gather round Him, the people coming in thousands to get a glimpse of Him. The house where Sri Chaitanya stayed at Benares, a private residence, proved too small to receive His many visitors and when He visited the Visvesvara temple, the riverbank and other places, people flocked to see Him. His success at Benares was dramatic and its effect immediate and far-reaching.

Prakāshānanda Sarasvati who was the head of the *Māyāvādi Sannyāsis* of Benares, met Sri Chaitanya at the temple of Bindu Mādhava; when he made obeisance to Sri Chaitanya by clasping His feet, addressing Him as the deity and entreating Him to excuse his former conduct, Sri Chaitanya promptly objected to being addressed as God, saying that no human being should be so called, that it was a great offence and blasphemy to so style a human being. Prakāshānanda requested Sri Chaitanya to enlighten him further in the *Mukhya-artha* of the Vedānta as His interpretation on that memorable occasion had greatly

[1] C.C.Madhya XXV.23-57 [2] C.C.Adi VII.149 Madhya XXV.21-22

charmed him. This led Sri Chaitanya to declare the Bhāgavata as the most faithful commentary on the Vedānta; He pointed out the ancient tradition that Vyāsa himself interpreted the text of the *Vedānta Sutra* in the Bhāgavata, and that the direct meaning of the Vedānta is too deep for human understanding except in the light of the Bhāgavata, which gives Vyāsa's own explanation of his *Vedānta Sutra*. When the writer of the text is also His own commentator, the meaning can be grasped with ease. The meaning of the *Pranava* in the *Gāyatri Mantra* is explained at length in the four *shlokas* of the Bhāgavata.[1] God imparted these four *shlokas* to Brahma who taught it in his turn to Nārada who taught it to Vyāsa. Vyāsa decided to write a commentary on his own aphorisms (Vedānta) in the light of the four *shlokas*, which he had received from his Guru Nārada, in the form of the Bhāgavata. He gathered together the teachings of the four Vedas and the Upanishads. Each the subject matter of an aphorism of the Vedānta, is contained in a particular verse of the Bhāgavata, therefore the Bhāgavata is the true commentary of the Vedānta. The Vedānta and the Upanishads give the same tenets as those of the Vedānta, the former being the commentary, the latter the source.[2] Sri Chaitanya then explained the four *shlokas* with reference to the aphorisms of the Vedānta, tracing the three principles *Sambandha, Ahidheya,* and *Prayojana,* which correspond to Krishna, *Bhakti* and *Prema*[3]. Krishnadās Kavirāj gives a very condensed summary of this complicated explanation, which is not easy to reproduce. Prakāshānanda was further favoured in hearing the sixty-one interpretations of the famous verse *Ātmarāmascha* of the Bhāgavata from His mouth.

Here at Benares Sri Chaitanya was at the zenith of His controversial triumph directed now to the vindication of His theological position; the conversion of Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma of Puri marked the beginning, and that of Prakāshānanda the end of one of the most significant episodes in the successful missionary career of Sri Chaitanya, which was carried out without making a single

[1] II.9.30-33 [2] C.C.Madhya XXV.89-98 [3] ibid.100-147 [4] C.C.Madhya XXV.165

enemy. Benares had remained untouched by His teaching when southern India and eastern India and parts of northern or middle India had more or less come under His influence.[4] The *Sannyāsis* accepted the Bhāgavata and made its teaching the subject matter of their daily discourse in preference to Shankara's *Bhāsya* on the Vedānta; they adopted the *Kirtana* of the Name of Krishna. Krishnadās remarks that Benares was turned into a second Navadvip.[1]

HIS MONASTIC SECLUSION AT PURI AND HIS MISSION

He returned to Puri by the forest route of Jhārikhand leaving behind an everlasting monument in the memory of the population. Tapan Misra, Raghunāth and others insisted on accompanying Him to Puri, but Sri Chaitanya withheld His consent saying He preferred to travel with as few companions as possible. He commanded Sanātana to go up to Vrindāvan and join his brothers. He returned to Puri with Balabhadra and His Brahmana servant, possibly in April 1516 A.D., where He lived the remaining eighteen years of His life with occasional short stays at Ālānāth, a small village about 16 miles south of Puri, which village served to recall to His mind the memory of Vrindāvan. His followers received Him back with the greatest possible fervour, He settled down in His old abode in the garden house of Kāsi Misra, Sārvabhauma entertaining Him to dinner on the day of His return. Thus had Sri Chaitanya passed the six years after His *Sannyās*.

The history of the next six years tells of His inexhaustible energy and the vivacity with which He continued his teaching. He took charge of the missionary work in Orissa aided by many followers appointed Nityānanda to be the head of the mission to further the cause of Bengal, and placed Rūpa and Sanātana at the head of a group of scholars at Vrindāvan deputing to them the task of writing the volumes on *Bhakti* which were to be the authoritative scriptures of the mission, besides taking

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[1] ibid 160

up restoration work and founding temples in order to restore Vrindāvan to its position as the greatest of the holy places of India. To promote their pursuit of faithful and unswerving, service to the faith derived from Him, Sri Chaitanya gave His two devotees further training at Puri in order to stimulate their powers, that they might be revealed not only their lives but also in their written work. In His 36th year being convinced that His followers were able to carry on His work independently; in the company of His selected few, He gradually withdrew from public activities and retired into monastic seclusion to devote His life to the confidential devotion to God, which He did for the last twelve years of his life.

In the meantime Rūpa having passed more than a month or so in circumambulatating the different woods of Vrindāvan after the manner of Sri Chaitanya started for Puri via Bengal with his brother Anupama who died at Gauda. Rūpa remained at Puri for ten months till *Dolyātrā* at the end of March 1517 A.D. when Sri Chaitanya sent him to Vrindāvan to take up his task in association with his brother Sanātana in earnest.

Sanātana reached Puri only ten days after the departure of Rūpa from that place. As usual, the Bengal devotees returned to their homes in November four months after the *Ratha Yātrā*, Sanātana remaining with Sri Chaitanya at Puri to undergo his course of training. He was further taught the doctrine in all its bearings and received advice as to the nature of the work to be undertaken at Vrindāvan, returning after the *Dolyātrā* festival in March 1518 A.D.

Sri Chaitanya continued to teach His doctrine at Puri where the Bengal devotees received instruction during their four months stay after the *Ratha-Yātrā* every year. On one occasion one of His followers named Bhagavān Āchārya invited Him to dinner sending Junior Haridās (not Haridās Thākur, the famous Mahammedan convert) to a very pious aged lady Mādhavi Dāsi to fetch some good rice for Sri Chaitanya, but the Master well aware of evil in the heart of Junior Haridās, and as a disciplinary measure and a

warning to hypocritical ascetics, forbade his entry to His residence and finally disowned him altogether for the offence of sensual association in mind with women. All devotees by Svarup Dāmodar waited on Sri Chaitanya to plead for pardon for the offender who was panitent for his evil-thought or doing, but the Master was obdurate saying that he had no self-control and therefore He could not pardon a *Vairāgi* (Junior Haridās) who conversed with a woman and felt sensual attraction towards women, and ended by threatening to leave Puri forever should he again be approached on the subject. After a year in despair of being pardoned, Junior Haridās drowned himself at the confluence of the two rivers at Allāhābād.[1] This news was conveyed by one of Sri Chaitanya's followers of Allāhābād to Srivās of Bengal; when the Master was told, He remarked, "It was the only proper expiation for a pseudo *Vairāgi* who has carnal association with female.[2]

In June or July about 1517 A.D., Raghunāthdās, the same as the prince of ascetics Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi, arrived at Puri to dedicate his life to the service of Sri Chaitanya, Who committed him to the personal charge and care of Svarup Dāmodar. In recognition of his spiritual advancement, Sri Chaitanya handed to him, for the purpose of daily worship, the holy Govardhanashila and the garland of Gunja plant.

Vallabha Bhatta of Ādāil (near Allāhābād) came to Puri possibly in 1519 A.D. He had a great respect for Sri Chaitanya Whom he called God,[3] and was very vain of his learning in the Bhāgavata and *Bhakti* literature. In order to convince him of the unrivalled scholarship of His followers, Sri Chaitanya told him of the erudition and spiritual advancement of Advaita, Svarup Dāmodar, Haridās Thākur, Nityānanda, Gadādhar and others; Sri Chaitanya agreed to Vallabha Bhatta's earnest desire that he should meet these outstanding teachers who where all at Puri to celebrate the *Ratha Yātrā* festival. Vallabha Bhatta visited Sri Chaitanya everyday and launched forth

[1] C.C.Antya II.120-126.161 [2] ibid.165 [3] C.C. Antya VII.8

discussions with Advaita Āchārya who pointed out the errors and weaknesses of his expositions. He wished to show his commentary *Suvodhini* on the Bhāgavata to the Master who refused to look at it because of Vallabha's vanity. His daily defeat by Advaita, urged him to show Advaita and others his refutation of the commentary of Sridhara Svāmi he informed Sri Chaitanya with pride that he had established his own separate views by rejecting the commentary of Sridhara Svāmi; this insult to the great Āchārya Sridhara Svāmi displeased Sri Chaitanya who remarked that a woman who did not acknowledge her husband (punning of the word Svāmi) was thereby proved to be a harlot, and declared that Sridhara is the universal teacher of *Bhakti* and those commentaries which admit his authority, are to be accepted; a retort that brought conviction to Vallabha Bhatta who was initiated into the devotion of Young Krishna by Gadādhar Pandit at the instance of Sri Chaitanya. Vallabha Bhatta was the worshipper of boy Krishna (Bala Copāl) in the spirit of *Vātsalya Rasa* (Parental relationship to God).[1]

Gopināth Pattanayaka, son of Bhavānanda Rāy, and brother of Rāmānand Rāy and Vaninātth, was the governor of Myaljatha under king Pratāprudra. He was ordered to be executed by being thrown from the cang (criminals were thrown down from a raised platform upon unsheathed swords fixed on the ground) by the prince, the eldest son of the king as he failed to pay the revenue amounting to 200,000 Cowri to the royal treasury, and also on account of his arrogance against the prince. Other members of the family were also put into chains. This family of Bhavānanda was very devoted to Sri Chaitanya. All the devotees headed by Svarup Dāmodar requested Sri Chaitanya to intervene in order to prevent the punishment of Gopināth. There was nothing in the world required to alter the order of the prince except a little gesture on the part of Sri Chaitanya for whose pleasure the king was prepared to give up the royal throne itself. Sri Chaitanya told them that as a *Sannyāsi* He could beg a few Cowris from the king but

[1] C.C.Antya.VII 167, 144

how could He possibly ask to remit so vast an amount of money? Sri Chaitanya refused to meddle with the matter expressing His resolve to eschew all worldly talk and the society of worldly people. Two other parties approached Sri Chaitanya with the same request. The Master asked them to go to the temple of Jagannāth and say their prayer to Him for His deliverance. Minister Hari Chandan conveyed the news to the king that Sri Chaitanya had sent the people to pray to the Jagannāth Image for the deliverance of Gopināth. At this the king stopped the execution under the impression that it might cause displeasure to Sri Chaitanya, His God. When the king met his Guru Kāsi Misra, the latter informed him of the distress of Sri Chaitanya owing to the harsh treatment of the family of Bhavānanda and that He might even leave Puri for Alalnath. The king then said, "I shall remit the whole amount of his debt if the Lord will only live in Puri. Millions of philosopher's stones (*Chintāmani*) are not equal in value to a single glimpse of the Lord. Two lacs of *Kahanas* of Cowris are a negligible amount. I must sacrifice my life and kingdom to His service.[1] The king remitted his revenue and reinstalled Gopināth in his governorship in Myaljatha administration doubling his pay. Sri Chaitanya disapproved of the undue kindness of the king towards Gopināth for His sake, and taught the latter the principle of moral obligation. Dr. D. C. Sen is wrong in saying that Vaninātha was the father of Rāmānand Rāy and his four brothers."[2] Vaninātha was one of the five brothers and their father Bhavānanda appointed him to the personal service of Sri Chaitanya after His return from the south.[3]

During one of the four-month's stay of His Bengal followers at Puri, Sri Chaitanya as usual had been performing the *Kirtana* in the company of His Bengal devotees. As some of the Odiya devotees had composed pleasant songs, which were much appreciated by the Master, He composed dances to express the feeling of the songs. One day in the course of these *Kirtana* performances in the temple, He felt a desire to show His *Parimunda*

[1] C.C.Antya IX.94-96 [2] C.&A. p.246. [3] C.C.Madhya X.56

dance, and so He asked His favourite singer Svarup Dāmodar to sing, with suitable music, the famous Odiya song which begins *"Jagannāth Parimunda Jau"* the theme of the famous *Parimunda* dance. Great physical strength is required to contract the whole body, which is followed by the waving movement of the body caused by intense joy. Blood and sweat exuded from the pores of His hair, His teeth clashed violently. As a result of overpowering emotion He muttered *"Ja ja ga ga ma ma ha ha na na"* inarticularly. This lasted several hours and only ended when it had worked up to a climax of intense physical vigour.[1]

In a few years Haridās Thākur passed away from the world in the act of beholding Sri Chaitanya and by reciting the name of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya taking up the body in His arms chanted the *Kirtana* and danced in the company of His devotees. He Himself buried the dead body on the seashore and begged alms and celebrated the festivities in honour of Haridās.

In the meantime Raghunāth Bhatta came to Sri Chaitanya and was sent to Vrindāvan after his training in due course. Every year Sri Chaitanya used to send Jagadānanda Pandit to Navadvip to look after His mother Sachidevi. One year, having procured with great care a pitcherful of sweet-scented *Chandanadi* oil from the house of Sivānanda Sen, he presented the same for the toilet of Sri Chaitanya Who refused it remarking that if He used it, people would call him a *Dvari Sannyāsi* (*Sannyāsi* in association with a woman.) He said that the oil should be used for lighting the lamp in the Jagannāth temple and that it was not proper for a *Sannyāsi* to anoint himself.[2]

Seeing that Sri Chaitanya was experiencing great discomfort in having to lie up on stripped pieces of the bark of banana-plants, when He was reduced to a bare skeleton as a result of His asceticism and frequent trances, Jagadānanda made a quilt and a pillow of soft cotton for

[1] C.C.Antya X.68-76 [2] C.C.Antya XII.112-117

Sri Chaitanya's use but the latter refused to accept them and thereby compromise His asceticism. Svarup Dāmodar then hit upon a plan to soften a little the hard bed of Sri Chaitanya. Having made strips of the dry banana leaves, he put them between two pieces of Sri Chaitanya's wearing cloth (*Vahirvāsa*) and offered it to Him which He accepted with great reluctance and hesitation at the request of His ardent devotees.[1]

HIS ADHIRUDHA MAHĀBHĀVA

Towards the end of His life, after His 46th year His love-in-separation from God Krishna reached such a pitch of intensity that He gradually lost all touch with public life, spending His days in a state of intense devotion to His Deity and in beatific vision corresponding to the three stages – *Antardasha, Arddha-Vahya Dasha* and *Vahyadasha*. It is enough to mention here that His love of God gradually concentrated, developed into the highest stage of *Adhirudha Mahābhāva* which is either Madana or Mohana, the latter aspect expressing itself in and through *Udghurna* or *Divyonmada* and tenfold *Chitrajalpa* psychological manifestations of love that have been described to some extent in the Bhramara Gitā[2] Krishnadās Kavirāj remarks, before he describes this highest stage of Sri Chaitanya's ecstatic love of God, that history before Sri Chaitanya does not give us an instance of any single person having ever had the same experience, or that any book had ever given a description of its workings.[3] Krishnadās Kavirāj appeals in the name of sincerity and truth to his readers to believe that such events actually happened in the latter part of Sri Chaitanya's life; his Guru Raghunāth Gosvāmi who was in constant attendance upon Sri Chaitanya (in obedience to Svarup Dāmodar) for the last 16 years of his life, made notes of all that happened in his diaries. Svarup's diaries of the same events were entrusted to Raghunāthdās who related the facts to Krishnadās, placing all diaries and memoirs at his disposal for

[1] C.C.Antya XIII.6-19 [2] Bhâgavata X.47 [3] C.C.Antya XIX. 103-108
[4] C.C.Antya XIV.7-11

incorporation in his Chaitanya Charitamrita.[4]

The world as such lost all its bearings for Sri Chaitanya who remained absorbed in intense thought in the spirit of Rādhā that Krishna had left Him to mourn His absence at Vrindāvan to go to Kurukshetra and Mathurā; He repeated Rādhā's soliloquy, wept like a child, saying "O, Krishna, where art Thou? Why hast Thou left Me? How can I live without Thee? I had My Lord again I lost Him. Who has snatched away My Krishna?" etc. The word "Krishna" conveyed a special meaning to Him; it caused Him to see Krishna as if with His own eyes, to hear the song of Krishna with His ears, to smell the scent of Krishna's body with His nose, to taste the liquid mellowness of Krishna with His tongue and to feel Krishna by touch at one and the same time. He could not fail to lose His mental balance and fell into trance upon trance. So acute was His feeling for Krishna that nothing could bring consolation to Him in the supreme intensity of his love-in-separation from God. He was restless and full of impatience. It was only Svarup Dāmodar and Rāy Rāmānand who brought Him some alleviation by singing and reciting verses from the Bhāgavata, Gitagovinda, Krishna Karnāmrita, songs of Vidyāpati, Chandidās and Rāmānand himself. At nights His emotion was intensified, and Rāy and Svarup would sit up till mid-night singing songs appropriate to His feelings. One day hearing the sweet melody of the song of Gitagovinda sung by the dancing girl in the temple, in the *Gurjara Rāgini* mode, Sri Chaitanya in a state of semi-consciousness, under the impulse of love, blindly rushed in the direction from which the enchanting melody was coming, through wild growth of prickly plants; fortunately Govinda caught Him just as He was approaching the girl and taking Him in his arms said "It is the song of a woman". At the word "woman" He realised the risk He had run and thanking Govinda, said that He would rather die than have touched the woman.[1]

Rāy Rāmānand always returned to his own house at mid-night after Sri Chaitanya had retired to bed, Svarup

[1] C.C.Antya XIII.85

and Govinda sleeping outside the door of the bed-room where the Master spent the night chanting the name of Krishna behind closed doors; Sri Chaitanya was so restless, so impatient for a glimpse of Krishna that Svarup and Govinda invariably kept watch that He might cause His own death. But on one occasion Svarup and Govinda saw that, although three doors remained bolted, Sri Chaitanya was not in His room, and were seized with panic; they and other devotees made a search and found Him lying unconscious to the north of the Liongate of the temple of Jagannāth. Their pleasure at finding Him was quickly turned to grief when they saw His condition; His hody was swollen on account of the relaxation of His joints, His bones were dislocated and only kept by a layer of skin. His breathing was faint and He lay senseless with eyes upturned and foam coming out of His mouth. All except Svarup took Him for dead he had cared for Him through many death-like trances when He had regained consciousness after the chanting of the name of Krishna into His ears. Although this attack was something quite new, Svarup applied the same remedy with satisfactory results. After chanting the name of Krishna for some time, He regained consciousness, the dislocated bones rejoined and His body reassumed its normal form. His first question was to ask what they were doing with Him, and in reply Svarup asked why He was there in such a state, He said, My Krishna disappears giving Me a glimpse as brief as lightning"[1] Krishnadās remarks on this incident that it was wonderful, so novel, not to be found in any records, unknown to anyone, and therefore not likely to be believed by ordinary folk, but "I write it from what I have heard from Raghunāthdās, believing it to be true.[2] Raghunāthdās also describes this incident in his 'Chaitanya Stavakalpavriksha'.[3]

On another occasion while He was running towards the Chataka Parvata or sand-hills on the seashore, believing it to be Govardhana and reciting the Bhāgavata text.[4] His attendant followers headed by Svarup rushed forward lest He should meet with any accident. Sri Chaitanya's speed

[1] C.C.AntyaXIV.64-78 [2] C.C.Antya XIV.82-83 [3] Verse No.4 [4] X.21.19

came to a sudden stand still and He fell on the ground senseless, turning as white as the conch, trembling like the sparkling waves. Blood and sweat ran over his body through the pores of His skin, tears streaming down His cheeks. All the eight *Sattvika-Bhāvas* (perturbations) manifested themselves in His persons at the same time: this is called the *Antardasha* in which state, though He was in the world He was unconsicious of it. Svarup began to chant the name of Krishna, which ultimately brought Him back to consciousness. While still in a semi consicious state, He muttered that He had joined the sporting party of Krishna on the Govardhana, and so on, and piteously complained to Svarup that they had snatched Him from the party and thus caused Him to suffer the heart piercing pang of separation from His beloved Krishna, and so weeping. Svarup and the others took Him to the residence.[1]

Thus He passed His time partly in complete unconsciousness, in semiconsciousness or in a normal state. Under the impulse of great love, Sri Chaitanya gave vent to piteous lamentations, clasping the necks of Svarup Dāmodar and Rāy Rāmānand in the mood of Rādhā, in separation from Krishna, and entering the flower-gardens which He believed to be Vrindāvan, would make inquires about Krishna from trees, creepers, shrubs, deers and peacocks even as the milkmaids of Vraja searched for Krishna when He left their company in the Rāsa dance, in quest of His dearest mistress (Rādhā).[2]

During the stay of the Bengal devotees, Sri Chaitanya was apparently quite but when they left at the autumn, His intensity of feeling reasserted itself and a similar occurrence to that already described, took place, for while suffereing from delirium, due to intense love, Sri Chaitanya left His sleeping chambers, though the doors were bolted. Govinda on discovering His absense instantly awakened Svarup and they all started to search. After some time they found Him in the strange form of a tortoise, among the cows at the Liongate of the temple. He had contracted His

[1] C.C. Antya XIV.87-112 [2] Bhâgavata.X.30.7.12

hands and feet into His belly and lay senseless on the ground; a round lump of flesh like great pumpkin. They made every effort to bring Him back to consciousness, but in vain, so they conveyed Him to His residence and began chanting the name of Krishna in a loud voice until finally He regined consciousness; His hands and feet came out of His belly as He regained consciousness, and body reassumed its normal human form.[1] He again asked Svarup why they had forcibly taken Him away from the sports of Rādhā Krishna. Raghunāthdās describes this trance of Sri Chaitanya in his "Chaitanya-Stavakalpa Vriksha".[2]

His restlessness grew more and more acute, He refused sleep and had to be forced to take His meals and bath, how He kept life in His body during these few months immediately before His passing away from the world is a mystery. Once again He escaped from His personal attendants on a moonlight night and beholding the sea from the Aitota He jumped in fancying it to be the Yamunā in which Krishna used to sport with His maidens of Vraja. His followers unable to find Him anywhere began to weep, thinking that He had disappeared for good. Different parties went out in different directions, Svarup with others taking the eastward path along the seashore. A fisherman, believing he had caught a large fish in his net, dragged Him ashore in an unconscious state and was overcome by love as soon as he touched the Master and suspecting that he was possessed by a devil, he was going in search of an exorciser, when Svarup and the others appeared. In reply to anxious inquiries the fisherman said he knew Sri Chaitanya, but the ghost that he had caught had a fearful body of great length, and knowing that Sri Chaitanya assumed such awe-inspiring and unusual shapes, Svarup insisted on the fisherman showing them his so called ghost and found Sri Chaitanya lying senseless covered with sand. Svarup tended Him with care and after reciting the name of Krishna for a considerable time, He revived. Once again he narrowly escaped an accidental death. He told Svarup

[1] C.C.Antya XVII.15-21 [2] Verse No.5 [3] C.C.Antya XVIII.32-82

Dāmodar that He had gone to see the sports of Krishna in the waters of Kālindi.[3]

Every year Sri Chaitanya sent Jagadānanda, one of His most affectionate devotees with presents of *Prasād*, etc. to Navadvip to console His sorrowing mother. This year, as ususal Jagadānanda had gone to Navadvip, but returned to Puri having remained only one month at the house of mother Sachidevi whereas he usually stayed four months, from the end of the Autumn. Sri Advaita sent an enigmatic riddle in rhyme to Sri Chaitanya through Jagadānanda, which induced an infinitely intense emotional mood of love-in-separation for God Krishna in Sri Chaitanya. Svarup suspected that there might some hidden meaning in Advaita's enigmatic letter which caused this marked change, and insisted on being told its meaning: Sri Chaitanya however tried to hide it from Svarup who refused to be denied. He was told that Advaita was a great scholar in Āgama and rituals and that he may have meant by the riddle that "a worshipper invokes a God for worship after which he throws his image into the waters," an interpretation that caused dismay to the intelligent Svarup, who understood that Advaita invoked God and caused Him to appear in visible form and that now he announced that the purpose of His advent had been fulfilled, and that He should withdraw to His celestial abode of Goloka Vrindāvan. Its meaning is apparently that "All the people have become mad with love of God, and there is no place vacant to sell the rice of love, and that he (Advaita) takes no part in worldly affairs etc."[1]

Whether we accept any meaning or not, it is a fact that this letter of Advaita served to intensify His love-in-separation from God to an extraordinary degree, thereby hastening his passage from the world. Svarup and Govinda anxiously kept closer watch for the Master's intent devotion and His beautific visions grew ever in intensity. Day and night He wept and soliloquized in the manner of love-lorn Rādhā, reciting the verses from devotional literature. Rāmānand and Svarup were always in attendance to bring

[1] C.C.Antya XIX. 20-29

consolation by singing the songs appropriate to His varying moods of feeling. One night having calmed and transquillised Him, after laying Him on His bed in Gambhira (His bed chamber) Rāmānand Rāy went home while Svarup and Govinda lay down at its doors. Sri Chaitanya spent the night in reciting the name of Krishna and gradually His excitement rose to a pitch of frenzy and He tried to go out to run after His God, finding the doors bolted from the outside He rubbed His face against and rugged, unpolished stone walls brusing His face severely and causing profuse bleeding. In an unconscious state He moaned aloud attracting the attention of Svarup and Govinda, who immediately entered His room and were full of grief at the heart-rending spectacle.[1]

The following day His devotees headed by Svarup induced Him to allow Shankara Pandit another affectionate devotee of Sri Ghaitanya, to sleep in His room. Shankara sat up the whole night tending His feet, keeping a constant watch that He should neither go out nor rub His face against the walls. But Sri Ghaitanya could not bear that Shankara should suffer by sitting up in the winter-nights, and as soon as Shankara felt drowsy, Sri Chaitanya wrapped him up in His own *Kantha* (quilt).[2] For this service of tending the feet of Sri Ghaitanya, Shankara bore the title of "Prabhu-Pada-Padhana"

It is to be presumed that shortly after His passing Sri Chaitanya asked Rāy Rāmānand to remember for all time to come, the devotional principles which He embodied in His eight verses now known as Sikshastaka, these He gave to His followers for their sure guidance in their spiritual progress. These eight verses of His own composition embodying the whole truth of His spiritual outlook and service to the Deity form His first and last message to the world. He Himself enjoyed its simple but deep spiritual meaning before He left the world to be mourned and remembered with never-ceasing tears by the host of His

[1] C.C.Antya XIX 56-65 [2] C.C.Antya XIX.71-72

loving followers of every rank. He disappeared in Saka 1455 possibly the forty-eight years of life. It will not be out of place here to give the translation of the said eight shlokas, which every GaudiyaVaishnava daily recite with deep reverence.

SIKSHASTAKA (OCTET OF TEACHING:)

1. Polishing the mirror of the soul's own heart,
   Quenching the great forest-fire of the world,
   Freely bestowing like the moon the lily-white good,
   Life of his youthful bride, goddess of all learning,
   Augmentor of the swelling ocean of bliss,
   Imparting at every turn the perfect relish of nectar,
   Ensuring the cooling immersion of every limb of the soul,
   The associated chant of Sri Krishna reigns eternally in All His Glory.

2. Full many are the Names Thou dost manifest,
   Them Thou hast imbued with all Thy power,
   There is no fixed hour for Their recollections,
   Such is the greatness of Thy Mercy, Krishna Lord!
   But no less unhappy is my ill condition,
   For I am unable to love Thy names.

3. By humility lowlier far
   Than that of a tiny blade of grass,
   By forbearance more enduring
   Than that of the patient tree,
   By seeking no honour for ourselves,
   Ungrudgingly showing all the respect that is their due,
   It is our duty at all time

To chant the Name of Hari.

4. I covet no wealth, nor retinue,
Nor even the lovely maid poesy,
Lord of the universe, not for these
I address Thee in my prayers.
To Thyself, Supreme Master,
In my every successive life,
May Thou be pleased to grant me
The causeless devotion of Thy Love.

5. Son of Nanda, I, Thy servant,
Fallen into this terrible ocean of the world,
May Thou in mercy make of me
Even as a speck of dust clinging to Thy Lotus Feet.

6. Oh, when will my eyes o'erflow with tears,
My voice, husky with love, chokes all utterance on my lips
And all my limbs vibrate with tender joy
On taking Thy sacred Name!

7. One wink is as the passing of an Age,
The eye-lid blots out all, as does the gloomy term of pouring clouds,
And the entire world is but one dreary void,
To me, bereft of the sight of Govinda.

8. He may embrace or tread upon this insect clinging to His Feet,
Or give me mortal pain by banishing me from His sight,
Or in whatever other ways He may behave to gratify

Nor even the lovely maid possy,

Lord of the universe, not for these

I address Thee in my prayers.

To Thyself, Supreme Master,

In my every successive life,

May Thou be pleased to grant me

The causeless devotion of Thy love.

5. Son of Nanda, I, Thy servant,

Fallen into this terrible ocean of the world,

May Thou in pity make of me

Even as a speck of dust clinging to Thy lotus feet.

6. Oh, when will my eyes o'erflow with tears,

My voice, huskily with love, choke all utterance on my lips

And all my limbs vibrate with tender joy

On taking Thy sacred Name!

7. One wink is as the passing of an Age,

The eye-lid blots out all, as does the gloomy terrain of pouring clouds,

And the entire world is but one dreary void,

To me, bereft of the sight of Govinda.

8. He may embrace or tread upon this insect clinging to His feet,

Or give me mortal pain by banishing me from His sight,

Or in whatever other ways He may behave to gratify

CHAPTER EIGHT

AN ACCOUNT OF THE VERY IMPORTANT FOLLOWERS OF SRI CHAITANYA

Krishnadās Kavirāj closes his chapter treating the 'branches' of Sri Chaitanya with the remark "So innumerable are the devotees of Lord Sri Chaitanya at Whom I have simply hinted that they cannot be counted at all in full. From each branch have sprung millions of sub-branches with disciples and grand disciples who preached the doctrine and flooded the country with love of God. We have culled a few of the names of Sri Chaitanya's followers who cannot be counted even by thousand mouths"[1]. We have a mind to take a brief notice of a few very important followers of Sri Chaitanya who had employed their lives and resources in furthering the cause of His movement and without whom we cannot think of Sri Chaitanya and His mission. The life of Sri Nityānanda will be dealt with in a separate chapter, as his activities are too important to be classed with those of others.

SRI ADVAITA

Krishnadās Kavirāj has put the great multitudes of Sri Chaitanya's followers under five distinct categories of status, which may be divided into the divine and human. Sri Chaitanya Dev is regarded as Mahāprabhu or the Supreme Lord and consequently He occupied the highest position in the movement. Advaita and Nityānanda are considered the two lords who served at the Feet of the Lord of all Lords (Chaitanya). All the Vaishnava biographers invest him with divinity. It is quite apparent from the high-sounding appellation that he occupied a very high position in the movement.

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[1] C.C. Adi X. 158-163

Advaita came of a very respectable Brahmana family of Navagrama in Sylhet (Now Banglādesh). His parent's names were Kuvera Mishra and Navadevi.[1] His great grandfather Narasimha Narai was a great politician and minister of Raja Danujmardana Ganesha who overthrew the Mohammedan King Bayazid, better known as Samsuddin II in Saka 1329 (1409 A.D.) and revived the Hindu Kingdom in Gauda which lasted till about the year 1418 A.D. Advaita is said to have been born in 1434 A.D. Achyuta was the eldest son of Advaita but when Sri Chaitanya was guest at their house on His way from Rāmakeli, Achyuta was a nude-child of three in 1510 A.D. when Sri Chaitanya visited their house immediately after His *Sannyās*.[2] So it is doubtful that if his eldest son was born in 1505 A.D. he could have been born as early as 1434 A.D. His birthday is annually celebrated on the 7th day from the full moon in the month of Madha (February). He was very much older than Sri Chaitanya and lived to a very great age.

On the death of his father, according to the custom of the Hindus, Advaita had visited almost all the important holy places on pilgrimage. He had at last settled at Shāntipur an ideal country place, on the Ganges near Navadvip. It was not new to him. Three generations ago, his forefather Narasimha chose this village for his residence. East was considered to be 'unfavoured' as it was untrodden by the Pāndavas'; so religious minded people of East Bengal, in the middle ages, migrated to western Bengal and settled in the neighbourhood of the Ganges, preferably in Navadvip and Shāntipur Advaita started his academy or *Tol* at Navadvip where he taught different branches of Sanskrit literature. His principle was to establish the superiority of the principle of devotion to all other religious modes of worship prevalent in Bengal. He was remarkably able to achieve his aspiration in opposing the doctrine of unqualified monism, professed by the scholars of the day. Advaita had already secured a position in the society for unrivalled scholarship. He was a

[1] Premavilâsa XXIV [2] C. Bh. Antya I. 217

professor of repute and well up in all branches of the scriptures. He interpreted even the Māyāvāda books like the *Yogāvasista*, Rāmāyana in the light of faith and devotion. His simplicity, fervour of devotion, and strict moral life and mode of worship marked him out from among the general populace of the profligate university town. He was initiated by Mādhavendra Puri while the latter stayed at his house at Shāntipur for a few days on his way to Puri.

Advaita started a Vaishnava society with Srinivasa and others at Sri Māyāpur. Advaita used to teach them the Bhāgavata, Gitā and other *Bhakti* literature. In spite of his high academic reputation and position, he had to suffer humiliation together with his Vaishnava friends at the hands of the anti-vaishnavas. Advaita and his friends were not rich. They organised the *Kirtana* and made it a regular system of worship and prayer, utterly disregarding the fierce protest of society. *Kirtana* has been accepted as the best form of *Sādhana* in the Vaishnava society in preference to 64 others or nine kinds of *Bhakti*.

ADVAITA AND HARIDĀS

During the early period of the movement Haridās joined Advaita at Shāntipur in his mission. Haridās came of a Mohammedan family and was subsequently initiated into Vaishnavism. His entry into spiritual life as a member of the Vaishnava society irritated Hindus and Mohammedans alike. The Mohammedan ruler and his co-religionists could not bear to see a Mohammedan adopt the religion of the Hindus whom they detested as infidels. Hindus on the other hand, could not think that a non-Hindu by birth should become their religious leader. So Haridās's conversion and subsequent friendship with Advaita helped to bring down the whole burden of wrath of both Hindus, as well as of the Mohammedan administrator on Advaita and his movement.

Caste Hindus had missed the propriety and true spirit of theistic association. Puffed up with the narrow pride of caste, the degenerate Hindu society looked down on the

so-called untouchables with contempt and sectarian rancour. The Brahmins very jealously guarded as their exclusive birthright the monopoly of the priestly function of all Hindus. Proselytism was unknown to the Hindu society of that day. Vaishnavas accepted Haridās as their Guru. He was in the opinion of Vaishnava writers, an incarnation of Brahma, the first parent of the Brahmins. Advaita offered him the sacred dish on the annual *Shraddha* of his parent in preference to all other Brahmins of society at Shāntipur in the teeth of fierce opposition. This dish was due only to the Brahmins. He said that he did nothing uncanonical by offering it to Haridās and that as he was well-versed in Smriti and knew its purport, he did it on principle in vindication of the true spirit of the canon. In defiance of the traditional convention of Hindu society, Advaita boldly offered the dish to Haridās saying, "By your acceptance of this food, hundreds of Brahmins are truly fed". The offering of the *Shraddha* dish to Haridās in recognition of his superiority to hereditary Brahmins constituted and established, as the first instance of its kind for a long time, in the history of the Bengal Vaishnavas, the true *Shastric* principle and a precedent which has still to be followed in the society against some opposition. Advaita's firmness in adhering to the principle that Brahmana hood is established on the appearance of the spiritual disposition and is not necessarily descendible by seminal birth, but the possession of which is open and obligatory on all is a brilliantly shining beacon in the religious horizon of Bengal and a living source of inspiration to the theists of all denominations. He adhered to the practice that he believed to be true. To start a practice, which was sure to be regarded as a social innovation and the attempt to place a true devotee, to whatever caste he may have belonged by birth, above the so-called Brahmanas, in a place like Shāntipur, a stronghold of Brahmana-influence required a certain amount of sacrifice of social esteem. The clear mandate of his deep scriptural knowledge supported him against enormous odds. In Bengal particularly during this period, nobody could dream of

ignoring the restrictors of the rigid society, however unshastric they might be, lest the society might excommunicate the offender and prevent him from arranging the marriages of his children especially the daughters, at the proper age, the non-performance of which duty was and is still considered, particularly in the village life, to be the gravest slur on the good name of the family. Moreover the daily life of any Hindu was made impossible if he incurred the displeasure of his caste. The leaders of caste punish dissenters by preventing the barber, washerman, nurse, shopkeeper and so on from giving them any social services. The punishment, which the society inflicted on such offenders was more severe than the penal servitude of the criminal court. No social threats, on wrath of the fanatic ruler of the country, prevented Advaita from doing his duty. He was invincible on the strength of his conviction that God is sure to be pleased with one who seeks to serve Him. Two possibilities confronted Advaita. The society might or might not relax its rigidity in his favour. He cast his lot with the Vaishnavas professing the religion of service and leading the spiritual life. The society did not readily submit to what is supposed to be his innovation. His intention was to bring society back to the religion, the true principle that was suffering under anti-theistic conventions. Advaita's intention was to establish that a Vaishnava, if born in a low caste, should not suffer from caste prejudices.

Advaita selected Haridās as the best of all Brahmanas on the grounds of his very high spiritual life and enlightenment, as he believed that the so-called born Brahmanas could not possibly benefit his dead parents by their acceptance of the sacred dish. Advaita, being a teacher of Vaishnava literature and primarily of the Bhāgavata could not but honour him as a Brahmana notwithstanding his birth in a non-Hindu family.[1] The author of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata threatens that one who charges a Vaishnava with caste disqualifications, is sure to suffer hellfire at every birth .[2] Haridās's devotional merit raises

[1] Bh. VII. II. 35 [2] C.Bh. Madhya X. 102

him above *Karma* and *Varnashrama* consideration. The author of Haribhaktivilās[1] calls a Vaishnava ever free and not subjected in any way to birth disqualifications and Karma. The Bhāgavata says[2] I think, a *Swapacha* (born in the lowest caste) who applies his mind, speech and efforts, wealth and heart to Krishna, is higher than a Brahmana endowed with 12 merits if the latter happen to be averse to Krishna. Brahmanahood is included in the state of Vaishnava but not vice versa. The perfection of the former lies in being absolutely devoted to Vishnu, Krishna, in other words Vaishnavism. The *said Purāna further says*[3] that a Vaishnava on whose lips the name of God delights to dance constantly, although he happens to be born of *Swapacha* parents is the best of all, because it proves that he has performed all sacrifices and austerities connected with a Brahmana life, in his previous births. All worship and gifts should be offered to such a Vaishnava; Advaita brought into practice the Vaishnava principle that was shut up in the books, in the history of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. It is enough to note here that this precedent of Advaita has become canonical injunction which later Vaishnavas faithfully followed and which is being still observed amongst Vaishnavas at the present day. In Vaishnavism, every one, whether a high caste Brahmana or an untouchable, or even a non-Hindu can equally claim devotion to Vishnu Krishna, which gives no preference to caste privileges. Eligibility of all individuals, irrespective of caste and race is proclaimed and acted upon in the Gaudiya Vaishnava society. It is not that Advaita was in favour of any anti-caste movement, for doing away with caste distinctions, or for bringing about an intercaste social reunion. What he tried was to relieve all individuals possessing the requisite devotional temperament of a Vaishnava, of all caste disqualifications. Vaishnavas headed by Advaita, gave a worthy man full spiritual recognition. They honoured not the low caste but the particular star illuminating it by his birth. They could not bear to see him suffer any spiritual neglect at the hands of the caste Hindus.

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[1] H.B.V. X. 113 [2] Bh.VII. 9. 10. [3] Bh. III. 33. 7

They worshipped Vaishnavahood in the person possessing the same. They neither allowed the caste people of a Vaishnava to claim him as their own, nor did they extol his caste. Other members of the same caste could claim no honour from the Vaishnavas on account of one born in their caste being thus honoured by the Vaishnavas. It was only Haridās and not all Mohammedans, who received the highest adoration from the multitudes of even caste Hindus who accepted Vaishnavism. Sri Chaitanya Himself buried his dead body and all Vaishnavas mostly Brahmanas by birth, drank the water in which he had washed his feet, with a conscious feeling of pride. Sri Chaitanya used to tell Haridās that He touched him to purify Himself. The author of Haribhaktivilās[1] and that of Bhakti Sandarbha (II) quoting a sloka from the Garuda Purāna, praises this attitude of Advaita and Sri Chaitanya towards Haridās, saying that a single Vaishnava is superior to a crore of Brahmanas versed in the Vedas. The author of Chaitanya Charitāmrita makes it further clear demonstrating that "whether a Brahmana, or a *Sannyāsi*, or a *Sudra*, who ever he may be, if he be well versed in the divinity of Krishna, is a Guru.[2] Those who identify a Vaishnava with his caste will rot in Hell.[3] On this principle, Sri Chaitanya dined at the hands and house of a *Senodia Brahmana* at Mathurā, who regarded from the caste point of view, was an untouchable. Kalidās, a caste Hindu ate the remains of food left on the plate of one Jharu Thākur, a renowned Vaishnava who happened to be born in the low Bhuimali caste, Sri Chaitanya eulogised Kalidās for his moral strength and humility worthy of a true Vaishnava.

Another great Vaishnava, Thākur Narottama, who came of a *Kāyastha* family, had hosts of Brahmana disciples. Shyamananda and Rasikānanda, who were born in a *Goala* and *Karana* caste, were the reputed Gurus of many high class Brahmanas and state Purushottama Thākur of Bodhkana, a *Vaidya* by caste, had innumerable Brahmana disciples, the most important of whom were Mādhvāchārya, Yādavāchārya, Daivakinandana and so on. His son's Kānu Thākur's famous disciple was Sri Rāma

[1] X.117 [2] C.C. M. VIII. 127 [3] ibid. X.100

belonging to the *Rādhiya* branch of the Bengal Brāhmanas. It is Advaita who first established this principle that a Vaishnava should not suffer from any caste prejudices if he happens to be born in the untouchable castes.

On His return from Gaya, where Sri Chaitanya was initiated by Advaita's fellow-disciple Isvara Puri, He actively directed his whole attention to the new movement, the feeble existence of which Advaita was dragging with difficulty in impatient expectation of an enthusiastic leader. Sri Chaitanya's talents and popularity drew the attention of Sri Advaita, who wished that He might be brought by Godhead into their fold. On finding that the change had come upon Him, Advaita and the other devotees were beside themselves with joy and felt relieved of their great uneasiness. Advaita hailed Sri Chaitanya as their leader.

Advaita is said to have been impressed with Sri Chaitanya Dev's Divinity on many occasions. It is Advaita who worshipped Sri Chaitanya Dev as God for the first time.[1] Advaita is greatly responsible for establishing Sri Chaitanya as God. He worshipped Him as his God with all the members of his family all through his life. Advaita was an inseparable counterpart of Sri Chaitanya's career in Navadvip. When the Kazi prohibited Sri Chaitanya's Kirtana under pain of severe punishment and forfeiture of property and caste, we find Advaita beside Sri Chaitanya in disobeying the order. Sri Chaitanya led a huge procession of Kirtan through the town to the Kazi's house. Advaita's fearless activity and enthusiastic dance in the middle group of the procession inspired the timid people with the sense of religious freedom. To arouse the religious sentiments of the People, Sri Chaitanya staged a religious drama at the house of Chandrasekhar, Advaita played the role of Madhavidusaka. We cannot think of Sri Chaitanya without Advaita.[2]

Advaita was a man of boundless kindness particularly to those whom the caste Hindus treated with hatred and malice. His intimacy and respect for the Mohammedan convert Haridās is evidence of his moral courage derived

[1] C.Bh. Madhya II.130-136; [2] C.Bh.Madhya VI. 87-93 etc.

from his devotional principle. His manifold qualities of heart and brain, combined with the deep sympathy for the so-called untouchables made him a singularly gracious figure in Vaishnava society. One day when Sri Chaitanya is said to have assumed the Divinity of God at the house of Srivasa, asked the devotees to beg boons from Him as they pleased, Advaita's prayer to Sri Chaitanya showed boundless kindness for the lower classes of the society as we find in the following utterances of his[1] "My Lord grant me the boon; May you vouchsafe Your mercy to the illiterate, women and outcastes."

Personal love and affection of Advaita for Sri Chaitanya was more than that for his own life and children. He wept like an affectionate father when he was told that Sri Chaitanya was to take *Sannyās*, cut off His beautiful curling hair, and live a strict life of an ascetic. Advaita and his wife Sita Devi went to Puri not on pilgrimage like others, but to see and serve the Lord of their devotion. Every year Advaita used to go to Puri and remained four months with Sri Chaitanya. When Sri Chaitanya visited his residence at Shāntipur, once immediately after His *Sannyās* and another time on His return from Rāmakeli to Puri and vice versa, Advaita held festivities in His honour.

Sri Chaitanya while at Puri, charged Nityānanda and Advaita with the task of preaching the doctrine in Bengal on a wide scale. Sri Chaitanya's special command to Advaita was; "to bestow Krishna *Bhakti* on all, from the *Chandālas*"[2] He carried out this particular mission with remarkable ability to the last day of his life. Sri Advaita had hosts of disciples to assist him. Advaita could not resist the shock at the passing away of Sri Chaitanya, and died shortly after.[3] Advaita was survived by his two wives and six sons. We shall take brief notice of them.

ADVAITA'S WIFE SITĀ DEVI

Two sisters Sitā and Sri were married to Advaita. Kavikarnapura described Sitā as the incarnation of

[1] C.Bh. Madhya X. 169 [2] C.C. Madhya X.V 42 [3] Karnananda VI.

Yogamāyā[1]. We always find her beside Advaita in the service of Sri Chaitanya. Advaita's family had been in close intimacy with that of Sri Chaitanya from long before His birth. Sitā Devi came from Shāntipur to Navadvip to congratulate Sachi Devi on having a male child, their saviour and gave her many rich presents. She used to come from Shāntipur with a variety of offerings and food to be given to Sri Chaitnaya. She was very fond of Him and he also revered her as a mother. Sri Chaitnya visited Shāntipur three times after His *Sannyās*. Sitā Devi prepared innumerable varieties of food to offer to the Lord on such occasions. Sometimes she used to accompany her husband to Puri with ample foodstuff and regaled Sri Chaitanya to her heart's content. She regarded herself as the maid of their God Sri Chaitanya and supported Achyuta and his party from whom her three younger sons differed as to the question of the personality of Sri Chaitanya[2].

She possessed many good qualities. Here is one of the most sacred names in the history of the movement. She played the role that offers the ideal to be followed by every person of the Vaishnava society. She identified herself with the Chaitanya movement with her ever-fresh unobstrutive enthusiasm. She advised Srinivasa to go to Vrindāvana to take his religious training. She treated all Vaishnavas with reverence.

ACHYUTA

Achyutānanda was the eldest son of Sri Advaita. Achyuta was a born ascetic and lived celibate life all through. He lived near Sri Chaitanya at Puri under the preceptorship of Cadādhara Pandit.[3] Kavikarnapura in his Gaura Ganaddesadipika says the following of him "It is heard that his (Advaita's) son Achyutānanda was a great favourite of Sri Chaitanya and beloved disciple of Gadādhara Pandit Gosvāmi. Yadunandandās in his Sakhanirtiayamrta echoes the same in the following line: "Advaita's son named Achyutānand the most beloved of Gadādhara, is happy in

[1] 4. G.G.86 [2] *Premavilâsa* IV. P.26 [3] C.C. Adi X. 150

the nectar of the great sentiment.[1] All the devotees of the sect loved Achyuta all the more because of Sri Chaitanya's deep affection for him.

Achyuta was one of the most important leaders in the period when Srinivasa Āchārya and Narottam Thākur were working. He held a very respected position in the Vaishnava community both on account of being the eldest son of Advaita and also having received special favour from Sri Chaitanya. He passed his latter life at Shāntipur furthering the cause of the movement. He had a host of disciples to help him in his work.

KRISHNA MISHRA

Advaita's' second son was Krishna Mishra. He was also a great devotee of Sri Chaitanya and obedient to Achyuta. He had two sons, Raghunath and Govinda. The descendants of the latter are still living at Shāntipur, Gorakona, Mirzapur and Kumarkhali. Govinda was father of three sons: Chand, Kandarpa and Gopinath. Kandarpa's descendants settled at Jikabadi in Maldah. Of three sons of Gopināth, the descendants of the eldest, Sri Vallabha still live at Mahisdara, Damukdiya and Chandipur etc. The descendants of the next two sons Pranavallabha and Keshava live in Uthali. Vira Chandra, seventh in degree from Pranvallabha, accepted orders, installed the Image of Sri Chaitanya at Katwa and reintroduced the circumambulation ceremony of Navadvipa.

GOPĀL

Sri Advaita's third son, Gopāl was also a great devotee of Sri Chaitanya. When he was dancing and singing with Sri Chaitanya in the Gundicha temple in 1511 A.D. he fell senseless and his breathing seemed to have stopped. Advaita took on his lap and tried to revive him by invoking Sri Nrisimha whom the Vaishnavas pray to when they are in danger. But it was of no avail. At last Sri Chaitanya touched the heart of Gopāl with His Hand and asked him

[1] A.B.p.234

to get up. He is said to have awakened as if from a deep sleep[1].

SCHISM AMONG ADVAITA'S SONS

It seems clear from the writings of both Krishnadās Kavirāj[2] and Vrindāvanadāsa[3] that there arose a schism among the disciples and sub-disciples of Advaita after his death, who divided themselves into hostile groups in regard to the question of Advaita's personality. One group headed by his first three sons Achyuta, Krishna and Gopāl and the majority of his disciples, regarded Sri Chaitanya as the supreme Lord and Advaita as His favourite devotee. Achyuta and his followers were in line with the Vaishnava biographers of Sri Chaitanya and the movement. Achyuta was a strict adherent of the principle that his father had laid down and practised in his life. The other group believed Advaita to be the supreme Divinity and Sri Chaitanya as the devotee. They also introduced some pantheistic ideas into their creed. Advaita's three younger sons: Balarāma, Svarūpa and Jagadisa started this schismatic movement. They differed from their father's doctrine of unalloyed devotion, and spread their new faith-particularly in Assam in which province their descendants and doctrine of dissent are still extant. Krishnadās Kavirāj and Vrindāvanadās treated the schismatic movement of the, younger sons of Advaita with derision and used upon it many abusive terms such as mean, vain, a mere husk of rice, and so on. Thākur Vrindāvanadās compared the dissenters to Rāvana, and cursed them. "As Rāvana's devotion to Siva as the supreme lord, and hostility to Siva's God Raghunath brought about his own destruction, so their regard for Advaita as superior to Chaitanya would lead them to utter ruin". He accepted the doctrine of Advaita himself as the weapon to strike down the dissenters.

Advaita's three younger sons were anti-Vaishnava. They and their descendants tried their best to undo what Advaita established as the truth. There are two schools of *Smriti* in

[1] C.C. Madhya X. 143.149 [2] C.C. Adi XII [3] C. Bh. Madhya X. 146-164

Bengal. Vaishnavas follow the *Smriti* of Sanātana Gosvāmi compiled in his Haribhaktivilās and Gopāl Bhatta's Satkriyasara Dipika and Dhyanachandra's Samskara Chandrika, Paddhati, in observing their socio-religious rites, ceremonies, festivals and so on. The non-Vaishnava Hindus of Bengal are guided by Raghunandana Bhattacharya's Astavimsatitattva which were written about forty years after Haribhaktivilās because we know that Haribhaktivilās is referred to in Rūpa's Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu which is dated as having been completed 1541(A.D.) where, Raghunandana's *Matha Pratistha Tattva* and *Shrāddha Tattva* which have been included in the Astavimsatitattva, are dated in Saka 1498 (1576 A.D.) and 1497 (1575 A.D.) respectively.[1] These two schools are diametrically opposed to each other on principle. Haribhaktivilās developed and codified the principle established and worked by Advaita. Rādhāraman, the grandson of Advaita's fourth son Balarama, had been, guilty of sacrilege by burning Advaita's effigy in the form of a tiny figure made of the Kusa-grass and offering, him the *Preta-Shrāddha* in conformity with the anti-Vaishnava principle enjoined in Raghunandan's *Smriti*. The Smarta Hindus, belonging to the Raghunandana school, believe that the dead live the life of evil spirits in the infernal region after death and the surviving relatives preferably the agnates, are required to perform the sixteen *Shārddha* ceremonies, ending with *Sapindakarana* for deliverance of the deceased from the horrible dungeon of evil, spirits.

Vaishnavas condemn the performance of such *Shraddha* ceremony. Gaudiya Vaishnava society prohibits the Vaishnavas from performing any such funeral or *Shraddha* ceremonies. Vaishnavas are not under any obligation to do any act that is not wholly for the sake of Vishnu-Krishna. They are not to perform any acts in order to free themselves from the six fold debts to the gods, sages, ancestors, elements, friends and to men in general which, every body incurs by his birth in the world. The satisfaction of debts that a man owes to the world by his birth is effected

[1] Mitras notices of Sanskrit manuscripts. Vol.III. PP. 50.52

by the service of God for which alone Vaishnavas strive. They never believe that their dead parents require any other help from their descendants for their deliverance (?). The descendants, if they happen to be irreligious could hardly be expected to help deceased by performing the *Shrāddha* ceremony to the spirits of the departed so they are opposed to the performance of the funeral rites (*Shrāddha*) which is imperative on the non-Vaishnava Smarta community.

Achyuta, the eldest son of Advaita, did not perform the *Shrāddha* ceremony of his illustrious father. It would have been a great offence on his part against his father had he performed it towards Advaita by supposing him to be rotting in the infernal dungeon waiting to be delivered by his son (?) But Rādhāramana, a grandson of Advaita's heretic son Balarāma, performed the *Preta Shrāddha* ceremony by making a *Kusha* figure of Advaita to wound the Vaishnava feeling and set a shameful example of Smarta supremacy in a Vaishnava family in regard to Advaita himself, the great champion of Vaishnava principle. His heretical descendants considered him god and at the same time made an attempt, two generations after his death, at delivering him from the *Preta* world, as if god were rotting in hell and awaiting deliverance at the hands of Rādhāramana. It was the most shameful inconsistency that could have been perpetrated.

If any Vaishnava likes to perform the *Shrāddha* ceremony to his deceased parents in the case where their parents were non-Vaishnavas before death, he can do it, for the benefit of the dead by offering his soul the *Prasad* or food that had been offered to God. We find the rule in the following sloka of Hari Bhakti Vilasa (*Shraddha Tattva*). "On the day when the ceremony is due, one should offer Vishnu food and perform the *Shraddha* with the offered food which is called '*Prasad*'. The *Prasad* is holy as Vishnu.[1] It has the efficacy of spiritualizing a person who honours it. So the Prasad can be offered to the souls of the dead whether Vaishnava or non- Vaishnava. In the first case it pleases them and in the second it spiritually enlightens them.

[1] H.B.V. IX.134

Vrindāvanadās Thākur shows what the true spirit of Advaita's faithful followers should be in the following passage, "He who sings the glory of Advaita regarding him as foremost of all Vaishnavas, is a real Vaishnava, attains Krishna at every birth. He is the most beloved of Advaita. Those who are ignorant of this significance are all abominable creatures. The Lord of all lords is Sri Gaura Sundara; this idea pleases Advaita beyond measure. These are sayings of Advaitas lips; never disbelieve them.[1] Krishnadās Kavirāj has given some names of Advaita's disciples together with their sentiments for Sri Chaitanya. The meaning of the opening *Sloka* is as follows[1] "There are two kinds of Advaitas disciples- faithful (*sara*) and vain (*asara*). I bow to the former devotees who deem Sri Chaitanya their very life, ignoring the latter who are as the dregs."

Sri Advaita had hosts of disciples to assist him in preaching the doctrine. It will not be out of place simply to mention a very few important disciples of Advaita by name. They are 1) Kamalākanta Biswās, 2) Yadunnadana Āchārya, 3) Vishnudāsa Bhattāchārya, 4) Anantāchārya, 5) Chaitanyadāsa (Sivananda's eldest son), 6) Sriman Pandit, 7) Srināth Pandit, 8) Chakrapani, 9) Nandini, 10) Kānudeva, 11) Durlabha Biswās, 12) Banamālidāsa, 13) Jagannāthdāsa, 14) Vijayadāsa, 15) Bhavanāth Kara, 16) Hridayananda Sen, 17) Bholanāthdāsa, 18) Yadavdāsa, 19) Janārdana, 20) Anantadāsa, 21) Kānu Pandit, 22) Dāsa Nārāyana, 23) Haridās Brahmachari, 24) Banamāli Kavichandra and many others.

SRIVĀS

Srivās and his three younger brothers - Rāmāi, Srinidhi and Sripati, left their village in the Sylhet district and settled down at Navadvip with a view to leading their religious life on the bank of the Ganges. The four brothers lived together throughout their lives, the three younger ones remaining strictly faithful and obedient to their eldest

[1] C.Bh.Madhya X. 162-165

brother Srivās both in religious belief and family affairs. Their house at Sri Māyāpur was situated one hundred "*Dhanus*" or two hundred yards to the north of Sri Chaitanya's in the locality still called *Khol Bhāngar Dānga* or the tract where *Khola* was broken. The place bears an allusion to an historical incident that the persecuting Kazi outrageously dispersed the *Kirtan* party by breaking the musical instrument *Khola* and tried to stop the progress of the movement under pain of severe punishment of forfeiting the property and de-filing the caste of the Chanters. Sri Chaitanya Math has built a temple on the site of Srivās's house, in which the Images of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita, Gadādhar and Srivās representing the memorial happenings in connection with Sri Chaitanya's life have been installed.

Srivās and his brothers were of a religious turn of mind. They made friendship with Sri Advaita, Sri Chaitanya's parents, Chandrasekhar Āchārya, Vāsudeva Datta, Mukunda Datta, and others who had migrated from Sylhet and Chittagong and were Vaishnavas. Sri Srivās lived a very pious life, reading the scriptures, worshipping the Vishnu and taking daily ablutions in the Ganges. He was a good scholar particularly in the Bhāgavata who assembled at the *Tol* (academy) of Advaita for religious discourse. He was very indifferent to the world and adopted no profession whatsoever to earn money, whereas he had to maintain a big family. One day Sri Chaitanya asked him either to earn his living or to accept *Sannyās*. But he did neither. He was averse to worldly ambition. Sri Chaitanya commanded Sri Rāmāi Pandit to look after the family by remaining attached to his eldest brother Srivās. He spent a good deal in holding the religious ceremonies and shifting his residence apparently possessing inherited wealth with which to defray his family and household expenses. It is very clear from the description of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata that his big house at Navadvip was divided into several blocks, containing a spacious courtyard surrounded by walls, where Sri Chaitanya held the *Kirtan*. This was usually held within closed doors lest malicious scoffers should enter

the house. Hostile demonstrators gathered outside the gate, which was bolted from the inside, and shouted maledictions. Srivās had a garden fragrant and gay with flowers where every morning all his Vaishnava friends would gather flowers for their daily worship. The present monastery, set up on the spot, maintains the old, tradition by growing the beautiful *Mādhavi Latā* which shades the courtyards, forming several arches, and fills the whole house with its sweet fragrance. His house became the meeting place of the small group of the Vaishnavas who used to sing the *Kirtana*, recite the Bhāgavata, and hold their discourses there. This brought down upon him the wrath of the anti-Vaishnava community of Navadvip. He had migrated to Sri Māyāpur to lead a free religious life but the strange irony of fate disappointed him. He would have suffered dreadful isolation but for a few souls with whom he could unreservedly exchange confidences and understanding. People outside his group hurled condemnation and derision at Srivās and his friends. These scoffers were doubtless pedantic scholars, not to be easily silenced. Srivās needed one who would fight the hydra, and save atheistically Navadvip by meeting its skepticism with another skepticism comprising faith and devotion to God. The Pandits of Navadvip were all logicians in *Navyānyaya*, so they could not be persuaded to believe in Vaishnavism except by logic, which could silence them. Only a genius of splendid qualities, both of brain and heart, could save the country Srivās's choice naturally fell on Sri Chaitanya whom all scholars of the day feared. The town was then, justly proud of his fame as one of these greatest scholars of India, after His defeat of the Kashmirian Pandit Keshava Bhatta in open controversy. Srivās and other Vaishnavas thought that if a marvellous intellect like Pandit Nimāi became a Vaishnava and put forth His unrivalled scholasticism in meeting all atheistical pedants on behalf of establishing *Bhakti*, it would make an epoch in the religious history of Bengal. None but He could have delivered Bengal from her pedantic atheism and others prayed to God to turn His mind to Vaishnavism. Sri Nimāi

challenged all Pandits of the university town whom-so-ever He chanced to meet either in the streets or in the academy, to an open intellectual contest in conformity with practice of the day. All avoided such encounter lest they should be ridiculed and put to shame by His sharp logic. Puffed up with unquestionable learning and sophisticism, He fearlessly, wandered everywhere accompanied by a following of students. He treated all scholars of the town with show of superiority, but had deep regard for Srivās and Advaita for their earnest devotion to God. One day Srivās met Him when He was making a triumphant entry into His academy with His pupils and scholars. He bent His head to the venerable Vaishnava Srivās with gentle courtesy, who, finding an opportune occasion addressed Him by way of blessing: "Whither goest thou, most arrogant? Why waste thy time in these vanities of learning without serving Krishna? Why dost thou teach thy students day and night? Why do people acquire their learning at all? Is it not to learn devotion to Krishna? If that devotion is not gained, what does such Godless learning avail? Thou shouldst not pass thy time in such vanity of learning. Thou hast studied enough. It is high time for thee to serve Krishna, with the learning".[1] The genius, to whom none could venture to speak, much less to instruct, accepted Srivās's gentle rebuke with perfect courtesy and replied with a reverent smile: "Thank you, revered Pandit. What you say will certainly come to pass by your grace in future". During this time Isvara Puri, who afterwards became Sri Chaitanya's preceptor, lived a few months at Navadvip and exerted a decisive influence on Him, which resulted in His initiation by him at Gaya, an incident which proved the turning point in the career of Sri Chaitanya.

When after His initiation by Isvara Puri, Sri Chaitanya suddenly changed His course of life, Srivās and others hailed Him as their saviour saying "All of us are ready to be led by You. May You chant the *Kirtana*, being leader of us. We are scorched by the fury of boisterous atheists. May You soothe us by the cool water of Your love and devotion"[2]

[1] C.Bh.Adi XII. 249-253 [2] C.Bh.Madhya II.195

The Vaishnavas created a sensation in the town by promulgating the *Sankirtana* under the leadership of Sri Chaitanya and it was soon reported to the Mohammedan ruler. Rumour had it that the ruler had dispatched some soldiers to arrest the Vaishnavas for their religious activities in the Mohammedan kingdom. Hindu citizens, terrified, anxious and apprehensive blamed Srivās for having excited the jealousy of the ruler. Srivās knew well how mercilessly Haridās had been subjected, a few years back, to fanatical persecution. In particular the Vaishnavas, suffered a great deal at the hands of the Mohammedans. A few years ago, Gangādās Pandit, a friend of Srivās, had escaped outrage and torture upon his family by leaving the town in the night. Sri Chaitanya had conveyed them over the Ganges in a boat and thus saved him and his family from being outraged by the ruler.[1] It was a terrible time for the Vaishnavas and particularly for Srivās who was so decisively threatened by the government. Srivās made special worship and offering to Lord Nrisimha Deva, Who is believed to save innocent devotees from persecution by assuming a terrible appearance. Sri Chaitanya finding Srivās so timorous, is said to have manifested to him His mighty four-handed Body of a divine warrior with the infallible weapons of Vishnu-the disc, club, conch and lotus in His four Hands.[2] Though the Vaishnava biographers may have dressed up the brilliancy of Sri Chaitanya's genius in divinity, it is true that He fired timorous Srivās with infinite courage to stand out against the oppression of the Mohammedans who trampled down the religious liberty of the Hindus. His vigorous speech thrilled the small group of Vaishnavas with enthusiasm to fight for their religious liberty. Now backed by almost divine assurance from Sri Chaitanya, Srivās fearlessly began to perform the *Kirtana*. In all seriousness the group started the movement, which turned proselytizing in character.

It was at the house of Srivās that Srivās and Advaita who are solely responsible for establishing Sri Chaitanya as God. Many supernatural and miraculous stories are told

[1] C.Bh. II. 109-120. [2] C.Bh. II. 256-266

of Him that are believed to have taken place at the house of Srivās. One evening Srivās's only son died during the *Kirtana* performance. Having heard a sudden cry of anguish from the women's apartment, Srivās hastened to the place and found the son already dead. He consoled his wife Malini Devi and other ladies of the house, insisting that they should not grieve at his son's death as it had occurred at the most auspicious moment, when the Lord Himself was dancing in the house. Apprehending that their weeping and crying for the deceased child might distract Sri Chaitanya's *Kirtana*, he told his wife that if they cried and stopped the *Kirtana*, he would certainly commit suicide by drowning in the Ganges. When Sri Chaitanya heard of the incident, He hastened to the place where the dead child lay and is said to have asked him (the dead child) why he should leave the house of Srivās. The deadchild is believed to have spoken a few words with Sri Chaitanya in response to His, command and took leave of Him before he died again.[1] Even to-day the Gaudiya Vaishnavas console themselves on such grievous occasions by reciting the words of the deceased child, from the Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

Srivās was a typical devotee. He dedicated his mind; body, home, family, friends and whatever belonged to him, to the service of Sri Chaitanya. He maintained the family not because they were his relatives but because they were Sri Chaitanya's servants. He piously believed that there was nothing left that might be called his. He simply obeyed Sri Chaitanya's bidding and his only endeavour was to please Him.

Srivās was the inseparable counterpart of Sri Chaitanya's life at Navadvip. He played a prominent part in everything. Once Sri Chaitanya staged a theatrical performance at the house of Chandrasekhara Āchārya where Srivās acted the role of Nārada, the great devotee of Krishna. When he was upon the stage, Sri Chaitanya's mother joked with his wife Malini Devi by asking whether he was Pandit Srivās. As he played on the lute he said; "I

[1] C. Bh.Madhya XXV. 59-65

have travelled through Vaikuntha, but I could not find the Lord on His throne. I came to learn that He has come to Nadia. I found Vaikuntha empty and deserted." The particular mission of Srivasa's life was to preach Sri Chaitanya as God Incarnate.

Srivās was no longer timorous. He pursued the teaching of Sri Chaitanya with unremitting vigour and realised the supreme necessity of proclaiming the *Kirtana* in the town. Feeling the pulse of the almost Vishnuised Navadvip, the Kazi circulated the most repressive ordinance, that those who were found with the *Kirtana* would forfeit their property and caste. The whole town was suddenly seized with panic. This time Srivās laughed at the fanatical order. He danced and sang the *Kirtana* in a huge procession, which Sri Chaitanya organised to oppose the Kazi. He was a notable host at his Navadvip house where Sri Chaitanya group held their daily service. This gained for him the good reputation of "Srivās the most charitable",[1] We find him as one of the principal singers whether in the *Kirtana* procession at Nadia or in the *Kirtana* dance round the temple and before the Car at Puri. His songs particularly fitted with the dance of Nityānanda and Sri Chaitanya. Whether on the stage at the house of Chandrasekhar Āchārya or in the open air *Kirtana*, he was an outstanding figure and gained the admiration of the Vaishnava connoisseurs for his beautiful singing voice.

In his Nadia days, Srivās used to take his morning bath in the Ganges and see his God Sri Chaitanya before he set his hand to any duty of the day. One morning, when he came to have the glimpse of Sri Chaitanya, he found Sachidevi lying senseless at the gate because of Sri Chaitanya's act of renunciation carried out the previous night. On enquiry he learnt the terrible news that his Saviour the Lord had forsaken them for a life of *Sannyās*. Srivās cried like a child which moved his enemies to tears. With Sachidevi and many others he hurried to Santipur where Sri Chaitanya was staying for a few days after his

[1] C. Bh.Madhya II.332

Sannyās on his way from Katwa to Puri. Here at Shāntipur Srivās wept unceasingly.

He left Navadvip in a few years and settled at Kumarhatta, a small town situated within the subdivisional jurisdiction of Barrackpur in the district of 24 Parganas. Kumarhatta was subsequently called Hālisahar, a corruption of *Hābil-sahar* or the city of palaces. It was also the birthplace of Sri Isvara Puri.[1] Paramesvara Āchāya, a famous follower of Sri Chaitanya, also belonged to this village. Sivananda Sen, father of the famous poet and devotee Kavikarnapur and Vasudeva Dutta, one of the foremost devotees and associates of Sri Chaitanya also settled at the adjoining village of Kanchrapārā. According to the Chaitanya Charitāmrita, Sri Chaitanya visited these villages and stayed a few days at Srivās's house on His way from Puri to Shāntipur and Rāmakeli. Srivās and his brothers lived in this village till the last days of their lives. The family became extinct after them.

Every year Srivās used to go to Puri, where Sri Chaitanya lived, with a variety of sweets and confectionaries such as *Pitha, Amritamonda, Padmachini* etc. for Sri Chaitanya. Sometimes his wife Malini Devi accompanied him to share the blessing. They used to attend the Car festival and stayed there for four months during which period they served Sri Chaitanya in all possible ways.

At the Car festival Srivās led one of the seven *Gaudiya Kirtana* parties which sang and danced before and beside the Car of Lord Jagannāth when Sri Chaitanya intended to dance Himself he asked a selected ten to sing the appropriate song, making a ring round Him. Srivās was one of the selected amongst whom Sri Chaitanya danced His wonderful dances, such as *Uddanda, Parimunda, Viraha* and so on. On one occasion He began His *Uddanda* dance, which resembled a moving wheel, before the Car, manifesting stupor, perspiration, weeping, tremour and other perturbations. So great was the excitement when the

[1] C. Bh. Adi. 17. 99

crisis was reached that He sometimes rolled with lightning rapidity. The devotees shouted "Hari" "Hari" which only gave impetus to the dance which held the audience spellbound and appealed so irresistibly to their hearts with a series of dramatic figures that they simply stood mesmerized, fixing, their eyes on the extraordinarily magnetic Dancer who, through His dance, delivered His wordless message. During this emotional storm the devotees held the crowd back from Sri Chaitanya's dancing ground by forming three circles. The first was formed by Nityānanda and others the second consisted of Mukunda, Kasisvar and others. The king Pratap Rudra, with his suite, formed another ring. The magic of the dance on this particular occasion seized all present with such controlling influence that they were incapable of any independent feeling or even consciousness. Srivās happened to be just in front of king Pratap and seemed lost in the joy of the moment. The king's minister, Mahapatra Hari Chandana, finding the king's view obstructed, asked Srivās to step aside. Srivās, absorbed in emotion, was oblivious of everything else. He took no notice of the minister's request, which was repeated several times. Srivās felt so much interrupted in his blissful absorption that he struck the minister to stop his importunity. It was doubtless a great insult, particularly in the presence of the king. Harichandana was naturally furious, but the king intervened with the words. "You are fortunate to have been touched by him. I am deprived of such luck. You have become sanctified.[1] Such was indeed the king's regard for Srivās.

It was Advaita and Srivās who, from first to last, were the strongest advocates of Sri Chaitanya's Divinity, and it was they who, for the first time, worshipped Him on the lion-throne of the Vishnu Images with the Gopāl-Mantra and the offerings of Tulasi, flowers, incense, perfume, etc. believing Him to be Krishna. When he together with Advaita sang the *Kirtana* glorifying the Name of Sri Chaitanya as God at Puri, Sri Chaitanya felt uncomfortable at being

[1] C.C.Madhya XIII.97

publicly extolled. The Lord asked Srivās why he had sung His Name to His displeasure. In reply he humorously waved his hand as if to hide the sun with his palm. His ready answer always came spontaneously from his innate sense of genial humour, which he employed in getting things in just perspective. Sri Chaitanya wished him to explain his enigmatic words and sign. Srivās said, "I covered the Sun. Could any body do this? So it is impossible to keep you hidden. The song of Your Glory filled the air from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin"?[1] At this very moment several *Kirtana* parties, who were inhabitants of Tipperah, Chittagong, Sylhet and Bengal, reached the place chanting the Name of Sri Chaitanya, Whom they all identified with Krishna in their songs. Srivās said it was impossible to stop them. During the latter part of Sri Chaitanya's life, He was recognised as the Incarnation of God by the majority of the populace. It was no doubt a great satisfaction to Srivās. Every year he stayed at Puri for four months from the time of the Car festival and observed the four-month-vow with Sri Chaitanya. He felt grieved at leaving His Company and wept bitter tears. Sri Chaitanya promised him that he should feel His presence during the *Kirtana* at his home.

He never recovered from the shock of Sri Chaitanya's departure from this world. The background of his life seemed to have faded and the world appeared suddenly and strangely empty. To Sri Chaitanya and His movement he gave the best that he had to give, keeping nothing back, in counsel, companionship, encouragement, in the sharing of sorrows and derision at the earlier stage of the movement, and of joys at the end. It is natural, therefore, that the Gaudiya Vaishnavas have religiously treasured his memory as something precious and unique for the simplicity and strength of his faith, his loyalty to Sri Chaitanya and undivided devotion to Vaishnava claims and heritage.

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[1] C.Bh.Antya. IX. 210

THĀKUR HARIDĀS

Another very important member of the movement who exerted immense influence from the beginning was Thākur Haridās. The true spirit of the new movement is very difficult to appreciate without first knowing the career of this Vaishnava knight of suffering and persecution. He was born in a Mohammedan family at Budhan in the district of Jessore which then comprised the greater part of the present Khulna district (now Bangladesh). The village of Haridās's birth is now within the sub-divisional of Satksira in the latter. Vaishnava writers did not think it necessary to shed and light upon the family history of any Vaishnava of anti-Vaishnava origin; consequently the family history and early life of Haridās before his conversion are shrouded in mystery. No earlier authentic writer gives us any clue to an accurate account of it. Caste prejudices have led some recent writers to give him a Brahminic ancestry because they could not bear the humiliating thought that their Brahminic ancestors had bowed down at the feet of one who was a Mohammedan by birth and respected him as their Guru. This attempt is actuated solely by communal bias.

The earlier Vaishnavas prided themselves on besmearing their bodies with the dust beneath his feet, which they considered very holy. The standard books of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita and Sri Chaitanya Bhāgavata etc. are unambiguous, in numerous passages, on the point that he was born in a Yavana family. The term 'Yavana' has a varied history of its own and has always been applied to the non-Hindu foreigners like the earlier Greek invaders and so on. It has been used to denote the Mohammedans on the Gaudiya-Vaishnava literature during the period at issue. The only cause of his persecution by the Mohammedan ruler of that time was his conversion as it appeared to him from Islam to Hinduism. Had Haridās not been a Mohammedan by birth he might have escaped punishment by pleading not guilty. His persecutors also would not have troubled about his reciting aloud the name of his

God had he not once belonged to the ruler's race. They applied their brutal force not to convert him from Hinduism but to revert and bind him to Mohammedanism, the religion of the family of his birth and of the ruling race. They gave him inhuman punishment to make an example of him lest others should likewise desert their ancestral faith. What they did was to safeguard the interests of Mohammedanism against the proselytizing influence of the Hindus. The governor said to him, 'Why, my brother, should I see such perversion of judgment in you? You have had the rare fortune of being born in the Yavana family. Why do you practise Hindu rites? We, Yavanas, do not eat rice if we happen to see a Hindu whilst at our meals. Being born in such a high Yavana family why do you give up the religion of high ancestry? How will you escape the punishment in the next world for violating the religion of your birth?" The Kazi tried his best to persuade him to reaccept his former Mohammedan religion by reciting the *Kalma*[1] It is obvious from the above fact that the contention of the prosecution was that he had given up his ancestral Mohammedan religion and the government was too rigid to allow any Mohammedan to become a dissenter.

Vaishnavas supported his position as their religious leader and declared that he was born in a humble family by the merciful will of God to show the uselessness of the blind belief that a high Brahmanic pedigree was a necessary condition of success in religious life. They cited the examples of Prahlad and Vajranghi of old to establish his high spiritual authority despite his birth in a Mohammedan family. Those two famous devotees of Nrisimha and Rāma were born of the demon and animal parentage. It does not matter whether a devotee has a Brahmin ancestry or not.[2] There is no shadow of a doubt that this historical person was Mohammedan by birth and received Vaishnavism in lieu of his ancestral faith.[3] According to *Premavilasa* (XXIV) he was initiated by Advaita, and to *Abhirama Sakhanirnaya*, he was the

[1] C. Bh.Adi XVI.70-73 [2] C.Bh.Adi XVI.236 [3] C.C. Madhya II.165; C.Bh.Adi XVI.292

disciple of Abhirama Thākur of Khānākul Krishnanagar. Krishnadāsa Kavirāj puts him among the disciples of Sri Chaitanya Himself.

Haridās was a very handsome person, with a fine figure long arms, almond eyes gleaming with intelligence, high forehead, aquiline nose, delicately moulded face. His great intellect, love of letters and religious music, and above all, love and zeal for the Truth- all these befitted his noble pedigree[1] He had been a fine representative type of a renaissance Bengal Muslim. As a Mohammedan youth of culture he learnt Sanskrit and Hindu philosophy after the fashion of the times. He invariably won the prize in al intellectual contests in regard to the Hindu doctrinal problems with the learned *Pandits* by dint of his keen intellect and persuasive eloquence. Unlike his rivals he never showed any temper in argument.

Vaishnava biographers offer an account of his spiritual life beginning from Benapole. He left his native village of Budhan, probably because of the hostility of his Mohammedan kinsmen, and selected a solitary hut in the woods of Benapole for his devotion. He was then an ascetic. Benapole is near Bongaon in the Jessore district. Haridās devotion and asceticism at his early age brought him into repute as a holy man. Many pious and God-fearing people frequented his solitary hut to have a sight of him. The leading Brahmana chief Rāma Chandra proved hostile to the ascetic, partly because Rāma Chandra was anti-Vaishnava and partly because he was an enemy of the Mohammedan rule and faith. He could not bear that a Mohammedan should be so much respected as a holy man by the Hindus under his very nose. He could not understand that a young man could be ascetic resisting the impulses of youth. He set his harlots on to him by promises of reward. A youthful girl of great beauty volunteered to bring about the moral downfall of Haridās. Rāma Chandra asked her to take some armed footmen with her to catch him red-handed at his lovemaking.

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[1] C.Bh.Adi XVI.47

In a solitary hut a youthful girl of enchanting beauty professed her love to a young man in the most voluptuous way but he was absolutely oblivious to everything outside his own world of devotion. Haridās asked her in reply to her frenzied requests, to wait until he had finished his prayers. Haridās was then under the vow of repeating his prayers ten million times within the month. He was engaged in a sacrament that is without beginning or end. Haridās was icily self-controlled against sex. The youthful harlot tried her best to lure Haridās for three successive nights but was disappointed. It was perhaps the first time in her experience that she saw a man perfectly self - possessed against the fire of the most violent passion. She became remorseful and began to hate herself and appreciate the marvel of the ascetic's self control. This made her penitent not only for the evil plot to ruin his vow, but also for her own shameful life as a harlot. The Vaishnava biographers conclude the account of this event with the observation that power of the holy Name of Krishna coming from the spiritually enlightened Haridās consumed the lustful mentality of the harlot. She confessed to him the whole plot and begged him to deliver her from her sins. Haridās advised her to become an ascetic leaving all her property, and live a devotional life. Haridās left the place the very next morning. It is said that the harlot carried out the command of her deliverer to the letter and became a famous ascetic and object of veneration.

From Benapole Haridās went to Saptagrama Krishnapur and began preaching *Bhakti* particularly the efficacy of the chanting of the Name of God which he realised to be the best of all possessions to attain the *summum bonum* of life. Here Balarāma Āchārya, the family priest of the local chief Hiranya and Govardhana, became his first disciple. Haridās lived in a hut living on alms from the house of his disciple. By this time he had attracted a number of admirers headed by Ādvaita's disciple Yadunandan. Raghunāth, son of Govardhana used to visit Haridās with his teacher Gopal. This Raghunāth was our future Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi. The local chiefs invited him to deliver a lecture at their

court. They were great patrons of learning and culture. Here in this court he entered into a scriptural disputation with a Brahmana scholar Gopal Chakravarti who was also an employee of the estate. The subject of discussion was the philosophy of the Name of God. Haridās delivered one of his best lectures on this occasion. The principle which he advocated at this meeting became canonical in Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. His rival Gopal being defeated insulted Haridās at the meeting. The whole audience expressed their indignation at his incivility. Haridās preserved perfect composure. His arguments on the strength of his *Shastric* knowledge, humility and gentle manner, convinced the audience of his greatness and saintly character. The insult instead of lowering him made him more popular and paved the way to the success of his mission. Haridās shortly after left the village and went to Fulia, Shāntipur.

Advaita received him with great respect and cordiality and gave him daily food at his house, and explained to him the Gitā and the Bhāgavata. They became close friends and were in perfect harmony with each other in every respect of their common religion. In the meantime his fame as a Hindu holy man spread in the neighbouring district. The local Mohammedan Magistrate could not bear that a member of his ruling race should be a Hindu monk. He feared that if he tolerated such lapses, many other Mohammedans might follow him, to the detriment of the ruling Mohammedan society. So he resolved to nip the new movement in the bud. Kazi personally met the governor and told him about Haridās's conversion to Hinduism and urged for his immediate orders to prosecute him for the offence of conversion to Hinduism, which the governor did. The news filled the country with consternation and dismay.

He was brought under arrest before the Governor and the tribunal of the Kazis, not to be tried for the sake of justice, but to be compelled, by whatever means, to go against his belief, conviction and experience. Impressed by his handsome and dignified appearance and in

consideration of his Muslem origin, the Governor gave him a seat and received him civilly, which honour was not given to an ordinary prisoner. The Governor questioned him in persuasive tones eulogising his high birth in a Mohammedan family and openly denouncing the Hindu subjects whose religion he had accepted. In reply Haridās delivered a simple but dignified speech truly philosophical, touching on the absolute nature of God, his omnipresence as indwelling God, the universal nature of service of the absolute and supported his view by quotations both from the *Koran* and the Bhāgavata. All nations and races speak of the same self-Lord in their respective scriptures. He is indivisible, one and the same, and not different because of his different Names recorded in different scriptures. If anybody bears any malice and hatred against anybody for his religious body, hurts not him but the indwelling God who guides his activities in his heart. Haridās pleaded that his doings were being directed by God, that he had no control over them. His persuasive eloquence and argument succeded in softening the heart of the Governor, but the Kazi took a different view and prevailed upon the Governor to punish him on the ground that if he were let off unpunished, others would follow him, to the disgrace of the ruling race. The Governor tried his best first by kind words and next by threats of severe punishment, to bring him back to the Muslim faith but Haridās remained resolute as before. His utterance "If my body be cut into pieces and if I am deprived of my life, I will not cease to utter the Name of Hari" will remain the most shining source of inspiration to all Hindu martyrs. There were two alternatives open to him, either to give up the belief and die a spiritual death or to accept the death sentence. Haridās chose the latter. To give up his life for the greater life in the service of God seemed far more fascinating to him than a degraded life on earth. The Kazi gave the following judgment. "Let him be whipped to death at the 22 market places. Take his life without hesitation. If he survives the beating at the 22 markets, then we will believe in what he has said." They ordered armed men to

beat him to death in such a horrible manner as to strike terror in all witnesses with the following vindictive remarks: "Any one who, being a Muslim by birth, accepts the practices of the Hindus, can be delivered from his sins for so doing only by the sentence of death."[1]

Haridās submitted with perfect resignation. The punishment of killing by degrees, making a shameful demonstration of grievous barbarity upon the person of the perfectly innocent and holy saint is rare in the annals of humanity. When he seemed dead in consequence of beating, he was thrown into the Ganges lest he should fare well after death if he was given the benefit of burial. Haridās is said to have been immersed in deep meditation on God, which made him unconscious of all external perceptions. By the grace of God, he was somehow or other rescued and taken out of the water. He made his appearance at Fulia to the wonder and fear of his persecutors and to the joy of the pious. The Governor was tormented by remorse and fear of divine wrath and begged his pardon. He gave him absolute freedom to move throughout the country without any hindrance. All his enemies and rivals, both Hindu and Mohammedan, were purged of all malice and ill will against him after this incident. He was received by the local Brahmana society with enthusiasm.

Haridās resumed his mission with renewed vigour in conjunction with Advaita, who offered him the *Srāddha Patra* in preference to all Brāhmanas. Haridās had no wish to accept such honour but Advaita knew him to be the best of Brahmanas for his spiritual merit and offered it to him with the characteristic remark: "By your acceptance of it, hundreds of Brahmanas are truly fed."

Many supernatural stories about him have been recorded in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Ghaitanya Charitāmrita and so on which suggests that he was held in great esteem by the people. He made Shāntipur Fuliā the centre of his activities from whence he used to visit other places such as Harinadi and so on for missionary purposes

[1] C.Bh.Adi XVI.99

when he used to lecture, hold discourses etc. Sometimes he used to live at Kulingram, the Vaishnavas of which village headed by Satyarāj and Rāmānanda, were his disciples.[1] When Sri Chaitanya assumed the leadership of the Vaishnava movement, he placed himself under Him. At Sri Māyāpur he used to live at the house of Srivās. Sri Chaitanya employed him and Nityānanda to preach the doctrine from door to door at Navadvip and to report the day's work to Him every evening. Sri Chaitanya Dev regarded him as the very best kind of devotee. In the Vaishnava community he was respected not merely as a Brāhmana but as a Guru of Brahmanas. He was the best exponent of chanting of the Name of Krishna.

When Sri Chaitanya Dev settled at Puri after His *Sannyās* Haridās followed him. Sri Chaitanya gave him a room in the garden adjoining His Own residence at the house of Kāsi Mishra. He used to send him food and met him every day. Rūpa and Sanātana lived with him at his hut for about a year each. They were of the same devotional temperament, disposition and humility. He was ever perfectly peaceful in the deepest devotion and untroubled. He always completed his chanting recitation of God's Name a fixed number of times before he took his meal, which was once a day. To chant three hundred thousand times the Names of God and behold Sri Chaitanya formed his daily duty, which he performed with the greatest possible love till the last day of his life.

He lived to a very old age. Apprehending the passing away of Sri Chaitanya from the world, Haridās said to him before others: "Low born and very wretched as I am, You have accepted me. I am untouchable but You have raised me from hell to the kingdom of God. You are God and so cause to happen what You wish. I have great favour. Being a *Mleccha* (Non Hindu), I have been cherishing a wish. Do graciously grant it to me. You may soon leave the world. But I shall not be able to bear so great a shock. Allow me to depart before the great mishap befalls me. I would like to

[1] C.C. Adi X

give up this body with my eyes fixed on Your lotus face, on my breast, Your Name on my tongue. Be gracious and allow me to have such a glorious death, my Lord". This was too much for Sri Chaitanya Who said: "All My happiness is with you. You ought not to Leave Me in this world." Haridās wept, touching His Feet and said: "My Lord, there are millions of Your worthy devotees to carry out Your Wish. If an insect like myself be blotted out, it will do no harm to the world". [1]

The next morning Sri Chaitanya came to him with all His devotees including Svarup, Rāmāraya, Vakresvar, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, and so on. Sri Chaitanya Himself sang the glory of Haridās. All the devotees made their obeisance to the feet of Haridās. They began *Kirtana* while Haridās seated Sri Chaitanya, in front of him, fixed his eyes on the latter's Face, clasping His Feet to his bosom and in the very act of uttering the Name of Sri Krishna Chaitanya, passed away as his eyes filled with tears of joy. He is said to have left the world at his own will. Sri Chaitanya lifted the body and began to dance holding it in His Arms.

A long procession of devotees bore the body in a beautiful litter to his last resting place on the sea-shore. Sri Chaitanya dipped the body into the water of the sea, decorated it with sandal paste and flowers. All the devotees paid him their last respect by drinking the water in which his feet were washed. Sri Chaitanya buried the body with His Own Hands, amidst the loud *Kirtana*. He Himself begged alms from the people to perform the festivities of his departure at which he paid the highest tribute to the great devotee in the following words: "Let all sing the glory of Haridās. Haridās was the crest jewel of the world. The earth has lost its treasure by his demise. Out of His great mercy, Krishna had given Me his company, He has now severed him from Me. When Haridās himself wished to leave the world I could not hold him back. He gave up his life at his own will, just as Bhishma did in bygone times.[2]

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[1] C.C.Antya XI. 40-41 2 C. C. Antya XI. 93-98

An earthen mound over his grave has been receiving the adoration of the devotees until a little more than a hundred years ago, when a fine tomb was erected and a convent was built, in which the Images of his Lord Sri Chaitanya and of His two greatest friends Advaita and Nityānanda have been set up by an Odiya gentleman, Bhramaravara of Kendrapāra, to preserve the memory of the great saint. The place where he lived during his stay at Puri is now known as Haridās Siddhā Bakula Math.

CHANDRASEKHARA ĀCHĀRYA

He was the uncle (mother's sister's husband) of Sri Chaitanya Deva. He was one of the main "branches" of Sri Chaitanya movement, having innumerable disciples of his own, with whom he served Sri Chaitanya and His mission. He was an inhabitant of Sri Māyāpur having migrated from Sylhet. Sri Chaitanya Dev acted the dramatic performance at his house. He followed Sri Chaitanya to Katwa and made preparation for the ceremony of His *Sannyās*. He was all through a very faithful follower of Sri Chaitanya Deva. The headquarters of the present Gaudiya Maths is situated on the site of his house.

PUNDARIKA VIDYĀNIDHI

Sri Pundarika Vidyānidhi was one of the principal associates of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Pundarika was the disciple of Sri Mādhavendra Puri. Like Advaita and other disciples of Sri Chaitanya. He was an inhabitant of the village of Mekhala, which is situated twelve miles to the north of Chittagong. His parents' names were Vaneshvara and Gangadevi. His wife was Ratnavati. Sri Chaitanya Dev gave him the title of 'Premanidhi'.

He was the guru of Gadadhar Pandit and the intimate friend of Svarup Dāmodar. He was also called as Vidyānidhi, Āchāryanidhi, Premanidhi, Bhaktividyānidhi, all of which suggest his depth of learning and devotion to God.

He had residence at Navadvip for the purpose of academic activities in the metropolis of learning and for

residing in the neighbourhood of the Ganges. He had a great regard for the Ganges. Unlike the ordinary Hindus who are indefatigable in bathing in the Ganges, Pundarika abstained altogether from such bathing for the reason that it would be a great offence to touch the holy water with his feet. He paid his homage to the Ganges by visiting the sacred river at night.

Vidyanidhi was a great scholar and used to teach his pupils in his own academy. Nobody except Mukunda Dutta knew that Vidyanidhi was a devotee of Krishna because his outward conduct was the exact opposite of that of the ascetic devotees of Krishna. On one occasion when Vidyānidhi came to Navadvip, Mukunda Dutta took Gadādhara to him. Gadadhara found Vidyānidhi so unlike a devotee in his outward conduct that he thought to himself that he could not be a Vaishnava. The ascetic Gadādhara found him comfortably seated on a beautifully made couch on which were spread the most costly cushions and the best silks. There were a great number of the softest pillows of different sizes draped in silk and velvet. The fine bed had a triple canopy with an enquisite curtain. The room was most sumptuously fitted up. There were several costly *Jharis* and a richly decorated *Dola* (litter) was kept ready as conveyance. His dress was of the finest quality. He resembled a great prince rolling in luxury. Mukunda Dutta noticed what was passing in the mind of Gadādhara. Mukunda began to recite certain verses from the Bhāgavata, which filled the mind of Pundarika with a great emotion which made him forget every other consideration. The coverlets, pillows, canopies, caskets were all kicked away. His costly apparel was torn to shreds. Vidyanidhi lost his sense and rolled disconsolate on the bare ground and was not calmed until six hours of the day had passed.[1]

Gadādhara was filled with wonder by the sight ecstatic love and devotion of Pundarika, Gadādhara expressed to Vidyanidhi his sorrow for doubting his devotion, and Mukunda interceded for pardon for his offence. Vidyānidhi

[1] C.Bh.Madhya VII

clasped Gadādhara in his arms. Gadādhara then prayed through Mukunda for the favour of initiation from Vidyānidhi. In the mean time Pundarika met and joined Sri Chaitanya in His mission at Navadvip with the permission of Sri Chaitanya, Gadādhara took initiation from Pundarika Vidyānidhi. Vrindāvanadās says that, Guru and Shishya, Vidyanidhi and Gaddāhara were two loving bodies of Sri Chaitanya[1]. Pundarika cried like a child when he heard that Sri Chaitanya had become a *Sannyāsi*. His love and affection for Sri Chaitanya Dev was that of a very devoted adherent. He used to go to Puri every year in the company of the Bengal devotees to meet and serve Sri Chaitanya Deva.

Vidyanidhi, on his second visit to Puri, remained there for the whole year with Sri Chaitanya Deva. SvaRūpa Dāmodar was his most beloved friend since Navadvip days, and the two stayed together at the same place to discourse about the Love of Krishna. Pundarika at this time conferred the *Mantra* on Gadādhara for the second time. Vrindāvanadās records a curious story about Pundarika having heard it from the mouth of Gadādhara.[2] Sri Chaitanyadeva kept Vidyānidhi near himself fixing his residence at Yamesvara on the sea beach. Pundarika criticised the conduct of the temple authorities and priests at the Odana Shasti festival when the Deity of Jagannāth is dressed in new starched garments. He asked Svarūpa why they offered starched clothing to Godhead, remarking that he did not understand why the people of Puri wore unwashed starched cloths, although they were conversant with *Smriti* literature. Dāmodar replied, Jagannāth is not offended by such offering, as it happens to be the time-honoured custom of the country. He, who is acquainted with *Sruti* and *Smriti*, certainly never indulges in such practice. But in this festival, this has always been the order here". Pundarika said, "Jagannāth is Godhead, and everything is of course possible for Him. But must all the people do what He does?" The Vaishnava biographer of Sri Chaitanya tells us a curious story in this connection,

[1] C. Bh.Madhya VII.155 [3] C. Bh. Antya X. 84

Lord Jagannāth is said to have appeared to Vidyanidhi in a dream. He saw that Jagannāth looked angry and seized him and slapped him on the face. The two brothers Jagannāth and Balarāma jointly slapped Pundarika on both cheeks. They slapped so hard that his cheeks became swollen under their Fingers. Vidyānidhi in his dream asked the Gods for what offence of his they were beating him so. Lord Jagannāth said, "You are living in my place. You know everything. You look down upon Me and, My servants as outcastes. Why do you stay at a place, which is destructive of caste? Go away to your own country and save your caste. You imagine the contamination of impure practices even in the festivity that has been ordained by Me. You call Me Brahman to spite My servants, regarding as an offence the wearing of unwashed starched clothing."[1] Vidyanidhi begged of divine pardon, saying that he was very fortunate that Their divine Hands dealt his cheeks the rare blessing. The God said that in order to do him a favour They had punished him, because he was Their favourite devotee.

His Cheeks became actually swollen in every part by the force of the slaps administered by the Gods in his dream. Vrindāvanadās says that one may receive punishment or great wealth in one's dream but all those are nothing when one, awakes. If the punishment or favour which God bestows on any person in his dream be actually perceived by others, then only they are efficacious. No one is so fortunate as such a person[2] Dāmodara Svarup saw the swollen cheeks of his dear friend and was transported with joy, saying, I have never heard that God Himself comes to punish one in a dream, but I now actually see it to be so in your case. Vidyānidhi had hosts of disciples all of whom were as faithful as their Guru to Sri Chaitanya.

SATYARĀJ KHĀN AND RĀMĀNANDA VASU

Satyarāja Khan was the son of Mālādhara Vasu Gunarāja Khan of the famous Vasu family of Kulin Gram in the Burdwan District. It is situated within two miles from Jāugrama on the Howrah-Burdwan railway line. Mālādhara

[1] C.Bh. Antya X.132-135 [2] ibid. 149-150

was the descendant of Dasarath Vasu who had migrated from Kanauj, being one of the five *Brahmanas* and five *Kayasthas*, Mālādhara was the 13th in degree from the founder Dasarath. It will not be out of place to give the genealogical table of the important Vaishnava family of Bengal.

1) Dasarath, 2) Kasul, 3) Subhasamkara, 4) Hamsa, 5) Muktirām, 6) Dāmodar, 7) Anantarām, 8) Guninayak, 9) Mādhava. 10) Sripati, 11) Jajnesvara, 12) Bhagirath, 13) Mālādhara (taken from the preface to Mr. Datta's edition of Krishnavijaya). Mālādharas second son was Laksmināth, who obtained the title of the Satyaraj Khān from the king of Gauda.

Mālādhar rendered the 10th and 11th cantos of the Bhāgavata in Bengali verse under the patronage of the Mohammedan King of Bengal. Mālādhar was a born poet. His graceful, easy style and the choice of simple and poignant words are marked throughout the work. Chandidās and Gunaraj Mālādhara Vasu are considered the best of all early Bengali poets. The King conferred the title of Gunarāj Khān on his poetic merit. He began the translation work in 1395 saka, and finished it in seven years. Sri Ghaitanya Dev was so charmed and impressed with its beauty and particularly with the tender meaning of the following line: "With my folded arms, O Krishna, son of Nanda, is the Lord of my heart", that He made the following affectionate promise to the family of Gunarāj Khān:- "By the words that Nandanandana is the lord of my heart, I sold myself to his family. Not only you, O Satyarāj Khān but even a dog of your village is dear to Me".[1]

Lakshmināth Satyarāj Khān and his son Rāmānanda were the ardent followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. They turned the whole village to Him for mercy. The other important Vaishnavas followers of the family were, Yadunāth, Purushottam, Shankara, Vidyananda, Vaninātha and others. The ruins of the moat, temples, the stage hall, still stand as witnesses to the past glory of this cultured

[1] C.C. Madhya XV.100

family. They used to hold the dramatic performance on Krishna *Lilā* and to go to Puri to stay with Sri Chaitanya for four months every year. According to the command, of the Lord they supplied the silken cord every year to bring the Deities of Jagannāth and others on the occasion of annual car festival. The author of Chaitanya Charitāmrita records important instructions, which they received from Sri Chaitanya for their devotional progress. They were all the disciples of Thākur Haridās[1].

GADĀDHARADĀS

He was one of the best devotees of Sri Chaitanya Dev so much so that Kavikarnapur describes him as an incarnation of the beauty of Rādhā. Vrindāvanadās refers to him as very beloved of Sri Chaitanya.[2] The followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva may be again divided into two general groups, one used to devote themselves to Krishna as friends in *Sakhya Rasa* under the lead of Nityānanda and the second group under Gadādhara Pandit Gosvāmi endeavoured to approach Young Krishna as their Lover. Gadadhara Das belonged to the latter group. Under the impulse of love, he used to act and talk in the manner in which the milk-maids of Vraja did. He was one of the principal assistants of Nityānanda Prabhu in his missionary activities in Bengal. He was so forceful a preacher that he could make the Mohammedan Kazi of his village Ariyadaha chant the Name of Krishna[3] Vrindāvandās remarks on the point that it was not an easy job for any human being, unless he was possessed by God Krishna, to purge a cruel Kazi of his malice and hostility towards Hindus. The Kazi was a terror to the Hindus of the locality who used to avoid him lest he should ruin their caste, so inveterate was his enmity to the Hindus.[4] Gadādhara installed the Bāla Gopāl Image before which the famous devotee Mādhavananda Ghosh sang the *Dana Khanda Lilā* at the instance of Sri Nityānanda in the winter of 1512 A.D. when Nityānanda, being ordained by Sri Chaitanya to carry on propaganda in Bengal, went there

[1] C.C. Adi X.80 [2] C.Bh.Antya V.93 [3] C.C.Adi X.53 [4] C.Bh.Antya V.423

and spent three months at and round about Panihati and Ariduha.[1]

NARAHARI, MĀDHAVA AND RAGHUNANDAN OF SRIKHANDA

The Sarkar family of Srikhanda is the Pride of Vaishnavas. They served the cause of Sri Chaitanya Dev in the best possible way. The whole village of Srikhanda turned Vaishnava by their influence. Srikhanda is about 6 k.m. south of Katwa. Since the lifetime of Sri Chaitanya Dev it has been a great preaching centre of the sect. one of the oldest Images Sri Chaitanya is to be found there.

NARAHARI

Nārāyana Sarkar had three sons - Mukunda, Mādhava and Narahari. Bharata Mallik in his Chandra Prabha has traced the origin of this family from Panthadas, who is believed to have flourished in the 12th century. Our interest in the family begins from the time of the sons of Nārāyana. Dr. D.C. Sen is of the opinion that Narahari was born in 1478 A.D. This date seems probable as he seems to be senior in age to Sri Chaitanya Deva. Narahari was one of the most loving followers of Sri Chaitanya. He was as an incarnation of Madhumati, a mistress of Krishna of Vraja. Narahari became the follower of Sri Chaitanya Dev while the Latter was still in Navadvip. Narahari was all through a vigorous preacher of the Divinity and doctrine of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Every year he used to live with Sri Chaitanya for four months since the Ratha Yātra, and devoted part of the year to preaching the faith in Bengal from its centre at Srikhanda. He set up the Deity of Chaitanya for daily worship. Sri Chaitanya Dev divided their duties so that while Narahari preached the doctrine in the company of other devotees, Mukunda should earn money for the maintenance of the family and Raghunandan, son of Mukunda should engage himself in the service of the Deities. Mukunda was the physician to the king of

[1] C.Bh.Antya V. 378

Gauda. Most of the poets and physicians of Srikhanda were in the service of the Kings of Gauda.

Narahari commanded very high respect in the sect. It was he who guided Srinivas Āchārya in his rehgious life and advised him to go to Puri and Vrindāvan for his training and to learn the Vaishnava literature. The life of Srinivāsa the greatest Āchārya of the sect in Bengal after the passing away of Sri Chaitanya, in inseparably connected with that of Narahari. God knows what would have been the fate of the sect in Bengal, had not Narahari succeeded in interesting Srinivās Āchārya in the Gaudiya doctrine. Srinivās wanted initiation from Narahari but Narahari advised him to be initiated by Gopāl Bhatta, as Sri Chaitanya desired. Srinivās started for Vrindāvan with his blessings. Premavilas tells us that Srinivās on his return from Vrindāvan found Raghunandan lamenting the death of Narahari. Srinivās also wept at not meeting him again. Bhaktiratnakara says that he lived long enough to meet even Narottam, when he visited Srikhanda several years after his return with Srinivās from Vrindāvan. Mr. Anandanāth Ray[2] is of opinion that Narahari left this world in 1540 A.D. If we accept this date, we have to admit that Srinivās went to Vrindāvan before the said date but he seems to have reached Vrindāvan immediately after the demise of Rūpa and Sanātana[3] but Rūpa does not seem to have died before 1554 A. D. which is the date of Sanātana's latest work Brihat Vaishnava Toshani. Sanātana predeceased Rūpa. What it probable is that Narahari Sarkar died a decade later.

NARAHARI'S LITERARY WORKS

Narahari seems to be the first writer of *Pada* poems in this period. The earliest writers of this kind of literature were Vidyāpati Thākur of Mithila and Chandidās of Nannur Bengal. Sri Chaitanya Deva gave an impetus to the further development of *Pada* literature. Narahari employed his poetic genius in celebrating the noble deeds of Sri Chaitanya

[1] P.V. XIV.p.104 [2] S.P.P. Vol. VI. p. 275 [3] P.V. Vol.V.p.31

Dev and sports of Rādhākrislina. He was soon followed by his friends Govinda Ghosh, Vāsudeva Ghosh and others. Naharari was really a gifted poet and accomplished Sanskrit scholar. Raya Sekhara tells us that Narahari had already composed songs in praise of Rādhā and Krishna before the Advent of Sri Chitanya.[1]

NĀMĀMRITA SAMUDRA

Narahari's Nāmāmrita Samudra contains 290 Bengali Slokas.[2] Many of his *Pada* songs have been collected in the later anthologies such as Padāmrita Samudra of Rādhā Mohan Thākur Pada Kalpataru of Vaisnavadāsa and others. Narahari pays his highest respect to his predecessor Chandidās in his songs.[3] Narahari's songs are exquisitely sweet and touching. The example of Narahari in this line was soon followed by his contemporary Vaishnava poets and later on by the successors who created a vast amount of this rich kind of literature in the Bengali language. As the Gosvāmis enriched the Sanskrit literature in all its branches, so the poets of Bengal created and developed *Pada* literature in singing the glory of Sri Chaitanya Deva and Sri Rādhā Krishna and devotees. The literary field of Bengal from the sixteenth century onwards for the next three centuries was almost in the possession exclusively of Vaishnavas.

BHAJANĀMRITA

This is a Sanskrit treatise on the devotion and worship of Krishna and Sri Chaitanya Dev it is a very important book.

Narahari Sarkar had a great number of disciples. Rāma Gopāldās who is the author of Rasakalpavalli (Saka 1565) has written all account of Narahari's principal disciples. It is called Sarkar Thākur's Sakhanirnaya[4] Another account of his disciples was written by Rasikadas, disciple of Sri Rama Ghosal, son of Gauranga Ghose.[5] Lochanadas Thākur, the author of the famous Chaitanya Mongal, was an

[1] G.P.T.456 [2] S.P.P Vol. IV. p.230 [3] Padakalpataru I. I.No. 14. p.12
[4] S.P.P. Vol.VI. p. 262 [5] S.P.P Vol.VI.p. 262

important disciple of Narahari. The later writer, Krishnarāma Dās in his Bhajana Malika, traces him as grand- preceptor, Thākur Gopāl, a disciple of Narahari Sarkar.[1] Mukunda Ray was another important disciple of Narahari[2] Dinabandhu Dās seems to call himself the disciple of Narahari, in his poems.[3] Denabandhu refers to Narahari by his spiritual name of Madhumati.

RAGHUNANDAN

He was the son of Mukunda Sarkar, the eldest brother of Narahari Sarkar. Mukunda was also a great devotee. Once he was examining the health of King Hossain Shah. A royal attendant was fanning the King with peacock's feathers, which so much inspired Mukunda with the recollection of Krishna, whose favourite sporting animal was the peacock, which he went into a trance. The King himself raised him up, and he inquired into the cause of his trance, he deluded the King saying that he occasionally suffered from fits. The King was intelligent and understood that he was a great devotee of Sri Chaitanya.[4]

We do not know when Raghunandan was born. He came to Puri with his father, uncle and other Gaudiya devotees in 1511 to pay their respects to Sri Chaitanya Dev Raghunandan was already an advanced devotee because when Sri Chaitanya Dev joked by asking Mukunda whether he was the father of Raghunandan or vice versa, Mukunda replied that he was the son of Raghunandan because the devotion of the God had resulted from that of Raghunandan who was the Guru from whom a love of God had sprung.[5] He was at least 20 years of age in 1511A.D., so he may have been born in the beginning of the nineties of the 15th century.

Every year Raghunandan used to visit Sri Chaitanya Dev and stayed with Him for four months after the Rāthā Yātra. He survived Sri Chaitanya Dev for many years. His life covered the two periods i.e. the lifetime of Sri Chaitanya and the next period of Srinivas Āchārya, with whom he

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[1] S. P. P. Vol.VI.p. 253 [2] S. P. P. Vol. 40. p. 23 [3] No's 476, 489 Sankirtanamrita
[4] C.C.Madhya XV. 121-127 [5] C.C.Madhya XV. 117

worked. Raghunandan was given consolation by Srinivas in his grief at the death of Narahari Sarkar[1]. He attended the Kheturi *Utsava* with his hosts of disciples[2]. He used to go to Kheturi on the occasion of the annual ceremony.[3] He was a vigorous preacher, no less important than Srinivas or Narottam. Srikhanda was one of the principal centres of the sect. Srinivas, Narottam, Vira Bhadra, Jahnava Devi, Achyutananda, Gopāl Mishra and other leaders frequented Srikhanda.

It attracted the people as a place of pilgrimage. All the Vaishnavas used to assemble there for the ceremony on the death of Narahari Sarkar. Raghunandan possessed a very important position in the Gaudiya sect.

We cannot assign any exact date of his death. He seems to have lived to a very old age. He was all along indefatigable in spreading the doctrine Kavikarnapur in his Gaura Ganaddesadipika prays him as much respect as to call him an incarnation of the Pradyumna (Vishnu), the third *Vyuha* of Chatur *Vyuha*.[4] We can easily judge from this, what a celebrated man he was in the sect. He was succeeded by his son Kanai Thākur who also worked with his father in furthering the faith. Kanai's son was Madana Thākur, who had five sons, the most important of whom was Jagadānanda, who was a celebrated poet. He lived at Jokalai in the Virbhum district. He established the Images of Sri Chaitanya Dev at his new village. The list of the descendants of Raghunandan, given in Gopāldās' Rasakalpavalli[5] is somewhat different from that of Bharatmallik's *Chandra Prabha,* which says that Raghunandan's son was Krishna who was the father of Kāmadeva and Vamsivadan. The latter had two sons, Vinod and Kanu. Chandra Prabha is at variance with at least three books, Gopāldās' Rasakalpavalli, Jagadanand's book[6] and Bhaktiratnakara. Jagadananda was the descendant of Raghunandan and an accomplished scholar.

Raghunandan's disciples were innumerable, including many poets such as Kaviranjana Vidyāpati, Rayasekhara,

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[1] P.V. XIV.p.104 [2] P.V. XIX. p.179 [3] P.V. XIX.p.196 [4] Verse 70
[5] S.P.P. XXXVII. p.101 [6] S.P.P. Vol. VI. p.1

Kavikanthahara and others. Their names are to be found in Raghunandana Sakhanirnaya. Chakrapani and Mahananda were two other important disciples who lived at Srikhanda. Rama Gopāldās, author of Rasakalpavalli and his son Pitambara, author of *Rasamanjari* were descendants of Chakrapani.

GOVINDA, MĀDHAVA AND VĀSUDEVA GHOSH AND THEIR OTHER BROTHERS

The first-named three brothers were famous *Kirtana* singers. Chaitanya Bhāgavata refers to Vāsudeva Ghosh as having no rival in the world in singing. He was given the appellation of "singer of Vrindāvan" *Gaura Ganaddesadipika* says that as Kalavati, Rasollasa and Gunstunga were the sweetest singers of old in Vraja, so were Govinda, Madhava and Vasudeva (188). They were already devoted followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Sri Chaitanya Dev was always delighted with their songs,[1] Krishnadās remarks that Vāsudeva, could move the stones to tears by his songs.[2] Govinda Ghosh was the principal singer of one of the seven Kirtana, parties that followed and preceded the Car of Jagannāth at Puri. They preached the cult in and through their songs and music. They were ardent preachers all through their lives. Sri Chaitanya Deva placed Vāsudeva under Nityānanda to preach the doctrine in Bengal. Govinda was with Sri Chaitanya Dev at Puri for some years.[3] Their songs have been collected in the Vaishnava anthologies.

They were *Kāyastha* by caste belonging to the *Uttara Rādiya* order. They lived at first at Kulai and next settled at Agradvipa, on the Bhagirathi, in the subdivision of Katwa.[4] This place is regarded as one of the sacred places in Bengal on account of this famous family and the Gopināth temple and Deities. The latter were installed by them. Many legends have been associated with these Deities. These famous Images of Gopināth are believed to have been actually installed by Sri Chaitanya Dev with His

[1] C. C. Madhya XI. 88 [2] C. C. Adi XI. 19 [3] C. C. Adi X. 118
[4] S.P.P.Vol. XXII. Part 2.p.29

Own Hand and with Govinda Ghosh as its priest, and since then they have been known as Ghosh Thākur. Govinda's grave is to be found in the village. After the departure of Govinda, a dispute ensued among the descendants of the Ghosh brothers, some of whom settled in East Bengal, as to the possession of the Deities. When those of East Bengal were stealing the Deity, with a view to deprive others, the Rājā of Patuli (in Burdwan) captured them and took the Images to his palace at Patuli lest it would be transferred from West Bengal to East Bengal. The Rājā used to send the Deity to Agradvipa, once a year for the annual festivities held in *Chaitra* (April) and take It back after the ceremony. He granted landed property near Agradvipa for the service of the Deity. During the festivities at Agradvipa a number of persons met with accidental death owing to the heavy rush of pilgrims and the Nawab of Murshidabad asked for a satisfactory explanation from the Rājā. The Nawab being dissatisfied with the Rājā and in order to prevent further mishaps, transferred the Deity and Its property to the Mahārājā Krishna Chandra of Nadia, who built the present magnificent temple of great height beside the tomb of Govinda Ghosh at Agradvipa. The Mahārājā of Nadia owed Rājā Nava Krishna of Sobhabazar, Calcutta, a sum of three lacs of rupees for which the latter took possession of the Deity from the temple of Agradvipa and placed It in his Calcutta residence.[1] Vijayarāma in his Tirthamangala, says that Krishna Chandra Ghosal, father of Jayanārāyana of Bhukailas, whom he accompanied came to visit Gopināth but were disappointed to find the empty temple as the Deity was then at the palace of Rājā Nava Krishna in Calcutta.[2] The Mahārājā of Nadia could only get the Deity back as the result of a law-suit and reinstalled the Deity in his temple at Agradvipa where it is now. Mahārājā Krishna Chandra granted fifty rupees a day for the service of the Deity.

JAGADĀNANDA PANDIT

Jagadānanda Pandit was one of the most beloved associates of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Since his Navadvip days to last,

[1] Ward's History of the Hindus Vol. I. p. 205-206 [2] Tirthamangala 1012-1014

Jagadananda served Sri Chaitanya Dev with singleminded devotion. He was extremely enthusiastic in advocating the Divinity of Sri Chaitanya. He stayed about a month or so with Sanātana at Vrindāvan. Every year he used to go to Navadvip to give Sri Chaitanya's news to His mother Sachi Devi. All the Bengal devotees loved him very dearly. He always tried to regale Sri Chaitanya Dev and give some comforts of life. His absolute faith and devotion to Sri Chaitanya, his sincerity of heart, his spiritual aptitude, and hatred for hypocrisy have been delightfully expressed with dramatic force and transparent eloquence in his book called 'Premavivarta' written in Bengali verse. It gives the true expression of the exact spirit of Gaudiya Vaishnava devotion advocating love of God with all sincerity and eagerness of heart, and denouncing worldliness. Asceticism is of general note of his poems. Sri Chaitanya Math has published it. He puts all that a Vaishnava should observe, in concise form, but in a very impressive way.

VĀSUDEVA DATTA AND HIS BROTHER MUKUNDA

They migrated from Chittagong and took up their abode at Navadvip and then at Māmgachi, a few miles west of Navadvip and finally at Kāncharapara. Vāsudeva was a great scholar. He was a very kind-hearted man and a very staunch follower of Sri Chaitanya Deva, Who was so impressed with his devotion that He used to say that He was sold to Vāsudeva. Vāsudeva prayed to Sri Chaitanya Dev "Let me suffer eternally in hell for the sins of the world and let the world be delivered. My heart burns at the sight of the afflictions of the world"[1] He installed the Deities at Māmgachi which are to be found there. His brother Makunda was at first the schoolmate and afterwards a life-long follower of Sri Chaitanya Deva. He was a renowned devotional singer. He entertained the Vaishnava group at Navadvip with his melodious *Kirtana*. He knew the heart of Sri Chaitanya Dev and sang the songs appropriate to His feelings. Sri Chaitanya took *Sannyās* amidst his *Kirtana*. He was one of the meekest followers of Sri

[1] C. C. Madhya XV.162-163

Chaitanya Dev following Him to Puri after His *Sannyās*, and stayed with Him. He used to shed tears at the sight of Sri Chaitanya practising severe asceticism and privations. Gaura Ganaddesadipika mentions the two brothers referring to their absolute devotion to Sri Chaitanya and their sweet melody. (Verse 140) The descendants of their family are now living at Chanhara in the Chittagong district (now Bangladesh).

SIVĀNANDA SEN

Sivānada Sena was one of the earliest and wealthiest followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. He was an inhabitant of Kānchapara, a village about a mile from Kumarhatta Hālisahara. He secured the passports, paid taxes and bore all expenses of more than two or three hundred Gaudiya devotees for their annual pilgrimage to Puri. He used to provide them with food and shelter on the way and personally looked after their comfort. Sri Chaitanya Dev said to him "Look after Vāsudeva Datta, who is so indifferent that he spends all he earns and saves nothing for the future. He is a house-holder and so ought to save money, otherwise he will not be able to support his family and dependants. You will have charge of the income and expenditure of his family, and look after it. Come every year with all devotees and take every care of them" [1]. Devakinandana Dās celebrates Sivānanda in the following lines: "I bow to Sivānanda, who is full of divine love; Whose caste, life and wealth are as the twin feet of Gaura." His son Kavikarnapur describes him, as the embodiment of love of Sri Chaitanya Deva.[2] Sri Chaitanya Dev once visited his house on journey to Rāmakeli. All the relatives of Sivānanda were the ardent followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. He had three sons Chaitanyadās, Rāmadās and famous Kavikarnapur. His nephews Sri Vallabha and Srikānta Sen were also very favourite followers of Sri Chaitanya Dev on his account. Sivānanda also could not bear to see that his God Sri Chaitanya should subject Himself to severe asceticism, so he used to invite Him to dinner and offered

[1] C.C. Madhya 93-97 [2] C.C.XX.46

Him rich food while he lived at Puri. He was always eager to give Him comforts. With Jagadānanda once he sent a quantity of scented oil for His use but the ascetic Sri Chaitanya Dev refused to accept it, and asked His attendant Govinda to send it to the Sri Jagannāth Temple to be burnt in the lamps before the Deity. Sometimes Sivānanda caused Pradyumna Mishra at his residence, to offer a variety of food to Sri Chaitanya Dev while the latter lived at Puri, believing that he would accept it by means of his omnipresence. He installed the Image of Sri Chaitanya Dev at his home for daily worship. This Image has been named Gaura Gopāl is still found in the temple of the village which was built, on the collapse of the old one in Saka 1708 (1786 A.D.) by a millionaire, Nimāi Chanda Mallika at a cost of one lakh of rupees during their days. A very spacious courtyard, a fairly big guesthouse are attached to the temple. Mallik is said to have been commanded by God in a dream to build it. It is situated a little distance from the old temple and house of Sivānanda, which are near the Ganges.

His eldest son Chaitanyadās is perhaps the author of the commentary styled *Balavodhini* on Krishnkarnāmrita. He was very fond of Sri Chaitanya Deva. When Sivānanda introduced him, Chaitanyadās (servant of Chaitanya) by name, he felt ashamed and said "I do not understand what name you have caused him to bear." Sivānanda replied; 'He bears that name by which we know of him.'

VĀSUDEVA SĀRVABHAUMA

He was the eldest son of Mahesvara Visarad of Vidyānagar, a neighbouring village west of Navadvip. Mahesvara Visārad was the fellow student of Nilāmbara Chakrabarti maternal grandfather of Sri Chaitanya Deva. The younger brother of Vāsudeva was Madhusudhana Vāchaspati, who was also the enthusiastic follower of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Madhusudana was the teacher of Sanātana and Jiva. They had a sister whose husband was Gopināth Āchārya who became Sri Chaitanya Dev's staunch follower before them.

Sārvabhauma's father Mahesvara was a great Vedantist whom Vāsudeva mentions as *Vedānta Vidyāmaya* in his

commentary on Laksmidhara's Advaita Makaranda. Vasudeva was perhaps the greatest Vedantist of the day in eastern India. It is he who introduced *Navya Nyāya* for the first time in Navadvip. He studied *Navya Nyāya* at Mithila under the famous teacher Paksadhara Mishra and committed to memory the whole of *Tattva Chintamani* and other works on Navya *Nyāya* and thus brought the whole treasure of Mithila to Navadvip. No student was then allowed to copy out the famous manuscript on *Nyaya* and carry it outside Mithila. He was certainly a great genius. Tradition asserts that Raghunāth Siromani, the authority on *Navya Nyāya* was his pupil. Vāsudeva's works on *Navya* were 1. Samāsavada (Aufrecht 1, 698a), 2. Sārvabhauma Nirukti, 3. Saravali, a commentary on Tattvachintāmani and 4. Tattvadipika. As a Sankarite Vedantist, he wrote a commentary on Laksmidhara's *Advaita Makaranda* at Puri before his conversion by Sri Chaitanya Dev to Vaishnavism. In the course of his famous discourse with Sri Chaitanya Dev on the *Vedānta*, Sārvabhauma employed both his *Nyaya*[1] and Sankarite *Māyā* theory with all his vigour, but ultimately he accepted Sri Chaitanya's views on the *Vedānta* and was converted to Vaishnavism by Him, which incident determined the future India-wide success of Vaishnavism. Sārvabhauma was also a scholar in the Bhāgavata to which fact both Vrindāvanadās and Krishnadās refer in their works[2]. His conversion took place in March or April 1510 A.D., at Puri where Sārvabhauma was residing under the patronage of King Pratāp Rudra of Orissa who afterwards practically converted to the religion composed and a hundred hymns in praise of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Sārvabhauma composed a hundred hymns in praise of Sri Chaitanya Dev, which are known as *Chaitanya Shata Sloka*[3] some of which have been quoted by Sanātana Gosvāmi[4] Kavikarnapur in his Chaitanya Chandradaya Nataka (VI.32), Krishnadās[5] Vrindāvanadās[6] on his commentary on Pravadhānanda Sarasvati's Chaitanya Chandramrita.[7]

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[1] C.C.Madhya VI.177 [2] C.C. Madhya VI: C.Bh.Antya III [3] C. Bh.Antya III. 130
[4] Br. Bhâgavatamrita 1.3 [5] C.C.Madhya VI. 254 [6] C. Bh. Antya III.126 etc.
[7] SI.41.143

When Sri Chaitanya Dev left for His missionary tour in the South, Sārvabhauma wept like a child as he said: "If a thunderbolt falls on my head or my son dies, that I can bear but separation from you is unbearable to me[1]." From the expression of his loving heart, we can imagine what a shock he received at the disappearance of Chaitanya Deva. He died of grief in his old age. He faithfully served the cause in Orissa more than anybody else. It is he who converted the King and made him dedicate himself to the service of Sri Chaitanya Dev and it is he who asked Sri Chaitanya Dev to meet Rāy Rāmānanda on the Godavari, which famous meeting led Rāy to take up the cause of Sri Chaitanya and serve Him in all possible ways giving up all worldly concerns. The conversion of the King and the prime minister caused the national acceptance of Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavism in Orissa. The memory of Sārvabhauma should be remembered with affectionate gratitude by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. His wife was, like her husband, devotedly attached to Sri Chaitanya Deva. As we have noticed elsewhere, present Gangamata Math at Puri has been established in the house of Sārvabhauma to perpetuate the memory of this very important apostle of Gaudiya-Vaishnavism. The whole family, with all its members, was devoted adherents of Sri Chaitanya.[2]

GOPINĀTH ĀCHĀRYA

He was Sārvabhauma's sister's husband and was a firm believer in the Divintity of Sri Chaitanya Deva, Sārvabhauma, before his conversion, cut contemptuous jokes with his students on account of his faith in Sri Chaitanya's Divinity. Gopināth also lived at Puri, possibly in the service of the king as we noticed him interviewing the King many a time. At his Navadvip residence Isvara Pari was his guest, where Sri Chaitanya used to meet him.

KĀSI MISHRA

He was the Guru of King Pratāprudra whom he guided in his religious affairs and advised him as to the management

[2] C.C.Madhya VII. 48 [2] G. G. 119

of the worship of the temple of Sri Jagannāth. Kāsi Mishra was one of the greatest followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. He was a great friend of Sārvabhauma and his conversion followed his. Kasi Mishra greatly influenced the King, who, when staying at Puri, used to visit his guru every day and tend his feet. Both guru and disciple used to consult as to how to serve Sri Chaitanya and please Him. The King provided the garden-house of Kāsi Mishra for Sri Chaitanya's residence where He lived permanently after His return from South and North tour to Puri. Sri Chaitanya is said to have revealed to him His four-handed form of Vishnu.[1] His house, where there is now the Rādhākanta Math is very important, indeed, for its associations with the career of Sri Chaitanya, Who lived there almost throughout the latter half of His life. Gaura Ganaddesadipika mentions Kāsi Mishra referring to Sri Chaitanya's bestowal of Grace on him (193).

BHAVĀNANDA RĀY AND HIS FIVE SONS

This noble family of Bhavānanda Rāy Pattanyak was very much attached to Sri Chaitanya Deva. He dedicated himself with his four sons to the feet of Sri Chaitanya on the latter's return to Puri from the South. Possibly Sārvabhauma Bhattacharya, prepared their way to final conversion by Sri Chaitanya Deva. When Sārvabhauma introduced Bhavānanda to Sri Chaitanya, saying that he was the father of Rāy Rāmānanda, Sri Chaitanya delightedly embraced him saying; "You are Pandu in fact, your wife being Kunti, and your five sons are indeed the five Pandavas". Bhavānanda said: "I am a *Sudhra*, a worldling, a wretch, yet You touch me, it is Your Godly Prerogative. I dedicate myself with my house, wealth, servants and five sons to You. Vaninath, this son of mine, will always be at Your Feet, to carry out Your command. Don't hesitate, but accept me as Your own and command me as You please".[2]

Sri Chaitanya's affection for the family may be judged from the unfortunate incident when Gopināth was ordered

[1] C. C. Madhya X.33 [2] C. C. Madhya X. 54-57

to be executed by the command of the Prince, partly in default or paying the large sum of money due to the royal treasury and partly for his insolence, which led Sri Chaitanya to resolve to leave Puri and go to Alalnāth. As soon as the King understood that it might cause Sri Chaitanya Deva's displeasure, he not only remitted the punishment and his heavy debt of two lacs of Kahanas of Cawri, but also reinstated him as the Governor of Mālajyāthya Dandapatha (possibly Midnapur) increasing his pay to double the previous amount. Vaninātḥ was well-beloved of Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya was delighted to know that when Vaninātḥ was brought to the court together with other members of the family in chains for the offence of Gopinātḥ, Vaninātḥ was reciting the names of Krishna without any fear and anxiety, counting them on the fingers and when the number exceeded a thousand, he made the marks on his person to keep up the count so that his chanting should not fall below the regular quota. The Vaishnavas keep up the number of chanting by means of Tulasi-beads, but Vaninātḥ, being in bondage, did so by marking on his body, so eager was he in his devotion to God.[1] Vaninātḥ was employed to convey Prasād to Sri Chaitanya from the temple of Sri Jagannātḥ.

RĀY RĀMĀNAND

As regards the doctrinal wealth of the sect, Rāmānand's knowledge of it was only second to that of Sri Chaitanya Himself. Rāmānand was born in a Karana family in the village of Bentpur in the Puri district of Orissa. He was an Oriya by birth. He was certainly Sri Chaitanya's *senior* by many years. When Sri Chaitanya met him in His 25th year, Rāmānand, who was the eldest of five brothers, was the Viceroy of the southern Orissa Empire and Governor of the King.[2] He was then at least forty years of age. So his birth may have taken place in the seventh decade of the fifteenth century. He survived Sri Chaitanya by a few years. Rāy was the most trusted of all that served the State of Orissa. He successfully defended the southern provinces,

[1] C.C. Antya IX p.56-57 [2] Banerji's History of Orissa Vol. I. p.335

which were the weakest frontier of the Orissan Empire, and were exposed to frequent, attacks by the powerful kings of Vijayanagar and the Mohammedan States of the Deccan. Rāmānand was successful in more than holding his own against the onslaughts of the implacable foes of the Gajapati, king of Orissa.

Sri Chaitanya Deva inspired him with that kind of spiritual life which led Rāmānand, the Viceroy of the Orissan Empire, Sanātana and Rūpa, the ministers of Bengal, to give up all the pleasures of worldly life and to become recluses. Rāy had lost all joy in his exalted office and submitted his intention to the king to live a strict religious life under Sri Chaitanya Deva at Puri. He was permitted by the Emperor to retire from the service on his pay and was given the garden of Jagannāth Vallabh for his residence at Puri where he lived during the remaining part of his life.

Rāy Rāmānand was a great Sanskrit scholar, poet and dramatic writer. He was well versed in *Rasa* literature. He was a singer, musician, and, a teacher of the art of dancing to girls who dance, before the Deity in the Temple of Sri Jagannāth. He knew perfectly well the Sanskrit language in which he wrote the dramatic master-piece Jagannāth Vallabh Nātaka and Maithili and Odiya, in which he, composed his beautiful songs. We know from his conversation with Rūpa regarding the latter's dramas that he was a great authority on dramaturgy. He possessed all that the best in Orissan culture. In behaviour and manners, he was the most perfect of gentlemen. He was one of the greatest poet and master music-maker, at whose playing the lovely wards of his songs and graceful movements could work magic in such a way as to make visible with unrivalled skill the whole gamut of sentiments with all its various aspects such as *Sanchāri, Sattvika, Sthāyi* and so on.[1] He taught the girls the art of devotional dancing in such a way as to make the variety of *Rasas* underlying his own songs, dramatised in graceful movements of the face, eyes and limbs. Every word of his

[1] C. C. Antya V. 22-23

songs and drama is clothed in music and it is by such wonderful combination of the two that his sentiments, which are the soul of his works and of himself, manifested themselves. Rasa completed his personality and perfected the various manifestations of his genius. In number and richness with all delicacy and charm, his contribution to *Rasa* forms an inexhaustible repertoire for later Vaishnava connoisseurs. Rūpa's Ujjalanilamani no doubt owes its suggestiveness or even background to Rāy Rāmānand who was the first to open the fountain-spring of Rasa to all Rasa writers of the sect. It is Rāy Rāmānand who for the first time represented in his delineations of love of God bearing on Rasa, the exact psychological processes that came and danced in the devotional heart of Sri Chaitanya Deva. When Sri Chaitanya Dev asked Ray Rāmānand to go on speaking further on *Madhurya Rasa*, Rāy wondered whether there was any man in the world who could know that there was still something beyond that.[1] Rāy found in the person of Sri Chaitanya the form of Rasarāj Mahābhava, the full embodiment of Divine Love of Rādhā and Krishna which he was delineating before Him. This wonderful revelation of Rasa by Sri Chaitanya in His own life led Rāy to determine that he should only serve Him in whom he realised the fulfilment of his ideal. Both Sri Chaitanya Dev and Ray Rāmānand found in each other the best of all that they could expect. Ray Rāmānand served Sri Chaitanya Dev to the last day of his life with that supreme treasure of *Rasa* and the highest creation of his art. It is only Ray Rāmānand in the company of another supreme *Rasika Vaishnava,* Svarūpa Dāmodar, who provided the most peaceful companion to Sri Chaitanya Dev. We get a little of the best and the most of him through his songs and drama and particularly in his dealings with Sri Chaitanya Deva. Ray Rāmānand was the most original composer of devotional music of the sect. *Rasa* in devotion was the theme of his life and he was always at his best in expressing it in songs and dance. His expression was always spontaneous and beautiful. He was a magician in the expression of emotions and sentiments. The culture

[1] C.C.Madhya. VIII. 96

and art of the Gaudiya sect is, however, only outwardly the creative assimilation of the mixture of the best of two cultures one of Bengal and the other of Orissa, the former represented by Sanātana and Rūpa, and the latter by Rāy Rāmāṇand for the vehicle of a new transcendental culture of surpassing loveliness. They were the best representatives of the culture of Bengal and Orissa in the field of creative art were chosen by Sri Chaitanya Dev to embellish the Acme of Divine *Rasa*. Gaudiya culture is much more than the more harmonious blending of those of Bengal and Orissa supplemented by that of Rājaputana, which soon came under its fold through the missionary activities of Rūpa and Sanātana. To appreciate and trace the spiritual value of the Gaudiya culture is a great study on an entirely different plane. It has however, all external appearance of a very happy synthesis of different cultures in a plane of its own which is incapable of receiving any grossness from its symbolic expression in terms of the art of this world.

The place of Rāy Rāmānand in the culture of Gaudiya Vaishnavism is very high, indeed. His marvellous poesy delighted Sri Chaitanya his God, with the rare fragrance of its spiritual character. His songs and lyrics entered into the very texture of the Life of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Every night until almost dawn during the last twelve years of Sri Chaitanya's life, Rāy Rāmānand held Sri Chaitanya's emotion to the pinnacle of exaltation with his enchanting melody, woven round the Love of Rādhāa and Krishna, immortalized in his own songs and those of Jayadeva, Vidyāpati, Vilvamangala and Chandidās. We know on one occasion Sri Chaitanya was constrained to place His hands upon his mouth to stop the outburst of ecstasy which Rāy Rāmānand caused Him by singing one of his best songs in order to lead Sri Chaitanya's emotion to the highest pitch of exaltation.[1] His creation of the art is the romance that resulted from the delightful combination of Rasa with lovely words and enchanting melody which form the unique feature of Rāmānand's works in art and literature.

[1] 1. C. C. Madhya VII. 183-4

As regards his character, Sri Chaitanya, Who was so great an ascetic that He felt uncomfortable at the very name of woman, used, to say that it was the unsullied character of Rāy Rāmānand which led Him to convince Himself of the scriptural truth that the body of a Vaishnava is wholly spiritual, It was beyond thought, in terms of worldly experience that the mind could remain absolutely undisturbed in association with the most beautiful girls in the bloom of their youth, whom Rāy Rāmānand taught dancing and music, dressing, and so on, which he did for his dramas to be performed adequately before the Deity of Sri Jagannāth. Sri Chaitanya Deva said, by way of removing Pradyumna Mishra's suspicion about the true character of Rāy Rāmānand "that his mind was as cold as the stone and wood in its external association with the girls whom he taught to express the various moods of love in the movement of their dancings and the music of songs, These he did by identifying himself with the feminine souls of his girl students." Sri Chaitanya Deva always emphasised the fact that the Rāy's mind was wholly devoid of materialistic taint.[1] We should appreciate his character by reference to Sri Chaitanya's uncompromising attitude towards those who succumbed to the love of the flesh. Sri Chaitanya could never forgive the junior Haridās against whom He closed His doors for good for the offence that he had begged of a pious lady, an elderly woman, a little quantity of rice to be cooked and served to Sri Chaitanya Himself. When all the devotees in a body requested Him to forgive the offence of junior Haridās, Sri Chaitanya refused with the remark: "My mind is not under My control; it refuses to touch a *Vairagi* who speaks (improperly) to a woman; I cannot see a Vairāgi who addresses a woman without due control of his senses; the uncontrolled senses of a man are apt to be attracted to worldliness, and the wooden statue of a woman can seduce the mind of a sage; despicable *Jivas* indulge their sensual pleasure under the garb of monkey like monkhood" (*Markata-Vairggya*, in the sense of false and mischievous asceticism).[2] Sri Chaitanya

[1] C. C. Antya V. 38-41, 51 [2] C.C. Antya II. 118-120, 124

was neither prejudiced, nor indiscriminate, nor was He unreasonable. By this seeming contrast, in His attitude towards Haridās and Kāla Krishnadās on the one hand, and towards Rāy Rāmānand on the other, Sri Chaitanya draws a demarcation, separating those who are still in the progress of spiritual life and who have not yet mastered their senses, from those followers of His who had fully mastered their senses and reached the spiritual stage proper which knows no moral fall. Rāy Rāmānand was the happiest of all characters among the followers of Sri Chaitanya Deva. Rāy's name is thus identified with the highest and the eternal in Vaishnava religion. He is a prophet and poet in the true sense of the term. Vaishnavism, through Rāy Rāmānand, has given proof of her fullest spiritual truth and heritage.

EMPEROR PRATĀP RUDRA OF ORISSA

He was the son of Emperor Purushottama Deva and ascended the throne in 1497 A.D. when the empire extended from the Hoogly and Midnapur district in Bengal on the north to the present Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh State. The empire remained intact until about 1515-1517 A.D. when the Krishna-Godavari valley was ceded to Krishnadeva Rāya of Vijayanagara. He was more or less successful in keeping the prestige of the Orissan empire; but within thirty years from his death, the empire was broken up, owing partly to internal intrigues and selfish jealousies and partly to the attacks by the Kings of Bengal on the north and those of Golconda and other States of the Deccan, on the South.

The Emperor was converted by Sri Chaitanya Dev in July 1511 A.D. and thereafter became extremely religious and did all at his command to further the cause of Sri Chaitanya's mission in the empire. He piously believed that there could be no more sublime religion, and so tried his utmost to make the empire adopt Sri Chaitanya's religion of *Bhakti*. His ministers Rāy Rāmānand, Harichandana, Mangaraja and others, were all enthusiastic advocates of the new religion. The emperor with his whole

family, including his sons and queens, dedicated himself to the feet of Sri Chaitanya whom he regarded and worshipped as the loving God of his heart and empire. After his conversion, his whole attention was dedicated to Sri Chaitanya Dev by leading a pure Vaishnava life. Sri Chaitanya Dev taught him the service of Sri Krishna by the incessant chanting of the sacred Name.[1] The Emperor carried out the command of his God in its spirit. He believed that the divine weapon would protect his worldly interests. He employed everything, his life and empire, in the service of Sri Chaitanya Deva, which according to his faith, ensured the proper care of every interest. His personal love and affection for Sri Chaitanya Dev may be judged from the fact that he threatened to abdicate his throne and empire if Sri Chaitanya Dev left Puri, and that he spent the last six years of his life after the passing of Sri Chaitanya, almost in seclusion by giving up all material interest in life. Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka gives a true picture of the Emperor's misery after the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya Dev. He could not bear Puri, the Ratha Yātrā festivals and other festivities that were once performed by Sri Chaitanya Dev. As a matter of royal duty incumbent on the Emperor, he no doubt played his part, but he did it with an aching heart, finding no pleasure in those festivities which served only to aggravate his feeling of intense love-in separation for Sri Chaitanya Deva. The Orissan Emperor remained a devoted adherent to the end of his days.

Mr. A. Sterling in his History of Orissa gives us the traditional and true picture of the Emperor's character and qualities in the following sentences: "His wisdom and learning soon became the theme and admiration of the whole country. He had studied deeply all the *Shastras*. His skill in the art of war and civil government was eminent. In short he was equally celebrated as an able, learned and warlike and religious prince." (P. 131). His martial spirit and political sagacity seem to have been

[1] C.Bh.Antya V. 200-201

co-coordinated with religious fervency and an intense desire for the spiritual upliftment of his people. The late Mr. A. Sterling tells us how he banished Buddhism from the Orissan Empire. Mr. R D. Banerjee in his History of Orissa writes as follows: "In Orissa, on account of its acceptance by Royalty, Vaishnavism became fashionable. Its result was corrosive. It gradually stamped out all other sects of Hinduism from the country." (P. 313). All these facts suggest the indisputable triumph of Sri Chaitanya's religion in Orissa, which was the outcome of the influence of Sri Chaitanya's magnetic personality backed by enlightened royal patronage. The later Āchāryas Shyamananda and Rasika were responsible for making it a national religion on a permanent basis, with the help of their disciples, like the Rājā Vaidyanāth of the Mayurbhanj State and other chiefs and Zamindaras. The Emperor Pratāp Rudra died of a broken heart about 1540 A.D.[1] But the Madal Panji and Kavikarnapura's Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka tell us that that he lived for many years after the said date given by Mr. Banerjee.

A very lovely Image of Sri Chaitanya, which the Emperor Pratāp Rudra is said to have installed at Pratāpura when Sri Chaitanya left Puri for Vrindāvan, has been reproduced in the report of the archaeological survey of the Mayurbhanj State. P C. It is of Nimba wood. This Image and that at Kalna are perhaps the oldest of all Images of Sri Chaitanya. Dr. D. C. Sen has published a painting of Sri Chaitanya listening to Sri Bhāgavata, which is believed to have been done at the command of Emperor Pratāp. It has been preserved in the house of the Zamindar of Kunja Ghata, who are the descendants of Maharaja Nanda Kumār who was hanged by Lord Hastings and was an ardent disciple of Rādhāmohan Thākur. Now there is hardly any important village in Orissa that has not the Image of Sri Chaitanya for daily worship. The Chaitanya Image, with that of Gopināth in the State temple of Maramba is also old.

[1] Banerji's History of Orissa Vol. I. p. 334

SIKHI MĀITI, MURĀRI MĀITI AND THEIR SISTER MĀDHAVI DEVI

Murāri Māiti and his sister Madhavi Devi, were most enthusiastic exponents of Sri Chaitanya's Divinity. It is through their influence that their elder brother Sikhi Māiti becomes a devotee of Sri Chaitanya.[1] Krishnadās Kavirāj distinguishes four persons as the very best amongst Sri Chaitanya's followers: In the world there are three persons and a half who appreciate the devotional mood of Sri Chaitanya Himself, viz. Svarup Dāmodar, Rāya Rāmānanda, Sikhi Māiti are three, and his sister, one half"[2] These four persons fully imbibed the special quality of Sri Chaitanya's Love and devotion to Krishna. Of these four persons, three came from Orissa, and one from Bengal, and what is more interesting is that two of them, Sikhi Māiti and Mādhavi Devi, were brother and sister. Sri Chaitanya counted Mādhavi Devi among the spiritual associates of Rādhikā in Vraja. Gaura Ganaddesadipika celebrates them in verse No.189. Mādhavi was the best of women followers of Sri Chaitanya. The word Arddhajana meaning half of a person used in connection with Mādhavi, does not mean that she was equal to half of any of the men devotees in the spiritual life, but is the Hindu way of expressing that women are one half of men. There is no distinction between men and women in regard to their right and claim to spiritual enlightenment in the Gaudiya sect. Mādhavi Devi was also a poet. Her poems may be found in the Vaishnava anthologies.

CHANDRASEKHARA VAIDYA

He was a Bengali inhabitant of Benares; a copyist by profession. Sri Chaitanya lived at his residence for two months at Benares, taking his meals at the house of Tapan Mishra, a great friend of his. He was a follower of Sri Chaitanya since his Navadvip days.

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[1] C. C. by Kavikarnapur. XIII- 89-109 [2] C.C. Antya II 104-105

SVARUP DĀMODARA

He was the closest associate of Sri Chaitanya. He knew exactly the heart of Sri Chaitanya and his own conduct represents the highest stage of devotion that a Gaudiya Vaishnava aspires to. He was the storehouse of all devotional secrets and of Sri Chaitanya's career. In association with him Sri Chaitanya was perfectly in tune in his devotional activities. The constancy of the mutual affection between Sri Chaitanya and Dāmodar shines forth in almost every page of the narrative of Krishnadās. Svarup is intimately associated with Rāy Rāmānand though Svarup Dāmodar's position in relation to Sri Chaitanya was distinct from that of Rāy Rāmānand. Svarup Dāmodar and Rāy Rāmānand were the best of the *Rasika Bhaktas*, yet each is incomparable in his own way. His was a most wonderful personality in every respect. Svarup's heart was the exact picture of that of Sri Chaitanya. We shall give a translation of the few passages in which Krishnadās gives us a very true, although brief, picture of his character: "Who had touched the inmost depths of Lord Chaitanya's Heart, and was an ocean of *Rasa*. He was totally withdrawn from the world and the greatest scholar, having dedicated himself to Krishna with all his body and mind. Day and night he was absorbed in the bliss of Love of Krishna. His scholarship knew no limit. He was well versed in *Rasa* and philosophy. His body was a picture of Divine Love. He was the exact replica of the Lord (Sri Chaitanya). There was no person equal to Svarup who was a veritable Gandharva (Divine musician of Heaven) in music, and a *Brihaspati* (Teacher of gods) in scriptural knowledge. He was the best beloved of Advaita and Nityānanda and the very life of Srivās and all the followers of Sri Chaitanya."[1]

He was one of the greatest scholars of Navadvip and joined Sri Chaitanya in His mission while the latter was still at Navadvip. His name before he took *Sannyās* was Purushottama Āchārya. When Sri Chaitanya left Navadvip on renouncing the world, Purushottama could not bear to

[1] C.C. Madhya X.102-117

stay at Navadvip without Sri Chaitanya. He left Navadvip for Benares to adopt the same course of life as was taken by Sri Chaitanya. He turned a *Sannyāsi* at Benares. His *Sannyās-Guru* Chaitanyananda Bhārati of Benares asked him to teach the Vedānta to others, but his mind was too deep to be fathomed by his *Sannyās-Guru*. Svarup was the veritable enemy of *Māyāvādism*. The intention of his taking *Sannyās* was to devote himself to Krishna without being disturbed by any worldly concern. His mind inclined towards Sri Chaitanya, so he hastened to Puri immediately on Sri Chaitanya's return from the South in June, 1512 A.D. Purushottama bore the name of Dāmodar Svarup since his Sannyās. As soon as he met Sri Chaitanya, he prostrated himself reciting a very touching hymn of his own composition to Sri Chaitanya glorifying His kindness and grace which would "remove all remorse, which is absolutely lure and holy causes supreme bliss, at the rise of which all scriptural conflicts and doubts vanish from the mind; which makes the heart exalt in the outpouring of Rasa, the blissful quality of which calms the mind, which is full of charming lovingness and dignity"[1] Sri Chaitanya Dev received him kindly saying. "I have dreamt that you would come. I am as much pleased that you have come as a blind man recovering his sight". Sri Chaitanya lodged him in a secluded room close to His and appointed a servant to wait upon him. Svarup soon became the very intimate friend of Rāy Rāmānand, Paramānanda Puri, and Sarvabhauma. Svarup seems to have been senior in age to Sri Chaitanya Deva, because his intimate friends like Rāy Rāmānand, Paramānanda Puri, Pundarika Vidyanidhi with whom he fraternized and jested, were all older than Sri Chaitanya Deva. Since his coming to Puri, and more precisely since the return of Sri Chaitanya from Vrindāvan we cannot think of Him without Svarup Dāmodar. Day and night he was with Him. He was always at his best in every part of his devotional life if Svarup was with Him. In His dances it was Svarup's song, which proved entirely suitable. It was Svarup who could console Him in His pang

[1] C.C. Madhya X. 119

of Love-in-separation for God by singing the appropriate songs from the Gitagovinda, Krishnakarnamrita, Vidyāpati, Bhāgavata and Chandidās.

He was the guardian of the Gaudiya devotees. If any Gaudiya devotee did wrong, Sri Chaitanya used to say, "Svarup, your Gaudiya did such and such"[1]. He was the authority on Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Every book, verse and song which was written and submitted for Sri Chaitanya's approval, had to be first examined by Svarup before Sri Chaitanya would hear it, because Sri Chaitanya could not bear any composition that contradicted the philosophy of *Bhakti* and contained *Rasa* mixed with the savour of impurity of mundane sensuousness. Svarup's duty was to see whether there was any such defect, in the light of Sri Chaitanya's doctrine. When an East Bengal poet wrote a drama glorifying Sri Chaitanya, everybody praised it; but none could deceive Svarup. He was the touchstone. He found out the defects, both philosophical and doctrinal, in the very first sloka in which the poet made his obeisances to Sri Chaitanya. According to Svarup's advice, the poet thenceforward engaged himself in devotion and study of Bhakti literature under Vaishnava teachers by renouncing the world.[2] Svarup deeply studied poetics in all its branches such as *Rasa, Alamkāra, Natyalankāra* and so on. Sri Chaitanya requested Svarup Dāmodar to teach the principles of *Rasa* to Rūpa Gosvāmi.[3] It seems from the fact that when Rāy Rāmānand and Sri Chaitanya wanted to know all about the two dramas by Rūpa Gosvāmi - Lalita Mādhava and Vidagdha Mādhava, Svarup Dāmodar was the first to give an account of them,[4] since Rūpa wrote his two dramas in consultation with Sarup Dāmodar.

When Raghunāthdās went to Sri Chaitanya at Puri by giving up his connection with his family, Sri Chaitanya handed him over to Svarup and placing Raghunāthdās's hands into those of Svarup, so saying: "I give this Raghu to you: may you accept him as your son and servant; from this day his name shall be Svarup's Raghu." Svarup

[1] C.C.Madhya XII. 127 [2] C.C.Antya V.158 [3] C.C.Antya I. 89 [4] C.C.Antya I. 125

accepted him.[1] Raghunāth was most carefully trained by Svarup Dāmodar. He lived at Puri under Svarup for the last sixteen years of Sri Chaitanya's career. We owe to Svarup Dāmodar and Raghunāth for the preservation of the history of Sri Chaitanya's life and incidents, interpreting their deep religious significance Svarup Dāmodar took notes in the form of memoirs of Sri Chaitanya's life and incidents interpreting their deep religious significance. Svarup Dāmodar entrusted his most beloved disciple Raghunāthdās with the whole of this precious treasure, which together with those of Raghunāthdās, was subsequently given to Krishnadās Kavirāj the illustrious disciple of Raghunāthdās. Krishnadās got first-hand materials in the shape of these memoirs and for writing his account of the latter part of Sri Chaitanya's life. Besides, Raghunāthdās, who closely studied Sri Chaitanya for the last sixteen years, having been a very close attendant, associate, told Krishnadās verbally whenever the latter inquired of him about anything. It is for this reason that Krishnadās's biography of Sri Chaitanya is the most faithful and reliable of all.

According to Kavikarnapur, Svarup was as much beloved of Sri Chaitanya as Lalitha was of Sri Rādhikā. Rāy Rāmānand has been compared with Visakha and Arjuna in relation to Sri Chaitanya in his friendship.[2] Svarup disappeared almost immediately after the passing of Sri Chaitanya Deva, when Raghunāth left Puri for Vrindāvan. Svarup is the highest authority on the career and devotional practice of Sri Chaitanya Deva.

Besides Svarup's memoirs, called Svarup's Karcha, he also wrote "Sangita Dāmodara", a treatise on music. He had an encyclopaedic mind and remarkable depth of spiritual insight. He was the most loving character in the history of Sri Chaitanya's followers. His name will linger affectionately in the memories of all who are interested in the life of Sri Chaitanya. The inmost spiritual life of Sri Chaitanya would have been unknown to the world but for Svarup Dāmodar.

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[1] C. C. Antya Vi. 202-205 [2] G. G. 120-124

GADĀDHAR PANDIT

Another very important "branch" of Sri Chaitanya is Gadādhar Pandit Gosvāmi and his line. He is given a very high place in the hierarchy of Gaudiya Vaishnava theology. As we have seen already, Sri Chaitanya was conceived of as the five-fold principle (*Pancha-Tattva*), Gadādhar being His Shakti or potency in promulgating His religion of devotion.[1] Vaishnavas believe him to be the same as Lakshmi or Rādhā.[2] In many places the image of Gadādhar is found to be worshipped along with that of Sri Chaitanya. The most ancient of such Images are the twin Images of Gaura-Gadadhara that are worshipped at the village of Champahatta, near Samudragarh, in the district of Burdwan, a few miles west of Navadvip. These Images were installed during their life time by Dvija Vāninātha, a disciple of Gadādhar, for their daily worship by the latter at his own home. They are life size Images of wood. The Gaudiya-Math has taken charge of the worship of the Images and transferred them to a new temple from the old dilapidated one. They have also started a monastery there.

Gadādhar came of a Brahmana family of Baliati in the district of Dacca. His father's name was Mādhava Mishra. The Gaudiya Math has established a monastery at Baliati with the help of the local Zamindar family to perpetuate the memory of Gadādhar at his native village. Gadādhar came to Navadvip for study as students from all parts of the country used to do during the period. He was a fellow-student of Sri Chaitanya at the academy of Gangadās Pandit. Mukunda Datta was another scholar school fellow, a very close friend of Sri Chaitanya and later, joined Him when He took up the leadership of the small Vaishnava group of Advaita, and since then we find him by the side of Sri Chaitanya all through His life. They loved each other more than anything else, Gadādhar, Nityānanda and Advaita carried on the mission of Sri Chaitanya as leaders of the hosts of preachers of the sect. Gadādhar was one of the five persons to whom Sri Chaitanya confided His

[1] C.C.Adi X. 15, C.C. Adi I. 41 [2] G.G.147-153

decision to accept *Sannyās*. Gadādhar spent the night with Sri Chaitanya at His house when He left home for good. He requested to be taken with Him, but Sri Chaitanya wished that he should follow Him later. Gadādhar reached Katwa with Nityānanda, Chandrasekhar, Mukunda Datta and Brahmananda, and witnessed the ceremony of Sri Chaitanya's acceptance of *Sannyās* with tearful eyes. They all followed Him to Shāntipur and passed ten days with Him at that place. According to Vrindāvandās[1] Gadādhar accompanied Sri Chaitanya to Puri at this time. But Krishnadās differs from Vrindāvanadās in this matter. He says that Gadādhar met Sri Chaitanya in the company of the two hundred Bengal devotees on His return to Puri from the South in June 1511 A.D. All the Bengal devotees returned from Puri in November 1512 A.D. after their four months' stay; but Gadādhar remained there not to leave the place again during his lifetime. Sri Chaitanya placed him in the services of Gopināth and lodged him in the temple of Gopināth at Yamesvara on the sea-shore in Puri.[2] Gadādhar accepted Kshetra Sannyās which means that one doing so should not leave the place again. When Sri Chaitanya started for Bengal enroute to Vrindāvan in October 1514 A.D., Gadādhar insisted on accompanying him saying that he could not live at Puri without Him. But Sri Chaitanya asked him not to leave Puri lest his services to the Gopināth temple should suffer. The love of Gadādhar for Sri Chaitanya was too strong to permit him to submit to the pang of separation from Him. He followed Him secretly and met Him at Cuttack. Sri Chaitanya asked him not to commit an offence by neglecting the rule of *Kshetra Sannyās* as one under the vow should never leave the place. Gadādhar said his vow could go to hell. His God was Sri Chaitanya and he did not feel any compunction in breaking any rule for the sake of love for his living God. Sri Chaitanya prevented him from journeying further with great difficulty. Gadādhar fell senseless when Sri Chaitanya embarked on the boat at Chaturdvara after bidding him farewell on the bank. Sārvabhauma led him back to Puri.

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[1] C. Bh.Antya. II. 35 [2] C. C. Madhya XV. 183

Gadādhar as a life-long celibate. He was a great scholar, and used to read and recite the Bhāgavata to Sri Chaitanya. Even when Srinivās Āchārya met Gadādhar immediately after the passing away of Sri Chaitanya, he found the manuscript of the Bhāgavata had been rendered almost illegible with the tears of Gadādhar and Sri Chaitanya for the last eighteen years.[1] Gadādhar could not survive the shock of Sri Chaitanya's passing and disappeared shortly afterwards. He had sent Srinivās back to Bengal to fetch a fresh copy of the Bhāgavata from Narahari Sarkar, but passed away before Srinivās returned to Puri with the said book.

BHĀGAVATĀCHĀRYA

He was an important disciple of Sri Gadādhar. Krishnadās Kavirāaj classed him also with disciples of Gadādhar. Bhāgavata Āchārya also mentions Gadādhar as his Guru in the *Bhanitas* of his Prematarangini. Yadunandandās refers to him in his Sakhanirnaya (6th verse). Kavikarnapur identifies him with Krishna's damsel Svetamanjari of old (195, 202). Sri Chaitanya visited his house at Varahanagar, near Calcutta, on His journey to Puri from Shāntipur, Kumarhatta, and Panihati. He heard him reading the Bhāgavata Purāna and was so charmed at his explanation of *Bhakti* that he conferred on him the title of Bhāgavatāchārya. He was both student of Advaita. Like his teacher he was also well versed in other scriptures. His full name was Raghunāth Bhāgavatāchārya. But he was well known only by his title 'Bhāgavatāchārya' in the Vaishnava society. The Images of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda and of Rādhā Krishna are still found in a temple on the site of his residence. A small hut in front of the temple is pointed out as being the place where Sri Chaitanya is said to have listened to him reciting the Bhāgavata Purāna.[2] Gauraganoddesadipikā contains the following reference to him 203: 'He who has written the book 'Prematarangini', and who is very beloved of Gauranga, is Bhāgavatāchārya.'

[1] P.V. IV. p.20 [2] C. Bh.Antya V. 120

VALLABHA BHATTA

Vallabha Bhatta, afterwards Vallabhāchārya, was initiated by Gadādhar.[1] At first Gadādhar avoided his request to initiate him as Sri Chaitanya was displeased with Vallabha Bhatta on account of his pride and disregard for Sridhar Swami, the commentator of the Bhāgavata. At last he repented for his pride, and Sri Chaitanya, at the request of Vallabha, asked Gadādhar to give him initiation. Vallabha Bhatta at first used to offer devotion to Krshna in the spirit of *Vatsalya Rasa* or love of a father for a son. As the consequence of keeping company of Gadādhar for long, he was attracted to the Gaudiya Vaishnava mode of devotion to young Krishna in the relationship of a beloved to her lover.[2] Vallabha seems to have separated himself from the Gaudiya community and founded his own sect now called the *Vallabhi* sect and introduced, the *Pusti Marga*, which is outwardly similar to the Gaudiya Vaishnava mode of *Parakiya Rasa*; but there is a fundamental difference between the two. Krishnadās Kavirāj gives us the account of his imitation by Sri Gadādhar but did not count him among the disciples of the latter in the list, possibly on account of his subsequent desertion and disobedience to the Gaudiya sect. Yadunandanadās in his Sakhanirnaya puts his name among the others in the following list whom Krishnadās omits possibly because they were not as important as those whom he mentions. Krishnadās admits that he gives the names of the very important disciples leaving out others because they are too numerous to mention.

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[1] C. C. Antya VIII. 167 [2] ibid. 145

VALLABHABHATTA

Gaudhar as in the preceding chapter, Vallabha Bhatta, afterwards Vallabhacharya, was initiated by Gadadhar. At first Gadadhar avoided his request to initiate him as Sri Chaitanya was displeased with Vallabha Bhatta on account of his pride and disregard for Vaishnava swami. The commentator of the Bhagavata at last succeeded for his pride, and Sri Chaitanya at the request of Vallabha asked Gadadhar to give him initiation. Vallabha Bhatta at first used to offer devotion to Krishna in the spirit of Vaishnava Rose or love of a Pathni for a son. As the consequence of keeping company of Gadadhar for long he was attracted to the Gaudiya Vaishnava mode of devotion to young Krishna in the relationship of a beloved to her lover. Vallabha seems to have separated himself from the Gaudiya community and founded his own sect, called the Vallabhi sect, and introduced the Pushti Marga, which is outwardly similar to the Gaudiya Vaishnava mode of Madhuro Rose, but there is a fundamental difference between the two. Krishnadas Kaviraj gives us the account of his initiation by Sri Gadadhar, but did not count him among the disciples of the latter in the list, possibly on account of his subsequent desertion and disobedience to the Gaudiya sect. Vadmandarada in his Sakhanirnaya puts his name among the others in the following list, which Krishnadas omits possibly because they were not as important as those whom he mentions. Krishnadas admits that he gives the names of the very important disciples alsarily and others because they are too numerous to mention.

Vallabha was well known only by his title Bhagavatacharya in Vaishnava society. The Images of Sri Chaitanya, Nityananda and of Krishna Krishna are still found in a temple on the site of his residence. A small hut in front of the temple is pointed out as being the place where Sri Chaitanya is said to have listened to him reciting the Bhagavata Purana. Gauragaganoddipika contains the following reference to him 203: 'He who has written the book Tattvadarangini, and who is very beloved of Gaurahari, is Bhagavatacharya.'

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[1] P.V. IV, p.29 [2] C. Bh.Antya V. 129 [3] Ibid. 145 [4] C.C. Antya VIII. 167

CHAPTER NINE

SRI NITYÂNANDA PRABHU AND HIS ACTIVITIES

(FROM 1511 TO 1534 A.D.)

The conception of Nityānanda's Divinely inspired personality described by Svarup Dāmodar in his *Karcha* has been accepted by Krishnadās Kavirāj and consequently by all the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. We have already noticed that Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda and Advaita have been given the status of Vishnu in general, but there is a difference between them in their degree of Vishnu-Divinity. The plenary Divinity of all divinities is Krishna Who descended as Sri Chaitanya. The plenary Divinity of Krishna has two aspects or bodies, so to say, one is called *Svayam-Rūpa* or the Principal aspect, and the second is called *Vilāsa Vigraha* or the extended Aspect, generally known as Balarāma, Who serves the purpose of *Svayam Rūpa* Krishna in five Forms. As He is *Mula-Shankarshana*, He brings about Krishna's divine sport at *Krishnaloka*, with the help of His *Svarupa Shakti*. This Baladeva or *Mula Shankarshana* Aspect of Divinity incarnated as Nityānanda, His partial emanation is called Nārāyana or *Mahā-Shankarshana* in *Paravyoma Vaikuntha*. The further emanations of the part of part (*Kala*) of Baladeva or Nityānanda are the great *Purusha Kārana* Vishnu and two other *Purushas* are *Garbhodhaka Shāyi* Vishnu and *Kshirodaka Shāyi* Vishnu[1]. The whole creation of the various worlds is brought about by the different activities of the great *Purusha Kārana*, *Garbha* and *Krishrodaka*. Advaita has been identified with *Kāranas* that force which is merely a partial emanation from the essence of Baladeva incarnation in Nityānanda. Nityānanda occupies the second place between Sri Chaitanya and Advaita in the hierarchy

[1] C.C.Adi I.7 -11

of Divinity. Svarup Dāmodar incorporates the *Chaturvyuha* or quadruple theory of the *Pancharatra* in the complex personality of Nityānanda, in the following verses: "I take shelter at the feet of Nityānanda (Balarama) whose figure styled Sankarshana shines among the all-powerful Quarter *Chatur Vyuha* in the all-pervading Vaikuntha beyond the sphere of *Māya*."

Both Krishnadās and Vrindāvanadās endeavour in great detail and with all the force of their style and eloquence to bring out the identity of Nityānanda with Baladeva Whose partial emanations are the source of the various *Avatāras*, (Descents) of God in the world. This the Vaishnava biographers advocated throughout their biographies of Sri Chaitanya Deva and particularly in the fifth chapter of the Chaitanya Charitāmrita by Krishnadās and in the opening chapter of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata by Vrindāvanadās. All the biographers whether earlier or later, or other writers like Narottam Thākur and so on are indefatigable in praising Nityānanda's Divinity in the superlative degree, particularly emphasizing that the Love of Sri Chaitanya and ultimately that of Krishna is only attainable through the Grace of Nityānanda.[1] Nityānanda is considered to be the manifest aspect of Chaitanya, and the difference between them is that between two separate bodies of the same person. It is considered absurd in Gaudiya Vaishnavism that Sri Chaitanya should be respected at all independently of Nityānanda. They are two Divine Brothers as Krishna and Balarāma,[2] Krishnadās makes it further clear by stating that Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda constitute one and the same Body of identical Manifestation, so that by losing faith in Nityānanda, one is doomed to perdition, Krishnadās cites an analogy of the old story of a foolish Mahammedan who had a hen and subsequently deprived himself of a regular supply of eggs by severing the hen's head. Thus, by believing in Sri Chaitanya and ignoring Nityānanda, Who is part of the same spiritual Self, one would merely deceive oneself[3]

[1] C. Bh. Adi I. 77 [2] C.C. Adi V. 149-154 [3] C.C. Adi V. 175-179

Vrindāvanadās also says the same in the following lines "Balai (Nityānanda) is the embodiment of Chaitanya Chandra's Love. Offending against Him brings death at every step.[1]

Born on the thirteenth day of the bright fortnight of the month of Māgha (February) at least 10 years before Sri Chaitanya, at Ekachakra in the district of Birbhuma, (Bengal) Nityānanda was the eldest son of Hadai Pandit, surnamed Ojha, and Padmavati, a Brahmana couple belonging to Maitthili order. Their remote forefather had migrated from Mithilā in Bihar and settled in Bengal.

Nityānanda's infancy and early boyhood were charmed suggestive of His inborn spiritual nature. His boyish play and supernatural acts of Krishna, Rāma, and so on. At the age of twelve, Nityānanda left home on a pilgrimage with a certain *Sannyāsi* who became a guest at their house and begged Him as alms from His parents. Nityānanda seems to have been abandoned soon by the ascetic,[2] who had taken him on giving an undertaking to His parents that he could care for Him more than his own life. Hādai Pandit declined his usual food for three months. So poignant was his grief at his separation from his beloved son.[3]

Nityananda spent twenty years visiting all the holy places, from the Himalayas in the North to Cape Comorin in the South and from Dvaraka in the West to Puri in the East. He went to Vrindāvan visiting Vakresvara in the Birbhum district, Baidyanath (near Madhupur), Naimis, Ayodhya, Allāhābād and other places on the way. His ascetic guardian seems to have left him before he reached Baidyanath. He performed the circumambulation of the circle of Vraja visiting all the woods and places of interest. From Vrindāvan he arrived at Hastinapur or old Delhi and thence went to Badarika in the Himālayas visiting Haridwar, Kurukshetra, Brahmatirtha, Prithudaka, Bindusarovara, Pravasam, Sudarsana, and Chakratirtha. He lived some time at Badarikashrama. Coming down from the hills he travelled in western India. He visited Dwarka,

[1] C. Bh. Adi I. 42 [2] C. Bh. III. Bhakti Ratnakar Taranga V.p. 318 [3] C.Bh.M. III. 99

Pandarpura and the whole area in which rise the Godavari, the Bhima, the Krishna and the other rivers of the West. At Pandarpur he visited the Vithaladeva Image. Sri Chaitanya also lived afterwards for a few days at this place. Nityānanda was initiated here by Lakshmipati Tirtha, a *Sannyāsi* belonging to the Madhva sect, and Guru of Madhavendra Puri, grand preceptor of Sri Chaitanya.[1] He bathed in all the rivers such as Sarayu, Gandaki, Gomati, Kausiki, Sona, Pampa, Bhima, Krishna, Godavari, Vipasa and so on and others on the way from Bengal to the West of India via. Haridwar. Here in western India he visited Matsa Tirtha (Mahe), Mahismati (Broach), Surparaka (Super) Gokarna, the rivers Reva (Narmada), Tapti, Nirvindha, and many other places. He happened to meet Sri Madhavendra Puri, accompanied by two of his disciples Isvara Puri and Brahmananda Puri.[2] They became very close friends in relation with their common Guru Lakshmipati Tirtha. Madhavendra was an aged person while Nityānanda was very young. He regarded Nityānanda as his bosom friend, but the latter respected him as his senior. Both were of the same temperament, full of ecstatic love of God. Nityānanda lived with them for some time.

They went northward with a view to visiting Ayodhya, while Nityānanda proceeded on his further journey to the South, passing through Malabar, Cochin, Travancore, and visited the Ananta temple and others on the Payoshini or Tiravattur River. At last he arrived at Cape Comorin, visiting the Agasta Malai on the Malabara hills. From Cape Comorin he went northward, entered the Tinnevelly and Madura districts, and visited all the important places therein such as Risva Parvata, Tamala Kartika, the rivers Kritamālā or Vaigai, Tamraparni, and so on. He proceeded north and arrived at Srirangam. Thence he reached Rameswaram and Setubhanda. From Setubhanda he pursued his northward journey, visiting Kamakosthipura, Kanchi (Conjivaram), Vijayanagara, Tirumalai, Krishna-Godavari valley, Jiyar Nrisimha at Simhachalam in Visakhapatnam, Kurmachala and many other holy places

[1] Bhaktiratnakar Taranga V. P.322 [2] Bhaktiratnakar Taranga V. p.223, C. Bh.Adi IX.158

lying to the east of southern India, finally reaching Puri, where He lived for some time and thence arrived at the mouth of the Ganges, which flows into the Bay of Bengal, having passed through all Orissa. From Bengal he returned to Vrindāvan and lived there until he joined Sri Chaitanya at Navadvip about 1507 or 8. A.D. During these long journeys occupying twenty years he became wonderfully wise with vast experience of religious conditions throughout India. He had met various sects in controversies. Once he kicked on the head of some Buddhists.[1] In some of the places, which he visited during his twenty years' pilgrimage, he may have finished his education, and particularly studied the Bhāgavata Purāna. We know when He met Sri Chaitanya at Navadvip that he went into a trance on hearing the recital of certain verses from the Bhāgavata.[2]

Nityānanda arrived in Navadvip from Vrindāvan after the thirty-second year of His life (12 years at home and 20 years on pilgrimage) on hearing of the activities of Sri Chaitanya.

Nityānanda seems to have gone to Navadvip about 1508 A.D. He became the guest of Nandana Āchārya, a very pious Vaishnava belonging to Sri Chaitanya's group. Nityānanda remained absorbed in ecstatic love of God, reciting the name of Krishna regardless of all outward life. His devotional temperament was exactly the same as that of Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya became very eager to meet him on learning of his highly devotional life. He went to Nandana Āchārya's house with His followers and there met Him. Sri Chaitanya was struck with profound admiration and love for Him. Like Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda also possessed a very handsome personality and perfect stature. His inner happiness seemed to radiate through His face and eyes. He seemed absolutely indifferent to the world and possessed by love of God. His spiritual insight was very deep. Sri Chaitanya asked Srivas Pandit to recite some verses from the

[1] C.Bh.Adi IX. 145 [2] C.Bh.Madhya IV. 8

Bhāgavata describing the beauty of Krishna. On hearing it,[1] Nityānanda could not control his feelings and swooned beneath the impulse of his ecstatic love, and on regaining consciousness, began to dance with joy. When he composed himself, Sri Chaitanya had a long talk with him regarding his life, and praised him, saying that he was very fortunate to have met him. He offered himself to Sri Chaitanya for employment in His missionary activities, and became as His right hand. Sri Chaitanya lodged him in the house of Srivasa who with his family loved him with his whole heart and without any reservation. Srivasa's wife Malini looked towards Him as her son. Sri Chaitanya's mother was as affectionate to him as he was to her own son. He soon became the object of love and reverence to the whole Vaishnava group of the town.

When the Vyāsa Puja was celebrated at the house of Srivās, Nityānanda was given the honour of first worshipping God Vyāsadeva with garlands and flowers. But Nityānanda placed the same around the neck of Sri Chaitanya identifying Him with God. Sri Chaitanya revealed to Him His six-handed Form of Divinity, at the sight of which Nityānanda fell senseless on the ground.[2] After this incident Nityānanda became the staunch exponent of Sri Chaitanya's Divinity. He loved Sri Chaitanya as the Lord of His life. He used to say with pride: "I am the servant of Sri Chaitanya."[3]

Sri Chaitanya appointed him, along with Haridās Thākur to start door-to-door preaching in the town of Navadvip. Nityanada's enthusiasm was an inspiration to the other followers of Sri Chaitanya. He used to meet all the people to preach to them the doctrine with extreme humility and persuasive eloquence he did not mind whether they were friends or foes. He was devoid or anger. He was always happy whether people abused or praised him. He was called *Avadhuta*[4], which suggests that He was regardless of all considerations, both approbation and disapprobation of the world. He was mad with Love of God. The sole aim of

[1] C.Bh.X.215 [2] C. Bh.Madhya V. 94 [3] C.Bh. Madhya X. 303 [4] C. Bh.Antya IV. 302

his life was to preach Sri Chaitanya's doctrine with all his might. He was the teacher of Chaitanyaism. He is identified with the very principle of Guru. He was as important as Sri Chaitanya Himself, at least so far as the movement in Bengal is concerned. In the course of his door-to-door preaching at Navadvip, he met the two rogues, Jagai and Mādhai who made a dastardly attack on Nityānanda and his colleague Haridās Thākur. Jagai and Mādhai were given to every form of crime and vile robbery, adultery drunkenness, murder and so on. Nityānanda was determined to reform them. His heart bled at the sight of their horrible lives. One night Nityānanda came to them while they were mad with drink. Nityānanda's purpose was to inspire them with a life, that knows no sin or vice. No sooner did he begin to speak to them than Mādhai struck him on the head with a broken earthen pot, inflicting a deep wound. He was drenched in the blood gushing out of the wound. Nityānanda chanted the Name of Govinda (Krishna) praying for their deliverance from sinful lives. When Mādhai was about to strike another blow, Jagai, who was somewhat more sober at the moment, stopped him saying, "What good should we gain by killing a wandering ascetic?" It roused the people of the neighborhood and news of the incident soon reached the ears of Sri Chaitanya Who hastened to the scene with His followers. He was filled with grief and indignation in finding Nityānanda drenched in blood standing quietly between the two rogues. Nityānanda was perfectly undisturbed and peaceful. Unable to condone the cruelty of the sinners. Sri Chaitanya invoked the Divine weapon Sudarshana, the discus of Vishnu. Nityānanda begged Him to be calm saying that he experienced no pain and that Jagai saved his life by preventing Mādhai from inflicting a second blow. Jagai and Mādhai were seized with remorse and chagrin. Their cruel hearts were touched with the magnanimity of Nityānanda's conduct. They now prostrated themselves, begging his pardon. Sri Chaitanya embraced Jagai who saved the life of His most beloved Nityānanda. He followed His brother and implored Sri Chaitanya's forgiveness, but this was

withheld on account of the wound inflicted on Nityānanda's body. Sri Chaitanya advised him to pray to Nityānanda for pardon. Nityānanda's answer to Mādhai was characteristic of His compassionate heart. He said, "If I acquired any spiritual merit in any of my previous births: I bestow it all on Mādhai".[1] After that the two robber brothers became ascetics shunning all sin and vice. Intense remorse corroded their hearts throughout the rest of their lives. Nityānanda consoled them and inspired them with spiritual hope. This famous incident convinced the people of the moral force of Sri Chaitanya's religion. Nityānanda's life was itself a series of stories involving the deliverance and reformation of hopeless wretches and social untouchables. He was the God-friend of all whom the caste, Hindus looked down upon. Nityānanda's heart was open to all. He embraced any and every body if they were only sincere and eager to be spiritually enlightened by his love of God.

After strenuous work for two years or so with Sri Chaitanya at Navadvip, he accompanied Sri Chaitanya to Puri after the *Sannyās* of the latter, in February 1510 A.D., leaving the birth-place of the movement to suffer negligence for about two years until Sri Nityānanda was sent back there to continue the work.

Sri Chaitanya left Nityānanda to work at Puri until He returned from the south. Nityānanda furthered the cause at Puri in the company of Mukunda Datta, Jagadānanda and others, with the help of Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, until Sri Chaitanya's return after fourteen months or so. About two hundred principal Bengal devotees arrived at Puri to meet Sri Chaitanya in July 1511 A.D., about a month or so after His return from the South, and lived four months with Him at Puri. Sri Chaitanya consulted with Nityānanda the greatest minister of His mission, as to what steps should be taken to continue the movement to Bengal, where a vigorous reformer with an unlimited fund of transparent moral force was needed. Sri Chaitanya chose Nityānanda

[1] C. Bh.Madhya XIII. 219

to shoulder the responsibility and accordingly appointed him head of the mission in Bengal placing Rāmadās, Gadādhardās, Raghunath Vaidya, Krishnadās, Pandit, Paramesvaridās, Purāndar Pandit, Govinda Ghosh and Vāsudeva Ghosh and others under him.[1] Sri Ghaitanya also commanded Advaita to confer Krishna Bhakti upon all down to the *Chandalas* (the lowest caste among the Hindus)[2]

All other devotees of Bengal helped Nityānanda in His work and were loyal to Him.

Nityananada, being thus commissioned went to Bengal with his assistants in November 1511 A.D. and started his work at Panihati where he arrived first from Puri. Making the house of Rāghava Pandit at Panihati the headquarters of his activities, Nityānanda, preached the doctrine to all the people on both banks of the Bhāgirathi. The house of Das Gadādhar at Varahanagar was made another centre, where all the people, even the boys, are said to have joined the great *Kirtana* festivities of Sri Nithyananda, forgetting their homes and personal comfort. Everywhere Nityānanda was greeted with reverence and sympathy.

Leaving a few disciples there to continue the work, Nityānanda went to Khardaha, his future home, with his devoted band of associates. Here he took up his residence at the temple house of Purāndar Pandit, one of the famous twelve disciples of Nityānanda. Ghaitanyadaās, Murāri Pandit, who was a follower of Sri Ghaitanya, lived at the village. He knew no fear in preaching the doctrine so enthusiastic was he. Nityānanda remained for some days at this village and proceeded, thence to Saptagrām, then perhaps the richest town in Bengal. Saptagrām was mostly inhabited by the *Suvarna Vanika* caste, which as a whole is still rich, being dealers in gold. This richest cast of Bengal is still considered untouchable and no caste Hindu may accept water touched by them. This disadvantage of the caste has resulted from their not complying with the wish of King Ballala Sen who introduced *Kulinism* and the

[1] C.Bh.Antya V. 222-233. [2] C.C.Madhya IV. 41

consideration of touchability and untouchability into the Hindu society of Bengal. Nityānanda favoured this untouchable caste. The whole of the *Suvarna Vanik* community of Saptagrām hailed him as their heaven-sent saviour. One and all accepted Vaishnavism. Every house of this village turned into a temple of *Kirtana*. Uddhāran Datta, at the head of the caste, is one of twelve 'Gopāla' devotees of Nityānanda. Nityānanda's mission met with unprecedented and unqualified success at Saptagrām, Ambuamuliska and its surrounding villages. Raghunāthdās, afterwards Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi, who was the only son of Govardhana Majumdar, the Kayastha chief of Saptagram, was already a devotee of Sri Chaitanya. Nityānanda gave further impetus to his religious fervour, which led him to renounce the world. The *Suvarna-Vanika* caste offered Nityānanda fabulous wealth in gratitude. Nityānanda's head, neck, shoulders, ears, arms, hands and toes were loaded with jewels and gems, with bracelets, earrings and rings. His body was always gorgeously arrayed in the habiliments of a prince. From Saptagrām he went to Shāntipur leaving Kamalā Kānta Pandit in charge of the centre at Saptagrām. They turned pious Vaishnavas practising humility and the pure life of love and devotion to Krishna.

He lived for some days at Shāntipur with Advaita, and thence reached Navadvip with his party. This time he entered Navadvip like a prince. We should remember that his aim in life was to preach day and night the doctrine of Sri Chaitanya and His glory. When he was at Navadvip with Sri Chaitanya, people used to call them poor. Now he employed ample riches in the service of the mission. He organised different methods of propaganda to attract the people to Vaishnavism. Mother Sachidevi was delighted to find Nityānanda at Navadvip.

From Navadvip, Sri Nityānanda used to frequent Knanchaura, Vadagachi, Dogachla and other centres of preaching. He had now hosts of disciples to assist him in his work. He flooded the whole locality with his *Kirtana*. The people in their thousands accepted him as their Guru. He remained

constantly surrounded by crowds of followers holding *Kirtana*. The luxurious display of pearls, diamonds and other gems all over his person excited greed in the hearts of a gang of robbers at Navadvip. They made every effort to rob him; but he was always protected by armed guards provided by his rich disciples of Saptagrām. Three attempts of the robbers were frustrated, at the end of which the leader of the gang was filled with admiration for Nityānanda's spiritual power and was converted to Vaishnavism. Vrindāvanadās attributed the failure of robbery on his person to his miracles. Probably his armed guard captured and took them to Nityānanda who may have forgiven them and inspired them with his characteristic spiritual force. Nityānanda's speech might have moved the robbers to sincere remorse for their past sins.

Some sections of the people particularly the bigoted *Brahmanas*, could not appreciate Sri Nityānanda's tolerance towards the *Sudras* and his luxurious life. One of them, who had been a fellow-student of Sri Chaitanya in His school days, complained to Him against Nityānanda, saying that a section of the people, who had a great regard for Him (Chaitanya) could not reconcile themselves to Nityānanda's conduct.[1] Sri Chaitanya supported Nityānanda saying that he was too spiritually powerful to be touched by worldliness. He was too pure to be restricted by the rules of the scriptures, which are imperative on other persons. His life was too deep to fathom. As Siva could digest poison, which causes death to others, so also Nityānanda could be liable to no moral fall. Sri Chaitanya asked his friend to convince others of this truth of his mystical life saying that he found no fault with him. This friend of Sri Chaitanya therefore begged pardon of Nityānanda for having doubted his integrity. It seems that though Nityānanda admitted a great number of people into the fold of Vaishnavism some sections of the people, who admired Sri Chaitanya, were not well disposed towards Nityānanda.

[1] 1. C.Bh.Antya VI

The following year, when Nityānanda went to Puri to see and give an account of his work to Sri Chaitanya, the latter praised him, saying that the nine-fold ornaments on his person were verily the ninefold *Bhakti*[1]. Sri Chaitanya wondered at his conversion of the Suvarna-Vanika caste as a whole. He wished that all low classes, all fallen and wretched persons would be delivered by him.

Before Nityānanda returned to Bengal Sri Chaitanya requested him not to come to Puri every year to pass the usual four months with Himself, neglecting his work in Bengal. Sri Chaitanya added, "Living in Bengal, carry out My wish there. I find none else who can fulfill My desire. You alone can accomplish My hard undertaking.[2] Nityānanda replied "I am but the body, while You are the life, so the body cannot live apart from the life."[3]

He returned to Bengal with fresh vigour and encouragement from Sri Chaitanya. Nityānanda never knew disappointment or failure. His character was a living inspiration to his followers. Hundreds of them were always with him. He used to wander from one village to another in the company of hundreds of followers, and held discourses, *Kirtana*, festivities and so on. Everywhere the people were struck with the unusual vigour and vivacity with which he preached the doctrine. This method proved most efficacious in converting the masses wholesale in the shortest possible time. He had a special psychological knack of attracting the masses to him. People in every village through which he passed in procession, greeted him with great enthusiasm, believing him to be the real friend of the people of Bengal particularly of those whom the caste Hindus treated with contempt. Nityānanda proclaimed universal brotherhood, which bound one man to another by the tie of the love of God. Nityānanda opened the door of the temple to all, irrespective of caste and social distinction. Sincerity of heart and genuine thirst for spiritual enlightenment were the only standards that he considered relevant for admission to his religion of *Bhakti*,

[1] C. Bh. Antya VII. 59 [2] C.C. Madhya XVI. 64-66 [3] ibid. 66

or love of God. Sympathy pity and tolerance are the mottos of Nityānanda's life. Nityānanda has been described as always happy and devoid of anger (*Akrodha Paramānanda*). Nityānanda roused the whole of Western Bengal, some parts of East Bengal also. On one occasion during his missionary tour in the district of Jessore, he arrived with a great number of his followers, at the house of Rāmachandra Khan, a notorious anti-Vaishnava Hindu chief of Benapole, who had tried to bring about the moral fall of Haridās Thākur, by the wiles of a harlot when he was living in the forest of Benapole. Nityananda entered the Chandi Mandap of Rāmachandra, and his followers, were waiting in the spacious courtyard. Rāmachandra sent his man to Nityānanda to say that his house would not accommodate him with his hosts of followers and a fit place for him would be the cow-shed of another house.[1] Nityānanda left the village with a smile saying that it was true that his house was not fit for him. It would be fit for the *Mlechas* who kill the cows.

A few years later the King of Bengal sent an expedition to collect the revenue that was in arrear; he took Rāmachandra with his family captive to Gauda, and raided the village, ruined his palace and desecrated his house and temple by slaughtering cows. Krishnadās remarks that the whole village or town became liable to ruin for the offence of one inhabitant against the saint[2]

The next year as usual Sri Nityānanda went to Puri with the Bengal devotees. He could not miss visiting Sri Chaitanya at least once a year for his personal happiness. Throughout his life, he visited Sri Chaitanya every year, during the car festival. Nityānanda was never idle or inactive. He strenuously occupied himself with missionary work throughout the year except for the few months that he passed in the company of Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Here also he rendered service in furthering the cause. This year Sri Chaitanya sent him and other Bengali devotees back to Bengal immediately after the Ratha Yātrā as he would

[1] C.C.Antya III. 151-152 [2] C.C. Antya III.163

himself visit Bengal shortly. Nityānanda returned to prepare to receive Sri Chaitanya in a manner befitting Him. It was only due to the preaching of Nityānanda during the last two years or so, that Sri Chaitanya was given the most cordial reception throughout the country. Everywhere he was greeted with homage and affection. Nityānanda worked that year with Sri Chaitanya Who was extremely satisfied with Nityānanda's activities in Bengal.

In 1517 A.D., when Nityānanda was preaching with his followers at Panihati, Raghunāthdās, son of Govardhana, of Saptagrām went to meet him there. Nityānanda commanded him to hold a great festival at Panihati. Raghunāth, who as we know, was the only son of the richest man in the district, enjoying an income of twenty lakhs of rupees a year (during those days), spent an enormous sum of money on a great festival with great pomp and grandeur. These festivities attracted numbers of people to whom Nityānanda preached. It was no doubt a very clever policy to attract and gather the people inviting them to dinner and thus making the opportunity for preaching. Nityānanda made his doctrine very interesting in a variety of ways. He had access to enormous wealth, which his *Suvarna-Vanik* disciples freely provided, to be employed in any way he liked, to further the cause. On this occasion at Panihati, Ragunāth gave away a great quantity of treasure and gold to Nityānanda and his followers.[1]

The next important event was that Jiva, son of Anupama Vallabha, and nephew of Rūpa and Sanātana, met Nityānanda who sent him to Vrindāvan commanding him to write and preach the literature on *Bhakti*. Jiva joined his illustrious uncles and worked at Vrindāvan under them.

Nityānanda used to take missionary journeys from one place to another with a great host of followers during the eight months of the year and passed the four months from the Ratha Yātrā at Puri in the company of Sri Chaitanya. This programme he observed to the last day of their lives. He was indefatigable in proclaiming the Gospel of Sri

[1] C.C. Antya VI.153

Chaitanya with all his heart, soul and body. During the twenty-two years of his mission, he worked wonders, in Bengal. He did more than even Sri Chaitanya could have expected of him. He opened numerous centres throughout western Bengal and trained innumerable disciples to preach the doctrine. The house of his every disciple was turned into a centre for propaganda. He recruited disciples from the *Brahmanas* down to all untouchables, and the Mohammedans. He inspired several poets to produce devotional songs and literature to popularise the doctrine of *Bhakti*. The success of Sri Chaitanya's mission in Bengal was mainly due to his life-long activities. He retained his mental vigour and geniality of temperament to the end. He was extremely sincere and enthusiastic. Nityānanda was the essence of divine pity in human form. He still lives in the memory of every Bengali from the highest to the lowest. The name of Nityānanda is pronounced affectionately every morning and evening in every village of Bengal. His very name fills the Bengali mind with relief and happiness in all miseries and bereavement. He will be regarded as the saviour of the fallen as long as the Bengali race shall endure. No man ever served the mission in Bengal, with greater devotion or better earned the spiritual repute and honour which came to Nityānanda, He did not survive for long after the passing away of Sri Chaitanya. Nityānanda used to preach in western Bengal and some parts of eastern Bengal. Besides Nityānanda, other followers of Sri Chaitanya, such as the Sarkara family of Srikhanda, the Vasu family of Kulingram, Srivasa and his brothers, Vāsudeva Dutta and Sivānanda's family of Kumārhatta, Kānchrapara, Nakul Brahmachāri of Amua muluka, Sri Advaita of Shāntipur, Ghosh family of Agradvipa, and so on, worked in their respective places. It must be admitted that Nityānanda's work was systematic and on a grand scale, and the entire responsibility to Sri Ghaitanya of the work in Bengal lay on his shoulders.

Another party headed by Jagannāthdas of Kathādia, Gopaldās of Vikramapur, Pushpa Gopāl of Svarnagram, Hari Āchārya of East Bengal, Chaitanyadās of Bangavati

and others worked with characteristic vigour in Chittagong, Dacca and other districts in East Bengal, (now Bangladesh). They were disciples of Gadādhar Pandit, but they owed allegiance to Nityānanda because the disciples of one follower of Sri Chaitanya looked upon His other followers with the same reverence as they bore to their own Guru. Sri Chaitanya was the connecting link in all relationships among the hosts of "branches" and "sub-branches" of his followers. Besides this, Nityananada and Gadādhar were bosom friends.

Jagannāthdās of Kathādia did wonderful missionary work in Chittagong. (S.N.48). Hari Āchārya has been described as making Bhakti bright and accessible to everybody in East Bengal (S.N. 38). Gopāl Dās of Sadipur possessed a temperament of great spiritual vitality. He flooded East Bengal with a wave of Vaishnavism (S.N. 38). They had hosts of disciples to assist them. The systematic and persistent propagation both in East and West Bengal by the hosts of learned followers of Sri Chaitanya, served permanently to establish Sri Chaitanya's religion of *Bhakti*; the installation of innumerable temples and institutions producing storehouse of literature of a high devotional quality. No other sect can be compared with Vaishnavism in any respect, either in the number of its professors or in its moral effect on the society and character of the people, or in the abundance, variety and spontaneity of its sacred literature.

The first period of the movement in Bengal closed with the disappearance of Nityānanda, possibly in 1534 or 1535 A.D. Next came Birabhadra, Srinivasa and Narottama to guide and continue it. They gave an extraordinary impetus to its further development. We shall discuss it in a subsequent chapter. It will not be out of place to give a short account of those who greatly helped Nityānanda in his work in Bengal.

It is almost impossible in this short paper to enumerate all the principal disciples of Nityānanda or even to give a full account of the most important ones. So we shall try to mention those few without whom we cannot think of

Nityānanda. Of all his hosts of disciples, twelve were very affectionate towards him. They are known as the Twelve Gopals. It is believed by the Vaishnavas that these twelve disciples of Nityānanda are the re-incarnation of the twelve cowherd friends of Balarāma of Vraja Who re-incarnated as Nityānanda. The first twelve enumerated below are the famous Gopāl-disciples of Nityānanda.

ABHIRĀM DĀS THĀKUR (Gopāl No. 1)

Gaura Ganaddesadipika (126) identifies him with Sridam of Vraja. He was an inhabitant of Khānakul Krishnanagar in the district of Hughly. He was a Brahmana by caste. The Images of Baladeva and Madana-Mohana, Vraja Gopal and Gopināth, installed by him, and that of Abhirām in a dancing posture, are still worshipped in a temple at the village. There are two other temples, one of which are nine-towered, and have a dancing hall. These are in the possession of the thirty-six or thirty-seven families of his descendants. Abhirām used to carry a stick called *"Jaya-Mangala Chāvuka"*, [1] which has been preserved in an iron safe in the temple. It is shown to the public once a year during the celebrations in the month of April.

His descendants are now living at Krishnanagar, Āmta in the Hughly district, and at Vishnupur, Kotalpur and other places in the Birbhum district, West Bengal.

Abhirām was perhaps the most vigorous preacher that Nityānanda ever had. His influence was immense. He was a terror to the Anti-Vaishnavas. He always remained inspired with enthusiasm infused by Nityānanda. He left no stone unturned to preach the doctrine. His own house was itself a centre of propaganda. His house attracted a great number of visitors. It soon became a place of pilgrimage. Srinivāsa visited it before he went to Vrindāvana. Nityānanda very often used to come here and hold *Kirtana*. He combined remarkable manual dexterity with a gentleness of heart. Bhakti Ratnākara eulogizes his character saying hat he was well versed in all the scriptures and well accomplished in dance, music and song. [2]

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[1] Bh. Ratnâkar Taranga VI [2] Bh. Ratnâkar Taranga. IV. P. 127

SUNDARANANDA THĀKUR (Gopāl No. 2)

G.G. identifies him with Sudāma of Vraja. He was an inhabitant of Maheshpura in the district of Jessore (Now Bangladesh). The Image of Rādhā-vallabha installed by him was subsequently taken by the Gosvāmis of Saidabad in the district of Mursidabad, West Bengal, because Sundarānanda was a bachelor, so the Deities were transferred to Saidabad lest there should be none to continue the services. The local Zamindars later on set up the Images of Rādhā-Vallabha and Rādhā Ramana in a temple on the birth-site of Sundarānanda to commemorate the great saint of this village. A fair is held in January every year to celebrate the anniversary of the disappearance of Sundarānanda. The descendants of his kinsmen are living at Mangaladihi in the district of Birbhuma.[1]

Vrindavanadās says of him that he was "the ocean of God" and the principal associate of Nityānanda.[2] Krishnadās also eulogizes him saying that he was an offshoot of Nityānanda who played his divine sports with him.[3]

KAMALĀKARA PIPPALĀI (Gopāl No. 3)

Gaura Ganaddesadipika (128) praises him saying that he was the re-incarnation of Mahābala of Vraja. He was born in the village of Khalijuli in Sundaravan, West Bengal. He migrated to Mahesa near Serampur in the district of Hughly and was installed in the service of the famous Jagannāth Image of Mahesa, which was set up by Dhruvānanda Brahmachari, a devoted adherent of Sri Ghaitanya. Dhruvananda, being a bachelor, put him in-charge of the temple and Deity transferring the property to him. Kamalakara's brother Nidhipati also settled at Mahesa. Kamalakara had one son named Ghaturbhuja who was father of Nārāyana and Jagannāth. Narayana's son was Jagadananda whose son was Rajivalochana, to whom the Nawab of Dacca granted 1185 *Vighas* of land now called Jagannāthpur about three miles west of Mahesa, in 1060 B.S. (1614 A.D.) for the maintenance of the temple[4]. The

[1] A. B. p. 202. [2] C. Bh. Antya V. 728. [3] C.C. Adi. XI. 23 [4] A.B.p.221

descendants are living at Mahesa. The Car festival of the Jagannāth Image at Mahesa is a remarkable celebration, which attracts, every year, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from different parts of Bengal.

Krishnadās says that Kamalākānta or Kamalākara was known to the world as a miracle of the love of God.[1] He was full of vitality in the matter of preaching. Nityānanda placed him at the head of the preaching centre at Saptagram before he was finally installed as principal of the Jagannāth temple at Mahesa.

GAURIDĀS PANDIT (Gopāl No 4)

According to Gaura Ganaddesadipika Gauridās Pandit was an incarnation of Subala of Vraja. He was a very powerful preacher and dedicated to Nityānanda all that he could call his own. He served the mission with all his heart and soul.[2]

His father Kāmsāri Mishra Ghosal of Sāligram had six sons - Dāmodara, Jagannāth, Suryadās, Sarkhel, Gauridās Krishnadās and Nrisimha Ghaitanya. The four last named brothers were Vaishnavas. The Saligram is near Mudagacha, a few miles north of Navadvip in the district of Nadia. Gauridās left Saligram and settled at Ambika Kālna, in the district of Burdwan, where he installed the Image of Sri Chaitanya, which together with those of Rādhā-Krishna, Jagannāth, Balarāma, and Rāma-Sita are now worshipped in a marble temple at Kālna. These Images of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda were made of Nimba wood by a famous sculptor with Sri Chaitanya's permission. These were duly installed during the life-time of Sri Chaitanya.[3] Sri Chaitanya presented the Gauridās manuscript of the Gitā in his own hand-writing, and an oar used by him for rowing a boat while he was still at Navadvip. Gauridās used to read the Gitā every day at Kālna. These two presents of Sri Chaitanya are still worshipped in the temple.

Gauridās passed his last days at Vrindāvan leaving the temple at Ambikā Kālna[4] to his famous disciple Hridaya

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[1] C.C. Adi. XI.24 [2] C.C. Adi XI. 26-27
[3] C. Bh.Antya V. 730 [4] Bhakti Ratnâkar Taranga VII. p. 509

Chaitanya, Guru of Shyāmananda of Orissa. The descendants of Gopirāmana disciple of Hridaya Chaitanya are the present proprietors of the temple.

PARAMESVARIDAS (Gopāl 5)

Gaura Ganaddesadipika (132) refers to him as Arjuna, the famous friend of Krishna. Vrindāvanadās says of him that Nityānanda was his life, so inspired was he by Nityānanda.[1] Krishnadās expresses his regard for him by saying that people would attain love of Krishna at his remembrance.[2]

He was one of the constant companions of Nityānanda. He lived for some time at Khardaha. He was the first to receive Srinivāsa on his visit to Kharda sometime about 1535 A.D. or so.[3] He was a *Vaidya* by caste and born at Tara Atpur on the branch railway line to Ghānpadanga off the Howrah-Amta line. Here he installed the Image of Rādhā-Gopināth, in his later life. The descendants of the brother of Paramesvaridās are now in possession of the temple. They bear the surname of Adhikāri on account of the right to worship God, being non-Brahmana by caste, while their kinsmen are surnamed Gupta. They had many *Brahmana* disciples. The festival is held every year in the month of May to celebrate the anniversary of his disappearance.

DHANANJAYA PANDIT (Gopāl 6)

G.G. (127) identifies him with Vāsudama of Vraja. He was a great ascetic and remained absorbed in love and devotion to God. Vrindāvanadās celebrates him by saying that he was a wonderful preacher (*Vilaksana Mahanta*). He was very much attached to Nityānanda.

He migrated from Jādagrām in the Chittagong district and settled at Sitalgrām about one mile from the Kaichar railway station on the Burdwan-Katwa light line, in the Burdwan district. Here he set up the Images of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda, Gopināth and Dāmodara (the latter two are the Images of Krishna), Which are still to be found

[1] C. Bh. Antya V. 732 [2] C. C. Adi XI 29 [3] Bhakti Ratnakara Taranga IV

in a small cottage. The old temple, which was built at the expense of the Mallik family of Bāzarvana Kavasi, has been ruined. Every year in the month of February, the Images are taken to a garden-house where festivities are held in honour of Dhananjaya on the anniversary of his disappearance. He lived at Navadvip with Sri Chaitanya before he settled at Sitalgram. He also lived for some time at Sancrapancra which is about six miles to the south of Memary in the Burdwan district where he had another service of the deities set up by his disciple. Their place is also called the residence of Dhananjaya (*Dhananjayer Patha*). Thence he went to Vrindāvan where he lived for some time. He returned to Bengal and stayed for some time at Jalandi where he also established a service to the deity. He passed his latter days at Sitalagram. He had one brother named Sanjaya who settled at Jalandi, about nine miles from Lokanagara in the Burdwan district. According to some, Sanjaya was not brother, but disciple of Dhananjaya. Sanjaya used to live at Muluk near Bolepur in the Birbhuma district. Those who are in possession of the temple at Sitalagram are the descendants of Dhananjaya's disciple Jivan Krishna who also installed the Shyama-Sundara Image, which is now in the house of Mr. Gopāl Rāya Chaudhari of the village [1].

MAHESA PANDITA (Gopāl No. 7)

G.G. (129) calls him Mahābahu of Vraja. Krishnadās says that he had a magnanimous heart and used to dance to the accompaniment of Dhakka music, being ecstatic with love of God.[2] Vrindāvanadās refers to him as being a very great preacher. He was a constant companion of Nityānanda in his missionary tour. We find him with Nityānanda at Pānihati, Saptagrām and so on.

Mahesa Pandit's native village was Masipur on the Ganges opposite Jirat. There he set up the Images of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda and those of Krishna under the names Gopināth Madana-Mohana, Rādhā-Govinda. The

[1] A.B. p.225 [2] C.C. Adi XI 32

village was washed away when the river changed its course, when the Image was transferred to Snkha-Sagara near Beledanga in the Nadia district. Some years after this second village had lost its identity in the Bhāgirathi, Babu Navakumar Chattopadhyaya of Pālpāra-Kātalpuli brought the Images to his own village and set them up in a temple some time before 1880 A.D. Pālpārā is about one mile south of Chākdaha on the Railway line in the Nadia district. The Gaudiya Math has taken charge and possession of the service of the temple.

PURUSOTTAMA PANDIT (Gopāl No. 8)

According to G.G. (130) he was an incarnation of the cowherd Stoka-Kirshna. He was born at Navadvip and was most attached to Nityānanda, who sometimes lived at his house when he arrived in Navadvip from Puri. He was a great exponent of Nityānanda's greatness. Krishnadās says that the very name of Nityānanda would send him into an ecstatic love of God.[1] He was a Brahmana by caste.

KĀLĀ KRISHNADĀS (Gopāl No. 9)

He should be distinguished from another Kālā-Krishnadās who accompanied Sri Chaitanya to the south.

Chaitanya Bhāgavat calls him Kālia-Krishnadās.[2] Vrindāvanadās says that Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda were surely attainable at the very remembrance of Kālā-Krishnadās. Gaura Ganaddesadipika (132) identifies him with Lavanga of Vraja, a friend of Krishna and Balarāma. Chaitanya Bhāgavat places him among the close associates of Nityānanda.[3] He was a native of Ākaihāt, which lies between Katwa and Daihat in the District of Burdwan. Here he installed the Images of Rādhā-Vallabha and Gopāl, which are now to be found at Kadua about six miles from Ākaihāt. Kālā Krishnadās particularly preached in the Pabna district (Now Bangladesh) and established a monastery at Sanatani in the said district. The ruins of the monastery are to be found there, He was a Varendra Brahmana by caste.

[1] C. C. Adi XI. 33 [2] C.Bh. Antya V. 740 [3] C.Bh. Antya V. 739

Krishnadās went to Vrindāvan and passed the rest of his life there.

PURUSOTTAMA NĀGAR (Gopāl No.10)

Gaura Ganaddesadipika (131) identifies him with Dama of Vraja. He was the son of Sadāsiva Kavirāj who was the son of Kamsāri Sen of Guptipārā. They were Vaidya by caste. Purushottama and his father and grandfather were devoted adherents of Sri Chaitanya. Purushottama was an excellent colleague of Nityānanda to whom he was whole-heartedly loyal.

Purushottama lived at Beledanga Sukh Sakhar, and Sahledanga and installed the Images of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda. After three villages had been successively washed away by the Bhāgirathi, the Images were brought to Chandur where they are to be found at present. Chandur is about one mile from Simurāli on the Railway line in the district of Nadia. Purushottama the famous had a son, Kānu Thākur. He is regarded as another Gopāl by some people.

UDDHĀRAN THĀKUR (Gopāl No. 11)

Gaura Ganaddesadipika (129) identifies him with Subāhu of Vraja. He was born of the Datta family of Saptagrām. He was *Suvarna Vanika* by caste. Sri Nityānanda used to stay at his house at Saptagrām when he preached the doctrine there. Though Uddhāran Datta belonged to the low caste, Nityānanda used to accept meal from his hand on account of his spiritual purity of life.

Uddhāran Datta installed the six-handed Image of Sri Chaitanya, and those of Sri Nityānanda and Gadadhār on either side. He used to worship these Images with his own hands. Some wealthy people of the *Suvarna Vanika* caste of Hughly and Calcutta built the temple, hall and other buildings to perpetuate the memory of Uddhāran Thākur.

Uddhāran Datta Thākur was the Dewan of the Rājā of Naihāti, the ruins of whose palace are to be seen near Daihāt in the Burdwan district. The place where Uddhāran held office is still called Uddhāranapur after him. Here also he

installed the Images of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda, which were subsequently transferred to Banoarivada. Here at Uddhāranpur, there is a tomb over the grave of Uddhāran Thākur.

SRIDHĀRA (Gopāl No.12)

He was a famous follower of Sri Chaitanya. His house was to the southeast of Sri Chaitanya's at Navadvip. He was very poor but extremely pious and happy. After the *Sannyās* of Sri Chaitanya, he used to go to Puri every year, and assisted Nityānanda in his work in Bengal.

CHAPTER TEN

ACTIVITIES OF THE SIX GOSVĀMINS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS AT VRINDĀVAN

We have already noticed in the course of Sri Chaitanya's life that He entrusted **Rūpa and Sanātana** with the restoration of the holy places of the Vraja Mandal; with the installation of the Deities in the temples there; with the writing of the literature, on *Bhakti* in its different branches. They began their work in 1516 A.D. but worked exclusively on their tremendous task since May 1518 A.D. after each had undergone about one year's training with Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Sri Chaitanya sent Lokanāth Gosvāmi circa 1509 A.D. to investigate the best means of beginning the restoration work before Rūpa and Sanātana started; Lokanāth giving them every assistance. A few years later, Sri Chaitanya also sent **Raghunāth Bhatta Gosvāmi**, having given him sufficient training and instruction, to work with Rūpa and Sanātana as their colleague. Next, **Gopāl Bhatta Gosvāmi** of the South, and **Jiva Gosvāmi**, a nephew of Rūpa and Sanātana, joined them. After the passing away of Sri Chaitanya, **Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi** repaired to Vrindāvan. Rūpa and Sanātana received him with all the affection. Rūpa and Sanātana, the two greatest apostles of Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavism, their lives and works, are in themselves great subjects for separate and independent study.

RŪPA AND SANĀTANA

Some try to assign Rūpa and Sanātana a caste other than that of a *Brahmana* taking in a literal sense the following expression of their extreme and remorse and humility towards Sri Chaitanya Whose compassion they

endeavoured to arouse:[1] "Touch me not Lord! Low born, with low companions, a degraded wretch, I have wasted my life in worldlings".[2] Those, who are acquainted with the spirit of humility that permeates a perfect Vaishnava life, cannot accept the caste interpretation of that passage. It is the remorseful uttering of a penitent soul for having passed a worldly life with unholy persons. It was the King's cruelty to the Hindus; whom Sanātana had served and raised to the political eminence, combined with his own personal aversion to the worldly life and his spiritual aspirations, that led him to appeal to Sri Chaitanya Who would reply: "Being highest you know yourself to be lowly. Krishna will free you soon"[3]. We cannot determine their caste by such ambiguous expressions. Their nephew Jiva Gosvāmi himself gives the story of their family and a genealogical tree at the end of his Laghutosani, which disperses with all such surmises. It states that one Jagadguru Sarvajna was born into the royal family of Karnātaka belonging to the *Varadvaja Gotra* of the *Brahmana* caste. Besides possessing all royal qualities, he had mastered the three *Vedas*. He had one son named Aniruddha who was succeeded by his two sons Rūpesvara and Harihara. Harihara drove Rūpesvara from the principality, who then settled in the kingdom of his friend Sikharesvara, in the east. His son Padmanābha settled at Navahatta or Naihati in the Burdwan district on the Ganges. Padmanābha was minister to Danuja Marddana Rājā Ganesh who defeated Samasuddin II about 1405 A.D. He had five sons – Purushottama, Jagannāth, Nārāyana, Murāri and Mukunda. As a result of fraternal quarrel, Mukundadeva left the home of his father and took up his abode at Fateyabad in the Pargana of Bakla Chandradvipa in the district of Jessore. His son was Kumaradeva. Of Kennaiadeva's several sons Sanātana, Rūpa and Anupama were the exclusive devotees of Sri Chaitanya. They used to reside at Rāmakeli near Gauda, the then capital of Bengal, in connection with their official duties. Bhaktiranakara confirms the same account of the genealogy of this

[1] Bharatvarsa. Sravana.1341.B.S. [2] C.C.M.XX. 98-99. [3] C.C.ibid 264

important family. (i) Mr. B.C. Chattopadhyaya who surmises that Rūpa and Sanātana may have been born in a non–Brahmana family seems to be unaware of the genealogical account given by Jiva.[1] They were Karnata *Brahmanas* and had settled in Bengal since the time of their great great – grandfather Rūpesvara.

King Hossain Shah of Bengal apppointed Sanātana as prime minister and Rūpa another minister, conferring on the Mohammedan titles of Sakara Mallik and Davira Khās which were suggestive of their official position. (Davirakhās – *'Yuktabhijno Daviroh Syat'*. Khās means confidential or personal). Their younger brother Vallabha, father of Jiva Gosvāmi, was also a responsible government official. These three brothers lived together at Rāmakeli. They owned immense wealth and used to spend it with a free hand for charitable purpose and hospitality. They brought a good number of *Brahmanas* of their own clan from Karnata for social intercourse, and made them settle at Bhatta Vati on the Ganges. Scholars from the different parts of the country, singer, musicians, dancers, poets and so on, used to visit the court of Sanātana and Rūpa who partronised them. Sanātana and Rūpa were great scholars on *Nyāya* philosophy and the *Naiyayikas* used to submit their work to them for their approvals. Their culture and learning earned them a great reputation in the country. They established a full service to the Deity of Madana Mohana at Rāmakeli, which is still extant. They were the most distinguished family of Bengal in learning, culture, honours and position in the State. From twenty to thirty pandits always graced the court of Sanātana and Rūpa. They were on terms of intimacy with the *Vaishnava* group of Navadvipa, and paid them high homage whenever they visited their court. The brothers corresponded with Sri Chaitanya when He was at Navadvipa, soliciting His grace and favour with touching humility.[2] Sanātana gives us the names of his professors under whom he had studied, in his Dasama Tippani. They are as follows: - Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, his brother Madhusudhana, Vidyāvachaspati,

[1] Bharatvarsa. Sravana 1341 [2] C.C.M.I.209

Vidyābhusana, the genius of the Gaudiya country, Paramananda Bhattāchārya who was well versed in Rāsa, Ramabhadra who was a great professor. (Quoted from Bhaktiratnākar. i. p.43). Sanātana had a special predilection for the *Bhāgavata* since his boyhood. His Bhāgavatamirta is the fruit of his life-long study and devotion to the Bhāgavatam.

Vaishnavas do not care to give any personal history of their own or any relationship with others who are not exclusive Vaishnavas. Sanātana was the embodiment of extreme humility and absolute disregard for worldly concerns, did not care to hint at the name which he bore before Sri Chaitanya gave him the name of Sanātana. Sanātana and Rūpa were known by their Mohammedan titles conferred on them by Hossain Shah. Mallik was the honoured surname of the family, which was conferred by the Mohammedan king. Since the time of Mohammedan rule in Bengal, many Hindu families have adopted the Mohammedan designations of Mallik, Chaudhuri, Sikdar and so on as their family surnames. The name of the younger brother of Sanātana and Rūpa was Vallabha Mallik to whom Sri Chaitanya gave the name of Anupama. When Sakara Mallik and Davira Khās came to the camp of Sri Chaitanya at Rāmakeli at mid-night to interview him, Nityānanda and Haridās introduced them to Sri Chaitanya as Rūpa and Sakara Mallik.[1] Vrindāvandās also calls the two brothers by the names of Rūpa and Sakara Mallik before Sri Chaitanya conferred on Sakara Mallik the name of Sanātana.[2] Vrindāvandās uses both the names of Rūpa and Davira Khās before Sri Chaitanya gave Sakara Mallik the name of Sanātana.[3] Vrindāvandās does not say that Sri Chaitanya gave Davira Khās the name of Rūpa. It seems from Vrindāvandās's description that Rūpa was his former Hindu name, while Davira Khās was the Mohammedan designation. Krishnadās also uses both the terms of Rūpa and Davira Khās before the brothers were blessed by Sri Chaitanya.[4] When the two brothers themselves weeping at the feet of Sri Chaitanya in extreme humility and remorse,

[1] C.C.M.I.184 [2] C.Bh.Antya. IX. 239, 273. [3] ibid.239, 268 [4] C.C.M. I.184, 175

Krishnadās informs us that Sri Chaitanya consoled them saying, "Hear, O, Davira Khās, you two brothers are My old servitors. From today, your names are Rūpa and Sanātana. Restrain your humility which touches My heart."[1] It seems that from this passage that Sri Chaitanya conferred the name of Rūpa on Davira Khās. But what is probable by reference to other passages cited above, is that Sri Chaitanya confirmed the Hindu name Rūpa by suppressing the Mohammedan title of Davira Khās, and gave Sakara Mallik the name of Sanātana, as Chaitanya Bhagavat distinctly says to that effect.[2] The point as to whether the name of Rūpa was already borne by Davira Khās and confirmed by Sri Chaitanya was made clear by the two passages of Sri Chaitanya Charita and those of Chaitanya Bhagavat which seem to hold that Rūpa was already the name of Davira Khās. Dr.S.K.De seems confused in saying that "Sanātana and Rūpa had the Mohammedan names and titles of Davira Khās and Sakara Mallik respectively".[3] It is very clear that Sanātana's former name was Sakara Mallik and not Davira Khās. As Dr. De suggests.[4] Dr. De seems to have followed the wrong notion of Dr.D.C. Sen in this regard.[5] Dr. D.C.Sen says that 'the names by which they (Sanātana and Rūpa) were known in childhood were Amara and Santosa.[6] We do not know from what source he obtained these names. Dr. Sen further says that Rūpa was born in 1490 A.D. and Sanātana in 1492 A.D.[7] We cannot accept his view as reasonable. First, he is wrong in saying that Rūpa was two years older than Sanātana. Sri Chaitanya says to His followers in presence of Rūpa that "His elder brother is Sanātana by name. There is none so wise as he in the world.[8] Kavikarnapura in his Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka calls Sanātana the elder brother of Rūpa in the following verse". He (Sanātana), the elder brother of Rūpa, who was like the ornamental gem of the court of the lord of Gauda, having given up his wealth, accepted the new goddess of asceticism. His heart was filled with *Bhakti – Rāsa* under the cloak of Avadhuta (who

[1] C.C.M. I. 207 – 208 [2] C.Bh.Antya.IX.273 [3] Introduction to Padyavali. P.XIVI.
[4] C.Bh.Antya.IX.273 [5] V.L.M.B.P.28 [6] Ibid 28 [7] Ibid P.39 [8] C.C.Antya.i.200.

disregards another outward approval and disapproval). He was dear to all who were adepts in the philosophy (of *Bhakti*), like a great lake of crystal water covered with moss.[1] "Jiva Gosvāmi in his Laghutosani described his uncle Rūpa as the younger brother of Sanātana.[2] Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi also refers to Sanātana as being the elder brother of Rūpa.[3] It is absolutely clear from the above passages that Sanātana was the elder brother of Rūpa whose next was Anupama. We are not sure whether there was any brother either between Sanātana and Rūpa or between the latter and Anupama. Krishnadās Kavirāja counts Rūpa and Sanātana as the principle disciples, and Anupama, Jiva, Rajendra and others as the junior disciples of Sri Chaitanya, taking the family as whole.[4] We cannot say with certainty who was this Rajendra and whom Krishnadās means by the term 'others'. Rajendra seems to be either a brother of Jiva or his Cousin being the son of either Rūpa or Sanātana. He could not be a brother of Sanātana and Rūpa because Jiva distinctly says that of his (Kumaradeva's) sons, only three were great Vaishnavas. (Laghutosani). Sanātana had an elder brother who seemed to be a non-Vaishnava whom the king of Bengal mentioned to Sanātana that 'He devastated the district of Chakla by killing man and animals like a robber'.[5] It is therefore certain that Rūpa could not have been born in 1490 A.D. and Sanātana in 1492 A.D.

When Sri Chaitanya met Sanātana at Rāmakeli about November or December in 1514 A.D., the latter had already been the king's minister for a long time. On His return to Puri, Sri Chaitanya told Gadadhara and others that He had met Sanātana and Rūpa whom He described as the foremost of devotees, outwardly ministers and governors, old in learning, faith and wisdom (Pravina) and so on.[6] It is clear from the above that Sanātana and Rūpa were already at least forty or forty-five in 1514 A.D. They could not otherwise have held their ministerial office, which their wisdom and experience had earned for them.[7] Moreover we know that

[1] Act IX. [2] Bh.R.K.I.P.54. [3] Muktacharitam.verse IV. Manohsiksa.Verse iii.
[4] C.C.Adi.X.85. [5] C.C.Madhya. XIX.24-25. [6] C.C.M.XVI.261. [7] B.R.K.I.

their youngest brother Anupama, who died in 1516 A.D. at Gauda while on his way to Puri from Vrindāvan, already had a son Jiva who saw Sri Chaitanya at Rāmakeli during the latter's visit to the place and who also joined his uncles at Vrindāvan a few years later. Thus if the youngest brother Anupama could have a son in 1514 A.D., his elder brothers could not have been born in 1490 A.D. and 1492 A.D. as Dr. Sen suggests. Had Sanātana been born in 1492 A.D. Sri Chaitanya could hardly have described a young man of twenty-two as old in learning and wisdom, as he did, nor could Sanātana have held the responsible office of a minister at the early age of fifteen or sixteen, because Sri Chaitanya met him when the latter had already served the government for a good many years; nor could his youngest brother have by that time (1514 A.D.) begotten a son to be of an age to take an interest in Sri Chaitanya. After finishing their studies they entered the king's service, which they enjoyed for many years before they finally retired from the world to join Sri Chaitanya's mission in 1516 A.D. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that both Sanātana and Rūpa must have passed their fortieth year before their retirement; so that they were likely to have been born circa 1470 A.D.

THEIR MEETING WITH SRI CHAITANYA

Sri Chaitanya's activities at Navadvip, the reformation of the two notorious brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi by Him and His general reputation as Avatār of God had deeply impressed Sanātana and Rūpa. They watched the movement with the greatest interest and sympathy. They had had Vaishnavite tendencies since their boyhood. Sanātana had already set up the Madana Mohana temple at Rāmakeli. They corresponded with Sri Chaitanya informing Him of their support and intention to help Him in His mission. Their personal humility, courtesy and sincerity as expressed in their letters, touched the heart of Sri Chaitanya and impressed Him with their piety as well as learning. Being in high favour with the Mohammedan king as his trusted ministers, they could not venture openly to help the Hindu movement. They awaited their

opportunities. Sri Chaitanya was also very eager to meet them, but dread of arousing the king's suspicion and jealousy deterred them.

At last Sri Chaitanya arrived at Rāmakeli in about November or December 1514 A.D. on the pretext of going on to Vrindāvan. His real intention being to meet and advise Davira Khās and Sakara Mallik as to how they could join Him.[1] Sri Chaitanya reached Rāmakeli in the company of a host of His followers and began preaching in the city. Sri Chaitanya's missionary activities in the city soon reached the ears of the king who sent for Kesava Chatri and Davira Khās and asked their opinion on Sri Chaitanya. Sākara Mallik and Davira Khās visited Sri Chaitanya's camp at mid-night in disguise. The two brothers bitterly regretted having spent their lives in the service of the cruel king who oppressed the Hindus and in the company of worldlings. They fell at the feet of Sri Chaitanya offering Him their services. Their remorse touched His heart. He promised them spiritual consolation saying that Krishna would deliver them from worldliness. This meeting with Sri Chaitanya was the turning-point in their lives. He inspired them with infinite spiritual strength and a poignant desire to renounce the world. Sri Chaitanya seems to have advised them to give up their Government service and devote their time and energy to His missionary work, for which they were well qualified with their learning and culture. Sri Chaitanya thereupon postponed His journey to Vrindāvan and returned to Puri, having worked for several months in Assam and Bengal. Accordingly Rūpa and Sanātana determined to give up their ministerial duties. No longer enjoying their worldly lives, they had a *Purascharana* ceremony performed by two *Brahmanas* to facilitate their acceptance as devotees by Sri Chaitanya.[2] Their third brother Anupama was of the same devotional temperament and was also graced by Sri Chaitanya. In a few months, Rūpa and Anupama came home to Fateyavād with their vast wealth leaving only ten thousand rupees with a Mudi at Rāmakeli for Sanātana's use in case of emergency. Rūpa gave half his fortune to pious *Brahmanas, Vaishnavas* and for other

[1] C.C.M.I.212. [2] C.C.M.XIX.5.

charitable purposes, and made provision for their family with one quarter reserving the remaining quarter for emergency. This he did perhaps before the autumn of 1515 A.D. when he learnt that Sri Chaitanya had reached Puri from Bengal and would soon go to Vrindāvan. Rūpa sent two messengers to Puri to notify him as soon as Sri Chaitanya had started for Vrindāvan, as he would make his own arrangements accordingly.

Sanātana now refrained from participating in the affairs of state; devoted all his time to his studies of the Bhagavat in the company of about thirty *Pandits* and left his ministerial duties to his subordinates. Rūpa's long absence at home and Sanātana's neglect of his duties on the pretext of indifferent health excited suspicion as to their royalty in the mind of the king. Sanātana was the helmsman of the state. The king usually passed his days in hunting and warfare. The affairs of state began to suffer greatly. The king sent his own doctor to ascertain the condition of Sanātana's health. He reported to the king that he was quite all right. At this king himself took Sanātana by surprise at his residence and found him discussing the scriptures with twenty or thirty *Pandits* in his hall. Sanātana received the king with great courtesy. The king said, 'My doctor reports that you are quite well. All the business of my state depends on you. But you are staying at home and neglecting it. You have ruined my affairs. Tell me your intention.' Sanātana humbly submitted that he was unable to devote himself any more to statecraft, and requested him to appoint somebody else in his place. At this king became angry and said, "Your elder brother is acting like a robber. He has been desolating the *Cakla* by killing men and animals; and here you are ruining all my affairs." Sanātana submitted with due courtesy that he was free to punish those who would offend him, as he pleased. The king asked Sanātana to accompany him on his expedition to Orissa. But Sanātana refused to obey his command saying that he was unable to join him as it was the king's intention to molest the Hindu gods and destroy their temples. It was perhaps the first time that the king had ever received a refusal or

met with point blank disapproval of a projected campaign, from his minister for reason so repugnant to the king that nobody would have dared to advance. It greatly irritated the king. He suspected that Sanātana might even escape and join the Hindu king, his enemy, so the king put him in prison before he started for Orissa.

Rūpa heard the news of Sanātana's captivity when he was still at Fateyavād. He wrote a letter, which was secretly conveyed, to Sanātana in his prison, advising him to buy his release with the ten thousand rupees that had been left at Gauda, and informed him that Sri Chaitanya had already started for Vrindāvan by way of Jhārikhand and that he and their younger brother Anupama would be leaving to join Sri Chaitanya. Rūpa advised Sanātana to run away from Gauda and meet them all at Vrindāvan by fair means or foul.[1]

Rūpa and Anupama met Sri Chaitanya at Allahabad in February 1516 A.D. Rūpa informed Sri Chaitanya of Sanātana's sufferings in prison and invoked His grace for his providential release. Sri Chaitanya taught Rūpa the doctrine of *Bhakti Rāsa* and sent him to Vrindāvan, charging him with the task of restorating the holy places of the Mathurā circle, by raising temples, writing systematic treatises on *Bhakti*, introducing Vaishnavite practices and preaching the doctrine in western and central India. Here at Allahabad Rūpa was introduced by Sri Chaitanya to Vallabha Bhatta, the future founder of the Vallabhi sect, who entertained Sri Chaitanya with Rūpa and Anupama to dinner at his house at Adail, opposite Allahabad, across the Yamunā. Rūpa wanted to live with Sri Chaitanya but He ruled otherwise. Rūpa possessed extraordinary abilities for carrying out successfully the task of his mission in the west of India which would have remained untouched if he had lived a devotional life of seclusion at Puri. Rūpa, being ordained by Sri Chaitanya, accordingly proceeded to Vrindāvan with Anupama, while Sri Chaitanya Himself returned to Benares.[2] Dr. D.C. Sen is wrong in saying that Rūpa met Sri Chaitanya at Benares.[3] It was Sanātana who met him at Benares.[4]

[1] C.C.M.XIX. [2] C.C.M.XIX. [3] C. & C.P.18. [4] C.C.M.XX.

Here at Gauda Sanātana was delighted to receive Rūpa's letter, which reached him in prison. Sanātana was a great diplomat; expert in dealing with all sorts of people and well knew the nature of his colleagues and subordinates. He easily won over the Mohammedan jailor by appealing to his weakness. "You are a very pious man and well read in the Korān. If you let a captive go for the sake of religion, God gives you salvation. I had been good to you in my former capacity; now it is your turn to show your gratitude by releasing me. I offer you five thousand rupees. If you set me free, you will get money and salvation at the same time".[1] The jailor, was afraid of the king's disapproval, was sure that he would be condemned to death when the king learned that he had helped Sanātana to escape. Sanātana however told him that the king had gone to the south (Orissa). If he returned soon the jailor should tell him that Sākara Mallik had been taken wearing his fetters to the bank of the Ganges but had jumped into the river and been drowned under the weight of his fetters and that his body could not be found in spite of careful search. "Have no fears that I should be detected. I will not live in this country. I will go to Mecca and become a Darvesa (saint)." The keeper still hesitated. Sanātana added another two thousand rupees to the former bribe, which proved too great a temptation and the same night the jailor conveyed Sanātana to the other side of the river opposite Gauda, filing off his fetters. Sanātana's most faithful servant Ishana, who had secretly conveyed the letter from Rūpa and arranged the jailor's bribe, accompanied Sanātana in his flight. He took eight gold coins (Muhar) with him for Sanātana's personal expenses on the way. It seemed quite natural to him that a distinguished personage should want money. His intension was to procure comforts for his master. Disguised, they left for Vrindāvan travelling through the forests and hills lest they should be detected by the spies upon the Gadadvara road where Sanātana, being well known, would be unable to pass unnoticed. He walked swiftly, reaching Pattra hill on the evening of the second day. It was most

[1] C.C.M.XX.4-8.

difficult to proceed without guide or armed escort. Sanātana asked the Bhuiya of the place to help him traverse the hill. The Bhuiya received him courteously, offered hospitality and promised that he would arrange to escort him at night. Sanātana took his bath after a continuous journey and fast lasting two days. That Bhuiya was a bandit chief and murderer who held undisputed sway over that entire neighbourhood. He employed palmists and magicians to read whether the travellers had any money. They were troublous times in almost every part of the country; altogether unsafe for travellers and the corpses of murdered persons were to be found everywhere along the routes. His unusual courtesy roused Sanātana's suspicions. He inquired of his servant Isana whether he had any money with him. Isana could not but admit it but said that he had seven Mohurs although he had eight gold pieces. Sanātana rebuked him for carrying what was virtually black death with him. He took the seven Mohurs and offered them to the Bhuiya requesting him to accept the money for the purpose of conducting him over the hill. He added that he was a refugee and preferred some forest–path unfrequented by travellers, avoiding the main Gadadvara road. The Bhuiya was touched by the piety of Sanātana's heart. He refused the money adding that he would have killed him that night to rob him of his eight Muhars, which his servant had in his possession. Sanātana insisted on his acceptance of the gold pieces saying that otherwise some other person was sure to kill them for it. The Bhuiya safely conducted him across the hill by the forest path at night with the help of four of his armed footmen. Having passed the dangerous zone, Sanātana told Isana that he knew that he had still one Muhar with him. Ishana admitted it. The ascetic Sanātana then sent him back home with his money and resumed his journey alone carrying a water bottle and a tattered quilt without fear of being killed for any consideration. We know that Sanātana was to meet Sri Chaitanya in whose hands lay his whole future. Now he wore rags flinging away his princely robes but he was happy to renounce the world, having gained the grace and favour

of Sri Chaitanya. In the course of his journey he arrived at Hajipur one evening. Hajipur is at the confluence of the Ganges and Gandaka rivers, opposite Patna. To this place Sanātana's brother-in-law Srikānt who was also in the service of the state, had been sent by the king of Bengal with three lakhs of rupees to buy horses which were to be presented to the Emperor of Delhi. He chanced to recognise Sanātana, who had taken shelter in a garden for the night. Srikānt met him there at night taking with him only one faithful servant. Sanātana related to him the whole story of his escape. Journeying by the forest-ways without food or bath. Sanātana presented an unkept appearance, which moved his relative to pity. He, accordingly, asked him to rest there for a couple of days, shave and change into clean clothing. But Sanātana insisted on resuming his journey immediately and requested Srikānt to convey him across the Ganges. Srikānt complied with his wish, but gave him a blanket, which Sanātana accepted as a protection against the biting cold of the hill-country. At last he reached Benares in the hope of finding relief in the presence of Sri Chaitanya. He presented himself at the gate of the house of Chandra Sekhara Vaidya where Sri Chaitanya was staying. Sri Chaitanya was aware of his arrival and commanded Chandra Sekhara to receive a Vaishnava whom he would find waiting at the gate and whom he was to conduct to the presence of Sri Chaitanya. Sanātana unshaved and in his soiled clothing looked remarkably unlike a *Vaishnava* outwardly and Chandra Sekhara not recognising him as such reported to Sri Chaitanya that there was at the moment only a *Darvesa* at the gate. Sri Chaitanya asked him to bring the *Darvesa* to Him. Sri Chaitanya rushed to embrace Sanātana as soon as he caught sight of him but Sanātana prostrated himself at a distance, entreating him not to touch his impure body. Sri Chaitanya took him by the hand and made him take a seat beside Him, caressing him with great tenderness when Sanātana besought Him not to touch him. Sri Chaitanya said, "I touch you to sanctify Myself. You can purify the world by the power of your *Bhakti*" and thanked Krishna for having delivered him from the snares

of the world. Sanātana replied that he knew no Krishna but had been saved by Sri Chaitanya Himself and told Him the whole story of his escape. Sri Chaitanya then asked Sanātana to shave and bathe in the Ganges and commanded Chandra Sekhara to exchange the soiled clothes for fresh ones but Sanātana would not accept that which Chandra Sekhara offered him. Sri Chaitanya used to dine at Tapana Misra's house. That day Sanātana was invited to dine there also. When Sri Chaitanya sat down to His meal, He asked Misra to serve Sanātana also but the latter was not to have his meal until He had first eaten. Tapan Misra then offered him a length of new cloth, which he refused but finally accepted an old cloth, which Sanātana cut into two small pieces one for a loincloth and the other for a wrap (*Kaupin* and *Vahirvasa*).

A Marhatta *Brahmana* follower of Sri Chaitanya invited Sanātana to dine at his house during the whole period of his stay at Benares but the ascetic Sanātana did not like placing himself under any obligation to him and preferred to beg every day at different houses. Sri Chaitanya was extremely pleased with this practice of his detachment from the world. But there was still something incongruous about Sanātana. He dressed in rags and lived by begging from door to door but wore the costly Bhota blanket given to him by his brother-in-law and which Sri Chaitanya seemed to disapprove of. He therefore resolved to dispose of it. On the bank of Ganges he found a beggar drying his *kantha* (made of old rags) and requested him to exchange it for the blanket. The beggar was offended at first thinking Sanātana was joking but was soon convinced that the offer was made in earnest. Sanātana returned to Sri Chaitanya carrying the kantha on his shoulders and told the facts. Sri Chaitanya replied, "I have guessed it. Why should Krishna, Who has delivered you from all worldliness, have left the last trace of it? No good physician leaves the remnant of a disease uncured. To live on alms from door to door with a costly blanket on your body would invite criticism from the public. It would spoil your good name." Sanātana replied, "He who

cut asunder my worldly ties, has cured the last remnant of worldliness in me." [1]

Sri Chaitanya taught Sanātana the whole doctrine of *Bhakti* in relation to its three aspects: *Samvondha, Abhidheya* and *Prayojana* for two months. We have already discussed it to some extent in connection with the life of Sri Chaitanya. He gave him the whole plan of his future work at Vrindāvan and instructed him to that effect. It is the same task which Sri Chaitanya had imposed on Rūpa at Allahabad. At the end of two months training at Benares, Sri Chaitanya sent him to Vrindāvan to join Rūpa and Anupama who were already there. Sri Chaitanya then returned to Puri.

Rūpa and Anupama, having lived over a month at Vrindāvan, returned to Allahabad along the bank of the Ganges to Sanātana; while Sanātana was journeying to Mathurā at the same time by the Trunk Road. So they did not meet each other. Rūpa heard at Allahabad that Sanātana had left for Mathurā. Rūpa and Anupama returned to Bengal via Benares where they stayed for about ten days. When they reached Gauda, Anupama suddenly died there. This caused Rūpa some delay, and he could not join the Bengal devotees going out to Puri but arrived there alone before the *Ratha-Yatra*, i.e. in June 1516 Sri Chaitanya lodged him in the same cottage with Haridās Thākur. Both were equally ascetic and in perfect harmony with each other in their devotional temperament. Every day Sri Chaitanya used to visit Rūpa at their cottage and instruct him. Sri Chaitanya also asked Svarup Dāmodar to teach *Rāsa* to Rūpa. When Rūpa was at Vrindāvan, he made up his mind to write his devotional drama and composed its *Namaskriya* verses glorifying Sri Chaitanya. On the way to Puri he composed its outline setting forth its plot and sub plot etc. He had a mind to deal with both the wedded and free and unrestricted love of Krishna in one drama. He had a dream at Satyabhāmapur in Orissa where he passed one night on his way, in which the goddess Satyabhāma (Krishna's

[1] C.C.M.XX.90-93.

wedded wife) appearing to him, commanded him to write a separate drama dealing with her love. At Puri Sri Chaitanya asked him one day, to arrange his plot so as not to take Krishna out of Vraja as Krishna never leaves it.[1] Rūpa was ordered by both goddess Satyabhāma and Sri Chaitanya to write two separate dramas dealing with the two independent aspects of the love of God. Accordingly Rūpa wrote his two dramas concurrently, one of them is Lalitā Mādhava the other being Vidagdha Mādhava. Rūpa had already the devotional life of Sri Chaitanya before Him, and his love-story contains crypto references to the love of Sri Chaitanya for Krishna. At the *Ratha Yatra* festival Rūpa made a close study of Sri Chaitanya's songs, dances, soliloquy, trances and inspired sayings, the result of the festival but none of the devotees with the exception of Svarup Dāmodar understood why Sri Chaitanya recited the famous verse, "*Ya Kaumaraharah*" of *Kāvya Prakasa*[2]: a verse in which a love-lorn girl longs to be with her lover in the grove on the bank of the Reva, where they had first met and where they fell in love with each other. On hearing the said verse from the mouth of Sri Chaitanya before the Image of Jagannāth in His car, Rūpa understood the language of His heart and composed the following verse, which embodies Sri Chaitanya's devotional secret.

"Rādhā says: "O, my sisters, my darling Krishna has met me at Kurukshetra, and I am that Rādhā, the bliss of our meeting is just the same, yet my heart yearns for the groves on the bank of the Kālindi sounded with music of the pipe of Krishna at the fifth pitch."

Rūpa was the second person who could fathom the depths of Sri Chaitanya's secret heart and he composed the verse, now to be found in his Padyavali, on the very spot where Sri Chaitanya recited the *Kāvyaprakasa* text in the course of his dance.[3] When Rūpa came to his residence from the car festival, he wrote it down on a palm-leaf. Putting it into the thatched roof of the hut, he then went to the sea to bathe. Shortly Sri Chaitanya called

[1] C.C.Antya.I.42, 66. [2] ibid.I.4 [3] C.C.M.I.60.

on him and found the verse, to His great delight. He caressed Rūpa with great affection and asked how he had understood His feelings so well as to embody it in this verse of his.[1]

Later on, Sri Chaitanya brought to Rūpa's hut, Rāma Rāya, Svarup Dāmodar, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma and others so that they might see his two dramas. Rāy Rāmānand was a great dramatist and an accomplished artist who taught dancing, acting etc. He talked with Rūpa about the plot, the hero, heroines and sub-plots; the introduction, object and development of the play etc. which he examined with great care paying the highest tribute to the dramatic talent, poetic excellence, soundness of principles and description of love, of the Lalitā and Vidagdha Mādhava Nātakas. Sri Chaitanya praised Rūpa's gift of *Kāvya* and *Alankāra* remarking that without possessing the highest gift of poetry, one could never write successfully on *Rāsa*. He asked all His devotees to grant Rūpa blessing that he might describe *Prema* and the divine sports of Krishna day and night.

Sri Chaitanya sent him back to Vrindāvan after *Dolyātrā* in March-April 1517 A.D., after ten or eleven months' training under Himself and Svarup Dāmodar. He gave him all instructions and advice as to the work at Vrindāvan. He asked him to send Sanātana to Puri on his return to Vrindāvan.

On reaching Vrindāvan, Sanātana, being a great ascetic, performed the circumambulation of the woods of the circle of Mathurā, passing each night under a separate tree or grove. Having secured a copy of Mathurā Mahatmya, a topographical treatise on Mathurā, he discovered the forgotten places associated with the memory of Sri Krishna, in the course of his wandering in the woods for about one year, at the end of which period he came to Puri, ten days after the departure of Rūpa from that place. During this one year, the feeling of Sanātana for God and the sense of his unworthiness for the service of Sri Chaitanya grew intense. On the way to Puri in the forest of Jhārikhanda he

[1] C.C.M. I.63-69.

was attacked by a virulent type of skin disease all over his body which served to aggravate his sense of remorse thinking that he would not be able either to visit the Deity of Jagannāth or to approach Sri Chaitanya whilst suffering from the loathsome disease lest his touch should offend. He accordingly determined to end his life by throwing himself under the wheels of the car of Jagannāth before the eyes of Sri Chaitanya. With this idea in his mind he arrived at Puri.

SANĀTANA AT PURI

Sanātana was humility incarnate. As soon as Sri Chaitanya saw him, He rushed to greet His devotee but Sanātana prostrating himself, entreated Him not to touch him, saying: "Don't touch me my Lord. I kneel at Your Feet. I am a vile and wretch; the skin disease has spread all over my body." Sri Chaitanya embraced him affectionately as the result of which His own body was besmeared with blood and pus from that of Sanātana. Sanātana's remorse became all the more intense. Sri Chaitanya lodged him with Haridās Thākur in his cottage. Everyday Sri Chaitanya used to visit and teach him there. He still had in mind his idea of committing suicide. Sri Chaitanya came to know of it and one day said to him, " If Krishna were attainable by means of death, we would have died a crore of time in a moment. It is only through *Bhakti* that He is attainable and by no other means. You have dedicated your body to Me therefore it belongs to Me. How do you dare to destroy another's property? I have to achieve many a deed through your life. I shall have to preach the doctrine of *Bhakti*, introduce Vaishnavite practices, restore all the holy places, found temples and install Deities through you. I have to remain here at Puri and you have to carry out all these objects by staying at Vrindāvan. Remove the idea of suicide from your mind.[1] Sri Chaitanya kept him at Puri till the *Dolyātrā* of the next year, that is to say he lived at Puri from March or April 1517 A.D. to March 1518 A.D. Sri Chaitanya had given him sufficient instructions, teaching and advice

[1] C.C. Antya.IV. 55-82.

to begin the work in right earnest. Sanātana was given by Valabhadra, who had accompanied Sri Chaitanya, an account of all the places, which the Lord had sanctified by His presence, and people He had blessed and converted during His journey by way of Jhārikhand. Sanātana visited all those places and people following the same route of Sri Chaitanya.

RŪPA AND SANĀTANA'S DEVOTIONAL LIVES AT VRINDĀVAN

In due course Sanātana reached Vrindāvan. Rūpa had to pass a year at home in order to dispose finally of their property, after his departure from Puri. Rūpa joined Sanātana at Vrindāvan in a few days. The two brothers thereupon began their work in right earnest with undivided attention. Their way of life and activities pleased Sri Chaitanya beyond measure. They were exactly fitted for the work He had imposed upon them. They were the pride of the sect. The Gaudiya *Vaishnava* world was struck with wonder and affectionate admiration at their devotional life. They were above reproach in every respect. If Sri Chaitanya made any body perfect it was Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunāthdās. Their asceticism was wonderful. Sometimes they were homeless, sleeping every night under a different tree and at times in a cave. They were perfectly happy under the trees of Vraja while their palaces at Rāmakeli and at Fateyabad had not given them a vestige of their Bliss they experienced at Vrindāvan. They lived on alms begging from door to door accepting coarse dry bread, in contrast to their luxurious and palatable dishes to which they were accustomed. They chewed the dry bread and gram forsaking all earthly pleasures. They had only a coconut shell as water bottle and a tattered quilt to protect them from the cold. They practised self-mortification to the extreme. Few people could have pursued unflinchingly martyrdom as they did. They used to take only ninety-six minutes' sleep in twenty-four hours and that also not invariably every day. They used to devote the rest of about twenty two hours to chanting the names of Krishna and thinking of Him at night and to writing works on *Bhakti* and at times to

discourse on Krishna and Sri Chaitanya during the day time. Sometimes they danced and exulted in the course of reciting the Name of Krishna and Sri Chaitanya. Day and night they were vigourously active in carrying out the command of Sri Chaitanya. The whole population of the circle of Mathurā was attracted by the extreme piety and devotion to Rūpa and Sanātana. The main purpose of their lives was to restore the lost shrines of Vraja, write a great literature on *Bhakti* and preach the doctrine to the people of western India. Lokanāth and Bhugarbha were already there. Raghunāth Bhatta was next sent by Sri Chaitanya to help them. Gopāl Bhatta from the south joined them in the course of some years. Sri Chaitanya asked Rūpa and Sanātana to treat Gopāl as their third brother. *Karnananda* says, "One who draws any distinction between Rūpa, Sanātana and Gopāl Bhatta, is doomed to perdition." Rūpa and Sanātana were the best of all saints. Their heart were overflowing with sympathy and kindliness. Raghunāth Bhatta used to recite the Bhāgavata at their meetings. Jiva Gosvāmi, son of Anupama, arrived at Vrindāvan with the permission of Nityānanda to work under his illustrious uncles. Raghunāthdās came to them after the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya in 1534 A.D. The venerable Kishnadās Kavirāj and many others joined them and offered their whole time and energy to be employed as Rūpa and Sanātana might direct. Rūpa and Sanātana were the guardians of all the followers of Sri Chaitanya. Messengers frequently ran from Vrindāvan to Puri and vice versa. Sri Chaitanya was in constant touch with the progress of the work of Rūpa and Sanātana. Once Sri Chaitanya sent a message by Jagadānanda, His close confidant to the effect that He would shortly visit Vrindāvan. Sri Chaitanya asked Jagadānanda remain day and night with Sanātana who received him very kindly and showed him all the woods and holy shrines of Vrindāvan Mathurā. Jagadānanda lived for two months with Sanātana at the latter's cave at Gokula. Sanātana repaired a Math at Dvadasa Āditya heath at Vrindāvan to provide a residence for Sri Chaitanya. But He did not put a second visit to the place; though He was

pleased to hear that Sanātana and Rūpa had worked beyond His utmost expectations. Sanātana sent some humble but very precious presents for Sri Chaitanya through Jagadānanda which consisted of sacred sand from land of *Rāsa*-dance, a piece of stone from the holy Govardhana, Gunja garland and some dry Piku fruits. Sri Chaitanya was over enjoyed to learn of their activities.[1]

Both Rūpa and Sanātana used to live in different woods at different times. The places and caves such as at Chakratritha in Govardhana, Vaithal in Kokilavana, on the western bank of Manasiganga Lake in Govardhana and so on, have been preserved. At the latter place a great fair is Annually held on the day of full-moon in the month of *Āsadha* (June and July) to commemorate the anniversary of the death of Sanātana. The whole Gaudiya *Vaishnava* population of the Mathurā circle assembles there for the occasion. We know Sri Chaitanya did not climb the Govardhana hill to see the *Gopāla* Image installed by Mādhavendra Puri in a temple, which stands at the summit. When Jagadānanda came to Vrindāvan, Sri Chaitanya cautioned him not to go up the hill, which is regarded as the body of Krishna Himself. Rūpa and Sanātana never climbed the hill either. They used to make a circuit round the hill with great reverence chanting its praises. We know that the temple and Image were placed under the care of two Bengali *Brahmana* ascetics by Mādhavendra Puri himself. After the death of these two Bengali disciples of Mādhavendra, a quarrel ensued, as to possession, among different claimants. The Gaudiya *Vaishnavas* claimed the Image on the ground of their relationship with Mādhavendra, the grand preceptor of Sri Chaitanya. The Gaudiyas were the most influential body at Vrindāvan so Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi and other leaders of the sect installed Viththalesvara, the youngest son of Vallabha in the service and as custodian of the Image.[2] Vallabha was the disciple of Gadādhara Pandit, and Viththala seems to have owed allegiance to the Gaudiya *Vaishnavas*. Viththala himself worshipped the Image of Sri Chaitanya in the

[1] C.C.Antya XIII [2] Bh.R.K.V.

temple at Gathuli where the Image of Gopāla was occasionally brought. Rūpa and Sanātana used to see the said Image of Gopāl whenever it was brought down to the place to save it from desecration at the hands of the Turks who very often threatened to molest the famous Deity and plunder its ornaments and wealth. Krishnadās Kavirāj tells us that Rūpa Gosvāmi with a number of his associates lived one month at the house of Viththalanāth at Mathurā to pay their devotion to the said Deity which Viththala brought there fearing an attack by Turks. The following among others were with Sri Rūpa on this occasion: Gopāl Bhatta, Raghnathdās, Lokanāth, Bhugarbha, Sri Jiva, Yadavāchārya, Govinda Gosvāmi, Uddhavadās, Mādhava, Gopāladās, Nārāyanadās, Govinda Bhakta, Vani Krishnadās and so on.[1] This residence of Viththalanāth has been identified with Satghara near Tulsi Chabutara at Mathurā.[2]

Many pious stories have been associated with the memory of Rūpa and Sanātana, which suggest their extraordinary devotion to God and utter disregard of personal comforts. When Sanātana used to live at Govardhana he made a point of circumambulating it every day. One day in his old age, though tired, he nevertheless took immense delight in observing his devotional duties. It is believed that the God *Gopāla* appeared before him with a piece of stone of the Govardhana hill marked with foot-prints of Himself and offered it to him saying, "Sanātana, you have become old; you should not trouble to walk so far round My hill. You will walk from now round this stone which shall represent the hill." The stone has been preserved and is worshiped in the temple of Rādhādāmodara, the Deity installed by Jiva Gosvāmi. It is a belief among *Vaishnavas* that God Krishna used to come and feed Sanātana in disguise. Jiva Gosvāmi records these stories in his Laghutosani. The whole population of every village in the Mathurā circle loved the ascetic brothers as their own sons and used to follow them in their hundreds and thousands whenever they passed their villages in the course of their occasional

[1] C.C.M.XVIII.48-64. [2] Gaudiya.vol.xiii. p.229.

circumambulation. Rūpa still holds the highest place in the estimation of the followers of the sect who take pride in calling themselves Rūpanuga or obedient followers of Rūpa. Even Sanātana himself desires the shelter of Rūpa in his devotional life, in the beginning of his Brihat Bhāgavatāmrita. Rūpa had the highest esteen for Sanātana's supreme devotional life calls him his lord in the following verse of his LaghuBhāgavatāmrita. "I shall describe in short what my lord Sanātana has written in his Bhāgavatāmrita." [1]

In the course of a few years, Rūpa and Sanātana founded a society under the Name of "Visva Vaishnava Rāja Sabhā" or the royal council of Vaishnavas of the whole world. Rūpa and Sanātana were the recognised heads of the council. During their lifetime and even for some time after, the Gaudiyas who were dwellers of Vraja reigned there supreme. The Vallabhi sect, the Rādhāvallabhi sect of Harivamsa and other sects sprang up later on as so many offshoots and gradually asserted their independence of the Gaudiya sect in course of time. Sri Jiva at the end of each of his six *Sandarbhas*, refers to the great council "Vishva Vaishnava Rāja Sabha" in eulogising his eminent uncles in the following line, "It is the fifth *Sandarbha* of Bhāgavata Sandarbha in which lies the teaching of Rūpa and Sanātana who are the councilors of the "Visva Vaishnava Rāja Sabha", who are the servitors of the servitors at the feet of the glorious God Sri Krishna Chaitanya Who is the Saviour of the Kali age and Who descended in order to disseminate His Own devotion." After the disappearance of Rūpa and Sanātana, Jiva was the head of the council in company with other Gosvāmis who loved Jiva as they did his illustrious uncles. Paramahamsa Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thākur has revived the said society and is now the president *Āchārya* of the "Visva Vaishnava Rāja Sabha" and the Gaudiya Math Mission. Under him the said society has been doing vigorous missionary works.

[1] Krishnamrita Khanda.verse V.

RŪPA AND SANĀTANA'S WORK AT VRINDĀVAN

Krishnadās Kavirāj who worked with Rūpa and Sanātana, summarises their work briefly in the following lines, "Rūpa and Sanātana are the biggest branch of Sri Chaitanya's mission which spread to the west. By the Gardener's (Sri Chaitanya's) wish, this branch extended immensely and overshadowed the whole of the western country up to the bank of the Indus on one side and the Himālayas on the other, including all the holy places. Every body benefited by the fruits of love, which these two branches yielded. The people of the west were ignorant and bereft of good practices, but Rūpa and Sanātana introduced devotional practices among them. They restored the forgotten shrines by reference to the *Sāstras* and established the services of the Deities at Vrindāvan."[1]

Their attention was first directed to the rediscovery of the forgotten shrines of Vraja. Sanātana had already acquired topographical treaties called Mathurā Mahatmya, and with its help he began his search of the ancient shrines, when he first arrived in Vrindāvan from Benares. He subsequently acquired many other books on the topography of the locality by which the ascetic scholars were able to trace all the places.[2] Kavikarnapura says the following in his Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka[3], "Sri Chaitanya immersed Rūpa and Sanātana in the nectar of His grace that they might restore the forgotten shrines of Vrindāvan connected with divine sports." Jiva Gosvāmi in his Laghutosani refers to them saying that the God Krishna Chaitanya blessed Sanātana and his younger brother Rūpa with infinite grace as the result of which they, having given up their kingdom, went to Vrindāvan, and all the lost shrines of the circle of Mathurā were discovered by them.[4]

Almost immediately after their return to Vrindāvan, Rūpa and Sanātana are said to have first erected the temple of Vrindadevi, which is believed to have stood in the Seva Kunja, which is a large walled garden with masonry tank near the Rāsa Mondala at Vrindāvan.[5] The first of all important shrines that have been erected in increasing

[1] C.C.Adi.X.85-90 [2] C.C.Antya IV.218. [3] Act.IX.104
[4] B.R.K.i. p.55. [5] Growse's Mathurā. p.241.

number is that of Govinda Deva which Rūpa established possibly within a few years of their arrival. At their request, Kasisvara Gosvāmi came to Vrindāvan with the Image of Sri Chaitanya, which was installed, on the right hand side of Govindadeva.[1] Bhakt Sindhu by Lochanadās states that, "the Image of Govinda was found by Rūpa and Sanātana at Nandagaon where they had dug it up in a cattle-shed and thence they brought it to Vrindāvan and installed it on the site of the temple near Brahma Kunda.[2] Krishnadās Kavirāj, whose Siksha Guru was Rūpa, tells us that Raghunāth Bhatta Gosvāmi had the temple of Govinda erected by his own disciple who also offered various ornaments to the Deity.[3] We have already seen that Raghunāth Bhatta was sent by Sri Chaitanya to work with Rūpa and Sanātana. It was not at least before 1522 A.D. because he (Raghu) first came to Puri and met Sri Chaitanya after the latter's return from his (Raghu's) house at Benares. Sri Chaitanya sent him back, after having trained him for eight months. He returned to Puri four years later and lived with Sri Chaitanya for another eight months for his further training, before he came to Vrindāvan.[4] It seems that the Image of Govinda was worshipped in a small cottage or cave until the disciple of Raghunāth Bhatta erected the temple for it at the command of his *Guru*. We have noticed in connection with the date of Chaitanya Charita by Krishnadās that Haridās Pandit came to the Gaddi of the Govinda temple circa 1531 A.D. Haridās was perhaps the first principal of the temple, which was probably completed before the said date, 1531 A.D. In the course of their preaching, the fame of Rūpa and Sanātana as ascetics and scholars soon spread in Rajputana and the Punjab and other provinces. The Rajput Princes, headed by Rājā Bhagavānadās, or more precisely his son Rājā Mānsimha, the best of the Emperor Akbar's generals, accepted Gaudiya Vaishnavaism. Mānsimha was initiated by Rūpa and Sanātana. Even the Emperor Ākbar paid his visit to these Gaudiya Vaishnava masters. These princes of Rājasthan, and rich merchants of Multan and other places,

[1] Anuragavalli. 2nd Niryas. [2] Growse's Mathurā p.250. [3] C.C.Antya XIII. 131.
[4] C.C.Antya XIII.

approached their ascetic Gurus with munificent gifts to be employed at their direction. Rājā Mānsimha was the next to enlarge the temple of Govinda to its immense dimensions by adding the nave, choir and chapels. There are several inscriptions on the walls of the nave, chapel and Chhatri, some of which have been irreparably mutilated. Fortunately ES.Growse has been able to read and publish a few of them. One of these inscriptions under a recess at the west-end of the nave states that the temple was built in Sambat 1647 (1590 A.D.) under the direction of the two Gurus, Rūpa and Sanātana.[1] Another verse taken from the exterior of the northwest chapel records the following fact: In the year 34 of the era inaugurated by the reign of the Emperor Akbar, Sri Maharājā Mānsimha, son of Maharājā Bhagavandas of the family of the Maharājā Prithirājā, founded, at the holy station of Vrindāvan, this temple of Govindadeva. The head of the works Kalyandās, the assistant superintendent Manik Chand Ghopar, the architect Govindadās of Delhi, the mason Gorakdās.[2] Since Mānsimha, the princes of the Jaypur state have been the hereditary custodians of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in the west of India. The temple was further enlarged about forty years later by another princess of Rājasthan. This portion was a later addition yet it is perfectly organic. Mr. Growese remarks that it is a large domed and pillared Chhatri of very handsome design. The inscription cut into one of these pillars records "In the year Sambat 1693 (1636 A.D.) on an auspicious day, Kartik Badi 5, in the reign of the Emperor Shājahān, this monument was erected by Rāni Padmāvati, widow of Rājā Bhim, the son of Rājā Amar Simha".[3] Rājā Bhim was the brother of Karana Simha II, the king of Mewār and a bosom-friend of Rājā Mānsimha. When Bhima was slain, such was the affection between him and Mānsimha that the later was not told of his death as soon as he heard the truth, he tore away the bandages of the eighty wounds he had received and expired.[4] Rājā Bhim Simha was the friend and adviser of the Prince Khurrum afterwards

[1] Growse's Mathurā. p.243. [2] ibid p.244 [3] ibid p.247
[4] Tod's Rajasthan. vol. I. p.431

Emperor Shājahān at whose solicitation the Emperor Jahāngir conferred on Bhim the title of Rājā and assigned a principality on the Banas for his residence of which Toda was the capital.

The temple as a whole consist of four separate sections- the Sacrarium in which the Deities lie, the nave with choir, the Chapel and the Chhatri. The sacrarium was indispensable for the installation of the Deity, for which neither the nave nor choir is necessary. They are used for visitors, and priests and for dramatic performances before the Deity. The chapel is also of secondary importance in comparison with the sacrarium in relation to the Deity. So the sacrarium was taken up first and it was built by the disciple of Raghunāth Bhatta to which Krishnadās Kavirāj refers.[1] The Deity was duly installed there in and Haridās to whom Krishnadās refers as being in charge of it was in the Gadi from 1531 A.D. to 1586 A.D. which, as we have discussed, was his period as principal. Krishnadās Kavirāj gives us the following description of richness of the services of the Deity in the temple under Haridās Pandit, "In Sri Vrindāvan there is a golden mansion (Govinda's temple is of red stone shining like gold) where is a great seat on which there is a throne bedecked with gems where upon is always seated the prince Son of the King of Vraja styled Lord Govinda Who is the Cupid-incarnate. Various regal services are rendered to Him including offerings, luxurious robes and rich ornaments. There are a thousand attendants to serve it in different ways which cannot be described. The principal of temple is Pandit Haridās whose fame and merits are patent throughout the world.[2] This temple and its luxurious service of the Deity referred to, belonged to the period long before Rājā Mānsimha built the name, choir and chapel in 1590 A.D. because Haridās in whose time the Deity was thus served, retired or died in 1586 A.D. Further more within a few months of the demise of Rūpa and Sanātana respectively, Srinivās of Bengal arrived at Vrindāvan and was received by Jiva Gosvāmi at the Govinda Temple immediately after the

[1] C.C.Antya XIII.131 [2] C.C.Adi VIII.50-53

evening service to the Deity.[1] Srinivās was also received by Viththalesvara, son of Ballabh Āchārya at the Ganthali temple of Gopāl near Govardhana.[2] We know that Viththalesvara died in Saka 1507 (1585 A.D.) at the age of seventy years and 28 days[3], therefore Srinivās must have arrived in Vrindāvan to see the temple in use some years before the death of his host Viththaleswara which took place about 6 years before Rājā Mānsimha could finish the additional buildings of the temple. The age of Srinivās will be discussed in the Appendix A. Srinivās must have come to Vrindāvan for the first time circa 1555 A.D. So the original temple or Sacrarium must have been completed before Srinivās came to Vrindāvan. It is clear that Rājā Mānsimha could not have built the Sacrarium because the Deity was already in it since circa 1531 A.D. when Haridās entered its service. Moreover the inscriptions recording that it was built by Rājā Mānsimha are not on the walls of the Sacrarium but on those of the nave and chapel which suggests that he inscribed the record of his munificence on those parts of the temple that he actually caused to be built. If he built the Sacrarium, he would surely have placed an inscription on its wall as he did on those of the nave and chapel. Rāni Padmavati added the Chhatri to the temple and carved the inscription on the wall recording her name and gift. We see this rule in the Madan Mohana temple of Sanātana Gosvāmi. Three people built the three parts respectively and record their names on the walls of their respective buildings. It is quite clear that the three sections of the Govinda temple, sacrarium, nave, choir and chapels, and the Chhatri were built by three different persons at different times as they became necessary, in other words, the sacrarium was built by the disciple of Raghunat Bhatta; choir, chapel and navaes by Rājā Mānsimha; and the Chhatri by Rani Padmavati. These sections of the temple may be easily erected one after another without doing any harm to its organic connection, because they are actually separate buildings placed side by side; so that if one man

[1] Premavilāsa.VI. p.34. [2] Anurāgavalli IV. p.69. Bh.R.K.V.
[3] Vaishnava Manjusa. Part II p.65

built the whole temple he could do it either in separate sections or all at once as he pleased. If Rājā Mānsimha had also built the Sacrarium, the fisrt Sacrarium built by Raghunāth Bhatta's disciple would have stood vacant close to it. Krishnadās Kavirāj who refers to Raghunāth Bhatta's disciple as having built the temple of Govinda, has written his book Chaitanya Charita in which he mentions it, after the completion of the temple by Rājā Mānsimha. Mr.Growse says that Rūpa and Sanātana brought the Image to Vrindāvan and erected it on the site of the present temple[1] which statement seems to suggest that the Sacrarium which was first built by the disciple of Raghunāth Bhatta is the same as the present one, so Mānsimha could not have built the Sacrarium. It was hitherto a belief that the plan of the Govinda temple has been preserved in the palace of Jaipur, showing its five original towers, but Mr. Growese inspected it and said the following, "On inspection I found that the painting, which is on the wall of one of the rooms in the old palace at Amber was not a plan of the temple at all but an imaginary view of the town of Vrindāvan in which all the temples are represented as exactly alike, distinguishable only by their names which are written above them." [2] The Jaypur state could not have the original plan because it was not Mānsimha who first drew it. The whole building consists of the Sacrarium, the Choir (Jagamohan), two chapels (Mohuls) and the Chhatri. "The south west chapel encloses a subterranean cell called Patal Devi which is said by some to be Gosain's (Rūpa and Sanātana's) original shrine in honour of the goddess Vrinda.[3] It seems from all that we have observed above that all the six buildings erected since the arrival of Rūpa and Sanātana, the first one in honour of Vrinda Devi, the second (Sacrarium) by the disciple of Raghunāth, and the rest (choir, nave, chapels and Chhatri) by Rājā Mānsimha, and the Princess Padmāvati, have been organically incorporated into one Rājā Mānsimha who built the major portion of the whole building certainly took several years to complete the temple in 1590 A.D.

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[1] Mathurā p.250 [2] Mathurā p.245. [3] Mathurā p.243.

Mr. Meghanāh Bhattachārya prefers to say that the temple was begun in the time of Mānsimha's father Bhagavāndās and completed by Mānsimha twenty years later.[1]

Both Mr. Fergusson and Mr. Growse discussed the merits and beauty of the temple giving a full description and ground plan. It will be sufficient to quote their remarks on this very important and ancient temple of the Gaudiya *Vaishnava* sect, which is perhaps the finest of all temples in western India. Mr. Growse remarks, 'the general effect of the interior is not unlike that produced by Saint Paul's Cathedral in London. The latter building has greatly the advantage in size but on the other, the central dome is more elegant, while the richer decoration of the wall-surface and the natural glow of the red sand stone supply that relief and warmth of colouring which are so lamentably deficient in its western rival.[2] Mr. Fergusson says of it that is "one of the most interesting and elegant and the only building perhaps from which a European architect might borrow a few hints". Mr. Growse adds by way of further appreciating the view of Mr. Fergusson "I should myself have thought that the suggestions that might be derived (by European architect) from its study were 'many' rather than 'few'.[3] Mr. G.H. Wilson in his Religious Sects of India remarks as follows, 'The interior of the temple is far superior to any of the religious structures to be met with along the Ganges and the Yamunā.'[4] If these remarks may be made on the ruined structures, we can quite imagine what a magnificent building it was when it was intact.

MADANA MOHANA TEMPLE OF SANĀTANA

When Rūpa and Sanātana arrived at Vrindāvan, it was then an uninhabited forest. So they had to repair to neighbouring villages and Mathurā to beg for alms, in the course of which, a *Brahmana* presented a Deity of Madana Mohana to Sanātana who brought it and set it up on the heath near the Kāliadaha Ghāt on the Yamunā. Sanātana himself built a small hut near that for the Deity of his

[1] S.P.P. Vol.X.Part II p.80. [2] Mathurā p.242. [3] Mathurā p.248. [4] ibid p.99.

devotion. We have already said that many princes and rich merchants accepted the discipleship of Rūpa, Sanātana and other Gaudiya Vaishnava masters who never accepted even a penny from them for their personal comforts. Sanātana had a disciple named Ramadās who was a very rich merchant of Multān in the Punjāb. When he pressed his *Guru* to accept his service, Sanātana asked him to make the best use of his wealth by erecting a temple to receive his Deities. Ramadās built the present Sacrarium and the landing Ghāt on the Yamunā leading from the temple of red sand stone. This temple is the *Sikhāra* type pure and simple, betraying a certain influence of the Orissan architecture. The vertical effect of its curvilinear outline tapering towards the summit crowned by the heavy Amlaka is enhanced by the Pagas rising from the plinth to the summit similar to Orissan temple architecture. The space between two horizontal lines, which are four in number, is cut in blocks which are decorated with the lotus and conch motifs. The horizontal bands consist of bead motifs, which are cut, in such a way as to produce a play of light and shade. These conceptions, motifs, and effects may be found in the temples of Orissa of an earlier date but this temple excels its types in Orissa in its tapering effect and plastic movements. It is probable that Sanātana who lived in Orissa for some time with Sri Chaitanya had the idea of Orissan temple architecture in his mind, and himself made the plan accordingly. The chapel attached to the temple was built later by another admirer of Sanātana. It is also highly enriched and the whole of its exterior surface is covered with sculptured panels. The carving on the lintel above its door contains an inscription given first in Bengali and then in *Nāgari* which has been thus read by Mr. Growse, "Of Guru descent, a compeer of Mahāveda, whose father was Rāma Chandra whose son was Rādhā Vasant, jewel of goodmen; that mass of virtue, by name Sri Gunada, dedicated in approved fashion this temple to the son of Nanda i.e. Krishna.[1] There is no date on this inscription. It was certainly built after the main temple and the nave as

[1] Mathurā p.251.

there would be no chapel without the Sacrarium and the nave, these being more important than the chapel. The names on the inscription seem to be Bengali; the precedence of Bengali characters to those of *Nāgari* would also suggest that it was built by a Bengali. One of the doorposts on the south side of the nave bears an inscription with the date Sambat 1684 (1627 A.D.) which records a pilgrimage of a native of Kanauj in that year. It seems that the nave was built by him otherwise why should the inscription recording his pilgrimage be allowed there? What is probable is that the Sacrarium was built by Sanātana's disciple Rāmadās of Multān; the nave by a native of Kanauj; and the chapel by Gunananda as their inscriptions are found in these respective places. The original vaulted roof and the top of the chapel have been destroyed by the iconoclastic fury of Aurangazib.

THE HISTORY OF THE DEITY OF MADANA MOHANA

The Deity of Madana Mohana also accompanied that of Govindadeva from place to place until it was installed at Jaypur. Rājā Jayasimha II of Jaypur presented the Deity to his brother-in-law (wife's brother) Gopāl Simha of the Karauli state. (Gazetter of Eastern Rājputana. Drake and Blockman. p.320). Rājā Gopāl Simha reigned from 1724-1757 A.D. Rājā Gopāl Simha built a magnificent temple close to his palace to receive the Deity. It is now daily worshipped there as the God of the state Rājā Gopāl placed the temple under the charge of a Bengali Brahmana named Rāma Kishore of Mursidabād.[1] These Deities have been worshipped by Bengalis since their installation. Rājā Gopāl Simha made an endowment of huge land the income from which is spent for the service of the temple and the maintenance of the priests.

When the Deity was at Vrindāvan, Sanātana's disciple Surdas, who was the governor of Dandila under the Emperor Ākbar used to spend his fabulous wealth for the service of the Deity in the form of hospitality to the host of

[1] Mathurā P.252.

Vaishnavas and pilgrims. One year he spent the whole of his revenues and had to send the empty treasure chests back to Delhi, which act of extravagance irritated Ākbar's minister Todar Malla who threw the religious enthusiast into prison. The Emperor Ākbar ordered his release in consideration of his past service and his own regard for the Vaishnava masters whom he himself visited and endowed.[1]

In 1875 A.D. the Madana Mohana temple at Vrindāvan was repaired under the direction of Mr. Growese who made some additions and alterations to restore the original effect of the main temple. Sanātana's tomb and a well-named *Sanātana Kupa* are to be found behind the temple.

DISAPPEARANCE OF RŪPA AND SANĀTANA

Dr. D.C. Sen says "We have a large mass of evidence to prove that both the brothers Rūpa and Sanātana died in 1591 A.D., having lived the full span of a century.[2] The first reason for Dr. Sen to suppose that they were alive up to 1591 A.D. is that the temple inscription records that it was completed in 1590 A.D. by Rājā Mānsimha under the direction of his *Gurus* Rūpa and Sanātana. He likes to confirm his supposition by the fact that when Srinivās paid a visit to Vrindāvan he was received in the temple by Jiva and that he heard that it was only four months since Sanātana had died and that Rūpa died only a four days previously. Dr. Sen suggests that Srinivās went to Vrindāvan in 1592 A.D. and returned to Bengal in 1597 A.D. He further says, 'This is borne out by the authentic records preserved in the court of the Rājās of Vishnupur.

We have already observed that Sanātana and Rūpa must have been born about 1470 A.D.; for it is hardly believable that both the brothers would have been living for 121 years had they died in 1591 A.D. Further more it would not have been necessary for Rūpa and Sanātana to live to see the completion of the temple built by Rājā Mānsimha who may have begun the work at the direction of his Gurus.

[1] Growse p.220. [2] V.L.M.B. p.39.

Mr. Meghanāth Bhattachārya of Jaypur says that the temple was begun by Bhagavānadās and completed by Mānsimha and that the construction took more than twenty years; that is to say it was begun some years before 1570 A.D. Bhagavānadās began another temple at Nandagram for the purpose of enshrining the Image of Hari Deva.[1] It is probable that Mānsimha asked permission of his Gurus Rūpa and Sanātana before he began the temple rather than on the day of its completion to acknowledge their permission in the inscription. Rājā Mānsimha was always engaged in warfare so may not have begun the work when he asked or run the work with speed. We have discussed the age of Srinivās in relation to Rājā Vira Hamvira in Appendix A and come to the conclusion that he may have come to Vrindāvan circa 1555 A.D. when he heard the recent death of Rūpa and Sanātana.

Rūpa and Sanātana certainly predeceased Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi because the latter expresses his deep grief on the death of Rūpa in his Prarthanasraya Chaturdasaka, "Raghunāthdās is said to have died at the very old age of 84".[2] Raghunāthdās may have died about 1663 A.D. It may be inferred that Rūpa must have died long before 1663 A.D. The latest work of Rūpa is Krishna Ganoddesadipika, which is dated in the month of Sravana Saka 1472 (1550 A.D.) and that of Sanātana is Brihat Vaishnava Toshani, which was completed in Saka 1476 (1554 A.D.). Those who know the polymathic quality of Rūpa and Sanātana realise that they would have produced more work during the thirty-seven years from 1554 A.D. if they had been alive upto the year 1591 A.D. It was certainly not the nature to be idle for so long. What is probable is that they died almost immediately after completing their latest works in 1554 A.D. This date of their death is also compatible with the statement of Premavilās that when Srinivās arrived at Vrindāvan, he heard that they died recently because Srinivās may have reached Vrindāvan in 1555 A.D. Nityānandadas, a contemporary biographer of Srinivās distinctly says that it was thirteen years after Sri Advaita

[1] S.P.P.vol.X. Part. II. p.80, 82. [2] S.K. De's note on Padyavali. p.223.

died that Srinivās visited Shantipur to obtain the permission of Sita Devi almost immediately before he started for Vrindāvan where he heard of the death of Rūpa and Sanātana.[1] We know that the death of Advaita soon followed the passing of Sri Chaitanya. Dr. Sen believes that Advaita died in the year 1539 A.D.[2] Srinivās therefore, have reached Vrindāvan to hear of the recent death of Rūpa and Sanātana, thirteen years later than the death of Advaita that is to say Srinivās must have visited Vrindāvan in 1552 (1539 A.D. plus 13). Srinivās made arrangements for his mother's safe stay at home, which may have taken him two, or three year's time before actually reached Vrindāvan in 1554 or 1555 A.D. when he heard that Rūpa and Sanātana had died a short while previously.

THEIR LITERARY WORKS

Rūpa and Sanātana were the first to start creating different branches of Sanskrit literature such as on theology, philosophy, ritual, *Kāvya*, drama, poetics etc., which endeavour was further carried out by their talented nephew Jiva Gosvāmi, Krishnadās Kavirāj, Kavikarnapur, Raghunāthdās, Gopāl Bhatta and others. This creation of literature in every branch was given further impetus by Visvanāth Chakravarti and Baladev Vidyābhusan in the later part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century.

SANĀTANA'S WORKS

Sanātana was preeminently a deep philosopher and thoughtful law-giver to the sect. We know from the description of *Laghutosani* by Jiva Gosvāmi that Sanātana had a special predilection for Sri Bhāgavatam since his early years.[3] Krishnadās Kavirāj seems to verify it by saying that he engaged deeply in the study of the Bhāgavata in the company of thirty Pandits before he relinquished his services to the king who had surprised him whilst debating with his Pandits. Sanātana's works may be mainly divided into two classes philosophical and socio-religious.

[1] Premavilās. IV. Three years in Vidyāratna's edition.
[2] C. & C. p.33. [3] Bh.R.K. I. p.38.

Sanātana has discussed with marvelous ability the philosophy and theology in his philosophical works in which he embodied for the first time the authoritative views of the Gaudiya sect on the Bhāgavata.

Jiva Gosvāmi has given us a list of Sanātana's works in the following verse at the end of his Laghutosani, "Of his four works, the volumes of Bhāgavatāmritam with its commentary Digdarsani were the first to be composed, the three others being Hari Bhakti Vilās with its commentary Digpradarsini, Lilastava also called Dasama tippani and Vaishnava Toshani. Jiva seems to place the works chronologically in respect of their composition. The latest works "Vaishnava Toshani" is dated as having been completed in Saka 1476 (1554 A.D.). Having finished it, Sanātana asked Jiva to correct it. Accordingly Jiva wrote his Laghutosani in Saka 1504 (1582 A.D.) Jiva Gosvāmi admits the fact at the end of the list given in his Laghutosani. Dr. D. C. Sen does not seem very correct in saying that he (Sanātana) was alive in 1583 A.D. This we know for certain as Jiva Gosvāmi wrote his Laghutosani in that year taking advice from him.[1] Jiva does not say whether he took his advice in the year he completed it or that Sanātana was alive to see it completed. He seems to say that having completed his Brihat Vaishnava Toshani in Saka 1476, Sanātana asked him to correct it and accordingly he wrote his Laghutosani by his command." But Jiva could not finish it before Saka 1504 (1582 A.D.). It does not mean that Sanātana was alive when Jiva finished it. We know that Rūpa finished his Vidagdha Mādhava and Lalitā Mādhava Nātaka in 1533 and 1537 A.D. respectively having begun writing them since 1516 A.D. at Puri. Sanātana's Brihat Vaishnava Tosani is an excellent commentary on the tenth Canto of the Bhagāvata. Jiva's Laghutosani is a mere abridgement of Brihat Vaishnava Tosani. Hari Bhakti Vilās and Dasama Tippani were written between Brihat Bhāgavatāmritam and Vaishnava Tosani. Rūpa made an abridgement called Laghu Bhāgavatāmritam of Sanātana's Brihat Bhāgavatāmritam. It deals with the intricate

[1] V.L.V.B. p.39.

questions and elaborations of various incarnations of Krishna – Vishnu and his entourage, *Bhakti, Prema*, devotees and so on in its two volumes each of which consist of 7 chapters. No other work of Sanātana except the Vaishnava Tosani has been dated but we may safely assume that the first work Brihat Bhāgavatāmritam, and the second work Hari Bhakti Vilās were certainly completed before Saka 1463 (1541 A.D.), which is the date of the completion of Rūpa's Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, because the latter contains references to Hari Bhakti Vilās.[1]

The India office library possesses a manuscript of a commentary called Tatparyadipika on Kalidās's Meghaduta. One Sanātana Sarmana of Vrindāvan is said to be the author of it as we find in its opening verse. Mr.Eggling has attributed its authorship to Sanātana Gosvāmi.[2] Jiva Gosvāmi and Krishnadās Kavirāj, who were the constant companions of Sanātana Gosvāmi, have given us two separate lists of Sanātana's works.[3] But neither of them gives any hint that Sanātana wrote a commentary on the Meghaduta. We hardly belive that Sanātana could have written a book on any secular work, which the Vaishnava masters, consider distasteful. Some may argue that it may have been composed when he was at home and before he renounced the world but the verse says that its author Sanātana Sarmana was the begger at Vraja. All the works of Sanātana begin with the Nāmaskriya to Sri Chaitanya but this commentary invokes Ganesa who could not have been mentioned by a Vaishnava master like Sanātana. Neither Sanātana nor any of his associates or followers have used the word Sarmana against his name. So extreme was the personal humility of Sanātana that he was the last person to call himself Sarmana, a Brahminical appellation. Moreover Sanātana's junior contemporary followers Kavikarnapura in his Alamkara Kaustubha (X.42) finds fault with Kālidās for his having described the Sringara of others than Krishna. Accordingly to the Vaishnavite view, Sringara, which is the subject of Meghaduta, must not be

[1] Purva Vibhaga. 2nd Lahari.42, 94. [2] Eggling's catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts. No.3379. p.1423. [3] C.C.M.i.35-36.

ascribed to any one whether man or god except Krishna. It is almost sure that Sanātana could not have wasted his time on any secular studies. However Sanātana was never a writer on *Kāvya*, which was the province of his brother Rūpa. Sanātana was the majestic philosopher and dignified lawgiver to the sect. Sanātana Sarmana, the author of the above commentary on Meghaduta, may have been a different person from Sanātana Gosvāmi.

AUTHORSHIP OF HARI BHAKTI VILĀS

Sanātana has dealt with the whole of the social problems that would arise, in keeping with the true spirit of Bhakti, which marks every branch of Sanskrit and the vernacular literature of the sect. His huge work 'Hari Bhakti Vilās' on the socio-religious rites of the sect evinces what an energetic, versatile, and skilled writer Sanātana was. He was an exceptionally well-informed person dealing with these intricate problems with his usual thoroughness. He shows immense care and scholarship in the writing of this book. The religion of Sri Chaitanya is primarily the spontaneous love of God unprompted either by any ordinary sense of gratitude to God or fear of retribution for sins or vices or any hope of enjoyment in the next world. But this supreme religion of causeless Love of God is inevitable for the few only, so Sanātana makes various rules and regulations in his capacity as ministers, which should regulate the life and religious observances of a follower and trains him towards achieving a spontaneous Love of God.

The 'Hari Bhakti Vilās' has been attributed to Gopāl Bhatta Gosvāmi, an intimate friend and colleague of Sanātana. Its supposed author Gopāl Bhatta says the following in the opening verses, "I, Gopāl Bhatta, disciple of Pravodhānanda, who was beloved of the God Sri Chaitanya, am compiling this 'Hari Bhakti Vilās' with a view to pleasing Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunāthdās and etc." It seems from this that Gopāl Bhatta is the author of the work as is generally believed. But we have already observed that both Jiva and Krishnadās Kavirāj who were the

disciples, pupils and companions of Sanātana and Gopāl Bhatta distinctly attribute its authorship to Sanātana in their respective lists. Further more we know that Sri Chaitanya particularly charged Sanātana with the task of writhing this sort of *Smriti* work and gave him the synopsis asking him to enlarge and elaborate it by citations from the *Purānas*.[1] Krishnadās gives us the substance of it. We can hardly disbelieve the statement of Jiva and Krishnadās that Sanātana is its author. Some people surmise that the present 'Hari Bhakti Vilās', which is passed under the name of Gopāla Bhatta is the abridgement of Sanātana's book; but Sanātana's Dig Pradarsini, which is the running commentary on his own original work, has been attached to it. So if the present 'Hari Bhakti Vilās' were other than Sanātana's work or an abridgement of it, the commentary 'Diya Pradarsini' would not have fitted in with it. Yadunandanadas who was the contemporary of Srinivās, the most important disciple of Gopāl Bhatta, seems correct in saying that, "Sanātana wrote 'Hari Bhakti Vilās' but dedicated it to Gopāl Bhatta and always made it known as Gopāl Bhatta's, so great was the friendship between Rūpa, Sanātana and Gopāl that they were as one. Those who make any distinction between them are doomed to death.[2] Srinivās could not have given wrong information about his *Guru* to Yadunandandās. This statement of Yadunandan might harmonize the apparent contradiction, by supporting the truth of both the versions that it was actually written by Sanātana but was made current in the name of his dearest friend, Gopāl Bhatta. In course of time people omitted the name of Sanātana from it. What is probable is that when Sanātana issued the work in the name of Gopāl Bhatta, the latter accepted it by way of recognition, added the opening verse in which he seems to say that he accepted it to please Sanātana rather than that he had written it.

'Hari Bhakti Vilās' is the authoritative *Smriti* work and mainly meant for the lay followers of the sect (XX.96-97). It was translated into Bengali metrical verses by one

[1] C.C.M.XXIV.319-340. [2] Karnananda.V.

Kanaidas. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali of the Dacca University states that the said University has acquired a manuscript of it.[1]

The 'Hari Bhakti Vilās' consist of twenty Vilāsas as chapters dealing with one or more subjects in each chapter in which the author first mentions the subjects matter embodying it in his own Kārikās slokās and next goes to support it by elaborate citations from numerous works.

The author says at the end of the book that the rules enjoined in it are mainly meant for the lay followers who are pious but rich house-holders, and not for the ascetics who have sacrificed every thing for the sake of God and have absolutely devoted themselves, in love, to God. It does not mean that they should be hostile or indifferent to rules because those rules and injunctions are conducive to the progress of a devotional life. The author, however supplies a rule which is also applicable to the ascetics *viz.* that they should avoid by all means what is called *Pratistha* or pride or love of praise which is considered impure. According to 'Hari Bhakti Vilās', *Pratistha* is very difficult to renounce and is the root of all-evil and hinders spiritual progress.

RŪPA'S WORKS

Rūpa was the first polymathic writer of the sect to deal with a variety of subjects such as *Kāvya*, poetics, drama, dramaturgy, poetry, philosophy and what not. He was supremely well qualified to cope with these subjects comprehensively. He was deeply learned and preeminently a poet. *Rāsa* and poetry distil the essence, which makes every piece of his writing exquisitely beautiful. Fully equipped, he launched upon the great task of creating a different kind of literature in all its branches, which is distinctive of the Gaudiya sect. Creativeness is the essence of his poetic genius. He was the first to give a new interpretation to *Rāsa* and to develop it in a direction peculiar to the sect. *Rāsa* has been interpreted and identified with *Rhakti Rāsa*, which forms the absorbing theme of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature and of the practical

[1] Indian Antiquary.1928. p.2.

lives of its adherents. Rūpa eliminated all sorts of sensualism either subtle or gross from *Bhakti Rāsa* which develops itself by way of concentration to *Prema* in proportion to the elimination of worldliness from the heart of a devotee. Rūpa gives us the following definition of *Rāsa* in his Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu.[1] "*Rāsa* is that dominant sentiment which is savoured in the blissful heart, absolutely purged of worldliness by *Suddhva Sattva*, which is the fountain head of all the charm and sweetness that lie beyond the realm of thought." He has brought out this idea of *Rāsa* in the most scientific way with all its bearings on the psychological processes, in his two important works 'Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu' and 'Ujjvala Nilmani'. These two works have been accepted, as offering the most authoritative version of *Bhakti* as is understood in the sect.

Rūpa's poetry on the religious life of a devotee is the sweetest flower that has been offered to Krishna, Who delights in Rāsa and romance; and that is why Rūpa dedicates his Ujjvala Nilamani, the best creation of his literary art, to his loving God Govinda praying that it might please Him. Rūpa's poetry is the expression of the passionate love for God. Harmonious beauty and lyrical intensity are to be found in abundance in the *slokas* of the Stavamālā. Whether in sense or in feeling or in metre, or in composition, they are perfect and exquisitely lovely. Every verse of Rūpa is a charming messagae of the beloved to her Lover Krishna in which the voices of all passionate devotees mingle. That is why all Vaishnavas even today regard themselves as his disciples, bow to him in deep reverence and call themselves Rūpanuga-follower of Rūpa. Every Vaishnava follower tries to identify himself with the spirit of Rūpa's poems. As a poet Rūpa has no rival in the Vaishnava sect, which is by nature poetic. Rūpa is a magician of the Sanskrit language. All the metres dance a perfect cadence beneath his hand. Both the music and texture of his poems are spontaneous. His emotions are well adapted to the self–same melody, rhythms, and music

[1] Dakshin.V.79

of his poems. To the history of music, Rūpa's contribution was immense. We will see later on that the great Tan Sen of Akbar's court was taught music by Haridās, one of the adherents of Rūpa who inspired his disciples and followers to worship God with music, *Rāsa*, poetry, and all that is pure and beautiful in the creation of art. To Rūpa God is beautiful, lover of romance, charmer of all charms. Krishna drinks *Rāsa*, hears music, and plays with young damsel mad with romantic Love. Rūpa's Krishna is *Akhilarasamirta* Sindhu or the nectarine ocean of infinite *Rasa*. *Kāvya* is the expression of love. Rūpa's poems were born in an atmosphere where there is no grossness, no qualities or *gunas* of the lower world where sensuality mars the beauty of the spirit. Rūpa's Stavamālā is the voice of his spiritual heart, a sensitive expression of passionate Love for God. He had mastered his senses by extreme asceticism and devotion to God before the addresses Krishna as Lover and worships Him with his Stavamālā, every piece of which is beauty incarnate to be enjoyed by the romantic God Krishna. Rūpa was the inspired singer of songs and has opened up new vistas of a spiritual life which was opened to him by Sri Chaitanya Whom he described as that romantic God Krishna Who had seized the emotions of His best beloved in order to experience the felicity that She enjoyed in Her Love for Him.[1] Rūpa felt that joy of Love and was eager to disseminate it amongst others through the medium of his poems.

Rūpa is a seer, a great poet, and the perfect interpreter of the Love of God, being thoroughly imbued with the same. Whether as a poet, or as a dramatist the same pathos; Love-in-separation for Krishna is the striking note of his theme, which deeply stirs the heart of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. His imagination and experience are one and the same and they naturally transcend the farthest heights of the so-called spiritual mysticism. He is the supreme exponent of Sri Chaitanya's spiritual bequest. Rūpa's writings are not emotional exaltation or poetic transfiguration but expressive of his personality in

[1] Anuragavalli. III. p.49.

relation to his God. This is the pious belief among the Vaishnavas.

Rūpa has given an impetus to a creative literary force exclusively, his own which is strikingly outstanding and independent in the history of Sanskrit literature. The future literature of the sect whether Sanskrit or Bengali is in the main the outcome of the forces generated by Rūpa.

Jiva Gosvāmi has given us the following list of Rūpa's important works at the end of his Lahgutosani: -

1. Hamsa Duta (Duta Kāvya)
2. Uddhava Duta (Duta Kāvya)
3. Astadasa Lilā Chanda. (Kāvya)
4. Utkalika Valli Stava (Stotra. It was incorporated in Stavamālā later on.)
5. Govinda Virudavalli (Viruda Stotra. In corporated in Stavamālā)
6. Premendusagara. (Kāvya Stotra)
7. Vidagdha Mādhva Nātaka (Drama)
8. Lalitā Mādhava Nātaka (Drama)
9. Danakeli Kaumudi (Bhanika)
10. Bhaktirasāmirta Sindhu (Philosophy and psychology of Bhakti)
11. Ujjvalanilmani (Poetics)
12. Mathurā Mahima (Glory of Mathurā)
13. Padyāvali (Anthology)
14. Nātaka Chandrika (Dramaturgy)
15. Laghu Bhāgavatāmrita (Philosophy and theology)

This is not the complete list and so Jiva's disciple Krishnadās Adhikari adds the following to it.

16. Krishnajanma Tithi (Ritualistic)
17. Laghu and Vrihat Krishnagānaddesadipika (Hierarchical hagiology of Krishna's friends and mistresses)

18. Akhyata Chandrika (Story Kāvya)
19. Stavamālā (Anthology of Rūpa's poems)

Krishnadās Kavirāj[1] and Narahari Chakravarti[2] verify the two lists. They further say that Rūpa wrote many other works besides those in the said list. The latter further says that he wrote 11 verses and asked Krishnadās Kavirāj to enlarge them. These eleven verses are known as Rūpa's Upadesamrita. This contains practical advices from Rūpa to his disciples as to how to progress in their devotional life.

HAMSA DUTA AND UDDHAVA SANDESA

These two works are the best specimen of Rūpa's *Duta Kāvya*, full of poetic imagination and an abundance of beautiful expression of feeling. By *Duta Kāvya* or *Sandesa Kāvya* we mean messenger poems in which certain inanimate but moving things such as the wind or clouds or some innocent birds or animals are sent as messengers to convey the pang of separation to a lady from her lover or vice versa. Kālidās is perhaps the first poet who created and developed this kind of *Kāvya* literature by writing his Meghaduta, possibly being inspired by the legends of our Epics. Rāma sent Hanuman or the monkey-god with his message to Sita at Lanka.[3] Nala and Damāyānti used to send the message of their love affairs through a swan.[4] This poetic conception of conveying massages of love through animals may be traced to our Vedic Age. A dog named Sarama was thus sent as messenger to Panis.[5] Rūpa Gosvāmi has made use of this exquisite piece of *Kāvya* literature in the service of his Divine Love. The post-Kālidās poets have blindly imitated the *Mandakranta* metre of Kālidās's Meghaduta as if no other metre is suitable for *Duta Kāvyas*. Rūpa Gosvāmi did away with the convention and asserted his independence in composing his *Duta Kāvya* in *Sikharini* metre.

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[1] C.C.M. I. 26-41 [2] R.K. I [3] Ramayana IX.44
[4] Mahābhārata III.5331-2. [5] Rg.Veda.X.108.

HAMSA DUTA

Rūpa has given a graphic description of the unbearable pang-of-separation of Rādhā and her friends from Krishna after He left them at Vraja for Mathurā. When Rādhā in the company of her friends headed by Lalita, came to the bank of the *Yamunā*, the empty bowers and flower gardens where Krishna has dallied with them, revived such poignant memories that she swooned. Her friends cried out thinking she had died; but subsequently brought her to senses with great care. A white swan happened to swim past them when they were lamenting their separation from Krishna. Lalitā and Rādhā sent the swan as messenger to Krishna entreating Him to come back to Vraja to save the life of Rādhā who could not bear her existence without Him. This is briefly the plot of Hamsa Duta.

The number of verses varies in different editions. Kā*vyāsa*mgraha of Jivananda Vidyāsagara gives 142; Kāvyakalapa of Hirachand, 142; Hara Kumar Bhattachārya, 101; Vasumati, 131; Sanskrit college (Calcutta) manuscript, 131; the India Office manuscript, 142; (No.3891. English catalogue). Hamsaduta of Rūpa Gosvāmi must be distingushed from the Hamsa Sandesa of Venkatesa alias Vedānta Desika, belonging to the Sri Vaishnava sect; from the Hamsa Sandesa of Bhattavamana; the Hamsaduta of Kavindrachary Sarasvati (classified list of Sanskrit manuscripts in the palace library of Tanjore. [2]

UDDHAVA SANDESA

In Uddhava Sandesa Krishna sends his friend Uddhava with His message to Rādhā at Vrindāvan, at the sight of whom Rādhā expresses her pent-up feeling for Krishna. Rūpa's work should be different from the Uddhava Duta of Mādhava Sarman.[3] This book of Rūpa also varies in the number of verses in its different editions. Mr. Sarvesvara Tarkalankara's edition consists of 100 *slokas*. Mr. C. H. Chakravarty says that it consists of 138 verses.[4]

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[1] Descriptive catalogue of Sanskrit Mss. in Govt. Oriental Library Madras. Vol.XX. No.11912 [2] Burnell p. 1637 [3] Haeberlin Sanskrit Anthology. pp. 348.FF. [4] Ind. Hist. Quarterly vol. III. p.215.

The India Office manuscript contains 131 verses.[1]

Some scholars like to say that these two works of Rūpa might have been composed before he met Sri Chaitanya, on the ground that they do not contain any *Namaskriya* to Sri Chaitanya with which he begins many of his books. It is very difficult to say anything definite on this point. It is doubtful whether the descriptions of Vrindāvan and Mathurā with which these two works are replete, are conventional and taken from secondary sources or whether they were written on the spot. Rūpa seems to have been in the country when he composed these *Kāvya* works. The absence of *Namaskriya* verse is not a definite criterion for predating them. If they were written without a *Namaskriya* to Sri Chaitanya and before he was initiated by Him, he could have easily added it later on if he were so minded. There is no secular touch in them; nor is it absolutely certain that he had not written a *Namaskriya*, which might have been omitted in the course of copying and recopying at the hands of copyists. Neither Ujjalanilmani (written long after 1541 A.D.), nor Danakeli Kaumudi nor Padyāvali contains any *Namaskriya* to Sri Chaitanya but we shall see subsequently that they were written and compiled respectively long after his conversion by Sri Chaitanya. Dr. S.K. Dey seems to regard the absence of a *Namaskriya* to Sri Chaitanya as the conclusive proof that Danakeli Kaumudi, *Padyāvali* and these two *Duta Kāvyas* were composed before Rūpa met Sri Chaitanya.[2] But this supposition is not tenable in the case of Hamsa Duta and Uddhva Duta any more than in the case of Danakeli Kaumudi, Padyāvali and Ujjalanilmani. These two Duta Kāvyas were possibly among his early works; but we cannot definitely affirm it in the absence of positive proof. The spirit of the books is just the same as that of the others which were derived from his initiation and inspiration by Sri Chaitanya.

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[1] Eggling's Catalogue No.3893. p.1468.
[2] Introduction to his edition of Padyavali. p. ii

DANAKELI KAUMUDI

Rūpa Gosvāmi gives the following colophon at the end of Danakeli Kaumudi, *"Iti Danakeli Kaumudi nama bhanika samapta. Katina sumanah sukhada yasya nidesena bhanikatra /geyam tasya nama priya suhrdah kundatatim Ksnanamalankurutam, // Gate manu sate sake chandra svara samantite / Nanidisvarenivasata bhanikeyam vinirmita //*[1]

It states that it was composed in Saka 1471 (1549 A.D.)[2] for the satisfaction of his dearest friend who lived on the bank of the Kunda. Jiva Gosvāmi makes it further clear in the commentary of his on the work. He says that it was composed for the pleasure of Rūpa's dear friend Raghunāthdās who lived at Rādhākunda. But there is one difficulty as to its date. Danakeli Kaumudi has been cited in Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu which is dated in Saka 1463 (1541 A.D.).[3] How could the Danakeli Kaumudi being completed in 1549 A.D., be cited in the work of 1541 A.D.? We know that Rūpa could not necessarily finish one before he started the other. He began Lalitā Mādhava Nātaka and Vidagdha Mādhava Nātaka and finished writing up to at least the end and fifth acts respectively during his stay with Sri Chaitanya at Puri in 1516 A.D. but he completed them at Vrindāvan in 1537 A.D. and 1533 A.D. respectively. If he could finish Lalitā Mādhava after a lapse of 21 years, as he did, he could have made use of the finished portions in his works that were composed during the long interval. So also Rūpa could have cited four verses as he did, from Danakeli Kaumudi, which he may have already composed, in his Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, which he finished before the Danakeli Kaumudi. This surmise may be supported by the fact that the said four verses cited in the Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, occur only in the beginning of the Danakeh Kaumudi, being 7th, 55th, 79th, and 117th whereas it contains 847 slokas. It is natural that Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, which is the most important and best of Rūpa's

[1] M.M.H.P. Sastri's notices of Sanakrit MSS. new series. vol.I. p.169.
[2] Manu-14. Chandra – 1. Svara-7
[3] Bhakti. R. Sindhu. D. IV.6, 128, Purva iii.40; V.II.

works should have demanded more attention than Danakeli Kaumudi. Rūpa used simultaneously to begin several works and made use of one in another. This assumption is the probable answer to the doubts involved.

Dr. S.K. De reads the date in the colophon as Saka 1417 (1495 A.D.) instead of Saka 1471 and thus remarks 'The date cannot be explained (as done by the commentary) as Saka 1471 (1549 A.D.) for Danakeli Kaumudi is cited in the Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu which is dated in Saka 1463 (1541 A.D.). Dr. De further goes on to say that it was composed long before Rūpa met Sri Chaitanya.[1] He says that it is one of his earliest works. He further verifies his surmise that it contains no *Namaskriya* to Sri Chaitanya. First Dr. De reads the date unconstitutionally so as to make it tally with his supposition. According to the Sanskrit rule, the numerals ought to be read conversely; that is to say, the number 7 should come before I (Ankasya vama gati). In other words it is Saka 1471 and not 1417. Dr. De's view not only traverses the established Sanskrit formula but also gives rise to historical inconsistency. We know that Raghunāthdās living on the bank of Rādhākunda, to whom the book has been dedicated, went to Vrindāvan after Saka 1455 (1534 A.D.). Raghunāthdās came to Puri in 1518 A.D. and lived with Sri Chaitanya and Svarup Dāmodar for 16 years till their deaths after which he went to Vrindāvan, and Rūpa and Sanātana received him kindly like a third brother and lodged him on the Rādhā Kunda.[2] Dr.De himself admits that Raghunāthadas came to Puri when he was barely nineteen, and, after Chaitanya's disappearance he left at the age of thirty five for Vrindāvan a self imposed life of severe asceticism till his death, which is said to have occurred at the great old age of 85.[3] If Raghunāthdās was thirty five in the year 1534 A.D. when Sri Chaitanya passed away, he must have been born in the year 1499 A.D. So Rūpa could not have dedicated it to Raghunāth living at Rādhākunda in 1495 A.D. Rūpa himself could not have lived at Nandisvara (Vrindāvan)

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[1] Introduction to Padyavali. p.iii [2] C.C.Adi.X.93-96. Mukta Charit verse IV. Karnananda IV. Svaniyam Dasakam verse. i. Manohsiksa verse iii
[3] Padyavali p.222).

where he completed the book, before 1518 A.D., because he had actually settled in Vrindāvan that year, though he lived there a month or so in 1516 A.D. when he saw the place for the first time.

The editor of the printed edition irrelevantly seems to count 414 *slokas* in this Kāvya book of Rūpa. Rājā Rajendralal Mitra says that it contains 847 *slokas*.[1] Visvanātha Chakravarti has written a commentary on Danakeli Kaumudi.

PADYAVALI

Dr. De says that this book of Rūpa was also an early compilation like Danakeli Kaumudi and Duta Kavyas before he met Sri Chaitanya on the ground that it contains no *Namaskriya* or reference to Sri Chaitanya. He further says to support his view "It does not give verses from any of Rūpa's dramas either which have been profusely utilised for illustrative purposes in his treatises on the Rāsa Sāstra (Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu and Ujjvalanilamani) as well as Nātaka Chandrika".[3] Much may be advanced against Dr. De's view that it was compiled before Rūpa met Sri Chaitanya. The verse No.283 of Padyāvali (Dr. De's edition) beginning with *Priyah Sahayam Krishnah* etc. has a special history of its composition. When Rūpa was at Puri in 1516 A.D., he composed this verse on the Rathayātra day in the month of Asadha (July) 1516 A.D. to give the exact expression of Sri Chaitanya's feeling for Krishna.[4] In Padyāvali there is another verse No.305 which has been ascribed to Kavikarnapura. Dr. De remarks on the verse "He (Kavikarnapura) must have been known to Rūpa Gosvāmi who is said to have made a copy of Kavikarnapura's Chaitanya Charitāmritamahākāvya in Saka 1467 (1545 A.D.)[5] We have already shown, however that Kavikarnapura was born about 1526 A.D. So Rūpa could not have quoted any verse from Kavikarnapura's works in his Padyāvali, as he did, if the latter were compiled before he was initiated by Sri Chaitanya which event took place in 1514 A.D. The verse No. 38 has been attributed to Gopāl Bhatta Gosvāmi. We know when

[1] Notices etc vol. i. No. 164. p.169. [2] Gaudiya.vol. i. Part 18. p.8
[3] Introduction to Padyavali. p.ii [4] C.C.M.I. 60,63,69. [5] Padyavali. p.188

Sri Chaitanya was a guest at their house at Srirangam, Gopāl was a boy. He arrived during his tour in the south in 1510 A.D., Gopāl was then a boy. He arrived at Vrindāvan at least ten years after Sri Chaitanya returned to Puri. Rūpa could not have obtained Gopal's verses before 1525 A.D. or so. Three verses Nos.131, 212, and 331 of Padyāvali are Raghunāthdās's composition. We have just mentioned that Dr. De himself admitted that Raghunāth came to Puri in his nineteenth year in 1518-19 A.D. So if Padyāvali had been compiled some years before Rūpa's conversion (1514 A.D.) Raghunāthdās's verses could not have been included in it. These verses of Raghunāthdās seem to have been composed at least in Puri, if not, at Vrindāvan. Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma's *slokas* (Nos.72, 73, 90, 91, 99, 100, 133) are also to be found in it. We know Vāsudeva was Māyāvadi Vedantist and *Naiyayika*. He does not seem to have composed at an earlier period, these devotional verses expressive of an emotional fervour which he hated before he was converted by Sri Chaitanya.[1] In verses Nos. 99, 72. Sārvabhauma seems to refer to his own life before conversion when his mind was replete with the dry dogmas of *Vedanta, Mimamsa, Nyāya* and so on and when he could not appreciate the sweetness of the Love of Krishna. In verse No.133, Sārvabhauma refers to Sri Chitanya as visible Krishna Whose dancing and grovelling body was besmeared with dust and sand. Verse No.13 of the anthology is attributed to Rāmānand Rāy with whom Rūpa lived at Puri during 1516-17 A.D. What is probable is that Rūpa may have collected these verses of Sārvabhauma and Rāmānand Rāy when he was at Puri with them. The verse No. 126 has been attributed to Raghupati Upadhyaya. We know that when Rūpa was with Sri Chaitanya as his guest at the house of Vallabha Bhatta at Adail near Allahabad in February in 1516 A.D., Raghupati himself recited the said verse to Sri Chaitanya and Rūpa. Rūpa seems to have then collected the verse.[2]

Moreover Sri Chaitanya's *Sikshastaka* or eight precepts, which he taught Rāmānand Rāy and Svarūpa Dāmodara in the latter part of His life, have found a place in the

[1] C.C.M.VII.66 [2] C.C.M.XIX.106

Pādyavali. Though Krishnadās remarks that these verses were composed before he taught them to Rāmānand Rāy towards the end of His life, we have no evidence to suggest that they were composed before his *Sannyās*. Anyhow the *Padyāvali* could not have been compiled before Rūpa finally settled down at Vrindāvan. What is further probable is that it may have been compiled almost immediately before Saka 1463 (1541 A.D.) which is the date of Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu because the latter bears references to Padyāvali both by its name and citation of its verses. The purpose of advancing its date is to show that Kavikarnapura's verse could not have been crept into it if it had been compiled several years before 1540 A.D. even when he was not more than fifteen years of age, because his poetic efforts could hardly have been so precocious.

Dr. De is inclined to ante date it because it does not give the verses of Rūpa's dramatic works which have been profusely utilised for illustrative purposes in his two treatises on *Rāsa Sāstra*. This does not seem to be very sound because Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu and Ujjvalanilamani, in which he cited his dramatic works, are original and new theories that required illustrations, which could not be supplied except from his own dramatic works. But Padyāvali is a mere anthology of the poems of about a hundred different poets of different ages. Most of these poems lay scattered. The main purpose of Rūpa was to save the best poems from oblivion on account of their having no place in a permanent form. He was anxious rather to preserve the best extant lyrical pieces which were likely to be lost, than to increase the bulk of his work by putting his own poems into it. It was unnecessary to transfer his own verses from his independent works, which were already preserved in book form. Even he introduced as many as thirty-four verses of his own. The verses from his drama, which are related to one another with reference to their context, might not have been very appropriate if they were put independently into the Pādyavali. We cannot therefore blame him if he did not cull any verses from his own three dramas for the anthology.

MATHURĀ MAHATMYA

Dr. De says that Govinda Virudavali and Mathurā Mahatmya, which have been cited in the Pādyavah, were composed before Rūpa met Sri Chaitanya. (Introduction to Pādyavali) . We do not find any ground for his view. It is only after the arrival of Sanātana at Vrindāvan that he acquired a book called Mathurā Mahātmya[1], in accordance with which he and later on, his brother Rūpa discovered the Shrines of the Mathurā circle. It is more probable that this book on Mathurā Mahātmya, and their discoveries inspired Rūpa to write his Mathurā Mahātmya rather than that he wrote his book on Mathurā before he arrived there to start the restoration work. If his book had been composed long before he came to Vrindāvan, he and his brother would not have searched for another treatise on Mathurā.

GOVINDA VIRUDAVALI

It is a *Viruda Kāvya* written in praise of the beauty and career of Krishna under the name of Govinda Whose Image he installed at Vrindāvan and to which he dedicates his Ujjvala Nilamani. It begins thus, *"Iyam mangalaRūpa sangovinda virudavali yasyah pathamatrena sri govindah prasidati."* This book in praise of his Deity Govinda seems to have been written after he installed the Image of Govinda. The surmise that it was an early work is not tenable. It has been incorporated in the Stavamāla. The text of Govinda Virudavali has been separately published in Oriya characters by Mr. Jagannāth Dalai, Cuttack in 1924. There are some Bengali editions also.

STAVAMĀLA

Some scholars are at a loss to decide whether Stavamāla was an earlier compilation than Padyāvali or vice versa. Jiva Gosvāmi gathered and arranged the beautiful lyrical and stotra verses of Rūpa in the form of Stavamāla, in the introductory verses of which he (Jiva) says the following, "A humble self named Jiva has collected in Stavamāla the

[1] C.C.M.XXV.208

verses of Rūpa, my master who wrote "Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu". It is clear that the Stavamāla was posterior to "Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu" (1541 A.D.) in which Rūpa has cited sixteen verses from the Padyavali, mentioning its name. The Stavamāla includes Rūpa's Utkalika Vallari which is dated Saka 1471 (*Chandrasva bhuvane sake pause gokulavasina/ Iyam Utkalika purva vallari nirmita Māyā–Colophon*). We may advance its date. Jiva in his Laghutosani which dated 1504 (1582 A.D.), mentions Utkalika Vallari but not the Stavamāla in the list of Rūpa's works which suggests that the Stavamāla was not yet compiled, otherwise he would have mentioned it and not Utkalika Vallari, because it is one of several works that have been included in it. It may have been compiled after 1582 A.D.

Baladeva Vidyābhusana has written a commentary styled Stavamāla Bhusana on it. Rājā Rajendra Lal Mitra notices one manuscript of the commentary, the colophon of which records the name of Vanamāli Vidyābhusana.[1] The copyist of the said manuscript seems to have mistaken Baladeva for Vanamali. All other manuscripts and printed editions ascribe its authorship to Baladeva, another polymath of the sect.

LALITĀ MĀDHAVA AND VIDAGDHA MĀDHAVA NĀTAKAS

Rūpa made the plot of these two dramas and composed its Nandi sloka while he was at Vrindāvan in 1516, but on arrival at Puri, he made two separate plots one for Lalitā Mādhava and the other of Vidagdha Mādhava. We should remark here that Rūpa does not seem to have compiled with the wish of Satyabhāma that he should write a separate drama dealing her Love for Krishna as His wedded wife. Both Lalitā Mādhava and Vidagdha Mādhava deal with the Love of Rādhā, the mistress of Krishna. Vidagdha Mādhava may be regarded as better than Lalitā Mādhava so far as love is concerned because the latter contains two acts, the

[1] Mitra's notices vol. IX. p.55

2nd and 5th dealing with the killing of Sankhachuda and meeting with Chandravali which are rather repugnant to the sweet Love affairs of Rādhā. So far as the dramatic technique is concerned, Lalitā Mādhava is superior to Vidagdha Mādhava. These two plays are masterpieces of the best Sanskrit drama. Rūpa wonderfully displays his easy command of Chanda and his abundance of poetic expression and delineation of *Rāsa* in perfect accordance with dramatic technique of his own as we find in Nātaka Chandrika. These dramas are very touching based on the transcendental emotion of the Love of God.

There is no doubt that the restoration of work of Vrindāvan demanded so much of his time and absorbing energy at the beginning of his stay that he could not but suspend for the time being, his literary activities because most of his books are dated in the latter part of his life. He took a very long time to finish these dramas. Dr. D. C. Sen seems wrong in dating Lalitā Mādhava in 1546 A.D.[1] The colophons of Lalitā and Vidagdha Mādhava state that they were completed in 1537 and 1533 A.D. respectively.

Visvanāth Chakravarti has written commentaries on these two dramas. Yadunandanadas rendered the Vidagdha Mādhava into very sweet Bengali meterical verse.

NĀTAKA CHANDRIKA

This is a treaties on dramaturgy the examples of the dramatic technique of which have been taken only from Vaishnavite dramas and particularly from those of his own composition. A great many of the illustrations employed in it have been cited only from Lalitā Mādhava Nātaka, which may be regarded as perfect as far as dramatic technique is concerned. Rūpa accepts the authority of Bharat Muni and discourages and finds ample fault with Vishvanāth, author of Sāhityadarpana. Nātaka Chandrika consists of 652 verses. (Sankhyatirtha edition. Kossimbazar.) Baladeva Vidyābhusana has written a commentary on it.

[1] V.L.M.B. p. 30

LAGHU BHĀGAVATĀMRITA

At the beginning, Rūpa says that this book would be an abridgement of his Master Sanātana's big book Brihat Bhāgavatāmrita which was the first to be composed. We cannot decide when Laghu Bhāgavatāmrita was composed. It is both a philosophical and theological treatise. Rūpa accepts *Svada* or *Sruti* as the best of all *Pramānas* in his investigation of truth. It is divided into two cantos- Krishnāmritam and Bhaktāmritam, which consist of 540 and 46 *slokas* respectively. It cites verses mainly from the Bhāgavata Purāna and also from Hari Bhakti Sudhodaya, Skanda Purāna, PadmaPurāna, Brahma Samhita, Hari Vansa, Karika, Gita, Vishnu Purāna, Pancharatra, Brahma Purna, Vishnudharmottara, Kurma Purāna, and Vāsudeva Upanisad etc.

ITS COMMENTARIES

Mr. Rama Nārāyana Vidyāratna has published the Laghu Bhāgavatāmrita, also called Sanksepa Bhāgavatāmrita with its commentary called Rasika Rangada, which has been ascribed to Vrindāvan Chakravarti. It at the end of the commentary on the Krishnāmrita part of Rūpa's Laghu Bhāgavatāmrita, its author states that it was composed by Vrindāvan son of Rādhā Charana, in Saka 1629 (1707 A.D.) In the colophon at the end of this commentary on this part he calls himself Vrindāvan Chandra Tarkalamkar. At the end of the commentary on the last Bhaktāmrita part the author calls himself Vidyābhusan. The Vidyābhusan of the latter part of the commentary seems to be different from Vrindāvan Chandra Tarkalamkar, the writer of the first part. Mr. Atul Krishna Gosvāmi of Calcutta and Mr. Javala Prasad Misra of Bombay have published Rūpa's Samksepa Bhāgavatāmrita with another running commentary ascribing the authorship of the latter to Baladeva Vidyābhusan. This commentary by Baladeva Vidyābhusan is different from that of Vrindāvan Tarkalamkar on the Krishnāmrita part but it is exactly the same as that of the Vidyābhusan on the Bhaktāmrita part in Rāma Nārāyana's edition which seems to have published Vrindāvan's

commentary on the Krishnāmrita part and Vidyābhusana's on the Bhaktāmrita part. We are not sure that Vrindāvan Chandra did not write this commentary on the last Bhaktāmrita part, which contains only 46 *slokas*, although he had already commented on 540 *slokas* of the Krishnāmrita part.

KRISHNA GANODDESADIPIKA

This is in two parts under the names of Brihat and Laghu consisting of 253 and 205 *slokas* respectively. In it, Rūpa deals with the names of Krishna's friend and mistresses of Vraja, describing their characteristic qualities and arts in their plays and dalliances with Krishna. It is throughout written in Anusthupa metre. It is perhaps the first systematic book of its kind on the subject. This book is a great help to enable the reader to understand the references to Krishna's associates in his Ujjvalanilamani and damas. In the beginning (verse 3), Rūpa says that some saints of old had recorded the names of the associates of Krishna, which were to be found in tradition and in some scriptures and that he describes them systematically. As regards the source of material, he mentions in verse No 4, "I am describing for the pleasure of my friends what I have heard from the mouths of the saints from the traditional account of the people of Mathurā, and from what I have found in various books, *Purānas* and *Āgamas*."

The verse at the end of Brihat Krishna Ganoddesadipika seems to imply that it was completed on Sunday, the sixth Tithau in the month of *Sravana* in Saka 1472 (1550 A.D.). The latter Laghu part seems to have been written after the said date when the first *Brihat* part seems to have been completed.

BHAKTI RASĀMRITA SINDHU

This is decidedly the best of Rūpa's works. *Bhakti* as the absolute permanent *Rāsa* with all its possible psychological bearings has been discussed in it by Rūpa with his usual thoroughness and clear-cut realisation. Though Narada and Sandilya Sutras are earlier than Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu,

yet from the point of the transcendental novelty and psychology of *Bhakti* and also from its detailed scientific treatment, the latter may be regarded as the first and last book on *Bhakti*. Rūpa displayed in it his unique devotional insight and all the wealth of his psychological knowledge of the spirit. It is the most wonderful book in the whole history of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. It resulted from his thorough assimilation of Sri Chaitanya's teaching, which He imparted to him at Allahabād. Rūpa admits it in the opening verse, "I bow to the Lotus-Feet of Hari Sri Chaitanya Dev. Being inspired in heart by Him, this humble self is now ready to write this book". He pays his respects to his brother Sanātana in the next verse, "May my Lord Sanātana always rejoice in my treatise Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu (nectarine ocean of devotional Rāsa) as his temple of repose (*Vishrama Mandira*)." At the end of the book, Rūpa says that it was composed for the pleasure of Sanātana. In the opening verses of each of the four parts, of the book, Rūpa invokes the blessings of Sanātana. Rūpa means to say that the readers of his book should be only those devotees who have given up *Mukti* or absorption in the undifferentiated *Brahman*; and he guards it against non-devotees. This he says in the next two verses (IV, V) "I great those Makara (a fabulous marine animal) devotees who roam at large in this Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu or nectarine ocean of devotion ignoring all rivers of *Mukti* and who are free from the mortal waters of fear. May this nectarine ocean of devotion flow for eternity, quenching the dry tongue of the submarine fire of *Mimansakas*."

Next he expresses his personal humility before he begins writing, with the hope that this book of his will be of a source of delight to his friends. He gives the definition of *Bhakti* which is the subject-matter of the book, in the ninth verse, "Pure devotion is a natural aptitude for the loving service of Krishna bereft of all other ulterior motives and free from all taints of *Karma*, *Jnāna* or abstract oneness with the *Brahman* and the like. Next he proceeds to bring out this idea in great detail citing verse from Nārada Pancharātra, Bhāgavata and other previous works.

THE DATE OF THE BOOK

The colophon *"Rāmanga sakre ganite sake gokulam adhisthitena sri bhakti Rasāmrita sindhur vitankitah ksudrarupena"* states that it was completed by humble Rūpa living at Gokulam in Saka 1463, (1541 A.D.) Rājā Rājendra Lal Misra seems wrong in assigning its authorship to Jiva Gosvāmi.[1] Mr. Eggling is not accurate in stating that it was composed some fifteen years after Sri Chaitanya's demise and its introductory verses seem indeed to ascribe its composition to Sanātana."[2] We know that Sri Chaitanya passed away in 1534 A.D. and that this book was completed in 1541 A.D.

ITS COMMENTARY

Again some scholars attribute the authorship of its famous commentary, styled Durgama Sangamani, by Jiva Gosvāmi either to Rūpa or to Sanātana.[3] The colophon of the India office manuscript seems incorrect in putting the name of Sanātana as its author. Jiva pays his respect to both his uncles Sanātana and Rūpa in the following opening verse, *"Sanātana samo yasya jyayam Sriman Sanātanah / Sri vallabho'nujah so 'sau srirūpa jiva sadgati"* saying that the eternal recourse of Jiva is Sanātana who is eternally glorified, and Rūpa whose younger brother is Sri Vallabha. (Jiva's father). With this verse, Jiva also ends his commentary on 'Brahma Samhita' and begins that on 'Ujjvala Nilamani'. Jiva himself mantions his authorship of Surgama Sangamani, in his letter to Srinivāsa.[4] Jiva's disciple Krishnadāsa Adhikari places the commentary of Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu with that of Ujjvala Nilamani in the list of Jiva's works.[5] All other manuscripts and printed editions of Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu with its commentary Durgama Sangamani mention Jiva as its commentator in the colophons. Durgama Sangamani is never mentioned in any of the lists of either of Rūpa's works or Sanātana's.

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[1] Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts. Vol. II.No.579
[2] Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the India office library. p. 812. No. 1894.
[3] Eggling's catalogue of the Sanskrit MSS in the India Office. p.814.
[4] Letter No.2. Published in Bhakti Ratnakara. XIV. Premavilāsa XXIV.
[5] Bh.R.K.I.

There is no difficulty in attributing the authorship of it to Jiva Gosvāmi. It is very helpful in grasping the ideas of Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu. Vishvanāth Chakravarti has made the shortest possible abridgement, known as Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu Vindu of Rūpa's original work. One Rādhā Mohana Sarman, who describes himself in the colophon as the descendant of Advaita, has written Krishna Bhakti Rasodaya consisting of 180 verses. This is nothing more than the passages of Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu with his comments thereon. Rādhāmohana is the son of Navakishora who is 8th in descent from Krishna Misra son of Advaita.[1]

SUBJECT MATTER AND CLASSIFICATION OF BHAKTI RASĀMRITA SINDHU

The Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu is divided into four parts called East (*Purva*), South (*Daksin*), West (*Paschima*), and North (*Uttara*). In the east part there are four *Laharis* (Waves) or chapters showing *Samanya Bhakti* (ordinary) in the first; *Sādhana Bhakti* or practice of *Bhakti* in the second; *Bhāva Bhakti* or development of *Bhakti* before reaches *Prema-Bhakti*; in the third; and *Prema Bhakti* or the highest stage of *Bhakti*, in the fourth wave. These four waves of the east part contain 33, 163, 31, and 13 verses respectively.

The south part comprises five *Laharis* or waves treating of *Vibhava*, *Anubhava*, *Sattvika*, *Vyabhichāri* and *Sthāyi Bhāva* respectively. They contain 196, 17, 55, 128, and 80 *slokas* respectively.

The west part consists five *Laharis* or waves *viz.* the first wave of which treats *Sānta Bhaktirasa*, the second of *Prita Bhaktirasa*, the third of *Preyobhaktirasa*, the fourth of *Vātsalya Bhaktirasa*, the fifth of *Madhura Bhaktirasa* in 28, 85, 61, 44, 21 *Slokas* respectively.

The north part contains nine Laharis headed, according to the subject treated, as (1) *Hāsya Bhakti Raskhya*, (2) *Adbhuta Rasakhya*, (3) *Vira Bhakti Rasakhya*, (4) *Karuna*

[1] Vaishnava Manjusa. Part ii.P.3.

Bhakti Rasakhya, (5) *Raudra Bhakti Rasakhya*, (6) *Bhayanaka Bhakti Rasakhya*, (7) *Vibhatsa Bhakti Rasakhya*, (8) *Maitri Vaira sthiti Namni Astama Lahari*, (9) *Rasabhasakhya navam Lahari* respectively. These nine *Laharis* of the North part have 12, 8, 25, 8, 13, 7, 7, 59, 22 verses respectively. The last verse and the colophon are the two additional verses at the end of the book.

Verses have been cited in it from the following books. We are obliged to give only one reference to them in it.

UJJVALA NILAMANI

This may be described as the second part or supplement to Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu. Rūpa says this in the second verse; "I am going to delineate separately and in detail Madhura or Ujjvala Rāsa which I have already discussed briefly in connection with *Mukhya Rāsa*." Jiva in his commentary distinctly says that it was written after Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu. (Verse ii). Rūpa took up *Ujjvala Rāsa* briefly in Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu whereas in Ujjvalanilamani he discussed it in all its psychological niceties. He divides *Ujjvala Rāsa* into two aspects – *Sambhoga* and *Vipralambha*, that is to say, Love of God in union and in separation. He particularly emphasises the latter aspect, because Sri Chaitanya practised it in His Own Life. The whole secret of adopting the *Vipralambha* aspect of Love is that Love-in-separation of God enhances all the more the concentrated Bliss that lies in Love-in-union. Rūpa has drawn examples from the Life and practices of Sri Chaitanya by way of illustrating the psychological contents of Love-in-separation of God.

Apart from the devotional point of view of the Vaishnavas, the earliest work on poetics that has been produced in Bengal is this Vasishnavite Ujjvala Nilamani of Rūpa Gosvāmi. There is a tradition that Bengal had a *Riti* or style of its own from very early times but we cannot show any concrete example in the field of literature that Bengal had any book on rhetorics before the time of Rūpa and his followers. Most of the rhetoric books of Bengal are the works of this sect whose creed by its nature offers as

much scope to the philosopher as to the writer on *Kāvya*, rhetoric and other branches of poetics. It is very interesting to note that both aspects of literature-its philosophy and *Kāvya* are well balanced in the works of the sect.

Rūpa's work is not only the earliest of its class in Bengal but is fundamentally independent of all works on poetics that have previously sprung up in India. Rūpa has founded an independent school of poetics in the very conception, development and treatment of *Rāsa*.

Rūpa distinctly differentiates his *Ujjvala Rāsa*, which is applicable only to Krishna and is consequently spiritual and lovely, from the love of mortal woman for her lover.[1] He further asks his readers to be very careful and cautious in understanding the meaning of his Ujjvala Nilamani in connection with his discussion in favour of *Parakiya Rāsa* or Love of Krishna with His mistresses of Vraja. Rūpa argues that none but Krishna is the sole enjoyer of all love in its excellence, and no mortal man should imitate Him in this regard. If a man eats poison in imitation of Rudra, he would die; so also if a mortal being tries to imitate Krishna in such enjoyment even in this thought, he is sure to meet with destruction.[2]

He begins his book with his respectful homage to his great brother Sanātana in the following verse, "May my master Sanātana whose tongue has been charmed by reciting the name (of Krishna), Who inspires the holy people with happiness by means of his sweet behaviour who bestows bliss on Rūpa, be ever glorified." Rūpa dedicates his Ujjvala Nilamani to his God Govinda Deva in the following last verse, "O God, this bright gem (Ujjvala Nilamani) born in the unfathomable ocean of Mahaghosa (Gokula), desires to be employed in thy Makara ear-rings by way of serving thee."

CLASSIFICATION OF THE BOOK

Ujjvala Nilamani consists of twenty-three *Prakarana* or chapters dealing with a variety of subjects and their

[1] Nayaka Bheda Prakarana.14

[2] Krishna Vallabha Prakarana.13.

delineations in each of them. The first is named *Nāyaka Bheda Prakarana*; the 2nd – *Sahaya Bheda Prakarana*; the 3rd - *Krishna Vallabha Prakarana*; the 4th– *Rādhā Prakarana*; the 5th – *Nāyika Bheda Prakarana*; the 5th– the *Yuthesvari Bheda Prakarana*; the 7th–*Duti Bheda Prakarana*; the 8th – *Sakhi Prakarana*; the 9th *Hari Vallabha Prakarana*; the 10th – *Uddipana Prakarana*; the 11th – *Anubhava Prakarana*; the 12th – *Udvasvara Prakarana*; the 13th – *Sattvika Prakarana*; the 14th – *Vyabhichari Prakarana*; the 15th – *Sthayibhaya Prakarana*; the 16th – *Sringara Bheda Prakarana*; the 17th– *Purvaraga Prakarana*; the 18th *Mana Prakarana*; the 19th– *Prema Vaichitra Prakarana*; the 20th–*Pravasa Prakarana*; the 21st– *Samyaga-Viyogapsthiti Prakarana*; the 22nd– *Mukhya Sambhoga Prakarana*; the 23rd–*Gauna Sambhoga Prakarana*.

ITS COMMENTARY

Sri Jiva Gosvāmi has written a running commentary on it. It is known as *Lochana Rochini*, which further illumines this profound subject. It should be noted in this connection that some people wrongly attribute its authorship to Rūpa. Jiva's disciple Krishnadās Adhikari distinctly says that it was written by Jiva.[1] Vishvanātha Chakravarti has also written a commentary styled Ānanda Chandrika. Beside that, he has written Ujjvala Nilamani Kirana in the simplest Sanskrit giving us a short summary of Rūpa's work. Ujjvala Nilamani with the said two commentaries was published by Rāma Nārāyana Vidyāratna at Mursidabad in 1889 and by Pandit Kedarnāth and Vāsudeva Laxmana at Bombay in 1913.

Krishnadās Kavirāj tells us that the total number of Rūpa's *slokas* both in prose and poetry is one hundred thousand.[2] Yadunandanadās in his Karnanda agrees with Krishnadās Kavirāj as to the said number of Rūpa's composition.

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[1] Bh.R.K.J. P.60 [2] C.C. Antya. IV.226

APPRECIATION OF RŪPA'S WORK:

When Rūpa and Sanātana came to Vrindāvan, the place was no more than the forest and Jungle, inhabited not by men but by wild animals. In less than a quarter of a century, they had turned it into the greatest stronghold of the new culture, by dint of their invincible energy and blessed enthusiasm. It was the potentiality of Sri Chaitanya's teaching, which sustained them in their successful attempt to establish a great centre of true theistic culture. Vrindāvan of Rūpa and Sanātana was the blissful home of the All-love. There music literature, songs and all the elements of art and culture reached an easy perfection. The art of Rūpa did not know that ugliness–the concomitant of sensuality, which only produces the uglier reaction of a loveless asceticism. The pleasure of a Youthful God was the guiding principle, and life of this stronghold of culture. The Rājput Princes were among those who were soon attracted to its beauty. The Emperor Ākbar could not resist the temptation to visit this centre of the aesthetic culture of ascetics. They approached the Vaishnava masters with affectionate admiration and raised lofty temples and spacious halls in keeping with the spirit of Rūpa, to house his achievements. It was the magnetic personalities of Rūpa and Sanātana that compelled princes and beggars to make their obeisance for the priceless gift of Divine Love. It was no doubt in every way an extraordinary achievements, that Rūpa and Sanātana could establish and develop a self-contained and self-sufficient university of religious culture at Vraja within such a short time. It was also distinct from all the other cultural centres of India in its fundamental conception. Its literature bears a distinction of its own. People may blame it as communistic but its communism is a thing of beauty. Rūpa's purpose was to train the generations to come, to breath an atmosphere of absolute spirituality. The students of this university were not to be contaminated by anything secular. With this purpose in view, he himself created and inspired his illustrious nephew Jiva to create, all branches of literature, so that the sect could declare non-co-operation with all concerns dominated by the

secular outlook. It was a mighty ambition of Rūpa and fortunately he succeeded to a considerable degree in its achievement. The influence of Rūpa's personality is felt in every work of the literature of that sect.

SRI JIVA GOSVĀMI

Sri Jiva Gosvāmi was son of Anupama Vallabha Mallik, younger brother of Sanātana and Rūpa. Anupama was also an enthusiastic follower of Sri Chaitanya and renounced the world for his service. He died in Gauda (Bengal) about April or May 1516 A.D., when he and his brother Rūpa were on their way to Sri Chaitanya at Puri from Vrindāvan. We have not got any records of the exact date of Jiva's birth. Bhaktiratnākara says that Jiva saw Sri Chaitanya at Rāmakeli when the Latter visited it in November or December 1514 A.D. If he were at least five years of age at the time of Sri Chaitanya's visit to Rāmakeli, he would have been born in 1509 A.D. Bhaktiratnākara further says that Jiva was sufficiently grown up to suffer grief on the death of his father. So it will not be unreasonable to assign his birth to cira 1509 A.D.

No reliable contemporary writer whether Krishnadās Kavirāj or any other gives us any history of this greatest Vaishnava writer before he left home for good. It is only Premavilāsa and the much later work Bhaktiratnākara, which mentions his ascetic turn of mind in the midst of the affluence of a baronial family. He must have been born an ascetic otherwise he could not have renounced the world at such a tender age and without entering into the worldly life. Religious asceticism was inborn with him. He had no taste for the luxury of worldly life. The examples of religious asceticism, set up by his father and famous uncles, made a deep impression on the young mind of Jiva. He also determined to follow the same life as that of his uncles.

The family was devotedly attached to Sri Chaitanya. Further religious training served to develop his natural inclination towards the service of Sri Chaitanya as an ascetic, which life the God of the family and its principal members had already adopted. Jiva's intelligence was

extraordinary and he mastered grammar and the Bhāgavata under several professors in his early years when he was still at home. Having finished his studies at home, he made up his mind to go Navadvip for higher studies; but his real intention was to leave home altogether. His religious fervency became intense while he was still at home. His relatives were perfectly aware that he would leave home very soon. On the pretext of proceeding to Navadvip for his further studies, Sri Jiva left home with a servant and arrived there a few days later. His family was very much respected in Navadvip because many scholars and academies received generous grants from his uncles and father. All of them received him very kindly. If he were then fifteen or sixteen years of age, he would have come to Navadvip about 1525 A.D. His real purpose in coming to Navadvip was to see Nityānanda and obtain his advice as to the life he should lead. Here he met Srivās and the other associates of Sri Chaitanya. Both Chaitanya Charita by Krishnadās and Bhaktiratnākara state that Nityānanda Who graced him advised him to join and assist his uncles Rūpa and Sanātana in their activities in Vrindāvan saying, "that Sri Chaitanya particularly assigned to their family those missionary activities."[1] Jiva accepted his command with his characteristic single-mindedness but his education was not then as complete as it should have been to enable him to undertake the great task of writing the literature on *Bhakti* and of helping his uncles in their work. He made up his mind to finish his education before he finally settled at Vrindāvan to serve the cause of Sri Chaitanya. The task with which his uncles were charged by Sri Chaitanya and with which he was further charged by Nityānanda could be properly carried out only by the genius of a great scholar. With the sole aim of serving the cause of Sri Chaitanya in the same way as his uncles, he placed himself under the great savant Madhusudhana Vāchaspati of Benares. He was a veteran professor of Nyāya and Vedānta and at the same time, a follower of Sri Chaitanya. He was the brother of Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma who had employed both his

[1] C.C.Antya.IV.233-234. Bh.R.K.I

scholarship and resources in the service of Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Madhusudana was also the teacher of his uncles Rūpa and Sanātana. We have already observed that Sanātana pays respect to his teachers in his Dasama Tippani.

Madhusudhana taught Jiva the subjects of *Vedānta* and other branches of Sanskrit learning for several years, which the young prodigy fully mastered in a short time, and became unrivalled in *Nyāya* and *Vedānta* in the University town of Benares then as now the greatest seat of Sanskrit learning in India. Having been well equipped with a sound academic training Sri Jiva came on to Vrindāvan and absolutely dedicated himself to the service of God as directed by his distinguished uncles.

Rūpa and Sanātana received him with great affection not as their nephew but in relation to Sri Chaitanya. It was no doubt a source of legitimate pride to them that their gifted nephew had been attracted to the exclusive service of Sri Chaitanya. Both Rūpa and Sanātana taught Jiva the doctrine of Bhakti and trained him in the true spirit of Vaishnavism which blends the extreme worldly detachment of ascetism with an all-consuming Love for Krishna. Jiva fully assimilated in his life and action what his uncles practised in their own lives. Jiva owed equal allegiance to his uncles Rūpa and Sanātana, and made no distinction between them. Rūpa seems to have given him the initiation. That is why Jiva addressed Rūpa as "*Madisvara*" in the opening verse of Stavamāla. Premavilāsa also calls Jiva a disciple of Rūpa (XVI). Jiva used to pay his respect to Rūpa and Sanātana saying that they were his best recourse. Opening verse of his commentary on Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu. He admits at every step that, "his writings are nothing but the teachings of Rūpa and Sanātana" and that he is the servitor of the servitors of God Sri Chaitanya." Sanātana and Rūpa taught him the meaning of all devotional literature and inspired him to produce it in its different branches in his own turn.

By his inherent genius, whether in asceticism or in education, or in the ability to lead, Jiva gained a high place

in the estimation of his superiors like Raghunāthdās and others. Krishnadās Kavirāj makes his obeisance to him as his *Siksa Guru*.[1] Raghunāthdās in his Muktacharita, which was written during the life-time of Rūpa and Sanātana, calls Jiva his "living body" by way of dedicating the said book to him. Raghunāth says that his work was composed at Jiva's command. When he was overwhelmed with passionate grief on the death of Rūpa, he expresses the wish in his Svaniyama Dasaka that he should die on the bank of Rādhā Kunda in the presence of Jiva. After the death of his uncles, Jiva was the President *Āchārya* of the Vishva Vaishnava Rājā Sabha.

The nineteenth canto of Premavilās gives us an account of Jiva's acceptance of the challenge of a great scholar named Rūpa Nārāyana who then went on a tour challenging all the scholars of the different seats of learning and extorting from his vanquished rivals written acknowledgement of their defeat. He now assumed the honorific title of *Dig-Vijayi* or conqueror of all places. By this time the reputation of Rūpa and Sanātana as great scholars had spread all over the country. Rūpa Nārāyana now came to Vrindāvan and arrogantly challenged the Vaishnava ascetics to a discussion giving out that on hearing of their fame as scholars, he had come to meet them, in open controversy. Rūpa and Sanātana pitied the proud Rūpa Nārāyana and asked what he wanted from them. They consented to give him their written acknowledgement of defeat in arguments, which he wanted from them, without embarking on any discussion. Rūpa and Sanātana saw him puffed up with vanities and so they wrote out what Rūpa Nārāyana dictated, to the effect that they had been defeated, by him in open controversy. Rūpa Nārāyana now came to learn that there was yet another great scholar at Vrindāvan of the name of Jiva whom he should also meet. He approached Jiva and told him that his uncles had given him a written acknowledgement of his victory out of fear, without accepting his challenge and that he also should do the same. Jiva understood everything. It is a principle of the

[1] C.C.Antya IV.236.

Vaishnava doctrine not to permit any disgrace to smirch the reputation of a Guru or to allow any assailants of the Guru to go unopposed. Jiva readily accepted his challenge, saying that he was the unworthy disciple of Sri Rūpa and Sanātana and that the *Dig-Vijayi* should defeat the disciple before he boasted of having defeatd his Gurus.

A formal disputation took place on the subject of non-duality (Advaita Vada) versus Duality (Dvaita vada). Rūpa Nārāyana advocated the former, Jiva the latter. The famous discussion lasted seven days and on the last day Jiva completely defeated his rival by proving that *Bhakti* was superior to *Jnāna*. This defeat and his arrogance towards Rūpa and Sanātana made the vanquished scholar extremely penitent and he now begged pardon of Rūpa and Sanātana with great humility. He begged for initiation from them. Rūpa is said to have spoken to him the Name of Krishna saying that it would please his heart. Rūpa Nārāyana lived at Vrindāvan for some years and studied Rūpa's *Bhakti* Rasāmrita Sindhu, Ujjvalanilamani, Bhāgavata and (Sāt) Sandarbha under Jiva Gosvāmi.

Dr. D. C. Sen says that Rūpa Nārāyana left Vrindāvan in the year 1534 A.D.[1] The date seems probable from the fact that Rūpa Narayan when he came to Puri, is said to have seen Svarup Dāmodara who died the same year; but it is hardly reconcilable with the other facts recorded in Prema Vilās viz. that he studied the Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, Ujjvalanilamani and so on of Rūpa and the Sada Sandarbha of Jiva and that Narottama came to Vrindāvan twelve years after the defeat of Rūpa Nārāyana. We know that Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu is dated 1541 A.D. and Ujjvalanilamani some years later. Narottama (the future *Guru* of Rūpa Nārāyana) would not have come to Vrindāvan before the demise of Rūpa and Sanātana Circa 1555 A.D., so Rūpa Nārāyana's defeat would not have taken place before 1543 A.D. or so. Rūpa Nārāyana's meeting with Svarup Dāmodar at Puri after this incident may have been mistaken for his previous meeting when he visited Sri Chaitanya before he came to Vrindāvan.

[1] V.L.M.B. p.45

JIVA AND HIS PUPILS – SRINIVĀS, NAROTTAM AND SHYĀMĀNANDA

Almost immediately after the demise of Rūpa and Sanātana, two young scholars of Bengal, Srinivās and Narottam by name, and Shyāmānanda of Orissa arrived at Vrindāvan to study Vaishnava literature and to lead a pure Vaishnava life under the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters. Srinivās reached Vrindāvan about four days after the demise of Rūpa, which tragic news he heard at Mathurā.[1] Sri Jiva received him kindly and himself undertook to teach him all the literature of Rūpa and Sanātana in the same way as Rūpa taught him.[2] Jiva had him initiated by Gopāl Bhatta. Narottam also began their studies under him. Shyāmānanda also placed himself under Jiva. These three scholars were most affectionate towards Jiva Gosvāmi, who trained them to work in Bengal and Orissa. The literature of the sect was still unknown in Bengal. The Gosvāmins of Vrindāvan became very anxious about the fate of the Mission in Bengal because after the disappearance of Nityānanda, its activities diminished to great extent. Rūpa and Sanātana were anxious to educate some young scholars in new literature to work in Bengal. It was no doubt a great joy to Jiva to get as last three first rate scholars who had the requisite genius to impart the Vaishnava spirit and collaborate in producing Vaishnava literature. When Jiva considered they had acquired sufficient knowledge of the doctrine to establish it against opposition from all other sects, he conferred on Srinivās the title of *Āchārya* and on Narottam, that of Thākur. In consultation with Raghunāthdās, Raghunāthdās Lokanāth and other Gaudiya Vaishnava masters of Vraja, Jiva resolved to send them to Bengal with the whole treasure of literature that had sprang up at Vraja. Jiva charged them with the tremendous task of preaching the doctrine and circulating and popularising those voluminous writings in Bengal. The rich merchants of Mathurā were Jiva's disciples. He asked one of them to provide carts, chests and waterproof materials to protect the books and to secure pass ports, which the merchant did. Jiva held a special festival when

[1] Premavilāsa.V. p.56 [2] Premavilāsa. XII.

his favourite pupils left Vrindāvan on their great mission. Jiva showed Srinivās a letter from Sri Chaitanya in which He declared that Srinivās would extend the cause in Bengal. Nityānandadas in his Prema Vilās tells us that they were sent in the month of *Kartika*, but does not mention the year. We may safely assume that it was perhaps towards the end of the fifties of the 16th century that Srinivās may have come to Bengal.

The Rajput princes were at the services of the Gosvāmins of Vraja. Rājā Vira Hamvira and the princely house of Rājā Kedara Rāy of Rājmahal now came to the help of Srinivās and Narottam in Bengal. Shyāmānanda converted Rājā Vaidyanath Bhanja of the Mayurbhanja state who proved as enthusiastic supporter of the cause as the Emperor Prataparudra of Orissa. It was perhaps the most flourishing era for the movement. Jiva living at Vrindāvan guided the movement in all three centres in western India, Bengal and Orissa. All the leaders owed absolute allegiance to Jiva Gosvāmi who possessed extraordinary qualities of leadership to guide a movement of radical religious reform in the different provinces in India.

Sri Jiva used to send his books to Bengal as soon as he was able to finish them. Whenever there arose any difficulty as to the meaning of any book either of his or of the other Gosvāmins, Jiva was referred to. His decision was accepted as final. Jiva has no equal in the sect, whether in missionary zeal and ability, or in the amount of literary production. His character from his infancy to his demise was spotless. He was as strong as a rock in defending the faith. No opponent could stand before his sharp intellect. Sri Jiva was the shining gem in the intellectual crown of the sect.

JIVA AND HIS RĀDHĀ DĀMODAR TEMPLE

Rūpa Gosvāmi installed the Image of Rādhā *Dāmodara* in a temple and placed Jiva in its charge.[1] The Rādhā Dāmodara temple is one of the most principal shrines of the sect. It is situated close to Sringaravata and the Yamunā.

[1] Sadhanadipika. quoted in B.R.K. IV. p.139.

Jiva lived within the precincts of the temple where he housed his vast collection of books, most of which have been destroyed, partly by the occasional raids of the iconoclasts of the Emperor Auranzib and I the course of moving from one place to another. A good deal of it has been preserved in the *Puthisala* of the Govinda temple at Jaypur. The chief of the Jaypur state had it transferred to his custody together with the principal Deities of Vrindāvan.

The tombs of Rūpa and Jiva are to be found within the precincts of the Rādhā Dāmodara temple. We cannot know with any certainty the date of the demise of Sri Jiva Gosvāmi. He lived on at least for a few years after the completion of his Gopālā Champu, the second book of which was completed in 1592 A.D. the first and the second book of which are dated *Saka* 1510 (1583 A.D.) and *Saka* 1514 (1592 A.D.) respectively. This book, when it came to Bengal, caused a division of opinion as to whether it advocates *Svakiya Rāsa* or *Parakiya Rāsa* among *Vyāsachārya* on the one hand and Narottam, Ramachandra and Govinda Kavirāj on the other. It was perhaps the second volume, which caused the question to arise. They jointly wrote a letter to Sri Jiva soliciting his decision. Jiva wrote a joint letter to Ramachandra, Narottam and Govinda supporting the latter view. If he disappeared before 1594 A.D. circa, that is to say, about two years after the completion of his Gopāl Champu, he would have lived to the age of eighty-five years.

JIVA GOSVĀMI'S LITERARY WORKS

Jiva's disciple Krishnadās Adikari mentions the following 25 works of Jiva by name and puts '*Ityadayadah*' at the end, which means that there are many other besides.

1. Harināmāmrita Vyākarana (Grammar)
2. Sutramalika (Grammar)
3. Dhatu Samgraha (Grammar)
4. Krishnārchanadipika (Ritualistic)
5. Gopāla Virudavali (Viruda Kāvya)

6. Mādhava Mahotsava (Kāvya)
7. Sankalpa Kalpadruma (Kāvya)
8. Bhavartha Suchaka Champu (Champu Kāvya)
9. Commentary on Gopāla Tapani.
10. Commentary on Brahma Samhita.
11. Durgama Samgamani, a commentary of Rūpa's Bh.R.Sindhu.
12. Lochana Rochani, a commentary on Rūpa's Ujjvala Nilamani.
13. A commentary on Yogasarastava.
14. A Commentary on Gāyatri contained in Agni Purāna.
15. Krishna Pada Chihna basing on Padma Purāna.
16. Rādhika Pada Chihna.
17. Gopāla Champu (Purva) (Champu Kāvya).
18. Gopāla Champu (Uttara) (Champu Kāvya)

Sada Sandarbha (Philosophical) which, includes the following six Sandarbhas.

19. Tattva Sandarbha
20. Bhāgavata Sandarbha
21. Paramātma Sandarbha.
22. Krishna Sandarbha.
23. Bhakti Sandarbha.
24. Priti Sandarbha.
25. Krama Sandarbha. (A Commentary on the Bhāgavata).

To the said list, we can safely add

26. Sarva Samvadini
27. Laghu Vaishnava Tosani
28. Sara Samgraha.

Sanskrit works ascribed to Jiva Gosvāmi may be divided mainly into two classes: (1) Commentaries on older

writings such as Brahma Samhita, Krishna Karnāmrita, Gopāla Tapani and on Rūpa's work such as Bhakti Rasāmrita Sindhu, Ujjvalanilamani; (2) his original works which are philosophical, grammatical, ritualistic and *Kāvya*. Jiva's colleague Krishnadās Kavirāj gives us the number of *Granthas* (32 litters make a Grantha) which are embodied in his books, as four hundred thousand that is to say, four times those of Rūpa. There never was in the history of this gifted sect, such a voluminous out-put as that of the polymath, Sri Jiva Gosvāmi, whose range of knowledge is so vast and the subjects of which he treats, so varied. Supremely gifted with patience and vitality, Jiva embarked upon his writings in a systematic way, every piece of which is characterised by his maturity of judgement and freshness of presentation. He has written with authority as befits men who have carried out some of the most illuminating investigations in the field of philosophy. His knowledge perhaps will not be questioned. He was well read and clearly knew a tremendous lot about philosophy from ancient times to his age. Accurate observation, logical treatment, clear-cut ideas, depth of thought and convincing conclusions are the main characteristics of his philosophical works. As a grammarian, he had few rivals. It is very interesting to note that he combined within himself the majesty of a philosopher, rigid consistency of a grammarian, and high imagination of a poet. His Kāvya works as a whole are admirably written with vivacity, spontaneity, sensitiveness, charming simplicity and warmth. Whatever he wrote, he wrote with ease, delight and a remarkable thoroughness. He is decidedly the greatest thinker of the sect.

SANKALPA KALPADRUMA

This is a Kāvya book written on the life and amours of Krishna with Rādhā and other damsels of Vraja. It may be divided into five sections headed as; (1) the *Janmalilā* or nativity of Krishna. (2) *Nityalilā* or eternal sports of Krishna, (3) *Sarvartulilā* or sports in all seasons, (4) *Phalanispatti* or fruition, (5) and *Prārthana* or Prayer

to God and Gurus. They contain 275, 315, 131,10 and 7 verses respectively. It begins with obeisance to Krishna, Sri Chaitanya, Rūpa, Sanātana, Gopāl Bhatta and Raghunāthdās, invoking their protective blessings. Almost at the end of the book he pays his respects to Rūpa and Sanātana in the following, "May my two lords, who are my uncles and who are incomparable among the good devotees, who teach me by marking out my course, be my eternal recourse."

GOPĀLA CHAMPU

This Kāvya work is in two big volumes namely Purva Champu and Uttara Champu written partly in poetry and partly in poetic prose. The quality and bulk of it are really great. Two verses almost at the end of the said volumes contain the date of their completion in Saka 1510 (1588 A.D.) and Saka 1514 (1592 A.D.) respectively.[1]

HARINAMĀMRITA VYĀKARANA

The idea that Vaishnava students should not touch any secular book or utter any name other than Krishna in the course of their education, was fully carried out by Jiva Gosvāmi. Grammar is the first book that ought to be mastered before any branch of Sanskrit learning can be taken up. Rūpa and Sanātana had already produced works on philosophy, Kāvya, drama, rhetoric, prose, poetry and so on. But a Vaishnava student would not have studied these until he had first mastered grammar, which however in the ordinary course would contain the names of many non-Vishnuite Gods and Goddesses in illustration of grammatical rules. Such as every aphorism, illustration, word and letter of which is coined after the name of Krishna Vishnu, His Incarnations and associates, so that the mere utterance of Them might bless the reader with religious merit. For instance, the vowels, E. Ai. O. Au are collectively called Ec in old Sanskrit grammar but according to *Harināmāmrita*, they are called *Chaturbhuja* (Vishnu); *Ka*,

[1] Purva. XXXI. 399. Uttara.XXXVII.233.

Kha, Ga, Gha, N, are called *Ka Varga* in ordinary grammar, but they are Vishnu -Varga in Harinamamrita; and so on. It is one of the biggest grammars that have been produced in India. A Vaishnava student need not touch any secular grammar for his higher knowledge of the subject. It is very popular among the Vaishnava students of Bengal, Vrindāvan and also Orissa. The Government has introduced this grammar as an exclusive subject for the Vaishnava students in the Government examination in grammar.

ITS COMMENTARY

One Hare Krishna Āchārya has written a commentary styled Valatosani Tika on it, Gopi Krishna Das Babaji, an ascetic Vaishnava is said to have revised it.[1]

Besides the Harinamamrita Vyakarana, Jiva is the author of Sutramalika; and Dhatu Samgraha, two other grammatical treatises. Mr. Colebrooke seems to ascribe the authorship of another Chaitanya Vaisnavite grammar Chaitanyamrita to Jiva Gosvāmi.[2]

SADA SANDARBHA

Sada Sandarbha, also called Bhāgavata Sandarbha, is a great and profound study of Vaishnava philosophy in six volumes, under the names of Tattva, Bhāgavata, Paramātma, Krishna, Bhakti and Priti Sandarbhas. It is again supplemented by Sarva Samvadini. Though Sanātana Gosvāmi had written his Brihat Bhāgavatāmrita, setting forth the views of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas on the Bhāgavata, the range of his study is limited to only *Purānas* whereas Jiva in his *Sada Sandarbha,* surveys the whole of the philosophical systems of India in comparison with and contrast to the Gaudiya Vaishnava view of *'Achintya Bhedabhedavada'* in the light of which he interprets the philosophy of the Bhāgavata as the official doctrine of the sect. He certainly follows the main points of Sanātana

[1] Vaishnava Manjusa Part I. p.78
[2] Mr. Colebrooke's miscellaneous essays. 1873. p.48

Gosvāmi as fundamental, such as the supremacy of *Savda* or *Sruti* over all other nine *Pramānās*; but the range of Jiva's study is vast. He has shown his extraordinary scholarship in refuting Shankara's doctrine of *Nirvisesavada* and showing the imperfections of the other philosophical systems by way of establishing the *Achintya Bhedābhedāvāda*. It is really a mighty book, which has taken the literary world by storm. The book has been written in Sanskrit prose.

ORIGIN AND SOURCE OF THE BOOK

Jiva says in his Tattva Sandarbha (verses Nos.4,5) that Gopāl Bhatta, another Gosvāmi and friend of Rūpa and Sanātana has written a book deriving its origin from all that is best in the works of old Vaishnava *Āchāryas* such as Madhva, Rāmānuja, Sridhara and others. As this book by Gopāl Bhatta is said not to be strictly systematic and continuous, Jiva undertook to write his Sada Sandarbhas by developing, enlarging and systematising that fragmentary and incomplete book of Gopāl Bhatta's, which has not yet been rediscovered. In Sada Sandarbhas. Jiva interprets the Bhāgavata as the finest of all devotional scriptures, quoting evidence in support of his views from the whole range of Hindu scriptures. Jiva says that he has given all references in it to the verses of *Srutis, Purānas* and others as they were found in their original books, in so far as they were available, but he admits that he has gathered many references from Madhva's commentaries on the Bhāgavata, Mahābhārata and the Vedanta, the original books of which were not available to him, so that he could not furnish us with the original references, but he belives in their genuineness on the ground of Madhva's solemn oath to that effect in his *Tatparya* on the Mahābhārata "Having fully studied all scriptures, the *Vedānta* and different books of different countries, I shall write the commentaries on the Mahābhārata and other works." Among other books from which he has quoted verses as found in Madhva's commentaries, and which he could not verify in the original are some sections of the four Vedas,

some portions of the Garuda Purāna which was not then very current, Mahasamhita and a few others among the *Samhita* works, and Bhāgavatatantra, Brahma Tarka among Tantra works.

TATTVA SANDARBHA

This is the first book of the six volumes. In its first thirty-five verses, Jiva discusses the source material and so on. The actual subject begins from the thirty-sixth *sloka*. Jiva opens the book with obeisance to Sri Chaitanya declaring Him Who was Krishna Himself. (Verse Nos. 1 and 2.) And salutes Rūpa and Sanātana singing their praises. In the next two verses he establishes the Godhood of Sri Chaitanya. (iii). In the sixth verse Jiva distinctly and seriously says that this book of his is only meant for those who are absolutely devotees at the Lotus-Feet of Krishna, therefore Non-Vaishnavas need not read it. In the next, he gives the name of Bhāgavata Sandarbha to his book because it would promulgate the meaning of the Bhāgavata.

Next Jiva advances arguments to establish *Savda* or *Sruti* as the best of all *Pramānas* of investigating the Truth, on the grounds that all other nine *Pramānas* are more or less corrupted by mistakes, inadvertence, imperfection of sense and proneness to deception, while Sruti, being Word of God, is free from all human frailties. These Srutis are partly lost and partly in fragments, so he accepts *Itihāsa* and *Purānas* as their supplement in order to understand its proper meaning. In this connection, Jiva discusses the originality of the *Purānas* among which he establishes the Bhāgavata and its evidence as supreme.[1] Jiva interprets the first verse of the Bhāgavata in the light of the *Gāyatri*. Next he gives us a short account of its previous commentaries. In this connection Jiva gives supreme honour to Madhva and his commentaries. Baladeva Vidyābhusan tells us that this he did because Madhva was the founder of the sect from which the Gaudiya Sect has sprung up.[2] Jiva deals with the date of the Bhāgavata which

[1] Sarva Pramanam Chakravarti. verse. No.18. [2] Verse.24.

itself declares that it was composed by Vyāsa after the Mahābhārata and other Purānas but according to Matsya Purāna, the Mahābhārata was composed after the eighteen Purānas of which Bhāgavata is one. Jiva is of opinion that the Bhāgavata was produced in a concise from before the great epic was written but that it was enlarged to its present form subsequently.[1]

Jiva regards the Bhāgavata as the great exposition of the Supreme God Krishna.[2] He discusses the whole subject in six volumes in the light of the three-fold aspect of *Sambhandha* which is Krishna, *'Abhidheya* which is devotion to Him, and *Prayojana* which is *Prema* to Him.

Jiva begins his actual subject by refuting the *Paricheda* and *Prativimva* (reflection) or *Vivartha* theory of Sanakara in the course of which he comes to the conclusion that Isvara is the Lord and Mainstay (*Āsraya*) of *Māyā*, whereas Jiva is inclined to be overwhelmed by it and so considers that obedience to and service of God, which is called *Abhidheya. Bhakti* is the only means of freeing oneself from the influence of *Māyā*. God differs from Jiva because He is Lord of *Māyā* and does not come under her *Upādhi* or influence while Jiva cannot assert his independence of *Māyā*. Again as the Sun and his rays are one and the same source, so God and Jiva are equally spiritual in their nature, so God and Jiva are both similar and dissimilar at one and the same time. How this is possible, is beyond human conception.[3] Here Jiva establishes the doctrine of *'Achintya-Bhedabhedavada'* or incomprehensible difference-and-non-differrence, which is the official doctrine of the Sect. In its supplement, 'Sarva Samvadini', Jiva further discusses the point in a comprehensive way.[4] He argues that both the theories of duality and non-duality by themselves confront us with difficulties, and the paradox that are both the theories are simultaneously true, is incomprehensibly real. "*Pauranikas* and *Shaivas* admit comprehensible or simple *Bhedabheda* or duality-non-duality. According to the *Māyāvadins*, duality is temporary and false. Jaimini,

[1] Verse 48 [2] Verse 26 [3] Achintya. Verse No.44 [4] p.149

Gautama, Kanada, Kapila, Patanjali, advocate the theory of duality. Madhva and Rāmānuja uphold pure duality and qualified non-duality. But according to our view, the theory of incomprehensible duality-non-duality is real and possible on account of God's wonderful and incomprehensible power."[1]

Though Madhva was an advocate of pure duality, nevertheless he is perhaps the first man who gives expression to the theory of '*Achintyabhedābhedāvāda*' in his *Tatparya* on the Bhāgavata.[2] Madhva in his turn has traced the theory to Brahma Tarka, a treatise on *Tantra*, or a composition of *Pancharatra*, from which he quotes seven verses to this effect. We have already observed that Jiva Gosvāmi has made use of Madhva's references in his commentaries to Brahma Tarka and other works. It seems that Jiva may have borrowed the evidences from Madhva's writings and references to Brahma Tarka in order to give official expression to Sri Chaitanya's philosophical doctrine of '*Achintyabhedābhedāvāda*', which the latter taught Sanātana at Benares and advocated in his discourse with Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, Prakashānanda and others.[3]

Besides the above points, Jiva in his Tattva-Sandarbha, discusses *Vyāsa's* Samādhi, his vision of God, the principle of *Bhakti*, the difference between God and Jiva, God's grace towards Jivas, God's advent, refutation of Jnāna, difference between body and soul, Krishna as the principal mainstay of all and so on. This first part (Tattva Sandarbha) of Sada Sandarbha contains 63 *slokas*.

BHĀGAVATA SANDARBHA

This deals with *Brahman* and *Paramātman*, potentiality of God's own powers, God's mainstay of contradictory powers, incomprehensibility and variety of the power of God, such as *Antaranga-Shakti*, distinction between it and *Māyāsakti*, His infiniteness, He is beyond both gross and subtle substance, His self revelation, His Beauty, Quality, and Sports, His spirituality, His fullness, Vaikuntha, His

[1] Sarvasamvadini. p.149 [2] Bh. XI. 7.51. [3] C.C.M.XX.Adi.VII.

associates, Spirituality of *Tripada Vibhuti*, difference between *Brahman* and Bhagavan, fullness of His Divinity, account of *Svarūpa Shakti* and so on.

PARAMĀTMA SANDARBHA

This discusses *Paramātman*, his distinction gradation, distinction *Gunavatāras*, *Jiva*, *Māyā*, the world, establishment of *Shakti Parinamavada*, refutation of *Vivarthavada*, reality of *Paramātma* and the world, views of Sridhara Svāmi on it, combination of activity with *Nirguna Brahman*, desire of *Lilāvatāras* towards devotees, the principle of God by six fold marks and so on.

KRISHNA SANDARBHA

In it Jiva takes up the following subjects: Self-Divinity of Krishna, His Quality and Sports, Activities of *Purusavatāra*, Sridharasvami's consent to the view, Krishna's supremacy in scriptures, the Divinity of Sankarsana in Baladeva, Krishna is the ultimate mainstay of all partial divinities, His two Handed Form, identification of *Goloka*, eternal Abode of Krishna is Vrindāvan, identification of *Goloka* with Vrindāvan, *Yādavās* and Gopās are eternal associates of Krishna, two kinds of *Lilā- Prakata* and *Aprakata*, their relationship, supreme manifestation of Krishna's loving Divinity in Gokula, His Queens are His Powers, Gopis of Vraja are superior to them, Rādhā is supreme over all His *Shaktis*, Names of important Gopis.

BHAKTI SANDARBHA

It deals with *Bhakti* as a means to *Prema* to God, principle of *Bhakti*, hearing of all scriptures, principles of *Varnashrama*, inferiority of *Jnāna; Karma*, *Yoga* non devotee; eternity and nacessity of *Bhakti* for all liberated souls, *Bhakti* as productive of all wishes, *Nirguna*, self-manifestive, all-blissful, its speciality lies in the fact of the pleasures of God, praise of sefless and disinterested devotion, difference of capacities between different

Bhaktas, necessity of keeping company with the devotees, speciality of *Mahabhāgavata*, difference between *Bhakti* and *Jnāna* and *Ahamgropasana* or devotion to the theory of I-am-the-god, distinguishing characteristics of *Bhakti*, self-surrender in *Vaidha-Bhakti*, service of Guru, keeping company with the *Māhābhāgavatas*, rendering of service to them, hearing and chanting the Name of Krishna, meditation on and remembrance of Krishna, worship of Him and praise of His Feet, suppression of offences, praise of God, servitude of, friendship with and devotion to Krishna, *Rāgānuga* or spontaneous *Bhakti* to Krishna, speciality of devotion to Krishna, gradation of ends and so on.

PRITI SANDARBHA

This discusses *Priti* or passionate Love for God, as the fifth desideratum, variety and denial of it in *Mukti*, *Jivanmukti*, and *Utkranta Mukti*, superiority of love of God to all *Muktis*, gain of the highest desideratum in communion with God, *Sadyakrama Mukti*, *Bhāgavata Saksatkaran Laksana Rūpa jivanmukti* and *utkranta mukti*, two kinds of *Bhāgavata saksatkara*-internal and external, *Brahmasaksatkara Laksana*, *vahih saksatkara laksana jivanmukti* and *utkrantamukti*, *salokya* and so on, *samipya*, liberation in *Bhakti* and its excellence, its origin, characteristics of *Priti*, ordinary characteristics of qualityless *priti (Nirguna)* its origin, *Priti* and *Rati*, purity of Love of Gopis for Krishna, mixture of *Jnāna* and *Bhakti*, excellence of Love of Krishna's associates, difference between Lordliness and Lovingness of God, greatness of the inhabitants of Gokula, and respective superiority of Krishna's friends, parents Gopis and Rādhika to them, *Rāsa*, *Alamvana* and *Uddipana* of *Rāsa*, *Guna*, Variety of *Nāyakas*, Super excellence of Krishna's Loveliness (*Mādhurya*), *Anubhava*, *Sanchari* of *Rāsa*, Five and Seven kinds of *Rāsa*, *Rasabhasa*, *Santa Dasya*, *Sakhya*, *Vatsalya* and *Ujjvala Rāsa*, *Sthayi* or dominant sentiment, Love-in-union and Love-in-separation, *Purva-Raga*, *Mana*, *Prema Vaichitra*, *Pravasa* and glory of Radhika and others.

ITS COMMENTARY

Baladeva Vidyābhusan has written a running commentary on it, Mr. Shyamalāl Gosvāmi has published it with Baladeva's commentary in Calcutta. Some editors have published some of the parts such as NityaSvarūpa Brahmachari who has an edition of Tattva Sandarbha with two commentaries one by Baladeva and the other by Vira Chandra Gosvāmi. The latter one is about a hundred years old. The Gaudiya Math has published Bhakti Sandarbha with its Gaudiya commentary in Bengali by Paramahamsa Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Gosvāmi Thākur Prabhupada.

SARVA SAMVADINI

This is a further study by Jiva on the subjects dealt with in Sada-Sandarbha. In its first verse, Jiva says that it is *Anuvyakhya* of the Sandarbhas but strictly speaking it contains additional evidence and references to clarify some of the topics discussed in the four books: Tattva, Bhāgavata, Paramātma and *Krishna Sandarbhas*. It may be accepted as a supplement to his former study of the subject.

The following subjects have been discussed in it: Establishment of the Divine Incarnation of Sri Chaitanya, Supremacy of *Savda* among nine other *Pramānas, Savda Shakti Vichara, Sphotovada, Savda Vritti Vichara, Mahavyartha Vagamopayah, Bhāgavata Svarūpa Nirnaya, Sargadi Vichara,* Views of the Advaitavadins on the form of God, Views of Rāmānuja, establishment of *Shaktivada, Kaivalva*-fault involving denial of *Shakti*, two kinds of nature, explanation of the aphorism *"Anandamayo bhāsyat"* of the Vedanta, refutation of the doctrine of non-duality, three kinds of distinction between God and Jiva, divinity, eternity of God's form, its stability and non-stability, Brahmano and *Visesatiriktatvam*, fulfilment of the scriptures in the Bhāgavata, *Anubhuti Samanvaya, Aham Prayaya* or pride of "I ", the infinitesimal quality of Jiva, his knowledge, his enjoyments, *Paramātma* in Jiva, discussion of the view of *Pariccheda* and others, refutation

of *Vivarthavada*, establishment of *Parinamavada*, *'Achintya-Bhedabhedavada'*, *Chatur Vyuha Vichāra*, support of the view of *Pancharatra*, Incarnations, Keshava is partial Incarnation of Krishna, the Name of Krishna is Supreme and His Divinity is Supreme; Marks of His Feet, Devotion to Krishna is the highest of all, and glorification of the devotion of the Gopis of Vraja to Krishna.

Its cites 127 aphorisms of the *Vedānta* and many verses from the following works:- Vishnudharmottara, Sārvabhauma Bhattacharya's poems, Bhāgavata, Sridhara's commentary on it Muktaphala Vyakhya, Bhamati, Vedanirghuntu, Purva mimansa Savara Bhasya, Tantra Vartika, Sankara-Bhasya, Madhva-Bhasya, Sri-Bhasya, Manu-Samhita, *Mahābhārata*, Rk Veda Samhita, Narayanopanishada, Vrihadaranyaka Upanishad, Ramāyāna, Purusottama Tantra, Katha Up., Varaha Up., Vakya-padiya, Kurma Purāna, Sahitya Darpana, Vrihat-Samhita, Taittiriya Aranyaka, Taittiriya-Samhita, Skanda-Purāna, Hari-Vamsa, Taittiriya-Brahmana, Chandogya Up., Maitreya Up., Mundaka Up., Sveta Up., Matsa-Purāna, Vishnu Purāna, MahaNārāyana Up., Panini's grammar, Garuda-Purāna, Prasna Up., Vayu-Purāna, Paingi-Sruti, *Vyāsa*-Sruti, Narada-Pancharatra, Gita, Chaturveda-Sakha, Manu Samhita, Padma Purāna, Mahopanishad, Kotaravya-Sruti, Vallavera-Sruti, Atmonipashad, Kaundilya-Sruti, Gopavana-Sruti, Mandavya-Sruti, Sauparna Sruti, *Bhāgavata*- Tantra, Bharat-Tatparya, Sahasranam Bhasya, Ramopanishad, Sri Vishnu-Sukta, Sandilya-Sruti, Kausitaki Up., Brahmanda Purāna, Paingi-Rahasya Brahmana, Maitreya Brahmana, Isovasyopanishad, Nrisimha Purāna Naradiya Purāna, Sri Krishna Sandarbha, Brahma Samhita, Ghurnika, Nama Kaumudi Asunama, *Gopāla*-Tapani, Laghu-Bhāgavatāmrita, and so on.

Sarva Samvadini has not been recorded in the list of Jiva's works, which Krishna[illegible]ss Adhikari mentions, by name, but we should remember [illegible] assign[illegible] is not an exhaustive list, at the end of which he us[illegible] words "Many others more". It has been published b[illegible]ngiya Sahitya Parisad. There are many manuscripts [illegible]er Bengal. We have observed how it closely added his further study to Tattva,

Bhāgavata, Paramātma and Krishna Sandarbhas mentioning them by name in it.

KRAMA SANDARBHA

Jiva himself says before he begins the subject, that in it he will supply omissions and deficiencies in Sridhara Svāmi's commentary "Bhavarthadipika" on the Bhāgavata. It is a commentary on the Bhāgavata following and clarifying that of Sridhara whom Jiva regards as the protector of *Bhakti*. Having written his Sada-Sandarbha, dealing with Krishna, *Bhakti* and *Prema* as *Sambandha*, *Abhidheya* and *Prayojana* respectively. Jiva further illustrates the said aspects of Vaishnava philosophy in Krama-Samdarbha, which has been written on the basis of Sanātana's Vaishnava Toshani and Jiva's previous work "Sadasandarbha". It is in six huge volumes.

SARA SAMGRAHA

This has been ascribed to Sri Jiva Gosvāmi. Rājā Rajendra Lal Mitra has given notice of a manuscript of it, which is now with Mr. Jagannāth Prasad Gupta of Nasipura, Mursidabad.[1] The Calcutta Sanskrit college also possesses a manuscript of it.[2] Both the last verse and the colophon ascribe its authorship to Sri Jiva. The sixth verse in the introduction *"Jayatam Mathurābhumau"* in praise of Rūpa and Sanātana is just the same as the opening verse of Krama Sandarbha and the third verse of his Tattva Sandarbha. Its second verse "I prāy with the blade of grass between my teeth that I should be as the dust beneath the lotus feet of Rūpa in every birth of mine" has been quoted from Raghunāthdās's Muktacharit.[3] Sara-Samgraha contains 2538 *slokas* in prose and verse.

RAGHUNĀTHDĀS GOSVĀMI

Raghunāthdās was th[illegible] son of Govardhan Majumdar and sole heir to the v[illegible] the[illegible]e of his father and childless

[1] Notices etc. vol.IV.No. 1722.
[2] Descriptive catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts. Vol.X.p.96.
[3] Verse No. I. of the Prasati at the end.

uncle Hiranya Majumdār, who were the great Zamindār of Saptagrāma charged with the collection of twenty lakhs of rupees a year out of which they used to pay twelve lakhs revenue to the royal treasury of Gauda. Their residence and court were situated at the village of Krishnapura, then called Chandpur, a quarter of Saptagrāma in the district of Hughly. Hiranya and Govardhana were proverbially charitable and hospitable and made lavish grants for the maintenance of the Brahmanas and Pandits of Navadvip, Santipur and other places. Sri Chaitanya's father, maternal grandfather and Advaita Āchārya received ample pecuniary help from them. They were very learned, cultured and their court was frequently visited by many scholars from different parts of Bengal. Sometimes they used to hold special assemblies of scholars at their court. Govinda Kavirāj, a younger contemprary of Raghunāth, in his Samgita Mādhava, praises Govardhana as having none to excel him in his charities.[1]

Dr. D.G. Sen is probably not correct in saying that Raghunāthdās was born in the year 1498 A.D.[2] Krishnadās Kavirāj distinctly states that when Raghunāth was already a youth and had begun his studies under Balarāma Acharya, Haridās Thākur visited Chandpur and lived for some time there taking his meals at the house of his disciple Balarāma. Raghunāth used to go to Thākur Haridāsa's cottage to pay his respects in the company of his teacher Balarāma. Krishnadās remarks that the grace of Haridās which Raghunāth received at this time, caused his future spiritual enlightment.[3] From Chandpur, Haridās came to Shantipur. While Haridās was staying at Shantipur, Sri Chaitanya was born at Navadvip.[4] We know that Sri Chaitanya was born in 1486 A.D., when Raghunāth was at least seven years old as he had already begun his studies sometime before the said date of Sri Chaitanya's Birth. We may approximately assign 1479 A.D. as the date of birth of Raghunāth.

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[1] Quoted in Bhakti Ratnakara. i. C.C.Antya. III.
[2] C. & C.p.121. [3] C.C.Antya.III. [4] C.C.Adi.XIII.97-100.

Raghunāthadas was certainly influenced by his Vaishnava teacher Balarāma Āchārya and Yadunandan Acharya, the family priest and his Guru, who was a devoted follower of Advaita. These Vaishnava disciples of Haridās and Advaita became the devoted followers of Sri Chaitanya when the latter became the head of the movement. Besides this influence if his teacher, religious fervency and inclination towards asceticism were inborn in him. Vast wealth and princely luxury, which were at his disposal, had no attraction for Raghunāth. His father married him to a very beautiful girl in his early years. Raghunāth had extraordinary intelligence and was given sound education under distinguished professors.

When the religious movement was in full swing at Navadvip, Raghunāth became much interested in it. Raghunāth met Sri Chaitanya at the house of Advaita while Sri Chaitanya was staying there after the acceptance of *Sannyās*. He received instruction from Him for five or seven days. Sri Chaitanya proceeded to Puri and Raghunāth, on his return home, went almost mad with religious fervency. He fled from home again and again in order to join Sri Chaitanya at Puri but he was forcibly brought back by his father every time after he had proceeded some distance. His father kept him under a strong guard appointing five armed men, four servants, and two Brahmanas to keep constant watch over him so that he might not flee away from home. Very grieved by being thus prevented from joining Sri Chaitanya, Raghunāthdās passed his days of close captivity with a sad heart till Chaitanya came to Shantipur a second time in 1514 A.D., on his way back to Puri from Rāmakeli. Raghunāth pressed his father for permission to go to Shantipur for a sight of Sri Chaitanya stating that it would be impossible for him to survive if permission were refused. His father Govardhan accordingly sent him to Shantipur with an abundance of rich presents and escorted by a large number of attendants, requesting him to return home soon. Raghunāth lived seven days at Shantipur and received instructions from Sri Chaitanya Whom he importuned

with tears as to how he could escape from the guards and accompany Him to Puri. Sri Chaitanya consoled him with the following advice, "Be calm, and go back home. Don't be mad. People attain the furthest shore of the ocean of the world by slow degrees. Don't imitate asceticism for the sake of public applause. Enjoy the legitimate things of the world, but be free from attachment to them. Let your devotion be of the heart and let your external conduct be as of this world. Even so Krishna will deliver you soon. When I came back to Nilachal after visiting Vrindāvan, find some pretext for coming up to me." [1] It was certainly the only wise course left to him, because if he continued to behave like an ordinary man and perform family duties, his parents would think he had settled down to a worldly life and would consequently dispense with special precautions when he would be able to flee from home. The result was as was to be expected. Sri Chaitanya sent him home with the hope that Krishna would cause the trick to suggest itself at the proper time for his escape. "Who can keep back one to whom Krishna is merciful" said Sri Chaitanya. Raghunāth on his return home, acted according to the advice of Sri Chaitanya. His parents were greatly relieved to find him so calm and settled.[2]

He passed one year after the return of Sri Chaitanya from Mathurā. In the second year i.e. in 1518 A.D., he fled from home at night; but his father managed to get him back after he had gone some way by sending his men after him. His attempts to leave home were repeatedly frustrated by his father. He became almost mad to see Sri Chaitanya. His mother asked his father Govardhana to keep him bound, otherwise he was sure to flee; but his father well knew that he would not remain at home. His father told his mother, "My vast wealth like that of Indra, his wife, who is as beautiful as the damsel of heaven, could not bind him. Do you think that a rope will do it? A father cannot divert the consequences of his son's actions of his previous birth. None can keep back one who has become imbued with the Grace of Sri Chaitanya."[3]

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[1] C.C.M.XVI [2] C.C.M.XVI. [3] C.C.Antya.VI.38-41.

Raghunāth next met Sri Nityānanda at Pānihāti during the Latter's preaching tour. Raghunāth held great festivities at his own cost. He distributed money and gold among all the followers of Sri Chaitanya who had assembled there. He asked Nityānanda's advice as to how he could escape his guards and go to Sri Chaitanya. When he came to Pānihāti, armed guards were with him lest he should flee. Nityānanda consoled him and advised him as to how he could affect his escape. [1]

After his return from Pānihāti, he did not go into the inner part of the house. He used to sleep in the outhouse. There his guards watched him, sitting up all night at the doors. One day as he lay in bed in the early hours of the dawn, Yadunandan *Āchārya* chanced to come to the house. The priest of Yadunanda's temple relinquished his service the previous night and there was none to perform it the next morning. So he came to Raghunāth at mid-night to ask him to compel the priest to take the morning service as usual. There was none influential enough except Raghunāth or his father to compel the priest to take the service, which would otherwise have been abandoned. When Yadunandan called on Raghunāth, his guards had fallen asleep. The house of Yadunandan was to the east of that of Raghunāth. They proceeded together to find the priest passing the gatekeeper who could not suspect any wrong of Yadunandan. When they had gone half way, Raghunāth asked his Guru return home promising that he would go alone to the priest's house and compel him to take the morning service. Thinking that it was best to flee immediately, as there was no servant or guard with him, Raghunāth sped eastward. He fled along the byepaths, avoiding the usual road lest his guards should overtake him.[2]

He journeyed thirty miles in the course of a single day and stayed in a cattleshed in the evening. A great outcry was raised at his house: Raghunāth has fled. His father said that he must have been fleeing with the pilgrims who

[1] C.C.Antya.VI.128-131. [2] C.C.Antya.VI.

were on their way to Puri to meet Sri Chaitanya. He sent ten of his men to pursue and bring him back. He sent a letter to Sivananda Sen, the leader of the pilgrims to send back his son. The guards went as far as Jhakra where they overtook the party but were told that Raghunāth was not with them. They brought back the news, which caused the parents of Raghunāth great anxiety.

Meanwhile, Raghunāth rising at dawn after his night's rest in the cattleshed took a southward direction and after crossing Chatrabhog, left the main road and continued his journey by way of small, unfrequented hamlets. He trudged on all day without food feeling no inconvenience, his mind being fixed on reaching Sri Chaitanya. He reached Puri after a journey of twelve days instead of usual twenty. He took food on three days only; and reached Sri Chaitanya when the latter was talking with Svarup Dāmodar and others. Sri Chaitanya received him with kind words. Raghunāth clasped His Feet. Raghunāth then greeted Svarup Dāmodar and others. Noticing him emanciated and tired, after his long journey, Sri Chaitanya asked Govinda to attend to his comforts and rest. Sri Chaitanya handed over Raghunāth to Svarup Dāmodar with deep affection, saying, "This Raghunāth I give into your keeping. Be pleased to accept him as your servant. And let him be known as "Svarūpa's Raghu" saying this, Sri Chaitanya took Raghunāth hand and made him over to Svarup who solemnly accepted the charge of his spiritual training. Raghunāth was perhaps the only person who received direct teaching from Sri Chaitanya and Svarup Dāmodar for next sixteen years. His life was moulded in the best traditions of Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavism. From him, Rūpa, Sanātana and the other Gaudiya Vaishnava masters of Vraja heard about the life of Sri Chaitanya during his stay at Puri. He began to practise a severe asceticism and absolutely devoted himself to a spiritual life from the day of his arrival at Puri in the month of June 1517 A.D. till the last day of his life, with undiminished vigour and enthusiasm. He was the most severe ascetic of that sect.

Sri Chaitanya's attendant used to give him food and took every care of him. From the sixth day Raghunāth began the practice of standing at the lion gate of the temple of Jagannāth at night begging for food without taking meal from Govinda. Raghunāth passed the whole day in chanting the name of Krishna and in other devotional practices subsisting on this one meal at night. Govinda informed Sri Chaitanya that Raghunāth had ceased to accept food from him, and that he obtained it by standing at the lion gate. Sri Chaitanya was pleased to hear of his asceticism and remarked, "He has done well. He has adopted the course worthy of one who has renounced the world. The *Vairagi* should always chant the Name of God and must live on food obtained by begging. The duty of a Vairagi consists in the performance of the Samkirtana of the Name of God at all times and filling his stomach with the leaves of trees, fruits and roots."

Another day Raghūnāth requested Sri Chaitanya to instruct him as to his duties and the spiritual life. Sri Chaitanya said, "Do not listen to worldly talk, nor use your lips for such talk. Do not eat or dress well. Chant the Name of Krishna at all times, desiring no honour for yourself but rendering honour to all. Keep your mind ever engaged in service of Rādhā and Krishna in Vraja. This is My instruction in brief. You will get the details of it from Svarup".[1]

This news of Rhagunath's severe asceticism cut the heart of his parents to the quick, that their son who was brought up as a prince, should suffer such hardship! They sent two servants, and a Brahmana cook with a large amount to Puri for the service of their son. Raghunāth first refused to accept any help from his parents. The servants and the Brahmana remained at Puri and persuaded him to accept it. Thereafter Raghunāth accepted eight panas of Cowri-shells each month, which would be the cost of entertaining Sri Chaitanya, twice a month, and

[1] C.C.Antya.VI.236-238.

nothing for his own use. Thus Raghunāth continued to invite Sri Chaitanya for sometime and then gave it up. Raghunāth considered that he had been entertaining Sri Chaitanya with money from a worldly minded person and realised that Sri Chaitanya could not be pleased with such invitations for he used to accept them because He did not wish to hurt Raghunāth by declining them. These considerations made Raghunāth give up his practice of inviting Sri Chaitanya, Who on hearing this, said with gratifying relief. "By feeding on the food of the worldling the mind is made impure. If the mind becomes impure, it is no longer possible to think Krishna. The food supplied by a worldling precedes ultimately from *Rajah Guna* it, therefore, pollutes the minds of both donor and enjoyer. I have accepted his invitation so long for his sake. It is well that he has given it up of his own accord." [1]

After a while Raghunāth also ceased to attend at the Liongate of the temple for his food. He began to obtain it by begging at the Chatras. Raghunāth thought it bad that he should stand in expectation of food from the people every day. At this, Sri Chaitanya said, "He has done well. To beg at the Liongate is the trade of a harlot- He is coming, he will surely give, he has gone; another is coming, he will give; this person who is gone did not give; another will come and give. At the *Chatras* one may fill his stomach by whatever is obtainable." [2]

Sri Chaitanya blessed Raghunāth with a piece of the Stone of holy Govardhana and a garland of *Gunja* twigs of Vrindāvan. Sri Chaitanya Himself used to wear the garland when He meditated on God. He venerated the Govardhana Stone by holding it to His eyes, and bosom and placing it on His head. Sri Chaitanya commanded Raghunāth to worship the Stone with earnestness and in the pure but simple method of service, which consisted of placing a sprāy of Tulasi on It and immersing It in pure water. Raghunāth accepted Them knowing that Sri Chaitanya had dedicated him to Krishna by giving him

[1] C.C.Antya.VI.273-280. [2] C.C.Antya, VI.

the Stone, and to the feet of Rādhā by giving him the garland of Gunja. Raghunāth is said to have seen the vision of Krishna in the said Stone.[1] Raghunāth attached himself with body, mind and speech to the service of Sri Chaitanya. He acted up to the rules enjoined by the scriptures for the life of perfect renunciation with the most scrupulous fidelity Sri Krishnadās Kavirāj remarks, "The course of Raghunāth's life is comparable only to the line that is cut into the slab of hard stone, in the quality of its enduring firmness." Seven *Praharas* and a half, that is to say about twenty-two hours and a half out of the twenty-four hours, were spent by him in chanting the Name of Krishna and thoughts of Him. There was left scarcely four *Dandas* (one hour and 36 minutes), during the night and day, for his meal and sleep.[2] The story of his asceticism is a wonderful narrative. During the whole period of his life, since his coming to Sri Chaitanya, he never allowed his tongue to taste any enjoyable food. He never wore any other clothing than patched and tattered old *Kantha* and rags. He carried out with the utmost care the command of Sri Chaitanya. He ate what was barely sufficient for maintaining life, and even for that he reproved himself. He further augmented his asceticism. He ceased begging alms at the *Chatra*. The remains of the cooked rice offered to the Image of Jagannāth which was left unsold on the hands of the Vendors became rotten in the course of two or three days. They used to cast the putrid rice to the cows at the Liongate. Those cows would not touch it on account its unsavoury smell, Raghunāth brought that rice during the night. He would wash it several times in a great quantity of water. He thus cleaned a quantity of rice, which still had a solid core. Raghunāth ate that portion of it mixing it with salt. On a certain day Svarup Dāmodar found him eating such food. Svarup also begged to have a small quantity of the same, which he tasted with devotion. Sri Chaitanya heard of it from Govinda. One day He came to Raghunāth and found him at his meal. He said to Raghu, "All of you eat excellent

[1] C.C.Antya.VI.300. [2] ibid.310.

food, why don't you give it to Me?" Saying this He ate a mouthful. As He was going to take more, Svarup restrained Him by the hand and snatched the rice remarking that it was not fit for Him.[1]

Sri Chaitanya was delighted with the spirit of Raghunāth's asceticism. Raghunāth exactly expressed the depth of his asceticism and how he hated non-Godly talk in his *Mano-Siksha*. We cannot resist the temptation to cite a few verses from it.

"Give up evil talk which steals the mind like a harlot.

Don't listen to *Mukti* which swallows up the soul like a tigress." (Verse IV).

"O, Mind! Why are you being burnt, saturated in the urine of hypocrisy and mean-mindedness? Bathe rather in the nectarine ocean of the Love of *Gandharva* and *Giridharai* (Rādhā and Krishna) and yourself enjoy and make me enjoy perpetual Bliss." (VI)

"Pride dances in my heart like a shameless *Svapacha* woman.

How will the Love of God touch my impure body and mind?

Serve the Feet of the Lord, which like a general drives her away

And bestows Love of God on me."(VII)

Raghunāth passed sixteen years in close touch with Sri Chaitanya and Svarup Dāmodar whom he served. Svarup Dāmodar and Raghunāth studied the spiritual activities of Sri Chaitanya and recorded them in their diaries and memories. Svarup gave Raghunāth all his notes and observations on Sri Chaitanya's life. Raghunāth embodied some of the facts of Sri Chaitanya's Life in his Chaitanya Kalpa Vriksa. After the demise of Svarup, which closely followed that of Sri Chaitanya in 1534 A.D. February, Raghunāth went to Vrindāvan.

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[1] C.C. Antya. VI. 309-324.

He now thought of ending his life by throwing himself from mount Govardhana after greeting Rūpa and Sanātana. For this purpose, he went to Vrindāvan in 1534 A.D. Rūpa and Sanātana became aware of his resolve from which they dissuaded him with great difficulty and made him live with them as their third brother.[1] Rūpa and Sanātana listened constantly to statements from his lips about the Life and spiritual experiences of Sri Chaitanya. He took up his abode on the bank of Rādhākund at the direction of Rūpa and Sanātana.[2] Here Krishnadās Kavirāj, the celebrated author of Sri Chaitanya Charita became his disciple and lived with him at Rādhākund. Raghunāthdās gave him all his and Svarup's memories and gave him verbally an account of Sri Chaitanya's Life for his famous biography.[3]

RAGHUNĀTHDĀS AND RĀDHĀKUND

When Sri Chaitanya visited Vrindāvan He discovered the sites of the Shyāmakund and Rādhākund lakes in two adjoining cornfields in the village of Aarit. Raghunāthdās lived under a tree on the bank of these two low-lying fields. It is said that one rich merchant whilst at Badrinārāyanana on a pilgrimage, had a dream in which God appeared to him and commanded him to restore the two lakes of Shyamakund and Rādhākund under the direction of Raghunāth. The pious Seth accordingly sought out Raghunāthdās and obtained his permission for digging the lakes and surrounding them with flights of stone steps. These two great lakes covering several acres of land were thus dug and provided with masonry ghats on all sides. Whatever be the legend, Raghunāthadas was certainly responsible for the restoration and construction of these two historic lakes. One day when Sanātana came to meet him, he found a tiger passing by Raghunāth absorbed in meditation. From that day Sanātana made him live in a cave.

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[1] C.C.Adi. X.96. [2] Karnananda. IV.P.77. Svaniyama Dasaka.
[3] C.C.Antya. XIV.9-10.

RAGHUNĀTHDĀS AND RŪPA-SANĀTANA

Rūpa has dedicated his Danakeli Kaumudi to Raghunāth. The Author of Hari Bhakti Vilās also states in the beginning that he is writing it for the satisfaction of Raghunāthdās. Throughout his own writing, Raghunāthdās owes his allegiance and pays his supreme homage to Rūpa, identifying him with Rūpa Manjari, a very beloved mistress of Krishna. In the 1st verse of the *Prasasti* included at the end of his Muktacharita Raghunāth prays, "I beseech again and again with the blade of grass between my teeth that I may be as the dust beneath the lotus feet of Rūpa in my every incarnation. This foot of his was meant for those who acknowledge obedience to Rūpa". In the first verse of his Abhista Suchaka, Raghunāth identifies himself with the thought of Rūpa in his spiritual service of Rādhā. In his Svaniyama Dasaka (verse X) he devoutly wishes that he might serve Krishna keeping Rūpa before him. In his Vilapa Kusumānjali, he addresses Rādhā and Rūpa Manjari for their favour. In the second verse of his Abhista Suchaka, he acknowledges his deep gratitude to Rūpa saying that his mind is filled with the Love of God Hari through the kindness of Rūpa, having been purged of all worldliness, which has also resulted from the care of Rūpa. In the next verse Raghunāth says, " As the result of rendering my service to a grain of pollen fallen from the lotus-feet of Rūpa, I have been able to live on the bank of the *Rādhākund* to sing and hear the nectarine flow of the Name of Krishna, being supported by the loving followers of Rūpa." When Rūpa died, Raghunāth was overwhelmed with poignant grief, which he thus expresses in his 'Prarthanachaturdasakam', "Having left behind by Rūpa who was my life, the *Mahagostha* appears to be void to me, the mount Govardhana is as the mouth of a snake. The Rādhākund seems like the mouth of tiger. If my body stands, it is but made of flint from the thunderbolt. I have resolved after deep thought that who but I should bear this heavy burden of grief?" Raghunāthdās also makes obeisance to Sanātana on many occasions in his writings. In the sixth verse of his Vilapa Kusumānjali, Raghunāth says of

Sanātana, "I bow to Sanātana, who is an ocean of kindness and who is always sympathetic towards the sorrows of others, who kindly taught me, this unworthy self, *Bhaktirasa* combined with asceticism. (Verse No. 6).

HIS DEMISE

We cannot assign with certainty any precise date to the demise of Raghunāthdās. Dr. D.C. writes, "He lived till a good old age dying in his 86th year in 1584 A.D." [1] Dr. S. K. De states that "he died at the great age of 84."[2] We do not know whether Dr. Sen and Dr. De have any source for the precise date of Raghunāth's demise. We have already noticed that Raghunāth must have been born at least before 1479 A.D. So that if lived 84 years, his demise occurred in 1563 A.D. The tomb of Raghunāthdās is daily worshipped at *Rādhākunda*. Gaudiya Vaishnavas frequent and perambulate it as a shrine of great sanctity. He venerated to the last day of his life the sacred Stone and *Gunjamala*, which Sri Chaitanya gave him for his daily worship.

RAGHUNĀTHDĀS'S LITERARY WORKS

Citing an old verse, the author of Bhaktiratnākar has attributed three works to Raghunāthdās (i) they are Mukta Charita Danacharita and Stavavali. Raghunāth was a great poet. All his works are Kāvya in character, the striking notes of which are fervent prayer for the service of Rādhā, the best beloved of Krishna, and personal asceticism. There is no affectation or pretension in his style. Both his thought and language are the spontaneous outcome of his poetic genius. He expresses with supreme force the passionate Love-in-separation not so much for Krishna as for Rādhā, identifying himself with her maid. In the whole of his Vilapa Kusumānjali, he addresses Krishna only once (Verse No.100), almost the whole of the book is addressed to Rādhā and some verses to Rūpa Manjari entreating their favour, His lament that he could not offer his service to Krishna, is full of poignant sweetness and

[1] C & C. p.144. [2] Padyavali. p.84.

unfathomable spiritual depth. Both his thought and expression are exquisite.

MUKTA CHARITA

This is a Sanskrit *Kāvya* work of Champu type. It consists of five verses in the beginning and four at the end, and the rest is entirely written in prose. In the first two verses, Raghunāth sings the glory of Rādhā and Mādhava and Their Love. In the third verse he identifies Mādhava (Krishna) with Sri Chaitanya saying, "Krishna appears in the sky out of the womb of Sri Sachi Devi to distribute to the world, His own Love." *(Ujjvala Bhakti)*. In the next verse, he offers his devotion to his Guru Yadunandan.

The actual subject of the book begins with a question of Satyabhāma to Krishna. Raghunāthdās greatly endeavours to show the infinite superiority of Rādhā's Love for Krishna to the wedded Love of Satyabhāma. Satyabhāma was struck with wonder to hear from the mouth of Krishna how the latter was enamoured of Rādhā the thought of whom had made Him swoon. Raghunāthdās introduces many interesting dialogues of Lalita, Visakha, Madhumangala and other servitors which makes it very pleasant reading. In the last verse he refers to his disciple Krishnadās Kavirāj, "May I keep company with Krishnadās, the king of poets, in every reincarnation of mine. I could disseminate the words of these great gems (*Mukta*) best in his company."

STAVAVALI

This is an anthology of Raghunāthdās's devotional poems. It includes Sri Chaitanyastakam, Sri Gaurangastava Kalpataru, Manohsiksha, Raghunāthdās Gosvāminah Prārthana, Govardhanāsraya dasakam. Sri Govardhanavasa Prārthana dasakam, Sri Rādhākundastakam, Vrajavilāsastavam, Vilapa Kusumānjali, Premapurabhida stotram, Granthukarttuh Prarthana, Svaniyama dasakam, Sri Rādhika astottara satanama stotram, Sri Rādhikāstakam, Premāmbhojamarandakhya stavarajah, Svasankalpa prakasa stotram, Sri Rādhā Krishnojjvala Kusumakelih, Prarthanamritam, Navastakam, Goparajastotram, Sri Madan

Gopāl stotram, Sri Visakhanandabhidha stotram, Sri Mukundastakam, Utkanthadasakam, Nava yuva dvandva didritsastakam, Abhistaprarthanastakam Dana-nirvarttana kundastakam, Prarthanasraya Chaturdasakam and Abhista suchakam.

ITS COMMENTARY

Vanga Vihāri alias Vangesvara Vidyābhusna has written its commentary styled *Stotravali Kasika* in Saka 1644 (1732 A.D.)

VILAPA KUSUMĀNJALI

Though it is included in *Stavavali*, a few words ought to be said of it, as some scholars seem confused about its authorship. The colophon of a manuscript ascribes it to Rūpa Gosvāmi.[1] Mr. Eggling seems to agree with Mitra's notice in attributing its authorship to Rūpa Gosvāmi in his catalogue of the Sanskrit MSS in the India Office Library,[2] though the India office manuscript has no colophon. The perusal of the manuscripts and the printed editions forces us to disagree with them in its ascription to Rūpa. Vilapa Kusumānjali are the poetical laments addressed to Rādhā and partly to Rūpa Manjari and Krishna. Its author must be other than Rūpa because he has been identified with Rūpa Manjari (G.G.180). In the fourth verse the author addresses *Yadunandan Āchārya* as his Guru. We know that Raghunāth's Guru was Yadunandan, and Rūpa was never his disciple.[3] In the fifth verse, its author makes obeisance to Sri Chaitanya saying, "I bow to Sri Chaitanya Who has graciously drawn me out of the dry well of my home by the hand of grace and brought me to His Feet Which outshine the lotus and Who placed me in the care of Svarup Dāmodar." We know from the description of Krishnadās Kavirāj[4] and that of Raghunāthdās himself in the 11th verse of his Chaitanya

[1] Mitra's notices vol. IX. p.62. [2] ibid. P.1466. No. 1177.b.,
[3] C.C.Antya. VI.161. Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātaka. X.3-4.
[4] C.C.Antya.VI.202

Stava Kalpavriksa that Sri Chaitanya handed him over to Svarup Dāmodar. So there can be no doubt that it is the work of Raghunāthdās and not of Rūpa. The India office library possesses a copy of its commentary. Its colophon ascribes its authorship to Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi himself.[1]

One Rasikadās has rendered Vilapa Kusumānjali into very sweet Bengali metrical verse. It has been published with its original by Madhusudanadās at Alati Hughly, West Bengal.

GOPĀL BHATTA GOSVĀMI

A few words ought to be said about the origin of Gopāl Bhatta, as some scholars do not seem either to be aware of it or to have misrepresented it. The difficulty as to the identification of his family arises from the fact that Krishnadās Kavirāj mentions him only four times in his Chaitanya Charita and then only in the dedication, in referring to him as a branch of Sri Chaitanya[2] And as being a fellow guest of Rūpa at the house of Viththala, son of Vallabhachary.[3] Bhaktiratnākar, a work of the 18th century, tries to explain this by pointing out that Gopāl Bhatta and Lokanāth Gosvāmi particularly asked their disciple Krishnadās to omit all references to them in his book, out of extreme humility. Krishnadās had to obey their wishes. Krishnadās's Chaitanya Charita bears only one reference to Lokanāth who was in no way less important than other Vaishnava masters in Vraja where Krishnadās must have known them better than anybody else because he lived with them throughout his life. The Bhaktiratnākar contains perhaps the only true explanation of the omission. This supposition that the extreme humility of Gopāl Bhatta prevented Krishnadās from referring to him in his book, may be supported by the reluctance of Gopāl Bhatta to add his name as author to his Satkriya Saradipika. In its beginning he says that he would not have mentioned his authorship of it had he not been compelled by his

[1] Eggling's Catalogue, p.1466. [2] C.C. Adi IX [3] Adi X.105. C.C. Madhya XVIII.49

superiors, by whom he means Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunāthdās. Dr. S. K. De says the following, doubting Gopāl Bhatta's identification, "The tradition recorded by Narahari Chakravarti states that Gopāl was the son of a learned Brahman of southern India named Venkata Bhatta. He had a brother whose *Sannyasa* name was Prabodhānanda. In one of the passages of Hari Bhakti Vilās, he tells us that he was the pupil of Prabodhānanda, though there is no reference to the relationship. Narahari speaks of the tradition, which identifies Gopāl's father Venkata with the Venkata Bhatta who invited Sri Chaitanya to his house near Srirangam during Sri Chaitanya's south India pilgrimage. But in Krishnadās's account of Sri Chaitanya's stay at Venkata's house for four months, there is no mention of Gopāl Bhatta and there are no definite date for establishing any such identification. As the account is missing in other biographies of Sri Chaitanya, its trustworthiness has not been proved." There is no doubt that Krishnadās ought to have given detailed information of him to enable us to identify him. But we should not be discouraged by this willful omission. Krishnadās has not mentioned the names of the fathers of even Nityānanda, Advaita, Rūpa, Sanātana, Srivās, Chandrasekhar, Murāri Gupta, Jagadānanda, Svarup Dāmodar and many other important associates of Sri Chaitanya. His book is a biography of Sri Chaitanya and so he was not obliged to give the history of Sri Chaitanya's followers.

It is not the later work Bhaktiratnākar but the two biographies contenporaneous with Krishnadās's Chaitanya Charita; namely Premavilās by Nityānandadas and *Karnananda* by Yadunandanadas which clearly describes his birth in the family of Venkata and Tirumalaya Bhatta of Srirangam with whom Sri Chaitanya stayed for four months when Gopāl was old enough to receive instruction from Him. Premavilās and Karnananda are the two biographies of Srinivās Āchārya of Bengal, who was the most important disciple of Gopāl Bhatta, written in 1600 and 1607 A.D. respectively, only about five years

or so later than Krishnadās's Chaitanya Charita. These two biographies were required to give an account of Gopāl Bhatta in connection with his disciple Srinivās in order to keep alive the preceptorial order and succession. Nityānandadas is said to have personally seen Gopāl Bhatta at Vrindāvan when he accompanied his *Guru* Jahnava Devi on her first visit.[1]

Besides these two works, another work Anurāga Valli by Manoharadās (Saka 1618. or 1696 A.D.), which was written before Bhaktiratnākar, which cites it, verifies the statement of the two previous works and gives us further new information of his literary work. Bhaktiratnākar seems to have drawn much of its information from them.

Dr. D.C. Sen has given us wrong and misleading information in the following lines, "Gopāl Bhatta was born in 1503 A.D. in the village of Bhattamari in southern India. We do not credit the account to be found in the Premavilās, the Bhaktiratnākar and other later works that Sri Chaitanya spent four months of a rainy season at the house of Venkata Bhatta at Bhattamari. Govindadās does not say that He (Sri Chaitanya) stayed anywhere in the country for more than a week except in Dvārka. Indeed, people outside the pale of Vaishnavas did not credit the story as will be observed from the following incidental references to it by Narahari Chakravarti in his Bhaktiratnākar. "When the master was travelling in the Deccan He stayed in the house of Venkata Bhatta for four months. The author of Chaitanya Charitāmrita did not mention it in the account of the master's tour there. There is mention of Chaitanya's visit to Venkata Bhatta's house but not of His stay for four months. Again "Sri Chaitanya's stay at Bhattamari for four months has not been mentioned in any authoritative book, incredable people do not seem to be willing to accept the account as true." [2]

We wonder how Dr. Sen could say that Premavilās and Bhaktiratnākar mention that Sri Chaitanya spent four months at Bhattamari. There is no passage either in the

[1] Premavilāsa XVI [2] C. & C. pp.112-113

Premavilās or in the Bhaktiratnākar to the effect that Sri Chaitanya lived at Bhattamari. Premavilās(XVIII) states that Sri Chaitanya lived for four months at the house of Tirumalaya Bhatta and Prabodhānanda Bhatta at Srirangam, and Gopāl Bhatta, son of the former and disciple of the latter, served Sri Chaitanya. Bhaktiratnākar echoes the same with a little difference that there were three brothers namely Venkata Bhatta, Tirumalaya and Prabodhānand and Gopāl was the son of Venkata. (Taranga i.) The word "Bhattamari' is conspicuous by its complete absence in the Premavilās and Bhaktiratnākar. The said word has been used in Krishnadās's Chaitanya Charita to describe a tribe of gypsies in Malabar who enticed away Sri Chaitanya's travelling companion Kala Krishnadās. We fail to understand how Dr. Sen could mistake a tribe for the name of a village and cities it as occurring with the statement that Sri Chaitanya lived at the house of Venkata Bhatta and Copāl Bhatta at the village of Bhattamari, in the Premavilās and the Bhaktiratnākar. He seems to read the passage to that effect in the Bengali edition of Bhaktamal by Krishnadās Bābāji.

Furthermore the two passages, of which Dr.Sen gives a free translation as we have cited above and to which he referred as occurring in the first *Taranga* of Bhaktiratnākar, are not to be found in it. We do not know if there is any book from which he may have quoted the said passages. In one passage, the Bhaktiratnākar states that Krishnadās Kavirāj in his Chaitanya Charita describes Sri Chaitanya's four month's stay at the Venkata Bhatta family but omits any mention of Gopāl Bhatta.[1]

We cannot agree with Dr. Sen in his statement that the tale of Sri Chaitanya's staying for four months with Gopāl Bhatta in the Deccan is unreliable and that Sri Chaitanya did not stay anywhere in the country for more than a week except at Dvarka.[2] Krishnadās Kavirāj distinctly says that Sri Chaitanya lived for four months at the house of Venkata and Tirumalaya Bhatta at Srirangam.[3] Krishnadās devotes a good deal of space to the description of Sri Chaitanya's

[1] Bh.R.K. p.7. [2] C.&C. p.112. [3] C.C.M.I.108-110; IX.82-116

stay with the Bhatta family at Srirangam. Premavilās (XVIII), Karnananda (V), Anurāgavalli (I) and Bhaktiratnākar (I) are in accord in referring to Gopāl as having been born in the said family and as having served Sri Chaitanya during His stay with them. Karnanand differs from Premavilās in identifying the father of Gopāl Bhatta. According to it, there are two brothers namely Venkata and Tirumalaya, the former being the father of Gopāl. Krishnadās Kavirāj seems to have been followed by the author of Karnananda as regards the names of the two brothers. (Karnananda.V.) Premavilāsa (XVIII) omits the name of Venkata and mentions Prabodhānanda as the other brother of Tirumalaya whom he identifies with the father of Gopāl. Neither Krishnadās Kavirāj nor the author of Karnananda mention Prabodhananad as one of the brothers. Anurāgavalli by Manoharadas says that there were three brothers Venkata, Tirumalaya and Prabodhānand, Bhaktiratnākar agrees with Anurāgavalli in the statement that there were threee brothers but differs from it in stating that Gopāl was the son of Venkata and not of Tirumalaya.[1] Bhaktiratnākar supports its view and that of Karnananda that Gopāl was the son of Venkata by reference to an anonymous old Sanskrit verse *"Vande Sri Bhatta Gopālam Dvijendram Venkatatmajam/ Sri Chaitanya prabhoh sevanijuktancha nijalaya."* "I bow to Gopāl Bhatta, the best of Brahmanas, and son of Venkata, who devoted himself to the service of Sri Chaitanya at his own house."

THE DATE OF THE BIRTH OF GOPĀL BHATTA

Dr. D. C. Sen assigns his birth to the year 1503 A.D.[2] that is to say, if he were born in that year, he would have been only seven years old when Sri Chaitanya was a guest at their house in 1510 A.D. We do not know from what source Dr. Sen has obtained the said date which seems doubtful considering that when Sri Chaitanya was at their house, according to the Gopāl was studying the Bhāgavata under his uncle Prabodhānanda. *Premavilās* (XVIII). Karnananda also says that Gopāl was then a great Pandit

[1] Bh.R.K. I.p.7 [2] C. & C. p.112

(Supandita) (V). Both these books state that Sri Chaitanya taught him His own religious views and asked him to go to Vrindāvan after the death of his parents. He commended Prabodhānanda to send him to Vrindāvan. All the books are invariably of opinion that Gopāl Bhatta was requested by his father to serve Sri Chaitanya and that he did it with deep devotion, to the great satisfaction of Sri Chaitanya. It seems clear what if he had been born in 1503 A.D., he would not have studied the Bhāgavata, served Sri Chaitanya, and received His instruction in 1510 A.D. he must have been at least fifteen years of age if not more.

It is not unreasonable to assign his birth to the nineties of the fifteenth century. The Gaurapada Tarangini says that Gopāl was 30 years old when Sri Chaitanya visited the Deccan. [1]

Gopāl Bhatta is said to have been very handsome and of a sweet disposition. He was educated by his uncle Prabodhānanda who was a great scholar and poet. After the departure of Sri Chaitanya from their house, his uncle Prabodhānanda taught and trained him for his future missionary work as Sri Chaitanya had desired. Sri Chaitanya was extremely pleased with his inborn religious fervency, extraordinary intelligence and scholarship. He blessed him with His *Kaupin* and *Vahirvasa,* which are considered very sacred, before He left the place. Dr. D. C. Sen does not seem correct in his statement that Gopāl was naturally attracted to uphold the banner of Vaishnavism after the conversion of his uncle Prabodhānanda Sarasvati of Benaras.[2] Dr. Sen seems to identify the conversion of the great *Māyāvadi Sannyasi* of Prakasānanda of Benares with that of Prabodhānanda of Srirangam. Prabodhānanda became the disciple of Sri Chaitanya in 1510 A.D. at Srirangam while Prakasānanda was converted in 1516 A.D. before which date he was hostile to Sri Chaitanya. They were two different persons.

According to the wish of Sri Chaitanya, Gopāl went to see Rūpa and Sanātana at Vrindāvan with a letter from

[1] C. &C. p.113. [2] C.&C. p.112.

Prabodhānanda.[1] Rūpa and Sanātana informed Sri Chaitanya at Puri of Gopal's arrival, in their letter to Him. Sri Chaitanya asked them to treat him as their own brother, and sent a cushion and one Dora as presents for Gopāl. Gopāl went to Vrindāvan after Raghunāth Bhatta[2]. who seems to have been sent there about 1522 A.D. A few years after arrival of Gopāl, Sri Chaitanya wrote to him requesting him to teach Srinivās when he went to Vrindāvan. This letter of Sri Chaitanya was shown to Srinivās when he visited Vrindāvan.[3]

GOPĀL BHATTA AND THE RĀDHĀRAMANA TEMPLE

Rūpa Gosvāmi installed the Image of Rādhāramana in a fine temple for his beloved friend Gopāl. It was and is a very rich service. Gopāl Bhatta nominated his most important disciple Srinivās of Bengal as heir to the same but the latter transferred it in favour of Gopināth Pujāri, another disciple of Gopāl Bhatta.[4] Gopināth was a Gauda Brahmana of western India. He was succeeded by his nephew Harinath (his brother's son). A few years later, while Gopināth was still alive, Harināth's father Dāmodar settled down at Vrindāvan with his two other sons, namely Harirām and Mathurādās. The descendants of Harināth and his two brothers are now in possession of said Rādhāramana temple. They are very influential both in wealth, learning and prestige among the Gaudiya Vaishnavas at Vrindāvan.

When Srinivās went to Vrindāvan with a view to training and studying the Vaishnava literature possibly in the fifties of the 16th century, Jiva Gosvāmi had him initiated by Gopāl Bhatta. It was the wish of Sri Chaitanya that he should be the disciple of Gopāl.[5] Srinivās served Gopāl Bhatta with deep devotion and studied under him and Jiva. Gopāl blessed his beloved disciple Srinivās with the *Dora* and *Kaupin*, which Sri Chaitanya had given him. Gopāl Bhatta was indefatigable in preaching the doctrine in Vraja. He had hosts of disciples who were mostly people from

[1] Premavilās XVIII. [2] Anuragavalli.II [3] Karnananda VI.
[4] Premavilāsa XVIII. Anurāgavalli VI. [5] Karnananda.VI

western India, while most of the Bengalis were the disciples of Raghunāth Bhatta. The most important of his disciples were Srinivās of Bengal, Gopināth Pujāri of Vrindāvan and Hita Hari Vamsa of Mathurā. The latter relinquished his obedience to his Guru Gopāl and fathered an independent sect called Rādhāvallabhi sect.

We cannot state with certainty the date of his death. He certainly died sometime before 1588 because in one of his letters to Srinivās, Jiva encourages Srinivās by referring to his previous letter that he should give way to grief at the death of his Guru Gopāl, as grief is unholy. This letter may have been written about 1588 A.D. as it implies that the Gopāl Champu Purva was completed and the Uttara Champu was about to be started. We know that the Purva Champu is dated 1588 A.D. Dr. S. K. De says the death of Gopāl Bhatta is traditionally given as Saka 1500 (1578 A.D.).

GOPĀL BHATTA'S LITERARY WORKS

The present volume of Hari Bhakti Vilās is said to be the work of Gopāl Bhatta. We have discussed the question in connection with the life of Sanātana Gosvāmi. Jiva tells us that Gopāl Bhatta had written a book embodying all that is best from the philosophies of the ancient Ācharyas of southern India and that his Sada Sandarbha is a futher and systematic study of Gopal's book.[1] We have no further information regarding this book of Gopāl Bhatta. His Satkriya Saradipika has been published by Thakura Bhakti Vinode of Calcutta. It is a treatise on Smriti, dealing with the socio-religious rites of the Vaishnavas such as marriage, *Sannyās*, funerals, cremation and various sacraments. It is very popular in these matters in the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect.

RAGHŪNATH BHATTA GOSVĀMI

Raghunāth Bhatta Gosvāmi was also one of the six Gosvāmins of the Gaudiya sect at Vraja. He was the son of

[1] Tattva Sandarbha. Verses Nos. 4 and 5.

Tapan Misra Bhattāchārya of Eastern Bengal who was the earliest of the followers of Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya advised Tapan Misra to live a religious life at Benares. Accordingly Tapan Misra left his native village and settled at Benares with his family. This incident took place about six years or so before Sri Chaitanya accepted *Sannyās*. Tapan Misra became a close friend of Chandra Sekhara Vaidya who was also a follower of Sri Chaitanya and lived at Benares.

When Sri Chaitanya visited Benares on His way to Vrindāvan in 1515 A.D., He was his guest for ten days. His son Raghunāth was already a youth who was employed to serve Sri Chaitanya. This Vaishnava family served Sri Chaitanya with great devotion. If Raghunāth was then twenty he would have been born in 1495 A.D.

On his way back from Vrindāvan, Sri Chaitanya lived for the two months of February and March 1516 A.D. at Benares taking His meals at the house of Tapan Misra. The natural religious aptitude of Raghunāth was greatly augmented by the direct teaching and personal influence of Sri Chaitanya. Raghunāth determined to follow Sri Chaitanya to Puri and to live with Him when the latter left Benares for Puri.[1] Sri Chaitanya prevented him and his father from following Him to Puri, as He preferred a solitary journey along the forest road of Jhārikhanda. He asked them to visit Him later on.

Sri Chaitanya received Raghunāth with great affection and trained him in His religious life for eight months at Puri. Krishnadās Kavirāj has not mentioned the year in which he came to Puri for the first time. We can infer with certainty that he was there before June of 1517 A.D. when Raghunāthdās came to Puri, because Sri Chaitanya calls the latter Svarup's Raghu to distinguish him from Raghunāth Bhatta and Raghunāth Vaidya remarking, "there are with Me three persons who bear the same name of Raghu, Svarup's Raghu is his name from this day."[2]

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[1] C.C.M.XV.172 [2] C.C.Antya.VI.203.

Raghunāth Bhatta had many artistic qualities. He was an exceptionally good cook. The art of cooking is almost a necessary qualification with Brahmanas because their orthodoxy requires them to live on their cooking when they are on tour. Though Raghunāth Bhatta was not one of those orthodox Brahmanas, he cultivated this art of crookery with the idea of offering God the best of food. It was personal affection and fervency of heart for God that prompted him to be an expert cook. During his stay at Puri, he used to invite Sri Chaitanya to dinner and delighted to entertain Him with his own cooking.[1] When Jagadānanda invited Sri Chaitanya, Raghunāth Bhatta cooked for him.[2] Sri Chaitanya sent him back to Benares after his eight months stay to look after the comfort of his old parents. He advised him to study the Bhāgavata under a Vaishnava and return to Him at Puri. He further forbade him to marry because he wanted him to be a missionary. Sri Chaitanya blessed him placing His own string of beads round his neck.[3]

Raghunāth had no intention of returning home but did so in compliance with the wish of Sri Chaitanya. He served his parents for the next four years, studying the Bhāgavata under a Vaishnava teacher, and returned to Sri Chaitanya after the death of his parents about 1521 A.D. Sri Chaitanya taught him for a period of another eight months and sent him to Vrindāvan to assist Rūpa and Sanātana in their work.[4] Sri Chaitanya advised him to cultivate the Bhāgavata and recite the Name of Krishna, which two acts would enable him to attain the favour of God. Sri Chaitanya presented him with a string of Tulsi beads measuring fourteen cubits in length, which Raghunāth Bhatta used to wear round his neck with deep reverence when meditating upon God. Rūpa and Sanātana received him with great affection.

Raghunāth was a great scholar of the Bhāgavata, which he used to read at the great council of Rūpa and Sanātana. He was not a pedantic scholar given merely to intellectual satisfaction. Spiritual emotion arising out of intense Love

[1] C.C.Antya XIII.107. [2] ibid XII.143.
[3] C.C.Antya XII.113-114. [4] C.C.Antya XIII.120.

of God was combined with his scholarship. He was an expert musician and singer, gifted with a naturally sweet voice, which made his recitation of the Bhāgavata extremely enjoyable. He would use three or four *Ragas* or musical themes in reciting a single verse of the Bhāgavata. Krishnadās Kavirāj, whose *Siksha Guru* he was, remarks that his voice was as sweet as that of a cuckoo bird and adapted to the variety of *Ragas*.[1] Raghunāth Bhatta was a typical Gaudiya Vaishnava master in combining extreme asceticism with artistic sensibilities for music and *Rāsa*, which is intimately bound up with the religious life. He never listened to any worldly talk nor did he speak of anything but God. He devoted the whole of his time to spiritual experience. He was an indefatigable preacher. He never troubled about the doings of others. He had hosts of disciples to whom he taught the Love of God.[2] Anurāgavalli tells us that most of the Bengali Gaudiya Vaishnavas were the disciples of Raghunāth Bhatta while Gopāl Bhatta's disciples were the people of western India. But this does not mean that was any provincial bias in his choice of disciples.[3]

We have already noticed that Raghunāth Bhatta was responsible for the flourishing condition of the Govinda temple. It was by his command that one of his disciples built the temple to the Govinda Deva and offered it great variety of gold ornaments.[4] Unlike other Gaudiya Vaishnava masters, he did not set up any separate temple and deity of his own. He attached himself to the Govinda Deva of Rūpa Gosvāmi and enriched its service.

Premavilās tells us that Raghunāth Bhatta died after Sanātana but before Rūpa. (Premavilās 57) When the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters of Vraja were guest at the house of Viththala at Mathurā for a month; Sanātana was conspicuous by his absence among those Gaudiya Vaishnava guests, which suggests that he may have disappeared by then. Raghunāth Bhatta was among them under Rūpa.[5] Rūpa was then old. We know that Rūpa

[1] C.C.Antya XIV.128 [2] C.C.Antya XIV. [3] Niryas II.
[4] C.C.Antya XIV.131. [5] C.C.M.XVIII.46-53.

disappeared about four months after Sanātana. If this view of Premavilās be correct in this regard, Raghunāth Bhatta may have departed after their return from the house of Viththala. His tomb is to be found at Vrindāvan near those of the 64 Mohantas. We have approximately assigned the dates of the disappearance of Rūpa and Sanātana to circa 1555 A.D. Raghunāth Bhatta may have been born either a little earlier than or about 1500 A.D. so he seems to have died at the age of about 55 or so.

LOKANĀTH GOSVĀMI

Another great ascetic of the Gaudiya sect is Lokanāth Gosvāmi. He was born in the aristocratic Brahmana family of Talkhari in the district of Jessore. His parents were Padmanābha Bhattāchārya and Sita Devi.[1]

Lokanāth's father Padmanābha was also a Vaishanava being disciple of Sri Advaita. Lokanāth was sent to Navadip for his higher education and became a great follower of Sri Chaitanya in their academy. Lokanāth had an ascetic and religious turn of mind from his early boyhood. When Sri Chaitanya became a Vaishnava preacher on His return from Gaya, Lokanāth offered his service to the Vaishnava cause. He was a scholar of repute and a highly cultured man. He was the disciple of Gadādhar Pandit.

Sri Chaitanya sent Lokanāth with Bhugarbha, another of his follower, being the disciple of Gadādhar, to start the restoration work of the forgotten shrines there.[2] He was reluctant and grief-stricken to leave the company of Sri Chaitanya but carried out his wishes to please him. Bhugarbha was also a good scholar and a great ascetic. He was the life-long friend of Lokanāth. These two ascetics started for Vrindāvan, leaving their homes for good, at the age of about twenty-five or so. Sri Chaitanya had intended making Vraja the great propaganda centre and colony of the sect in western India so He sent them to prepare the ground before His arrival at Vrindāvan after his *Sannyās*.

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[1] Premavilās. VII.p.39. [2] Premavilās VII. p.45.

In due course Lokanāth and Bhugarbha reached Vrindāvan, which was then jungle and forest. When they were about to begin their work of discovering the lost Shrines, they heard that Sri Chaitanya had set out on His missionary journey in the south of India, having accepted *Sannyās*. They could not resist the desire to join Him in His tour, so they started for the south but failed to meet Him anywhere. Sri Chaitanya returned to Puri after about fourteen months in 1511 A.D., but Lokanāth and Bhugarbha were in the south on a pilgrimage till the end of the winter of 1516 A.D., when they returned to Vrindāvan on hearing in the south that Sri Chaitanya was there but unfortunately reached Vrindāvan after the departure of Sri Chaitanya. When Rūpa and Sanātana were sent by Sri Chaitanya to begin the work there, Lokanāth and Bhugarbha identified themselves with their labours.

Extreme asceticism was the distinguishing quality of Lokanāth's character. He was greatly revered by the population of the circle of Mathurā as a great saint. He always avoided name and fame or any praise or public esteem. He absolutely applied his mind to devotion to God and the cultivation of spiritual experience. He did not like to accept services from anybody. There was no harshness or bitterness in his asceticism. His sweet behaviour earned for him the reputation of being one of the most loving ascetics of the sect.[1] He sometimes lived in a cottage in Chatravana near Omraon a few miles from the town of Vrindāvan. Here he discovered the Image of Rādhāvinoda from the lake of Kishori Kunda. He set up the said image in a Shrine for his personal devotion at Khadiravan, which is about four miles from Nandagrām or six miles from Varsana in the circuit of Mathurā. Here he lived to the last day of his life. There is a lake called Yugal Kunda at Khadirvan. On its margin is a little Shrine on the tomb of Lokanāth. The Images of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda, Rādhā Vinoda and Bāla Gopāl are still worshiped in the Shrine. During the lifetime of Lokanāth, people crowded to the place to have a glimpse of him but it is now not easy of access.

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[1] Premavilās VII.

Lokanāth had no intention of making any disciples of his own, lest they would praise him, in which case self-glorification might have marred the purity of his devotional heart. He considered himself extremely humble and too lowly to become anybody's Guru. He paid respect equally to all whether poor or rich, young or old. But he had to modify his austere determination in favour of Rāj Kumār Narottama, son of Rājā Krishnānanda of Garerhat. Narottam's asceticism, his unswerving determination to gain the grace of Lokanāth, and Jiva's request and recommendation, caused Lokanāth to initiate Narottam. Narottam became attached in mind, heart and soul to the service of his Guru Lokanāth. Jiva begged Lokanāth to send Narottam to Bengal to preach the doctrine. Narottam was not at all willing to leave the service of Lokanāth but the great cause of the mission compelled him to do so. Lokanāth's last advice to Narottam was "Don't enter worldly life, establish the service of Krishna, entertain the Vaishnavas and preach the doctrine with untiring energy and patience. [1]

We do not know how many years he lived. On his second visit to Vrindāvan, some years after the Kheturi *Utsava*, Jahnava Devi described to Lokanāth in glowing terms the missionary activities of his disciple Narottam. The departure of his friend Bhugarbha was communicated to Jiva to Srinivās in his letter written before he could finish his Uttara Champu, which is, dated 1592 A.D. Lokanāth seems to have disappeared before his friend Bhugarbha. Lokanāth was about the same age as Sri Chaitanya, but departed about forty years later.

MADHU PANDIT

Madhu Pandit and his fellow-disciple Paramānanda Bhattāchārya were sent to Vrindāvan by their *Guru* Gadādhar Pandit. Madhu Pandit was born at Saibona, two miles from Khardaha in the district of 24 Parganas, West Bengal.[2] Both Paramananda and Madhu Pandit were great

[1] Premavilās.XIII.P.88. [2] A.B. p.243.

ascetic-devotees. They were no mean scholars and were very popular among the sect at Vraja. Their names became famous in association with the temple and Image of Gopināth at Vraja.

Krishnadās Kavirāj in the beginning of his Chaitanya Charitamrita renders supreme homage to the Images of Madana Mohana of Sanātana, Govinda Deva of Rūpa and Gopināth of Madhu Pandit, distinguishing them from other Deities and attaching special sanctity and importance to them in relation to the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Krishnadās remarks, "These three Lords have accepted the Gaudiyas as their own." These three Deities and their temples are the most important and rich of all that stand at Vraja. Krishnadās celebrates the said Deity of Gopināth in the following verse, "May Lord Gopināth, Who resides at Vamsivat and Who inaugurated the ecstatic *Rāsa*-sports, attracting the Gopis by means of the strains of His flute, confer good upon us."[1] Rādhā Krishna Gosvāmi, disciple of Haridās Pandit, in his Sadhanadipika pays respect to Madhu Pandit, saying, "that Madhu Pandit installed the Image of Gopināth at Vamsivata on the bank of the Yamunā."

When Jahnava Devi visited Vrindāvan, she was distressed to see the tiny Image of Rādhā with the beautiful tall Deity of Gopināth.[2] On her return to Bengal she sent a very beautiful Image of Rādhā, that could match the other, to Vrindāvan with sufficient ornaments, and robes, to be installed on the left hand side of Gopināth. This image was sent by boat along the Ganges from Khardaha to Vrindāvan.[3]

Madhu Pandit was the Guru of many princes and rich merchants. The magnificient temple to his Image of Gopināth was built by his disciple Rājā Raesilji, a grandson of the founder of the Shaikhawat branch of the Kachhwaha Thakurs. This prince Raesilji was both the kinsman and friend of Rājā Mānsimha in whose company he fought against Rāna Pratāp of Mewer as Akbar's general. He was a

[1] C.C. Adi I.17. [2] Premavilās XVI.p.125. [3] Bhaktiratnākar XIII

vigorous warrior. He came under the influence of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas of Vraja possibly through the mediation or in consequence of his intimacy with Rājā Mānsimha, the reputed disciple of Rūpa and Sanātana. Rājā Raesilji built this Gaudiya Vaishnava temple of Gopināth at the cost of a vast sum of money. This temple is similar to the Madana Mohana temple both in style and dimension; but the ornamental designs of this temple are unique and not to be found in any of the group. This temple suffered more than any other from the vandalism of the bigoted Aurangzeb who caused its three towers with the roof and the nave to be pulled down. The stunted sacrarium with its tottering gateway across the courtyard bears witness to its past architectural and artistic glory. The Deity was taken, together with Govinda Deva Madan Mohan and others from place to place until it was finally installed at Jaypur. Since its desecration by Aurangazeb the temple has been deserted and remains vacant. Another Image of Gopināth with that of Sri Chaitanya was installed in a new temple, which was built after the desecration of the original temple. The latter Images are now worshipped there, but its original Deity, which was set up by Madhu Pandit is now at Jaypur. Mr. Growse has published the photograph of the ruined temple of Gopināth in his book "Mathurā". [1]

THE TEMPLE OF YUGAL KISHORE

This is another magnificent temple among the group belonging to the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect. Ghasundi installed the Image of Yugal Kishore. He was one of the associates of Rūpa, Sanātana and Jiva.[2] Dr D.C. Sen seems wrong in saying that this Deity of Yugal Kishore belongs to Jiva Gosvāmi.[3] The name of Jiva's Deity is Rādhā Dāmodara. The Yugal Kishore temple is larger than any other temples except that of Govinda. It also consisted of the sacrarium, nave, choir and so on. But its nave has been completely destroyed by the fanatical iconoclasts appointed by Aurangzeb. The sacrarium with its richly

[1] Between pages 254 and 255. [2] Bhaktamala. translated by Mr. Growse in Mathurā. p.199. [3] V.L.M.B p.54

decorated choir still stands vacant, because the Mohammedans desecrated the temple. The decorative motifs of these temples are full of noval and plastic vitality. The inscriptions on the temple ascribe its construction to Non Karana in Sambat 1684 or 1627 A.D. in the reign of Jahāngir. He is said to have been a Chauhan Thākur. Mr. Growse suggests that this prince Non Karana was the elder brother of Raesilji, who built the temple of Gopināth.[1] Mr. Growse's surmise does not seem correct because Raesilji belonged to the Shaikhwat branch of the Kachhwaha Thākurs whereas Karana of the inscription of the Yugal Kishore temple is said to have been a Chauhan Thākur. "The temple of Gopināth was the earliest of the series", that is to say, it might have been built even before the Govinda temple. It does not seem very probable that the elder brother of the builder of the Gopināth temple would build the temple of Yugal Kishore about more than 40 years later than the temple of his younger brother. (Gopināth temple might have been built several years before 1590 A.D., which is the date of the inscription of the Govinda temple). The prince Non Karana seems to be the same as Karana Simha II, who succeeded the last independent king of Mewer in 1621 A.D. and acquired the powerful support and friendship of Jahāngir. He may have built the Yugal Kishore temple about 6 years after his coronation. We know that Padmāvati, the widow of Karana's brother Bhim Simha of Rāj Mahal added the Chatri to the Govinda temple in 1636 A.D.

HARIDĀS PANDIT GOSVĀMI

We have had occasion to mention this great saint before. He was one of the most enthusiastic colleagues of Rūpa and Sanātana at Vraja. He greatly contributed to the richness of the service of Govinda Deva. He had great qualities of heart and brain. He was the disciple of Anantāchārya, whose Guru was Gadādhar Pandit. He was the first to request Krishnadās Kavirāj to write the

[1] ibid p.254.

biography of Sri Chaitanya, describing the latter part of His life. Krishnadās Kavirāj thus celebrates him in this connection. Various regal services are rendered to Him (Govinda Deva). He is incessantly served by thousands of attendants whose services cannot be described by a thousand mouths. The principal of the service is Sri Pandit Haridās whose fame and merits are patent throughout the world. He is good-natured, patient, calm, generous, grave, courteous in speech, graceful in manners and profound. He respects all and is the benefactor of every body. His mind is devoid of guile, animosity and malice. All the ordinary fifty qualities of Krishna are to be found in him. He possesses firm faith in Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda and exults in dwelling on the Life of Sri Chaitanya. He always appreciates the good qualities of all Vaishnavas, never troubling his head about their faults. He pleases them in body, mind and speech and incessantly listens to the suspicious Chaitanya Mongal, which is also heard by others in consequence of his grace. He brightens the council by his speech like the full moon and augments the pleasure by the nectar of his good qualities. Most graciously he directed me to describe the latter Life of Sri Chaitanya".[1]

Nābhaji in his Bhaktamāl thus refers to Haridās "Tell me now of Haridās, the prince of Asdhir, who sealed the list of the saints, who, bound by a vow to the perpetual recitation of the two names of Kunja Bihāri, was ever beholding the sportive Actions of the God, the Lord of the Gopis' delight; Who was a very Gandarbha in melodious and propitiated Shyama and Shyama (Krishna and Rādhā), presenting them with the daintiest food in daily sacrifice (service) and feeding the peacocks, monkeys and fishes; at whose door a king stood waiting in the hope of an interview; Haridās, the pride of Asdhir, who sealed the list of the saints"[2]. The king, referred to in the above passage, was none other then the Emperor Ākbar who paid him a visit on hearing of the saintliness of his character from the famous Tansen, the celebrated musician and singer at the

[1] C.C.Adi.VIII.53-64. [2] Growse's Mathurā. p.218

royal court. Tansen was the disciple of Haridās who taught him music. Tradition asserts that Tansen was an idiot, and so was expelled from his family in disgrace. He met Haridās at Vrindāvan who received him kindly and taught him music, which made him the most brilliant figure in Indian classical musics. When Ākbar was charmed by Tansen's music, he naturally felt inclined to visit the teacher of such a genius.

We have already discussed his age in connection with the date of Chaitanya Charita from the list of Mohants of the Govinda temple given with the years for each incumbency, Haridās may have been in office from about 1531 to 1586 A.D. Mr. Growse dates the visit of Ākbar to Vrindāvan as 1573 A.D.[1]

About more than a century after the death of Haridās Pandit, an attempt was made by the disciples of one order of Haridās to make him independent of the Gaudiya Master. Priyadās, the author of Bhakta Sindhu, a gloss of Nabhaji's Bhaktamāl, tried to distort the historical facts of Haridās's life to suit the schism of which he was a partisan. Mr. Growse has shown at great length how Priyadās was wrong in his dates, Sambat 1441 –1537 (1384–1480 A.D.) and other facts. Mr. Growse thus concludes, "That he is utterly at fault in his dates Sambat 1441 – 1537, is obvious at a glance; for Emperor who visited Vrindāvan was certainly Akbar, and he did not ascend the throne till Sambat 1612. It is true that professor Wilson, in his religious sects of the Hindus, where he mentions Haridās, describes him as a disciple and faithful companion of Chaitanya. (Mathurā 221). Not only does Krishnadās Kavirāj pays very high respect to Haridās as a great Gaudiya Vaishnava attached to the Govinda temple but Rādhā Krishna Gosvāmi, the immediate disciple of Haridās, in his Sādhana Dipika, has set at rest all doubts about the allegiance and faithfulness of Haridās, to the Gaudiya sect. The list of the Mohants of the Gaudiya temple headed by Haridās, which we have reproduced in connection with the date of Sri

[1] Mathurā. p.241

Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krishnadās, is another proof against the attempt of Priyadas to separate Haridās from the Gaudiya sect. Moreover the text of Bhaktamal, in the commentary of which Priyadas endeavoured to place Haridās as independent of the Gaudiya sect, is at variance with all that he said to that effect.

It is believed that he was a Sarasvata Brahmana and his family originally came from Uchch near Multan. Haridās had many disciples among whom Sachidevi, otherwise known as Gangamata, princes of Puthia, Bengal and Rādhākrishna Gosvāmi, the author of Sādhana Dipika are the most famous and important ones.

THE GAUDIYA VAISHNAVAS AT MATHURĀ-VRINDĀVAN AND THEIR RELATION TO THE RĀJPUT PRINCES AND THE EMPERORS OF DELHI

The news that two ministers of Bengal had become great ascetics and of their extreme asceticism and fervent devotion soon spread far and wide. The people of western India of all classes from princes and merchants to the common people were attracted to the great saints of Bengal. They used to live under the trees of the forest and in caves, devoting their time to intellectual and spiritual culture. When people came to them renouncing the world, they taught them how to love God in complete detachment from all secular concerns, but to the princes and rich merchants, who sought their advice for their spiritual well being and who had not sufficient strength of mind to withdraw from their worldly concerns, their advice was to employ their wealth in the service of God by raising temples to God, digging lakes and so on within the cfrcuit of Mathurā. The princes of Amber, Mewer, Rāj Mahal and other states of Rajasthan and rich merchants of Multan, Mathurā and other commercial centres accepted discipleship to these ascetic devotees of the Gaudiya sect and with their unlimited resources, carried out the command of their Gurus to turn the forest of Vraja into a magnificent town for the temples of God. People in their thousands came to settle in different

parts of the circle of Mathurā with a view to leading religious lives under the Gaudiya Vaishnava Gosvāmins who had turned the forest into a great colony of intellectual and spiritual culture as if by the touch of a magic wand. Devotional literature and the development of music were the outstanding attractions of the Vraja of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Temple architectural art developed and exhibited during this period at Vraja constitutes the best specimen of its kind in the whole of northern and western India. What is interesting in the creation and development of the many-sided culture and arts at this colony of Gaudiya Vaishnavas is that they were indented to serve their juvenile God Krishna, with all that was beautiful and charming in a spirit of absolute detachment. They lived on dry bread or grain by daily begging and slept under trees or in caves, inspite of being the Gurus of princes and wealthy merchants, whereas each of their temples and its services were as rich as a princely palace. Complete detachment and asceticism in the midst of luxury, which was meant only for God, distinguished the Gaudiya Vaishnava saints from the rest of India. How the people of the western India in their hundreds joined the church of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas may be easily judged from the simple fact that while Raghunāthdās lived at Rādhākund, a single corner of the circle of Mathurā, he used to make prostrated obeisance to two thousand Vaishnavas every day.[1] Certainly several thousands of Gaudiya ascetics were with Raghunāthdās. We can imagine how many thousands of people must have lived then at Vrindāvan and in other parts of the circuit of Mathurā practising Gaudiya Vaishnavism. The house holders or family men, practising the Gaudiya religion must have been several times more numerous than the ascetics, because only comparatively few people can renounce the world. If the few ascetics living with the masters of the sect numbered several thousands, the statement of Krishnadās Kavirāj that Rūpa and Sanātana's preaching spread from the Himālayas to the banks of the Indus, is true indeed.[2]

[1] C.C.Adi. X.99 [2] C.C.Adi. X.87.

The rapid success of the Sri Chaitanya's movement in western India is primarily due to its acceptance and active patronage by the Rājput Princes and other high officials and courtiers of the Delhi Emperors. The activities of the Gaudiya Gosvāmins happily coincided with the most tolerant and benign rule of the Emperor Ākbar. It was certainly through the personal influence of his greatest general Man Simha and his favorite musician Tansen that Ākbar paid visit to the Gosvāmins of Vraja and made some royal endowments for their benefit, giving cordial support to those of his vassal princes who rendered services to the Gaudiya Gosvāmins. The Emperor himself was greatly impressed by the holy atmosphere of Vraja created by the great saints from whom he received instructions.[1]

The Emperor had so much regard for these saints that when his minister Todara Malla overthrew Suradas, the governor of Sandila, for having spent the entire revenue in the service and entertainment of the devotees at Sanātana's Madan Mohana temple, Ākbar ordered his immediate release.[2] How much Ākbar was loved by the Hindus in general and the Vaishnavas in particular, may be imagined from the following curious tradition: "The Hindus claim that he was a Hindu in his previous birth. A Hindu Brahmana of the name of Mukunda felt an intense desire to become the Emperor of India. He began severe *Tapasya* wishing to die immediately and to be born as a prince with the power of remembering everything about his previous birth. The wish was granted. He inscribed a few facts on a brass plate and buried it in Allahābad before he died. Nine months later he was born as Ākbar, who, when he ascended the throne, went to Allahabad and found the brass plate he had buried in his previous birth." The Hindus claimed Ākbar as their own exactly like the Persians of old who had wished that Alexander were the son of one of their kings.[3]

Whether for political expediency or from personal affection, it is a fact that he favoured the Hindus. He married

[1] Growse's Mathurā. p.220. [2] Bhakta Mala.quoted in Growse's Mathurā. P.252-253.
[3] Asiatic Researches.vol. IX. MDCCVII.

the sister of Bhagavanada, father of Mānsimha.[1] He particularly depended on Mānsimha who was his greatest general and to whom Ākbar was indebted for half his triumph from Kabul to Arakan, and naturally he was well disposed towards the Gurus of Mānsimha. The Gaudiya Vaishnava leaders worked peacefully under the sympathetic rule of Akbar. It is well known that Ākbar loved Hindu religious literature. A list of books prepared from the Aini-Akbari[2] and the Muntakhab-Ut-Tawarikh of Mulla Badaoni gives the names of all Sanskrit books translated into Persian at the direction of Ākbar and of their translators. The Bhāgavata, the Mahābhārata and the Ramāyāna are among others that were rendered into Persian.

Sri Jiva Gosvāmi who survived the other five Gosvāmins, seems to have died a little before the death of the Emperor Ākbar who was succeeded by his son Salim who ascended the throne under the name of Jahāngir in 1605 A.D. Jahāngir was born of the Rājput princess of Amber. His reign began in the period of the immediate disciples of the six Gosvāmins. Like his father, Jahāngir was also an indulgent patron of the Gaudiya ascetics of Vrindāvan, which he visited in the 14th year of his reign i.e. in 1619 A.D. He thus writes in his memoires "On Thursday 18th, I went to see Vrindāvan and the idol temples of that place. In the time of the late king (Ākbar) the Rājput nobles had built temples after their fashion and ornamented them richly on the outside".[3]

Jahāngir's favourite vassal and friend Karan Simha II of Mewer mentions the reign of Jahāngir as Mānsimha did that of Ākbar, in the inscription of the temple of Yugal Kishore. Jahāngir gave permission to Vira Simha Deo to build a very splendid temple at Mathurā, which was destroyed by Aurangzib. Captain Tod in "The annals of Rājasthan" goes to far as to declare that Jahāngir was a Vaishnava. There is some amount of truth in the statement. Jahāngir in his own memories "Tazuk-i-Jahāngiri" has paid

[1] (Ain i.310.334. [2] Book.i.Ain.34 [3] Tuzuk-i-Jahāngiri, vol. II. Translated by Rogers and Beveridge O.T. fund.new series.vol.XXII. p.103-104.

the very highest tribute and records his affectionate admiration for the Sannyasi Jadrūpa Gosvāmi of Mathurā, who had great influence over the Emperor. The Igbal-nama says that Khan Azam approached Jadrūpa Gosvāmi privately and requested him to use his influence with Jahāngir for the release of Khurrum who was only released at the wish of the ascetic Gosvāmi.[1] We should say a few words on the identity of Jadrūpa Gosvāmi before quoting some passages from Jahāngir's memories to demonstrate how much he influenced the Emperor.

Jadrūpa Gosvāmi, as the name suggests, seems to have been connected with Rūpa Gosvāmi being the disciple of one of the five Gosvāmins of the Gaudiya sect. The title of Gosvāmi, which means one who has mastered the senses was abundantly used for the first time in the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature to glorify Sri Chaitanya and His ascetic followers. Rūpa and his five colleagues are the principal Gosvāmins of the sect. The title was further extended to their disciples and other colleagues such as Kavirāj Gosvāmi, Lokanāth Gosvāmi and others. The Vallabhi sect borrowed the term "Gosvāmi" from the Gaudiyas to honour their Gurus. It might be supposed that Jadrūpa Gosvāmi might have been a disciple of the Vallabhi sect. We know that Vallabhi sect adopts the life of an ordinary citizen (*Grihastha* or householder) as the means of devotion discarding the asceticism of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, but from the writing of Jahāngir, it is clear that he was as austere an ascetic as any of the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect resembling them in his devotion to God. We cannot find a single instance of any *Guru* of the Vallabhi sect practising asceticism, which is the fundamental characteristic in the life of the six Gosvāmins and their disciples who bore the title of Gosvāmi. The rigid procedure was characteristic of Jadrūpa who has been described as *Sannyasi-i-Murtaz* by Jahāngir.[2] The Vallabhi *Gurus* are invariably Grihastha or householders with the single exception of Vallabha himself who is believed by some to have been a *Sannyasi* for a hundred days before his death in 1531 A.D. When Jahāngir

[1] Igbal-nama.128. [2] ibid vol XIX. p.355

met Jadrūpa in 1618 A.D., the latter was sixty years of age and he is said to have accepted Sannyās in his 22nd year. In other words, he was born in 1558 A.D. and entered holy orders in 1580. So it is quite clear that Vallabha could not have met him at all nor could any of his sons or disciples have blessed Jadrūpa with *Sannyās* because they are all *Grihasthas* who cannot initiate another into *Sannyās*. Furthermore, Jadrūpa Gosvāmi could not have belonged to the Vallabhi sect for the simple reason that Jadrūpa was called Gosvāmi and that he had disciples of his own; but we know that "one extraordinary peculiarity of this sect is the position held in it by Vallabha's son Viththalanāth and his descendants. No one can become a Guru of this sect or own the temples except a descendant of Viththalanāth in the main line".[1] Jadrūpa's time corresponds with that of Jiva Gosvāmi, Gopāl Bhatta and other ascetics of the Gaudiya sect. Gopāl Bhatta, whose disciples were mostly people of western India, may have been Jadrūpa's Guru. Jadrūpa first lived at Kaliyadaha near Ujjain and later on removed to Mathurā Vrindāvan. Jahāngir met him for the first time at Kaliyadaha. Let us quote the words of Jahāngir about Jadrūpa. In the 11th year of his reign i.e. 1616 A.D. "I heard frequently that an austere *Sannyasi* of the name of Jadrūpa many years ago retired from the city of Ujjain to a corner of the desert and employed himself in the worship of the true God. I had a great desire for his acquaintance and when I was at the capital of Agra I wished to see and send for him. In the end, thinking it would trouble him, I did not send for him. When I arrived in the neighbourhood of the city, I alighted from the boat and went 1/8 *Kos* on foot to see him. The place he had chosen to live in was a hole in the side of a hill which had been dug out and a door made. In the cold days of winter, though he is quite naked, with the exception of a piece of a rug that he wears in front and behind (*Dora and Kaupin*). He bathes twice a day in a sheet of water near his abode, and once a day goes into the city of Ujjain and nowhere but to the houses of three Brahmanas whom he has selected out of seven who

[1] Farquhar.Outline of religious literature of India. p.314.

have wives and children and whom he believed to have religious feelings and contentment. He takes by way of alms five mouthfuls of food from what they have prepared for themselves, which he swallows without chewing in order that he may not enjoy their flavour. He was not devoid of knowledge, for he thoroughly mastered the science of the Vedanta, which is the science of Sufism. I conversed with him for six *Gharis*. He spoke well, so much so as to make a great impression on me. My society also pleased him. At the time when my revered father conquered the fort of Asir, in the province of Khandesa, and was returning to Agra, he saw him in the very same place and always revered him."[1] Jahāngir then gives an account of four *Varnas* and *Ashramas* to say that Jadrūpa belonged to the *Sannyās* order, the highest of the Hindu *Varnashrama* system.

The devotional spirit of Jadrūpa in begging alms at the houses of those with religious sentiments was an exact imitation of that of Sri Chaitanya and of the six Gosvāmins. Sri Chaitanya could accept no invitation from any body unless he recited the names of God at least one lakh of time a day. Rūpa and Sanātana used to accept dry food such as bread and grain at the houses of Brahmanas and temples. None of the Gosvāmins, as we have observed, tasted any enjoyable food. Jadrūpa seems to have adopted this very important principle of a Gaudiya Vaishnava life.

The Emperor's second visit to Jadrūpa took place two years later i.e. in the 13th year of his reign, 1618 A.D. It is thus described; "On Wednesday, the 29th I had an interview with Jadrūpa who is one of the austere ones of the Hindu religious and the particulars of whose circumstances have been described in the preceding pages, and went with him to see Kaliyadaha. Certainly association with him is a great privilege".[2]

"On Saturday, for the second time, my desire for the company of Jadrūpa increased. After performing the mid-day devotion, I embarked in a boat and hastened to meet him and at the close of the day, I ran and enjoyed his society

[1] O.T.fund. Vol. XIX. p.358). [2] Ibid.vol.XXII. p.49.

in the retirement of his cell. I heard many sublime words of religious duties and knowledge of divine things. Without immoderate praise he sets forth clearly the doctrine of wholesome Sufism. One can delight in his society. He is sixty years old. He was 22 years of age when forsaking all external attachments he set foot with all determination on the high road of asceticism, and for thirty years he had lived in the garment of nakedness" and so on.[1]

We should bear in mind that by Sufism the Emperor means the mysticism of Jadrūpa's Vaishnavism and not Mohammedan Sufism because the Emperor distinctly speaks of him as a Hindu *Sannyasi* in several places. The Emperor seems to view the ecstatic experience of Vaishnavism in the light of Mohammedan Sufism because some outward expressions are common to both, though doctrinally speaking there is a great gulf between them but being very subtle, the Emperor could not discern it.

The next visit took place at Mathurā in 1619 A.D. It is thus described. "In the following pages, some thing has been written about *Gosain* (Gosvāmi) Jadrūpa who lived as a hermit in Ujjain. At this time he changed his residence to Mathurā, which is one of the greatest Hindu places of worship and employed himself in the worship of the true God on the bank of the Yamunā. As I valued his society, I hastened to wait on him and for a long time enjoyed his company without the presence of any stranger. In truth his existence is a great gain to me: one can be greatly benefited and delighted".[2]

"On Monday the 12th my desire to see the Gosain Jadrūpa again increased and hastening to his hut without ceremony I enjoyed his society. Sublime words were spoken between us. God Almighty has granted him an unusual peace, a lofty understanding, an exalted nature and keen intellectual powers with a God-given knowledge and a heart free from attachment to the world, so that turning his back upon the world and all that is in it, he sits content in the corner in solitude, without wants. He had chosen out of all other

[1] ibid Vol XXII. p.52. [2] ibid.Vol.XXII. p.104.

worldly goods half a gaz of old cotton (*Kvipas*) like a woman's veil and a piece of earthen ware from which to drink water, and in winter and summer and the rainy season lives naked and with his head and feet bare." and so on.[1]

"On Wednesday the 14th, I again went to visit the Gosain and bade him good-bye. Undoubtedly parting from him weighed upon my mind that desires the truth. On Thursday the 15th, I marched and pitched my camp near Vrindāvan. [2]

How much the Emperor came under the influence of Jadrūpa may be further judged from the following deliberations: "In my father's reign, the weight of the "Sir" was 30 dams. About this time it came to my mind "Why should I act contrary to his rule? One day Gosain Jadrūpa said that in the book of the Vedas, which the Lord of his faith had written, the weight of "Sir" was 36 dams.[3]

The direct disciples of the six Gosvāmins died before Jahāngir was succeeded by his son Shāhjahān as Emperor of India. Then the followers of Gaudiya Vaishnava sect did not possess that vitality with which their glorious predecessors upheld the movement. The reign of Shāhjahān was rather uneventful in the history of the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect at Vraja. They were firmly established and materially prosperous in the service of their temples. They do not seem to have produced anything remarkable in literature but performed the temple ceremonies and continued the movement in a conventional way within their limited areas. Unlike his father and grandfather, Shāhjahān does not seem to have been a patron of Hindu religion. Captain Tod in his Annals of Rājasthan says that Shāhjahān was inclined to the doctrine of Shiva in which he was initiated by one Siddarūpa. Sectarian animosity led Shāhjahān to be hostile to Vaishnavas and he thus remarks "Here we find the follower of Siva oppressing those of Kanaiya (Krishna), the priest of Jupiter driving the pastoral Apollo from the Parnassus of Vraja. Through the intercession

[1] ibid.vol.XXII.P.105. [2] ibid. P.106-107. [3] ibid. P.108.

of the power of the Princess of Udaipur, he was placed on his altar where remained until Aurangzeb became Emperor of the Moghuls."[1] We can not find any evidence to confirm Captain's Tod's statement that Shāhjahān became a bigoted Saiva convert. He was more orthodox in his Mohammedan religious views than his predecessors.

But Shāhjahān's eldest son Prince Dara Shukoh was more Hindu than any Mohammedan Emperor, in spirit and sympathy. He was himself a great philosopher and lover of Hindu religious literature. We know that the fifty Upanishads were rendered into Persian by the Pandit of Prince Dara in 1656 and those Persian Upanishads were later on translated into Latin by Anquetil Duperron Oupnek'hat,[2] Berner says the following in this regard "Born a Mohammedan, he although publicly professing his adherence to its faith (Moslem) Dara was in private a Gentile with Gentiles (Hindu). He had constantly about him some of the Pendets (Pandits) or Gentile doctors on whom he bestowed large pensions and from these it is thought he imbibed opinion in no wise in accordance with the religion of the land and so on.[3] The district of Mathurā had been the Jagir of the Prince Dara Shukoh.[4] Dara added some buildings to the famous Vaishnava temple of Kesva Rāy at Mathurā.[5] Dara was the legitimate heir to the throne, being the eldest son of Emperor Shāhjahān but he was cruelly put to death by Aurangzib on 30th August 1659 A.D., on the ground that he had turned Kafir. The Rājput princes supported Dara in his struggle with Aurangzib but the battle of Fateyabad (May 20, 1658 A.D.) decided the day in favour of the latter. Aurangzib thus writes to his father Shāhjahān whom he made captive "During your illness Dara usurped all power, grit up his loins to promote Hinduism and destroy Islam. If, God forbid, the aim of that infidel had succeeded and the world had been obscured with the gloom of infidelity, and Islam had lost its lustre, it would have been hard for us to answer for it on the last day. My march

[1] Vol.II.p.611-612. [2] printed in two vols at Trasbourg in 1801-2.
[3] Berner'travels in the Moghul Empire, Constable and Smith Edition, 2nd Edition. p.7
[4] Sarkara's Aurangzib. Vol III.p.23. [5] S.P.P. vol X.88.

on Agra was not due to a rebellious spirit but to a desire to put an end to Dara's usurpation, his lapse from Islam and his exaltation of idolatry throughout the empire".[1]

PERSECUTION OF THE GAUDIYA VAISHNAVAS BY AURANGZIB

With the accession of Aurangazib, in 1658 A.D. began the suffering of the Hindu population in general and terrible disaster befell the Vaishnavas of the circle of Mathurā in particular. Of all the sects the Gaudiyas suffered most at the hands of Aurangazib, the most ruthless of all iconoclasts that the world has ever seen. By this time Vrindāvan had been turned into a very fine city of lofty temples of which Rūpa's Govinda temples of was reputed to be the best of the Hindu temples in the valley between the *Ganges* and the Yamunā. It was the richness and height of the Govinda temple, the light on the top of which attracted the attention of the fanatical Emperor Aurangzib and his queen while they were at Agra, which excited the jealousy of the Emperor. His sterm Islamic orthodoxy, combined with his personal animosity towards his eldest brother Dara and his Hindu favourites incited in him a morbid desire to crush Vaishnavism in Vraja, because it was flourishing in the vicinity of the capital of Agra, enjoying Dara's patronage and its city had been built by the Rajput princes who had helped Dara in his struggle against him (Aurangzib). He determined to persecute severely the ascetics of the Vrindāvan in particular and other religious doctors of Hinduism in general. He imposed heavy taxes on the religious functions and fairs of the Hindus. The Vaishnava ascetics were *Sannyasins* possessing no money at all but failing to pay the taxes would mean severe punishment. His vindictive measures against the religious ascetics filled the country with terror and anxiety. At this moment the Rājput prince Rāna Raj Simha wrote the following letter to the Emperor in order to prevent him from prosecuting ascetics, 'How can the dignity of the sovereign be preserved who employs his power in exacting heavy tributes from

[1] The letters given in Adab. 260a-"64a. Sarkara's Auragzib. Vol III. p.151.

the people thus miserably reduced? At this junture it is told from east to west that the Emperor of Hindustan, jealous of the poor devotee will exact a tribute from Brahmanas – *Sannyasins, Beranghis (Vairagi* as the Gaudiya ascetics are called). Regardless of the illustrious honour of his Timurean race, he condescends to exercise his power over the solitary inoffensive anchorites. To vilify the religion and customs of other men is to set at naught the pleasures of the Almighty."[1] The letter could not soothe the fanatical temper of Aurangzib who prescribed Krishna and rendered His innumerable Shrines impure throughout Vraja. Rāna Rāj Simha offered the heads of one hundred thousand Rājputs for the service of the Deity.[2]

Aurangzib began the demolition of the temples at Mathurā in 1659. The Image of Govinda Deva with Sanātana's Madana Mohana, Madhu Thākur's Gopināth and other Image, together with the vast collection of books assembled by Rūpa, Sanātana, Jiva and other masters, were immediately transferred to and hidden at Kamyavan to prevent desecration and devastation of the precious treasures of the Gaudiya Vaishnava by the fanatical vengeance of Aurangzib. All the principal temples of Govinda, Gopināth, Yugal Kishore and others belonging to the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect were demolished desecrated and on the ruins of some of them the walls of mosques have been raised. Mr. Growse writes regarding the Govinda temple, "The troops of Aurangzib soon plundered and demolished as much of the temple as they could, and then erected on the tops of the ruins a mosque wall, where in order to complete the desecration, the Emperor is said to have offered up his prayers"[3]. The demolition of the upper towers and of the lofty arcaded parapet that surmounted the walls has terribly destroyed the effect of the exterior and given it a heavy stunted appearance. Vrindāvan presented a horrible spectacle of desolation and desertion for the time being. The Emperor satisfied his vengeance upon Dara and the Rajput princes by pulling down the

[1] Tod's Rajasthana.vol.I. pp.443-444.
[2] Tod's vol.II. p.611-612. [3] Mathurā. p.244

temples and cruelly persecuting the harmless ascetics to whom his elder brother, grand father, great grand father had paid respect and had visited to received instruction. The temple of Govinda Deva of Rūpa Gosvāmi, which was the finest of all the temples not only at Vrindāvan, but also in the whole of western India, which was the highest glory of the Gaudiya sect, was demolished to perpetuate the heartache of the Hindu religious population of India. *Masir-i-Alamgiri* No.6, thus describes the demolition of Kesava Deva temples in which Sri Chaitanya Dev had dance. January 1670, in this month of Ramzan, the Emperor ordered the demolition of the temple at Mathurā known as Dehra of Keshava Rai. His officers accomplished it in short time. A grand mosque was built on its site at a vast expenditure. The temple had been built by Bir Simha Deva Bundela at a cost of 33 lakhs of rupees. On seeing this instance of the strength of the emperor's faith and the grandeur of his devotion to God, the Rājahs felt suffocated and they stood in amazement like statues facing the walls. The idols large and small, set with costly jewels, which had been set up in the temple, were brought to Agra and buried under the steps of the mosque of Jahanara, to be trodden upon continually.[1]

The Emperor learning that in the temple of Keshava Rai at Mathurā there was a stone railing presented by Dara Shukoh, remarked "In muslim faith, it is a sin even to look at a temple, and this Dara has restored a railing in a temple."[2]

The Deities of the Gaudiya sects were kept hidden at Kamyavan from before 1669 A.D. till about 1691 A.D. when Rājā Rāma Simha of Amber whose ancestor Mānsimha had built the Govinda temple and became the disciple of Rūpa and Sanātana, brought the Deities to a place called Govindapura about ten miles from the capital of Amber with a view to protecting them from the vengeance of Aurangzib. By this time the Rājput princes strengthened after the storm of the Emperor's wrath that passed over

[1] M.A. 95-96. [2] Akhbarat. 9th year. Sheet.7.14 Oct 1666.

them. From Govindapur, the Deities were further transferred to a place called Gati or Galta very close to the capital. They remained there till sometime after 1706 A.D. when they were finally installed in the present magnificent temple at Jaypur which was made the capital instead of Amber in the first quarter of the 18th century. As the principal Gaudiya Vaishnava Deities were given shelter and protection by the Jaypur State which before all others, accepted Gaudiya Vaishnavism. The Rājā of Udaipur similarly took charge of the Srinath Image and set it up in a temple at a place now called Nathadwar near Udaipur. Other Vaishnavite Deities have been protected and served by the Kotah, Bharatpur, Karauli, Kankaroly, and other Rajput States, which had already, came within the fold of Vaishnavism. If the chivalrous Rajput princes had not taken charge of these principal Deities of the headquarters of their Vaishnava religion, they would have suffered terrible vandalism at the hands of the arch-iconoclast Aurangzib. Though a great number of the books in manuscript belonging to Rūpa, Sanātana, Jiva and the other Gosvāmins were destroyed in course of transit from one place to another, nevertheless a considerable portion of them has been preserved in the *Punthisala* of the Govinda temple at Jaypur. But it is a matter of great regret that owing to the lack of care and interest on the part of the Gosvāmins of the temple, bookworms are destroying them. They neither take due care for protecting them nor allowed others either to see or save the books.

from Govindapur the Deities were further transferred to a place called Cari or Carla very close to the capital. They remained there till sometime after 1706 A.D. when they were finally installed in the present magnificent temple at Jaipur which was made the capital instead of Amber in the first quarter of the 18th century. As the principal Sevaite Vaishnava Deities were given shelter and protection by the Jaipur State which before all others accepted Gaudiya Vaishnavism. The Raja of Udaipur similarly took charge of the Silabati image and set it up in a temple at a place now called Nathdwar near Udaipur. Other Vaishnava Deities have been protected and served by the Kotah, Bharatpur, Karauli, Kankroli, and other Rajput states, which had already made within the fold of Vaishnavism, if the only alone Rajput princes had not taken charge of these principal Deities of the headquarters of their Vaishnava religion, they would have suffered terribly at the hands of the arch-iconoclast Aurangzib. Though a great number of the books in Sanskrit belonging to Rupa, Sanatana, Jiva and the other Gosvamis were destroyed in course of transit from one place to another, nevertheless a considerable portion of them has been preserved in the Pustakalaya of the Govinda temple at Jaipur. But it is a matter of great regret that owing to the lack of care and interest on the part of the Gosvamis of the temple, bookworms are destroying them. They neither take due care for protecting them nor allowed others either to see or save the books.

The Deities of the Gaudiya sect were kept hidden at Kamvavan from before 1600 A.D. till about 1691 A.D. when Raja Sinha of Amber [illegible] and [illegible] Mansimha built the Govinda temple and became the disciple of Rupa and Sanatana, brought the Deities to a place called Govindapura about ten miles from the capital of Amber with a view to protecting them from the vengeance of Aurangzib. By this time the Rajput princes strengthened after the storm of the Emperor's wrath that passed over

[1] M.A. 95-96. [2] Akbharat. 9th year. Sheet 7-18 Oct 1903.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ACTIVITIES IN BENGAL FROM 1535 A.D. TO THE END OF THE 16TH CENTURY UNDER JAHNAVADEVI, SRINIVĀS ĀCHĀRYA AND NAROTTAM THĀKUR

After the disappearance of Nityānanda and Advaita, which closely followed that of Sri Chaitanya, Sri Jahnava Devi, assumed the leadership of the movement in Bengal until the rise of Srinivās and Narottam at the end of the fifties of the century, when she merged her activities with those of the two new leaders. We shall make a brief notice of her in order to bridge the periods between the disappearance of Nityānanda and the rise of Srinivās and Narottam.

JAHNAVA DEVI

Jahnava Devi had hosts of disciples and used to make missionary tours in Bengal. She had a great personality and spiritual power. All the disciples of Nityānanda and followers of Sri Chaitanya accorded her the very highest respect. She went to Vrindāvan with her disciple Nityānandadās, the author of Premavilās.

When she arrived at Vrindāvan, Rūpa received her with great respect and courtesy. She visited all the principle temples of the sect. The main object of her visit, as she said, was to meet Rūpa Gosvāmi, possibly to consult him as regards the missionary activities in Bengal. Rūpa introduced Bhugarbha, Lokanāth, Gopāl Bhatta, Sanātana and other Masters to her. She caused festivals to be held in all the temples and entertained all the Gaudiya Masters of

Vraja. When she expressed a wish to see Rūpa's works, which she greatly appreciated, Jiva Gosvāmi read them to her before the other Gosvāmins. It is clear that she knew Sanskrit well and was gifted with a great intellect. Nityānandadās tells us with great emphasis that he was with her all along, and witnessed all these incidents with his own eyes.

After her stay at Vrindāvan, she went to Rādhākund to meet Raghunāthadās Gosvāmi, who greeted her with all cordiality and personal humility. Krishnadās Kavirāj also received her with great respect. She had religious discourse with them and perambulated the holy tanks of Rādhā Kunda and Shyāma Kunda. She possessed the Vaishnavite qualities of personal humility and respect for the Vaishnavas. All the Vaishnavas greatly honoured her.

From Rādhākund she returned to Vrindāvan with her attendant disciple, Nityānandadās, and again requested Rūpa Gosvāmi to explain to her, from his Bhaktirasamrita, how to practise the sixty-four forms of *Bhakti*, by avoiding offence with a view to making progress towards God. Rūpa explained it to her in detail.

After staying in Vrindāvan for some days she decided to return to Bengal. All the Gosvāmins of Vrindāvan assembled at the Govinda temple to speed her on her departure. When Sanātana dressed her invoking her grace, she requested him to withhold his humility and entreated him for his blessing. Sanātana particularly asked her to send Srinivās to Vrindāvan as soon as possible, and so did Rūpa. She told him that he was then at his village.[1]

She returned to Bengal in due course and visited Srikhanda where she met Narahari Sarkar, Raghunandan, Mukunda and others, and visited other centres of preaching before arriving at her home at Khardaha. She requested Narahari Sarkar to send Srinivās to Vrindāvan, as Rūpa had desired.[2]

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[1] Premavilās XVI. p.128. Talukdar's edition. [2] Premavilās XVI. p.

After the return of Srinivās and Narottam from Vrindāvan the latter installed the Images of Sri Chaitanya and Rādhākrishna at his residece at Kheturi. Sri Jahnava Devi was present at the festival of the installation of the Deities. She approved of the appropriate *Mantra* for worshipping the Image of Sri Chaitanya, which Srinivās used at the instance of the Gosvāmins of Vraja. The function was performed under the direction of Jahnava Devi.[1]

A few years later Jahnava Devi paid another visit to Kheturi before visiting Vrindāvan a second time. Narottam and Rāma Chandra received her with great respect, and held a special festival in her honour. She spent a few days with them worshipping the image of Sri Chaitanya. They speeded her with all honour on her departure for Vrindāvan, and gave her a hundred rupees for her expenses on the way.

This time also Nityānandadās accompanied her to Vrindāvan. When a Muhammedan bandit named Kutubuddin with his gang, attempted to rob her, Nityānandadās introduced miracles, which were displayed by Jahnava Devi to frustrate their attempt. She converted Kutubuddin to Vaishnavism, and through him, his bandits accepted initiation from her and became enthusiastic Vaishnavas. On her way she is said to have turned many sinners into Vaishnavas.[2]

Jiva Gosvāmi, Lokanāth and Gopāl Bhatta received her with due honour. Sri Rūpa and Sanātana disappeared several years before she went to Vrindāvan for the second time. She related to Lokanāth and Gopāl Bhatta the wonderful missionary activities of their disciples, Narottam and Srinivās Āchārya, praising in glowing terms their great personalities, and the installation of the Image of Kheturi.[3] She spent some time in devotion at Vrindāvan.

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[1] Premavilās.XIX. [2] Premavilās XIX. p.185 Talukder edition. [3] Premavilās XVI. p.119

From Vrindāvan she returned direct to Kheturi to convey the greetings of Lokanāth and Gopāl Bhatta to Narottam and Rāma Chandra. Thence she went to Jajigrāma to meet and tell Srinivās Āchārya the news of Vrindāvan. After a few days stay there, she returned home to Khardaha.

This second visit to Vrindāvan may have taken place some time in the sixties of the 16th century, when she was at least between sixty and seventy years of age. She seems to have disappeared a few years later. She installed the Rādhikā Image beside the Gopināth at Vrindāvan.

She was always indefatigable in discharging her selfless duties to further the cause. The force of her personality may be imagined from the fact that she could secure proselytes even among the Mohammedans.

Her career is remarkable for instances of rare boldness and selfless labour. Her teachings to her disciples bear testimony to her great spiritual advancement and perfect assimilation of Vaishnava doctrine. She was highly educated and cultured. Her generosity has become a proverb in the Vaishnava sect.

She was the pioneer of Vaishnava ladies like Gangāmātā and Hemalatā Devi, who set great examples of the practice of the highest order of devotion. This group of great Vaishnava women rendered long and valuable service, taking a leading part in promoting the cause of the Vaishnava movement. The career of Jahnva Devi is one of amazing power. Her genius, talents and rank were fully used for carrying out her missionary work. Her devotional life offered the highest possibilities to the contemporary women of Bengal, who used to pass their whole lives in the less ambitious sphere of worshipful duties within the family circle. Jahnava Devi displayed in a wider sphere her devotional activities as Leader of the sect. She had left an example to be perpetually remembered as a source of inspiration to Vaishnava womanhood.

THE ĀCHĀRYA – THĀKUR AGE (FROM THE MID TO THE END OF THE 16TH CENTURY)

Srinivās Āchārya and Thākur Narottam were created Principals of the movement in Bengal by Jiva Gosvāmi, possibly in the fifties of the 16th century. Their activities more or less coincided with those of Sri Jiva under his direction, so they fall with in the Gosvāmi age in general, but they are so important to the history of the movement in Bengal that we shall designate the period the Āchārya Thākur age in Bengal. This is one of the best and most flourishing periods in which Bengal again becomes the centre of the movement. We shall say a few words on the biographies of Srinivās because they are likely to mislead us in some important incidents of his life. Several biographies were written of Srinivās and his activities, but only two of them are now actually available in form and print. One of them was written by Nityānandadās and the other by Yadunandanadās.

NITYĀNANDADĀS

In the 20th chapter of his Premavilās, Nityānandadās tells us that he was born of a *Vaidya* caste of Srikhanda, the village of Narahari Sarkar Thākur. His former name was Balarāmadās. He lost his parents Ātmarāma and Saudamini in his boyhood, when he went to Jahnava Devi at Khardaha. She initiated him into *Vaishnavism* and gave him the name of Nityānandadās.

His *Siksha Guru* was Virabhadra. Nityānandadās pays his respects to his Gurus at the end of each chapter of his book. He used to spend most of his time with his *Gurus*.

Dr. D.C. Sen assigns his birth to the date 1459 A.D.[1] This is untenable for the simple reason that when he lost his parents in his boyhood, he met Jahnva Devi who brought him up. Nityānandadās was the younger contemporary of

[1] V.L.M.B. p.172

Srinivās and Narottam and wrote their lives after their death in his Premavilās, which was dated 1600 A.D.

Dr. Sen likes to advance the date of his book to later than 1610 A.D.[1] How can we believe, with him, that Nityānandadās – if he were born in 1459 A.D. – could have written his book after 1640 A.D., when he would have been 180 years of age!

Nityānandadās accompanied his *Guru* Jahnava Devi to Vrindāvan on her two visits, one of which took place in the early fifties and the other a few years later. He seems to have been younger than, or at least of the same age as Srinivās who seems to have been born about 1520 A.D. Nityānandadās tells us that he learned *Yoga* practices from Rupanārāyana. It is therefore hardly credible that he could have been initiated by Jahnava Devi in his early years, because the Vaishnava *Guru* would not have allowed any disciple of hers to practice *Yoga*, which is inimical to Gaudiya *Vaishnavism*. He seems to have been a *Yogi* before he met Jahnava Devi. We do not know when he died, but he says in the 24th chapter, that he was old when he wrote the book in 1600 A.D. He seems to have died immediately after the completion of his book.

THE PREMAVILĀS

This is a hopelessly confusing book, written in barbarous poetry, having no regard for historical consistencies. Simple facts have been clothed in prophecies, miracles, and wild exaggeration. These confusions have been augmented a hundred fold by wanton interpolations, with a view to giving authenticity to the later ideas of interested parties of the sect. Now the result is that we cannot accept its passages in a literal sense without reference to, and comparison with, other passages in it, and other contemporary works on the subject. The text of the different manuscripts and printed editions varies considerably.

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[1] V.L.M.B. p.171

Mr. Rāma Nārāyana Vidyāratna published it for the first time in Murshidabad. It contains eighteen chapters only, at the end of which the author distinctly finishes the book, making a statement to that effect. This edition was based on several manuscripts. The editor has further published two other chapters, which he secured in one manuscript, in addition to its first 18 chapters. These later chapters deal with the lives and activities of Narottam and Shyāmānand and their disciples. We should bear in mind that the whole of the eight, ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters have been devoted to the description of Narottam's life, and the thirteenth chapter mainly dwells on Shyāmanand. We may accept the accounts contained in these two chapters only with due caution.

Most of the manuscripts contain the first eighteen chapters, and a few add the latter two. It seems that these two were supplementary. Mr. Yashodālāl Tālukdār has published an edition with twenty-five chapters, which he curiously calls "twenty-four and a half chapters". In his preface he says that he was able to collect eight manuscripts of varying periods. He admits that the oldest manuscripts in his collection contain seventeen chapters, and others of a later date, eighteen, and twenty. He had one manuscript of twenty-five chapters which is believed to be a hundred years old, and which he published. The book covers 345 pp. While its first eighteen chapters run into only 168 pages; or in other words, the volume of the last seven chapters is greater than of the first eighteen chapters.

The later chapters could not have been written by the same author who wrote the earlier ones, because they repeat the same events which have already been related, with brief additions which, again, are incredible, or deal with matters which do not fit in with the object and purpose of the main book, and sometimes these additions contradict what has been said before. Moreover it is particularly in the 24th chapter, which occupies pages 226 to 302, that its author discusses the whole question of *Kulinism* from the time of Adisur and

Vallalsena, to the time of the writer, through various stages and traditions, with a view to proving the social *locus standi* of the descendants of Nityānanda and Virabhadra.

These chapters deal with the genealogies, supernatural activities of Nityānanda and Advaita in particular, and also of Thākur Haridās, Vāsudeva Datta, Isvara Puri, Kesava Bhārati, Candrasekhara, Pundarika, and others who were senior associates of Sri Chaitanya, whereas Nityānandadās's purpose was to write about Srinivās and other later Āchāryas. Many silly miracles have been interpolated. A Vaishnava like Nityānandadās would not have emphasised the *Kulin* question as it goes against the *Vaishnava* principle.

Let us point out one or two incredible statement in the later chapters, which could not have been written by a contemporary writer or the disciple of Jahnava Devi, before we proceed to suggest which is the interpolated passage in the other chapters.

REGARDING THE LATER CHAPTERS

An attempt had been made to establish Haridās Thākur as a Brahmana by birth. The Chaitanya Charita, Chaitanya Bhāgavata and all the other Gaudiya Vaishnava literature in this regard, state unequivocally that he was a Yavana (Mohammedan) by birth and accepted Vaisnavism later on.

Dr.D.C.Sen is right in saying: "The comparatively modern movements of different castes to establish the claims of superiority were undoubtedly at work in the supplementary portion.[1]

Haridās Thākur is said to have entered into scriptural disputations with Yadunandan Āchārya, disciple of Advaita and *Guru* and Priest of Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi, and that he began his *Tapa* in a lonely place at Benapole on the Ganges, where the local Mohammedan Kāzi sent a harlot to degrade him.[2]

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[1] V.L.M.B. p.173 [2] XXIV. p.233-235

The author does not seem to know what to impose on whom, though the outline of the fact is right. It is not Yadunandan, the *Guru* and Priest, but Gopāl Chakravarti, an employee of Raghunāth's Estate, with whom Haridās entered into a disputation. Benapole was never on the Ganges and is quite in a different district, far away from it, nor was it the Mohammedan Kāzi but the Hindu chief Rāma Chandra who sent the harlot to Haridās at Benpole.[1] Premavilās is further wrong in placing the events of Haridās's life in chronological order.

In the 19th chapter the author discusses the disputation between Rūpa Nārāyana and Jiva Gosvāmi in detail. The same topic is again taken up in the 23rd chapter with the addition that Jiva was expelled from Vrindāvan by Rūpa who mercilessly abused him on account of his having defeated Rūpa Nārāyana, which was contrary to the ideal of Vaishnava humility, and that Jiva did not mention the name of Rūpa and Sanātana in his Sadasandarbha out of indignation.

It is not true that Jiva did not mention the name of Rūpa and Sanātana. In every part of his Sadasandarbha, he begins and ends with the supreme homage to them both. Nityānandadās, as he says, saw Rūpa, Jiva and Sanātana. He seems to have read or at least seen Sadasandarbha, because Srinivās Āchārya used to teach it to the Vaishnavas in Bengal. He could not have recorded such a mistake. Jiva died long before the writing of the Premavilās. These later chapters are full of inconsistencies and incredible statements. Let us point out a few unwarrantable mistakes in the earlier chapters by way of showing the interpolated passages.

Nityānanda has been described as the disciple of Isvara Puri who is said to have begged him from his father and travelled to the holy places with him. Nityānanda was actually the disciple of Lakshmipati Thirtha, grand preceptor of Isvara Puri and contemporary of Isvara Puri. Nityānanda met Isvara Puri and his *Guru* Mādhavendra

[1] C.C.Antya.III

Puri for the first time in western India after initiation by Lakshmipati, at Pandarapur in the course of his pilgrimage[1] Mādhavendra Puri was the disciple of Nityānanda's *Guru* Lakshmipati, and that is why he used to address Nityānanda as friend. Madhavaendra's attendant disciples, Isvara Puri and Brahmananda Puri became very respectful and devoted to Nityānanda on this account.

Karnananda another biography of Srinivās, which was written seven years later than Premavilās by Yadunandan Thākur (see p.22), omits to describe the journey of Srinivās and Narottam from Vrindāvan to Bengal, saying that it has already been described in Nityānandadās's Premavilās (6th. *Niryas*). Thus the author of Karnananda omitted in order to avoid repetition. Yadunandandas wrote Karnanada in collaboration with his *Guru* Hemalatā. It is clear that Yadunandandas not only knew of the said incident in Premavilās, but also agrees with it.

The present editions of Premavilās give a story of the robbery of Srinivās's property by Rājā Vira Hāmvira on the way from Vrindāvan to Bengal. The king has been described as wicked, profligate, ferocious, and the head of the gang of robbers.[2] His astrologers had informed him that two cartloads of jewels were coming from Vrindāvan. The king sent two hundred armed robbers to loot the so-called jewels of Srinivās when he arrived in Gopālapur after passing through the Jhārikhand and Tamluka.[3] At night Srinivās was robbed by the two hundred robbers employed by the king of the country. The boxes of supposed jewels were handed over to the king who opened them and found they were full of books, which he kept in safe custody.

Srinivās met the king at his court when listening to the recitation of the Bhāgavata. Srinivās is said to have found fault with the court Pandit Vyāsadeva, which roused the king's admiration. The king received him as a guest and was converted to Vaishnavism. He returned the books, his sins having been remitted by initiation.

Karnananda tells us, in regard to the principal disciples

[1] C.Bh.IX [2] Premavilās XIII [3] Premavilās p.91-92

of Srinivās, that when he was on his way to Orissa from Bengal, by way of Jhārikhand, on a mission, his books were stolen in Rājā Vira Hāmvira's state. This incident took place several years after his return from Vrindāvan.[1] Srinivās appealed to the king for the recovery of his property. So it is quite clear that Nityānandadās's Premavilās to which Yadunandana refers, and with which he agrees, did not contain the traditional belief as recorded in the present Premavilās that either the robbery took place on his way from Vrindāvan to Bengal or that it was caused by the king himself.

Another book, Anuraga Valli, by Manoharadās, which was written in 1696 A.D., is in accord with the statement in Karnananda that Srinivās safely arrived in Bengal on the strength of the passport which Jiva Gosvāmi had secured for him, when the officers in charge allowed him to pass their respective territories without any trouble and threat the conversion of the king Vira Hāmvira took place after the return of Srinivās from Vrindāvan on his second visit there.[2] We know Srinivās's second visit to Vrindāvan took place several years after the first one, when Jiva sent him with the mission. Futhermore, the robbery by the king may be doubted from its own account. It says that Srinivās greatly enjoyed the sylvan journey in the Jhārikhand and reached Tumluka without experiencing any fatigue. From there, he reached Gopālapur, where he was robbed.

Srinivās's home was in the Burdwan district which is immediately east of Birbhuma. Tamluka is in the Midnapura district on the road from Burdwan to Orissa, not Vrindāvan, and lies more than a hundred miles further down and south of Burdwan. We cannot reasonably reconcile the statement that he went out of his way to Tamluka, a distance of more than 100 miles, and walked uphill to reach his home in the Burdwan district, which he had to pass before reaching Tamluka from Vrindāvan. So the description in the present Premavilās, of the robbery at Gopālapur seems to agree with the Karnananda's distinct statement that Srinivās's

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[1] 1st Niryas [2] Karnananda p.87.

belongings were stolen on his way from Bengal to Orissa several years after his return from Vrindāvan.

The *Premavilas's* account, that a king would have employed two hundred armed bandits to rob two poor ascetics of their few books, is really incredible. If the robbery took place on his journey from Vrindāvan to Bengal, which is said to have led to king's initiation, the latter would have been the first disciple, but no book says so. We find Rāma Chandra congratulating the king on his good fortune in being initiated by Srinivās.[1] We know Rāma Chandra himself was initiated some time after the arrival of Srinivās from Vrindāvan. The chapter of the Premavilās seems to have been greatly distorted, possibly in the 18th century by the later Vaishnavas who tried to magnify the miraculous powers of Srinivās Āchārya as a contrast to the sins and crimes of his disciples before their conversion.

If the king Vira Hāmvira were addicted to vice, as the present Premavilās and another 18th century book, Bhaktiratnakara state, he would hardly have been in the habit of listening to the Bhāgavata every day as Srinivās found him doing when he took the opportunity of introducing himself. Certainly the king must have been religious-minded otherwise Srinivās could not have gained his admiration for his scriptural knowledge. It is clear that until the publication of Anuraga Valli (1696 A.D.), which states the facts as they were, no attempt was made to distort the truth. The greatness of Srinivās is sufficiently convincing from the historical facts of his missionary deeds. We should take care to eliminate the supernatural element and undue exaggeration, in order to see things in their right historical perspective. Even a casual reader of the present Premavilās cannot but declare that different hands guided by different motives wrote it. Suceeding couplets seem to contradict preceding ones in the same chapter.

In the first chapter, its supposed author begins the book with a curious story that Srinivās was born as the result of Sri Chaitanya's invocation to the God Jagannāth for the

[1] Karnananda Chap. VI.

advent of a mighty man to upset the Māyavada theory which Sri Advaita was preaching in Bengal in order to subvert the *Bhakti* movement of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda. Nityānanda is said to have reported Sri Advaita's treachery to Sri Chaitanya at Puri in great distress. Jagannāth is said to have granted Sri Chaitanyas prayer and told Him that a man of the name of Srinivās Āchārya would be born soon to Lakshmipriya, wife of Chaitanyadās of Chakhandi.

Sri Chaitanya is said to have written two letters, one to Advaita and other to Nityānanda, that a great Āchārya would descent, in the person of Srinivās. It is clear that these letters seem to have been written a few years after Sri Nityānanda was deputed to continue the movement in Bengal. We know he was sent in 1511 A.D.

In the next passage, Sri Chaitanya is made to write another letter to Rūpa and Sanātana at Vrindāvan, saying that Jagannāth had granted his prayer that Srinivās would be born; and that he would send Nityānanda with Rāmadās, Gadādharadās, Sundaranandadās and others as his colleagues to work in Bengal. The letters to Nityānanda and Advaita seem to have been written several years after 1511 A.D., when Nityānanda was sent to Bengal with Rāmadās and others. The letters to Rūpa and Sanātana seem to have been written while Nityānanda was still at Puri, i.e. before 1511 A.D., so that Nityānanda could not have reported the doings of Advaita, which caused Sri Chaitanya to write these letters. Moreover, Rūpa and Sanātana did not go to Vrindāvan before 1516 A.D., nor did Sri Chaitanya meet them before 1514 A.D. The whole of the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature contradicts this view that Advaita proved faithless to Sri Chaitanya. Both Chaitanya Charitamrita and Chaitanya Bhāgavata, which were written after the death of Advaita, pay him the highest homage, saying that he was the greatest teacher of *Bhakti* and absolutely faithful to Sri Chaitanya.[1]

Some admirers of the descendents of Nityānanda, hostile to those of Advaita, seem to have manufactured the

[1] C.C.Adi.I.p.13.C.Bh.XXII. Madhya.XXII. p.88-89.

plot lower the prestige of Advaita's descendents in the mind of the *Vaishnava* public, but the plot and its means of introduction were so unskillful that its author could not escape suspicion.

It is not very difficult to ascertain which chapters are original and which passages have been interpolated. We are forced to doubt the authenticity of the last seven chapters for the reason that the subjects dealt with do not tally with the object and purpose of the previous eighteen chapters and are not compatible with the established historical facts recorded in contemporary works. It is obvious from the many contradictions that the last chapters have been written by various hands at different periods and from different motives.

We can also detect the spurious passages in the first 18 chapters, which seem to have written by Nityānandadās in the light of other passages and contemporary books. The later writers introduced many passages and have almost rewritten some of the chapters, introducing new ideas and modifying the original text accordingly. It would be unsafe to accept the meaning of its passages in their literal sense without testing it with reference to other passages and contemporary literature. We will do so in the course of our observations whenever the occasion arises.

There are two schools of critics: one that likes to reject the book altogether as spurious, and the other, like Dr.D.C. Sen, advances its date from twenty to forty years later. We can agree with neither of them. The two contemporary biographies of Srinivās, Karnananda by Yadunandanadās and Premamrita by Guru Charana Das (at the end) refer to Nityānandadās's Premavilās. In reply to the later critics, we beg to remind them that the Karnananda, which refers to it, is dated as having been written in 1607 A.D. We have no reason to doubt the precise date of Karnananda. The 24th chapter contains the year Saka 1522 (1600 A.D.) as its date. Though the said chapter is itself questionable yet the date seems correct from its reference in Karnananda.

YADUNANDANADĀS

The author of Karnananda is Yadunandanadās, a renowned poet, an elegant writer and a conscientious historian. He was one of the voluminous writers of the sect, and was born in 1537 A.D. at Malihati in the Mursidabad district.[1] Malihati is about 25 miles south of Kātwa on the Bhagirathi. He mostly lived at Vudhaipada, the village of his Guru Hemalatā in her service.

Dr. D. C. Sen is not correct in saying that Yadunandanadās was initiated by Suval Chandra Thākur the grandson of Srinivās.[2] Dr. Sen seems to misunderstand the statement of the poet when he puts his name below Suval Chandra and his uncles in the list of Hemalatā's disciples. Suval Chandra was not the grandson of Srinivās.

At the end of each chapter of Karnananda, Yadunandana bows to the feet of Hemalatā. In his Bengali metrical translation of Vidagdhamādhava, he pays his respects to her, saying, "She placed the dust of her feet on his head". In his other Bengali metrical translation of Govindalilāmrita, he bows to the feet of Hemalatā as his Guru, translating the famous hyms to Guru, *"Ajnana timirandhyasya jnananjana salakaya Chakshurunmilita yena tasmai sri gurave namah"*. There is no doubt that he was the disciple of Hemalatā.

Yadunandana was also a great Sanskrit scholar. He was the first to undertake to translate the Sanskrit works into Bengali metrical verse for popularising them with those who did not know Sanskrit and to whom the noble ideas of the great Sanskrit works are sealed. He had an extraordinary gift for rendering the Sanskrit works into very sweet Bengali metrical verse, in keeping with the lucidity and beauty of style of the originals. He may be regarded as the best of all translators of the Vaishnava Sanskrit works in the sect. His works may be divided into two classes: original in Sanskrit and Bengali, and Bengali metrical translations. The latter are more numerous than the former.

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[1] Intro.to Atul Gosvāmi's Ed. of Beng. Karnamrita [2] V.L.M.B. p.175

METRICAL TRANSLATIONS OF SANSKRIT WORKS

GOVINDALILĀMRITA

Yadunandana translated Krishnadās Kavirāja's voluminous book, Govindalilamrita. It is dated as having been completed in Saka 1532, or 1610 A.D.

SĀRANGARANGADA

This is another metrical translation of Krishnadās's Sārangarangada, a commentary of Vilvamangala's Krishnakarnamrita. It is very popular in the sect, and has been published by different editors. We should remark that Sārangarangada which Yadunandana translated, is a commentary on the 112 *slokas* forming the one chapter of Karnamrita, which runs into three chapters.

VIDAGDHAMĀDHAVA

This is another Bengali metrical translation of Rūpa Gosvāmi's Vidagdhamādhava Nataka. This translation is also known as Rādhā Krishna Lilā Rasa Kadamba.[1]

SAKHĀNIRNAYA

This is the biographical and historical account of the followers of Sri Chaitanya, written in Sanskrit. It is a very important book for identifying the numerous followers, their homes, and distinguishing qualities. The author of the Anubhāsya, a sub-commentary on Krishnadās's Chaitanya Charita, has incidentally made use of nearly the whole of it, so it is virtually published with the said Anubhāsya in the Gaudiya Math edition of Chaitanya Charitamrita. It is a valuable contribution to the historical works of the sect and sheds new light on many obscure points.

RASAKADAMBA

This is a voluminous treatise on Rasa in Bengali verse, after the manner of Rupa's Ujjvalanilamani. Yadunandanadās has greatly enriched the Bengali language by introducing Rasa

[1] S.P.P.vol. IV.p.335

from the Sanskrit. The Rasakadamba by Yadunandana should be distinguished from that of Kavivallabham, the disciple of Uddhavadās.[1] Both authors were more or less contemporaneous.

KARNANANDA

This cannot be called the full-length biography of Srinivās Āchārya. It is mainly an account of his disciples, written in elegant Bengali poetry. Yadunandana tells us that he need not have written another full length biography of Srinivās, as two biographies, one by Rūpa Kavirāj, and the other by Thākuṛa Mahāsaya (Narottam) had already been composed, describing his life in great detail.[2] He devoted himself to the description of a few facts of the missionary success of Srinivās, in his Karnananda. He followed these two Sanskrit biographies and another biographical account of Srinivās by Nrisimhadeva, who was one of the eight principal poet-disciples (Kavirājas). It cites nine Sanskrit verses from the latter works (6th Niryas). Besides, it was written under the direct supervision of, and in collaboration with, his *Guru* Srimati Hemalatā Devi, who used to examine the writing, and supplied him with material that was lacking, and gave the name Karnananda to the work. Rāma Chandra Kavirāj, the greatest disciple of Srinivās, also helped him in writing his Karnananda.[3]

It is naturally the most reliable account of Srinivāsa's life, and should serve our purpose as a safe guide in controversial matters. Yadunandana was himself a great historian of the sect, being the author of Sakha Nirnaya, and had all the available material for writing this book. He and his *Guru* were two eyewitnesses so their knowledge is first-hand. It is a matter for regret that we have not yet discovered the biographies of Srinivās in their entirety, which have been referred to by Yadunandana or by the late writer Narahari Chakravarti.

Karnananda does not seem to be free from interpolations at the hands of later Vaishnavas, which,

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[1] S.P.P.Vol.IX. p.38 [2] Karnananda 1st Niryas [3] Karnananda III. p.55.

being done by less skilled and intelligent people than our accomplished poet Yadunandana, are easily detected. The poet distinctly tells us in the sixth chapter that he ends the book there, saying: "here he ends his book in the month of Vaisakh (June) in Saka 1529 (1607 A.D.) placing the feet of his *Guru* Hemalatā on his head, at Vudhaipad."

She was extremely glad to have the book read to her and gave it the name of Karnananda (Joy of the ear).

The present edition of Karnananda, however, has another chapter, which deals with the question as to whether Kavirāj Gosvāmi disappeared prior to Raghunāthdās on receipt of the news of the theft of Srinivās's books. Yadunandana is said to have referred the matters to his *Guru* , who is made to reply that she heard her father answering the same question when Rāma Chandra Kavirāj put it to him.

This question could not have been asked by Rāma Chandra for the simple reason that he met Gosvāmi Kavirāj twice at Vrindāvan, and the first visit took place a few years after his initiation by Srinivās after his arrival in Bengal from Vrindāvan with the books. Moreover, we know from the letters of Jiva Gosvāmi to Srinivās, Rāma Chandra and others, that Kavirāj used to send his greetings in them to the Āchāryas of Bengal. These letters were written for years together, from the time of Srinivās's arrival in Bengal until the end of their lives. If Kavirāj had disappeared on receipt of the news of the so-called theft, how could he have sent his greetings to them, and have written his famous Chaitanya Charitamrita, which was written not earlier than 1588 A.D. and 1592 A.D., the dates of Gopāl Champu, which have been referred to in Chaitanya Charitamrita? Several letters from Jiva to Srinivās also mention the beginning and end of the composition of Gopāl Champu.

Kavirāj was too important a figure for any confusion to have arisen in respect of his disappearance. Yadunandana was seventy years old in 1607 A.D. when he wrote Karnananda, and Kavirāj Gosvāmi was certainly alive some

years after 1592 A.D., the date of *Gopāla Champu*. Yadunandana worked particularly on the literature of Krishnadās Kavirāj, so he was expected to know more about him than anybody else.

The chapter in question is not clear, in its reference to the theft of the books, which is said to have led to Krishnadās's immediate disappearance. It seems to imply the tradition belief that Srinivās was robbed of his books by king Vira Hāmvira's bandits, on his way from Vrindāvan to Bengal; but Yadunandana tells us in the earlier chapters that Srinivās safely arrived in Bengal with the books and that he was robbed on the way from Bengal to Orissa some years later. We cannot accept this chapter as having been written by Yadunandana in the light of what he said in unequivocal terms in another part of the book. It is clear that later Vaishnavas would have delighted in depicting the lives of Srinivās's disciples before their conversion, as sinful, in order to magnify the greatness of the *Āchārya*, must have added this interpolated chapter. It refers also to some miracles: that Kavirāj did indeed, die on receipt of the news of the theft but resuscitated at the instance of Rūpa and Sanātana who restored him from the other world. We can safely reject the chapter as spurious and accept only the first six chapters, acknowledged by the author.

A few lines in the beginning of the fourth chapter seem to be interpolated. Rāma Chandra Kavirāj is made to say to the king that he was very fortunate because Rūpa and Sanātana had entered his palace in the form of their works, in connection with the incident of the theft. The author is not very clear on the point as to whether he means that robbers employed by the king deposited the books with him, or whether the king's spies and police recovered them from the robbers and deposited them with the king, who seemed to have issued royal orders to recover them at the request of Srinivās. When the author distinctly states in another place that Srinivās met the king to recover his books which were robbed on his way from Bengal to Puri several years after his arrival from Vrindāvan, we must

take the passage to mean that the king was able to recover the books from the robbers, and after their recovery, the books were deposited with him.

DATE OF KARNANANDA

The author himself gives Saka 1522, (1600 A.D.) as the date of the completion of it in the sixth chapter, so that it was written in his seventieth year. His metrical translation of Govindalilāmrita is dated as having been completed in 1610 A.D. Dr. D. C. Sen advances the date to later than 1640.[1] In another place he says the following, doubting the date 1607 A.D. "I believe the date should be later by at least two decades".[2] His grounds for assigning the later date both to Premavilās and Karnananda is that Srinivās was born in 1560 A.D. and began his family life after his return from Vrindāvan about 1600 A.D., and the events narrated in the two books evidently cover the period from twenty to forty years after his return from Vrindāvan. His view on the date of Srinivās's birth as 1560 A.D. is faulty and untenable. He seem to have been born about 1520 A.D., so we have no reason to doubt the date of Karnananda as given by its author.

Dr. Sen agrees in assigning the year 1537 A.D. to the birth of Yadunandana, so we do not know whether he lived for more than a hundred years to write his book some time in the forties of the 17th century. His metrical translation of Govindalilāmrita, which is dated as having been completed in 1610 A.D., seems to be his last work.

SRINIVĀS ĀCHĀRYA

Srinivās was born circa 1520 A.D. at Chakhandi in the Burdwan district. He was the only son of Chaitanyadās and Lakshmipriya, daughter of Balarāma Chakravarti of Jajigrāma in the same district. The real name of Chaitanyadās was Gangadhara Bhattāchārya. He was an enthusiastic follower of Sri Chaitanya since his Navadvip

[1] V.L.M.B. p.171. [2] ibid. p.175.

days. Chaitanyadās was a student at Navadvip when Sri Chaitanya was a mere Child.[1]

When Sri Chaitanya accepted *Sannyas* in 1510 A.D., shaving his head and wearing a rag, Gangadhara wept with grief, lamenting the fact that he would never again see his God, Sri Chaitanya wearing fine raiment. People called him Chaitanyadās, or servant of Sri Chaitanya on account of his passionate devotion to Him.

At the time of Sri Chaitanya's *Sannyas,* Chaitanyadās was childless. He and his wife made a pilgrimage to Puri, where they stayed for some time. Sri Chaitanya received them kindly, and asked his attendant Govinda, to look after their comfort. On their return from Puri, Laksmipriya conceived, and gave birth to Srinivās in the month of Vaisakh,[2] to the delight of Chaitanyadās and his relatives. None of the biographers has mentioned the year in which Srinivās was born.

His extremely religious parents made him recite the Names of Sri Chaitanya and His associates when he first learnt to speak. He was brought up in a religious atmosphere under the spiritual influence of Sri Chaitanya. Srinivās had no opportunity of learning that there was any other God than Sri Chaitanya. His father impressed upon his youthful mind the greatness and purity of Sri Chaitanya's life and that of His associates.

Chakhandi was a reputed centre of learning, where many great scholars lived. Srinivās, who was placed under Dhananjay Vidyāvachaspati, was gifted with extraordinary intelligence, and mastered *Vyakarana, Alamkara* and *Tarka.* Whilst studying, he came under the influence of Narahari Sarkar Thākur of Srikhanda, another village in the district of Burdwan. Narahari Sarkar was an enthusiastic preacher of the doctrine in the neighbouring district. Srikhanda was then a great centre of Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnavaism. Narahari advised our young scholar Srinivās to go to Puri to get instruction from Sri Chaitanya, and study the Bhāgavata with Gadādhara Pandit. His father

[1] Bh.Kar.II. p.78 [2] Bh.Kar.I. p.73, Premavilās.I.p.12

Chaitanyadās was then thinking of joining Rūpa and Sanātana at Vrindāvan, leaving his wife in her son's care.[1] When Srinivās was thinking of visiting Puri, his father suddenly died of fever after seven days illness.[2] Though it was a great shock to the family, he consoled his aggrieved mother. He went to Jajigrāma and met Narahari Sarkar, the great friend of the family, and his spiritual guide. His desire to live with Sri Chaitanya and Gadādhara grew intense.

Sri Chaitanya seems to have had some intimation of Srinivās's religious aptitude and great inclination to study *Bhakti* literature, and had written to Rūpa, Sanātana, and Gopāl Bhatta, requesting them to train Srinivās in the spiritual life[3] Sri Chaitanya also asked Gadādhara Pandit to teach Srinivās the Bhāgavata on his arrival at Puri.[4] Srinivās was advised by Narahari Sarkar to send his mother to Jajigrāma and let her stay there under the care of his maternal uncles during his absence. Accordingly Srinivās built a house at Jajigrāma for his mother and took her there.[5]

Srinivās requested Narahari Sarkar for initiation at Srikhanda, saying that he had dedicated his life to him when they met at Jajigrāma on the previous occasion. Narahari told him that Sri Chaitanya had personally advised Gopāl Bhatta to initiate him, so they ought not to violate His divine command.[6] He stayed a few days at Srikhanda before leaving for Puri on a visit to Sri Chaitanya.

Srinivās started for Puri with a companion on the fifth of the moon's increase in the month of Magha (Jan-Feb) certainly in 1534 A.D.[7] because Srinivās heard of the passing away of Sri Chaitanya from the returning pilgrims, on the way.[8]

Dr. D. C. Sen gives us another reference to this effect: "Narottam quotes some *slokas*, said to have been written by Kavikarnapur, in which he writes that Srinivās had

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[1] Bh.Kar.II.p.85 [2] Premavilās. IV.1.17 [3] Karnananda.6th
[4] Premavilās, IV. pp.20,21 [5] Premavilās VI. p.18 [6] Premavilās, IV. p.18.
[7] Bh.Kar. III. p.99 [8] Karnanand VI. Niryas. Nrisimha's slokas, quoted in Karnananda and Bh. kar; Anuragavalli, II

heard on the way to Puri that Chaitanya had disappeared".[1] Karnananda informs us that Narottam's biography of Srinivās was written before his book. Narottam was the most intimate friend and colleague of Srinivās. Sri Chaitanya passed away in 1534 A.D. We do not know why Dr. sen dates this visit of Srinivās as in the year 1581 A.D.![2]

Srinivās, grief-stricken, reached Puri to find the associates of Sri Chaitanya lamenting. He made his way to the Gopināth temple where Gadādhar was living, and found him faint and cold at the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya.[3] Srinivās made his obeisance, reciting the Name of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda when he became a little composed. He introduced himself, saying he was the son of Chaitanyadās of Chakhandi. Gadādhar Pandit greeted him kindly, saying: "I am glad that you have come and introduced yourself. I was commanded to teach you the Bhāgavata. The Lord (Sri Chaitanya) asked me in His later years to make Srinivās hear the *Krishna Lilā* on his arrival. You shall live in the Gopināth temple for his sake. You will send him to Vrindāvan with letters in his hands. There is the Lord's command to teach you the Bhāgavata, but this manuscript has become illegible with the reader's tears."[4]

Gadādhar wrote to Narahari Sarkar in Bengal, asking for another copy of the Bhāgavata. Srinivās himself went to fetch the manuscript. He met Rāya Rāmananda, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, and others before he returned. He did not meet the Emperor PratapRudra as he had left Puri, out of grief at Sri Chaitanya's passing, and was mourning him some distance away from the town.[5] Srinivās returned to Bengal to secure a manuscript of the Bhāgavata after a short stay at Puri. Gadādhar sent a companion with him, as he was then young.

On his return to Bengal, he heard of the disappearance of Nityānanda and Advaita.[6] He met Narahari Sarkar with the letter from Gadādhar, and secured a manuscript of the

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[1] V.L.M.B. p.85. [2] V.L.M.B. p.89. [3] Premavilās.IV. p.19
[4] Premavilās IV. p.20. [5] Bh.Kar.III. p.111 [6] Bh.Kar.III. p.118

Bhāgavaṭa, and later on, set off with it to Puri in the company of a Vaishnava employed by Narahari.

Srinivās was terribly disappointed and shocked to learn of the death of Gadādhar, when he arrived at Jaipur, and returned to Bengal without proceeding further to Puri.[1]

There is no account of his life for the next several years in the available biographies. The books by Karnapur, Narottam and Nrisimhadev Kavirāj may have recorded it, but we have not yet been able to trace them entirely, except passages quoted in contemporary and later writings. He seems to have continued his studies, as he was still in his teens. When Sri Jahnava Devi went to Vrindāvan, Rūpa Gosvāmi asked her to send Srinivās to Vrindāvan as soon as possible.[2] On her return to Bengal, she asked Narahari to do this, as Rūpa was waiting to train him. It was Sri Chaitanya's command to the Gosvāmins of Vraja to train Srinivās and Narahari advised him to hasten, so that the command should not be violated.[3] This request seems to have heightened his desire to study *Bhakti* literature with Rūpa and Sanātana, but he was still staying at home. Had he gone to Vrindāvan then, he would have met Rūpa and Sanātana. He resolved to visit the homes of Sri Chaitanya's principal associates on the way, halting at Navadvip to visit Sri Chaitanya's home. Vamsivadan Thākur and Isana, Sri Chaitanya's servant, received and introduced him to Sri Vishnupriya Māta, the revered widow of Sri Chaitanya. She blessed him, and entertained him for several days. Srinivās was struck with wonder and admiration to see her practising the severest asceticism. She used to live on as much rice as she could count, telling the sixteen names of God for one grain of rice.[4] He met Murari Gupta, Dāmodar Pandit, Suklamvar and other early associates of Sri Chaitanya, of Navadvip.[5] From there he went to Shantipur and met Advaita's wife, Sitā Devi, her sons, Sri Achyuta and Gopāl.

The Talukdāra edition of *Premavilas* says that Srinivās went to Shantipur three years after the departure of Advaita[6] but the Vidyāratna edition puts thirteen instead

[1] Premavilās.IV.p.21. [2] Premavilās. XVI.128. [3] Premavilās.XVI.p.130.
[4] Premavilās IV.p.23 [5] Bh.Kar.IV.p.124. [6] Premavilās IV.p.24

of three. The latter edition seems correct, because Srinivās's visit seems to have taken place not long before his departure for Vrindāvan, which took place not before 1554 A.D. or so. Sri Advaita was born in 1434 A.D.[1] So he seems to have disappeared in 1534 A.D., as Bhaktiratnakar says, or the Rāmanārāyana Vidyāratna edition seems to indicate rather than in 1550 A.D., as the Talukdara edition would suggest.

Sita Devi greeted him with all the tenderness of a mother. Thence Srinivās visited the home of Nityānanda at Khardaha. Jahnava Devi, Vira Bhadra and others, received him with great affection. Jahnava Devi requested him to hurry on Vrindāvan, lest he should miss Rūpa and Sanātana. She sent him with a letter to Khanakul Krisnagar, the home of Abhirāma Thākura in the company of Isana.

Dr. D. C. Sen is not correct in saying, "he received the strokes of the Jaymangala strick" in the temple of Khardah.[2] It was Abhirāma who touched him with it at Khanakul.[3] Abhirāma and his wife showed the deepest affection for Srinivās. He blessed him with the stroke of the Jaymangala stick, which is belived to inspire an ecstatic love of God. Abhirāma also advised him to start for Vrindāvan immediately and take shelter with Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunāth, Gopāl Bhatta and other Gaudiya Masters of Vraja. Srinivās is said to have visited Katwa, where Sri Chaitanya took Sannyas; Agradvip, where lies the temple of Vāsudeva Ghosh brother and Ekachakra, the birthplace of Nityānanda.[4] When he met Narahari Sarkar at Srikhanda, he was impatient at Srinivās's delay, and entreated him to hasten to Vrindāvan if he wished to fulfil the pious desire to study *Bhakti* literature with Rūpa and Sanātana. Finally, Srinivās set out on his journey with his permission.

In the meantime Sanātana had disappeared. Rūpa had despaired of Srinivās. He asked Jiva Gosvāmi to receive

[1] C. C.p.29 [2] V.L.M.B.p.90 [3] Premavilās IV.p.28 [4] Bh.K.iv.p.130

and help him in his spiritual training on his arrival, should he not live to meet him.[1]

Srinivās reached Benares in due course and visited the house of Chandra Sekhara Vaidya where Sri Chaitanya had lived for two months and a few days. Here he met an old disciple of Chandra Sekhar who invited him to dinner and showed him the places associated with the memory of Sri Chaitanya. He reached Allahabad a few days later and passed one night there, whence he followed the trunk road and reached a place four days journey from Vrindāvan. Here he heard that Sanātana had died four months before.[2] When he reached Mathurā, he was shocked to hear that Rūpa had also disappeared just a few days after.[3]

Srinivās reached Vrindāvan and made his way to the temple of Govinda Deva when a crowd of visitors thronged to attend the evening service. Jiva Gosvāmi, accompanied by many followers, entered the temple and made obeisances before the Deity while Srinivās was there. He easily recognised Jiva Gosvāmi, and introduced himself. Jiva received him with great courtesy, addressing him as friend.[4] He took him to his own residence at the Rādhādāmodara temple and lodged him there. The next day Srinivās expressed his homage at the tomb of Rūpa Gosvāmi in the compound of Jiva's Rādhādāmodar temple.

Jiva introduced him to Gopāl Bhatta Gosvāmi who greeted him very kindly and regretted his delay in reaching Vrindāvan, saying that they had all wished to meet him, but it was now too late.[5]

Gopāl Bhatta took him to his Rādhārāman temple, and invoked the blessing of the Deity for the spiritual wellbeing of Srinivās, who was gradually introduced to all the masters of Vraja. Some days later Gopāl Bhatta initiated Srinivās on Jiva's recommendation. Jiva and Srinivās became more closer, the latter studying *Bhakti* literature under Jiva. Another young scholar, the famous Narottam, had already placed himself under Jiva. He became the

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[1] Premavilās.V.p.30 [2] Premavilās V.p.31 [3] Premavilās V.p.31
[4] PremavilasVI.p.34 [5] PremavilasVI.p.35

disciple of Lokanāth. Sri Jiva Gosvāmi taught these two scholars with indefatigable zeal and care. Narottam had already been in Vrindāvan one year.[1] Their friendship, thus established, continued until the last day of their lives.

Srinivās seems to have lived at Vrindāvan for more than a year or so. When Jiva Gosvāmi found that they were fit to act as Āchāryas, he consulted with Gopāl Bhatta, Lokanāth, Raghunāthdas and others, proposing that Srinivās and Narottam should be sent to Bengal to continue the movement there both in the form of popularising the literature of Rūpa, Sanātana and other Gaudiya Masters, and preaching the doctrine from different centres. All the Masters gave their consent to Jiva's proposal. Srinivās and Narottam were given the title of "Āchārya" and "Thākur", respectively by Jiva, who sent them to circumambulate the different holy woods and Shrines in the circuit of Mathurā under the able guidance of Raghav Pandit.

Bhaktiratnakara describes this wandering in great detail. Since the time of Sri Chaitanya, it became an established custom among the Gaudiya sect to visit all the woods in the circuit of Mathurā by perambulation, reciting the Names of God and recollecting the Memory of Krishna connected with the said woods. When Srinivās and Narottam returned after circumambulating the woods, Jiva prepared to send them to Bengal with the books, and asked one of his rich disciples of Mathurā to provide carts, boxes, passports, etc. When all was ready, Jiva held a great festival at the Govinda temple in honour of their departure. All the Vaishnava ascetics assembled in the Govinda temple to bless the two Āchāryas. Gopāl and Lokanāth felt the separation from their most loving disciples very much.

Gopāl Bhatta blessed his disciple Srinivās, wrapping round his head the holy *Kaupin* and *Dora* which Sri Chaitanya had sent him from Puri on hearing of his arrival at Vrindāvan. He also gave him the *Salagram Shila* named Vamsi Vadana for his daily worship. Sri Jiva charged him

[1] Premavilās XII.p.76

with the great task of preaching the doctrine with untiring zeal, showing the letter from Sri Chaitanya in which the latter had commanded the Gosvāmins of Vrindāvan to train him and appoint him head of the movement in Bengal.[1] Lokanāth commanded his disciple Narottam to establish the service of God, entertain the Vaishnavas and preach the doctrine of Sri Chaitanya with all the fervour of his heart. All the Vaishnava Masters blessed them. According to Premavilās, Shyāmānand was also sent with them, but other books differ this. Shyāmānand seems to have been sent with Srinivās on his second visit a few years later.

Srinivās and Narottam safely arrived in Bengal without any mishap on the way. The royal passports caused the officers in charge to conduct them through their respective territories.[2] We have already discussed the so-called robbery of the books by the bandits of Rājā Vira Hāmvira, that it is merely a distortion of the truth.

On their arrival, the two leaders started two centres of propaganda in their two respective villages. On his arrival, Srinivās started a theological school at his home at Jajigrāma, to teach the Vaishnava philosophy and literature. He secured a good many Vaishnava students. The old associates of Sri Chaitanya joined him. He used to make preaching tours to different districts. Srikhanda, Katwa, Kalna and other places were already centres of propaganda before Srinivās took the lead. He used to visit those places, hold meetings and festivals.

Narahari Sarkar Thākur wished him to settle down as a married man. Raghunandan and Sulochana of Srikhanda arranged his marriage with the daughter of Gopāldās, a Brahman of Jajigrāma. His wife was named Ishvari Thākurini. Her two brothers, Shyāmadās and Rāma Charan became Srinivās's disciples, and were admitted to the theologiacal school at Jajigrāma. There is no doubt that the mother of Srinivās prevailed upon him to prefer the married life. His marriage seems to have

[1] Karnananda, VI [2] Anuragavalli.VI.p.87.Karnanda,VI

taken place at the age of thirty-five. Some time after, one of the greatest poets of the day became his disciple. He was none other than the great Rāma Chandra of Kumaranagar, whose vigorous participation in the movement gave a great impetus to its activities. In this connection Srinivās remarked: "I was so long blind in one eye, now I have recovered the other through you".[1] Srinivās placed him with Narottam in charge of the Kheturi centre.

Rāma Chandra was a great scholar and a typical Vaishnava. A few years later, Srinivās visited his *Guru* Gopāl Bhatta at Vrindāvan and consulted Sri Jiva as to the work in Bengal, leaving the leadership to Narottam and Rāma Chandra. Other Vaishnavas of Vraja wondered why he returned to Vrindāvan so soon. Srinivās was shocked to learn of the disappearance of Haridās Āchārya, the father of his two important disciples, Sridas and Gokulananda. Haridās was a devoted follower of Sri Chaitanya and used to carry the messages from Vrindāvan to Puri, and vice versa, whilst Sri Chaitanya was alive.[2]

On his arrival at Vrindāvan, he occupied himself with the service of his *Guru* Gopāl Bhatta, and in further study with his respected friend, Sri Jiva. His stay at Vrindāvan caused anxiety both to his family and disciples in Bengal, so Rāma Chandra was sent to fetch him back. Rāma Chandra advised his brother Govinda, another eminent poet of the day, to change their residence from Kumaranagar to Telia Vudhari on the Padma, where they had inherited landed property from their maternal grandfather, Dāmodar Sen of Srikhanda.

The Gosvāmins of Vrindāvan were aware of his participation in the movement and personal sacrifices for it, and were delighted to greet him. He was introduced to Gopāl Bhatta, Lokanāth, Bhugarbha, Raghunāthdas, Krishnadās Kavirāj and other Masters of the place. He told Srinivās and Jiva how Narottam and others were spreading the cult and working indefatigably at the

[1] Karnananda, I [2] Bh.Kar.VI.p.475

theological school.[1] His poetic gifts in praise of Rādhā-Krishna endeared him to the Masters of Vraja, who conferred on him the title of Kavirāj. Krishnadās Kavirāj mentions Rāma Chandra Kavirāj in his famous Chaitanya Charitamrita.[2] After staying at Vrindāvan for some time, and circumambulating the twelve woods, he returned to Bengal with his *Guru* Srinivās and Shyāmanand. The latter was created head of the movement in Orissa, and was trained by Jiva.[3] This time, Jiva Gosvāmi, with the others, accorded them a very loving send-off.

His presence in Bengal filled the workers with enthusiasm. He now began to preach on a very grand scale. Hundreds of students from different parts of Bengal and Orissa, joined his theological school. Many poets and scholars of the country enrolled thenselves as his disciples. Rāma Chandra's brother, Govinda is said to have been a *Shakta* and written a good many poems in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati.[4] He was directed by the Goddess to be initiated into Vaishnavism by Srinivās. We are not sure whether this statement in Bhaktiratnākar was true, as their family had been Vaishnava since Sri Chaitanya's time. Their father Chiranjiva was one of Sri Chaitanya's most devoted disciples.[5] The author of Bhaktiratnākara seems to have said that he was converted from Shaktaism, only to humiliate that sect. After the initiation of Govinda, another centre of propaganda was opened at Vudhari.

Srinivās's attention was next directed to attach special sanctity to the Birth-Site of Sri Chaitanya, as one of the best way of perpetuating His memory. His idea was to turn Navadvip one of the principal place of pilgrimage of the Vaishnavas. With this purpose in view, Srinivās himself undertook to perambulate Sri Māyapur, Navadvip and its surroundings to recollect the deeds of Sri Chaitanya connected with those places, according to Vaishnava custom. He, with Narottam and Rāma Chandra, visited the group of nine islands called Navadvip, with Sri Mayapur,

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[1] Bh.Kar.IX.p.575 [2] C.C. Adi.XI.51 [3] Anuraga Valli, VI, Bh.Kar.IX. Karnananda [4] Bh.Kar.IX [5] C.C.Adi.X.78.G.G. p.197.207

the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya as its centre, taking Ishan, Sri Chaitanya's old servant and his family as their guide. This ceremony of perambulation is known as *ParikRāma*. After the time of Srinivās it ceased to be held for some years, but was again revived by Jagabandhu and Vira Chandra, two later descendants of Advaita. Again, after long lapse, it has now been revived and is held on a grand scale by Sri Chaitanya Math.

Srinivās introduced another innovation of propaganda in the form of the annual ceremony of holding a grand council. Scholars, poets, Brahmanas, and all religious people were invited to it. It was a huge gathering. Theological and doctrinal questions were the subjects of discussion at this open assembly. A lot of money was needed for it, so it was held at Narottam's expense at his Sri Chaitanya temple at Kheturi. Narottam was the son of Rājā Krishna Chandra, one of the richest men of his time. Moreover, Santosh Datta, cousin of Narottam and co-heir to the Estate, became his disciple, and placed the whole Estate at Narottam's disposal for the benefit of the Mission. Srinivās, Virabhadra, Rāma Chandra, Govinda, Kavirāj, and other leaders of the sect used to address the audience. Other sects also came to challenge and take part in the disputations. Their annual grand council created a great sensation throughout the country. Every year hundreds of new proselytes were recruited.

Srinivās resolved to make a missionary tour in Orissa where his young friend Shyāmānand was working. He started off with the necessary books by way of Jhārikhand, but when he passed Tamluka, he was robbed of his books and other belongings. It was no doubt a great blow to his enthusiasm. The robbery was committed within the territory of Rājā Vir Hāmvira, king of Vishnupur, an independent monarch possessing land between the Moghul Empire on the west and the Pāthans of Gauda in the east.

Mortified by the loss of his books, Srinivās decided to appeal to the king for their recovery, and journeyed to Vishnupur. The question was: how could a poor Brahmana

obtain an audience of the king? He became a guest at the house of one Krishna Vallabha, a pious Brahmana scholar, who used to attend religious discourses at the court of Vira Hāmvira. The king was religious-minded and given to listenening to the recitation of the Bhāgavata and other scriptures by his court Pandit, Vyasā Āchārya. Srinivās told his host about the theft and asked how he could meet the king. Srinivās's name as great preacher was already known in Vishnupur, possibly to the king also, who was a poet and scholar and very liberal towards religious men and poets. Krishna Vallabha took Srinivās to the court, where the king listened the Vyasā Āchārya reciting the Bhāgavata[1] and attended there with his followers for several days, when he was presented to the king as a great Bhāgavata scholar. One day Srinivās took part in the discussion, which usually followed the reading by the court Pandit, on some doctrinal point. Srinivās offered the best explanation, in the light of Sridhara's commentary and the Gaudiya Vaishnava doctrine, which gained the king's admiration, who next requested him to read the Bhrāmaragita from the Bhāgavata and accepted his as a royal guest. The king and his courtiers were greatly impressed with the personality and scholarship of Srinivās, who in due course, exercised a great influence. Both the king and queen became Srinivās's disciples, and he also initiated the court Pandit Vyasā Āchārya and his son. It was the greatest triumph of his missionary life for the king employed his power and wealth in the service of the Vaishnava movement. Indeed, it was through his lavish patronage that it became a gigantic movement and achieved great success in a short time. The initiation of the king was an important historical event for the sect in Bengal.

We know that it was through the active influence of Prataprudra, Emperor of Orissa, that Gaudiya Vaishnavism was firmly established in the Orissan Empire. The success at Vrindāvan was mainly due to the acceptance of its faith by the Prince of Amber and other Rājput States. The movement in Bengal had so long been confined to the

[1] Karnananda, I

common people, until the king of Vishnupur came forward with his help. We should remember that the kings of Gauda were Mohammedans and naturally antagonistic to the Hindu movement. Vaishnavism in its native province suffered persecution at the hands of an alien power, whereas in other provinces it developed under the beneficent care of its rulers. The king of Vishnupur removed this slur from Bengal by employing all his resource in favour of Vaishnava propaganda in his own territory and other parts of Bengal.

We should remark, in this connection, that we have accepted the view expressed in Karnananda, as to how the king was initiated. Anuragavalli seems to verify it, as to the date. Karnananda seems to imply that the king recovered his *Guru* , Srinivās's,books but curtails the description with the king's initiation as the consummation of Srinivās's visit to the palace.

The descriptions in the 18th century book, Bhaktiratnakar and Premavilās, seem unreliable, placing the incidents in wrong chronological order and making exaggerated statements.

King Vir Hāmvira provided his *Guru* Srinivās with a house and property at Vishnupur where a propaganda centre was started. His family lived there or at Jajigrāma, where he also lived when not staying in Vudhari or Kheturi, or travelling throughout the country on propaganda tours. He visited Srikhanda, Kātwa, Kālna, etc. on the occasion of festivals. He entrusted the king's spiritual instruction on to his great disciple, Rāma Chandra.

The king's personal affection for Srinivās was like that of the Emperor Pratāprudra for Sri Chaitanya. Srinivās gave the king the name of Haridacharanadās (servant at the feet of Hari). Jiva Gosvāmi later on blessed the Prince Dhari Hāmvira with the devotional name of Gopāldās, for whom he had great affection, and whom Jiva mentions in a letter to Srinivās.[1]

[1] Premavilas.p.304. Karnananda. Bhaktiratnakar, XIV.p.1033.

Srinivās was overwhelmed with grief by the death of his guide and wellwisher, Narahari Sarkar. The ceremonies in honour of the departed Narahari and Gadādharadas were performed at Srikhanda and Kātwa with great pomp. The principal disciples of the sect assembled there on that occasion.

Srinivās now started another centre of preaching and installed the Deities of Rādhāvinoda at the house of his important disciple Govinda Chakravarti at Verakuli. A great festival was held on this occasion. Virabhadra, Krishna Misra, Narottam and other leaders with their respective disciples joined it. It was another principal centre from which the dictrine spread in that quarter. Srinivās used, occasionally, to live there.

He paid another visit to Vrindāvan. He was nominated by his *Guru* Gopāl Bhatta as heir to the Rādhārāman temple at Vrindāvan, but it was impossible for him to leave Bengal and reside at Vrindāvan for the service of the temple. He transferred his right, with his *Guru* 's permission, to his fellow disciple Gopināth Pujāri, the famous commentator on the Gita Govinda. The descendants of Gopināth's brothers are still in charge of the said temple.

He returned to Bengal in due course and resumed his duties, which he continued to the last day of his life with never-failing energy. Virabhadra, Achyutananda, Raghunandan Thākur of Srikhanda, Hridaya Chaitanya of Kālna, Yadunandan of Kātwa and all other leaders of the sect worked in co-operation with and under the leadership of Srinivās.

Jahnava Devi also played an important part, visiting the different centres and attending festivals. Jiva Gosvāmi was the supreme Head of the whole movement, which was carried on from different places. Srinivās guided it in Bengal under his direction. Messengers frequently ran from Bengal to Vrindāvan and vice versa. Jiva used to send further literature to Srinivās to teach at the theological schools in Bengal, as soon as he had finished writing it.

He also sent scholars whom he had taught and trained, to assist Srinivās in general, and run theological schools in particular.

We shall briefly notice some letters that passed between Jiva and Srinivās because they shed some light on the relations between the Gosvāmins of Vraja and Srinivās in Bengal.

LETTER FROM SRINIVĀS TO JIVA[1]

"To the feet of Sri Jiva Gosvāmi, the source of all my happiness: Your servant Srinivās makes repeated obeisances to you. I have not heard from you for a long time, but would be glad to get news of you. I am well, so are Vrindāvan and the others. Please let me know how Sri Gopāl Bhatta is. I should like to know whether you have finished the correction of Rasāmritasindhu, Mādhava Mahotsava, Uttarachampu, and Harināmāmrita Vyākārana. I hope you will send them to me if they are finished. Please accept my respectful obeisances and convey them to all at Vrindāvan".

We know that Bhakti Rasāmritasindhu is the work of Rūpa Gosvāmi, so it seems that Jiva Gosvāmi revised it after his death. This letter was written many years after Srinivās came to Bengal with the mission.

LETTER FROM JIVA TO SRINIVĀS[2]

"To the duel feet of Srinivās which are conducive to all my happiness: I, Jiva by name, make obeisance to you. I always await your good news but I have not heard from you for long. At present I am free from maladies. The others are also well, but Bhugarbha Gosvāmi has departed. Let me know all news of your associates, particularly of Vrindāvandās. Does he study? How and where are Vyasā Sharma and Vāsudeva Kavirāj?"

"Some portions of Rasāmritasindhu, Mādhava Maotasava, Uttarachampu and Harināmāmrita are still to

[1] Premavilās, XXV. p.302 [2] Karnananda, Bh.Kar.XV. p.1030

be corrected. Now the rainy season has begun, so they cannot be sent to you at present. I will send them when the weather is more favourable. Please convey my greetings to all there. My blessings are due to the king (Vira Hāmvira).

LETTER FROM JIVA TO SRINIVĀS[1]

"To the great Srinivās Āchārya, who is my great friend and abode of all merits: Jiva from Vrindāvan sends his hearty greetings. Those who live at Vrindāvan are well. I am always eager to hear from you. I am occasionally grieved to hear that you are not well. Please console us with your good news. I have already replied to your previous letters, as they fell due. Now I submit that grief of the body and sense is not becoming to the devotees of God. It is painful. You ought to remedy it.

Besides, this Shyāmadās Āchārya is very religious, favourable to our wishes, and well versed in the scriptures, so you should discourse with him on *Bhakti* with great affection. With his help, the views of the atheists are likely to be dispelled. The Vaishnava Toshani, Durgama Somgamani, and the Gopāl Champu are being sent with him to your place, after revision. You should co-operate with him in correcting them. You should regard him as your ward.

Besides, if you began teaching the "Harināmāmrita", which has been sent before, you should correct its mistakes, if there be any, according to the *Bhāsyas* and *Vritti*. There is another supplementary book here. If you wish to have it, please command me to that effect. I have finished writing the Uttara Gopāl Champu, but it ought to be further considered. When will fortune bless me to meditate on your favour, on hearing it from this distance? Please convey my good wishes to Vrindāvandās and others, also to Gopāl Dās, and so on.

"I meditate on the favour of the feet of Srinivās Āchārya".

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[1] Karnananda; Bh.Kar.XIV.p.1032, Premavilās XXV.p.304

We know Shyāmadās was the son of Vyasā Āchārya and disciple of Srinivās. It seems from the nature of this writing that Srinivās was not very well disposed to him. There arose a question in Bengal as to whether Jiva Gosvāmi preferred *Sakiya* to the *Parakiya* doctrine, or vice-versa, in his Gopāl Champu, which made a division of opinion between Vyasā Āchārya, father of Shyāmadās and Srinivās's favourite disciples Rāma Chandra, Govinda and others. This controversy was apparently the cause of Srinivās's strained relations with Shyāmadās, whose scholarship was much appreciated by Jiva. The grief referred to was due to the death of Gopāl Bhatta. This letter may be dated 1590 A.D., as the Uttara Champu mentioned in it, was completed in 1592 A.D.

In another letter to Govinda Kavirāj Jiva wished to know whether Srinivās had got the Brihat Bhāgavatāmrita which was sent through Shyāmadās, the great musician on Khola.[1]

These letters which state that Srinivās received those books as Jiva finished them, seem to nullify Dr. D.C. Sen's view that Srinivās brought all the manuscripts of all the Gosvāmins books, leaving nothing there in 1601 when he was created *Āchārya* and sent to Bengal to take up the work.[2] The books mentioned in those letters are dated at various periods before 1592 A.D. It is only too obvious that Srinivās could not have brought those books with him from Vrindāvan on his first visit when he was created *Āchārya*.

Srinivās could count almost the important poets of the day amongst his disciples and numerous Pandit scholars who became preachers, were initiated by him. Bengal was swept up in a wave of *Bhakti*. Aristocrats, scholars and poets as well as the masses, came within the fold of *Vaishnavism*. Nityānanda's activities had been mainly confined to the common people, but his successor Srinivās captured the heart of the highest Bengali classes, and turned them into preachers. His success was of a solid and permanent character. He imparted theistic education to the new proselytes to strengthen their conviction. His

[1] Karnananda, Bh.R.K.XIV.p.1036 [2] V.L.M.B.p.106, III

disciples were all doctors of *Vaishnava* philosophy and well versed in the scriptures. He gave a tremendous impetus to the development of new *Vaishnava* literature. Nityānanda had laid stress on the *Kirtana*, which could not offer much scope to the intelligentsia of the country, but in his day there had hardly been any literature of the sect to offer the intellectual section of the population. Srinivās arrived on the field at the most opportune time when the Gosvāmins of Vraja had produced a vast literatures in its various branches, which proved good food for the intellectual people. The king of Vishnupur supported Srinivās with his vast wealth and influence. Narottam also contributed his Estate for the purpose.

We cannot say with any certainty when Srinivās died. His career more or less synchronized with that of Jiva Gosvāmi, who was born about 1509 A.D. Srinivās must have been born about 1520 A.D., so the difference in age between them is not very great. This is also borne out by another fact, that the former used to address the latter as friend. Sri Jiva seems to have died in the "nineties" of the 16th century, and Srinivās does not seem to have survived him long. The Karnananda, which is dated 1607, appears to have been written after the death of Srinivās. We may assume that he lived about 75 years or so.

HEMALATĀ THĀKURANI

Hemalatā was one of the great ladies who contributed to the success of the movement in an unlimited degree. She was highly educated and a vigorous preacher. It is no exaggeration to say that she was as important as Jahnava Devi in the sect. She was a gifted and devoted leader. Both by example and precept, she attained a very high position, which placed her among the authorities on the doctrine of the sect. She initiated innumerable men and women into the religion of Sri Chaitanya. One of our famous poets, Yadunandan Thākur was an important disciple of hers. In all his writings he pays her homage. He wrote Karnananda at her command. She improved the service of the temple at Jajigrāma.

RĀMA CHANDRA KAVIRĀJ

As Sri Chaitanya had the devoted support of Nityānanda and Advaita, so Srinivās had that of Rāma Chandra and Narottam. He regarded Rāma Chandra as his one eye and one arm. Rāma and his famous brother Govinda were the two sons of Chiranjiva Sen, a devoted adherent of Sri Chaitanya. Their mother's name was Sunanda.[1] Chiranjiva was a native of Srikhanda.

Rāma Chandra was Srinivās's first important disciple. He was extremely handsome, possessing artistic merit, and a most celebrated scholar and poet. Srinivās, who taught him *Bhakti* literature and gave him spiritual, training, deputed him to work in the company of Narottam whose inseparable friend he became. In his *Prarathana*, Narottam prays to God that if he is born again, he may be given the priyelege of Rāma Chandra's company. He lived an ascetic life with Narottam. He whole-heartedly served the Mission with his learning, wisdom and energy.

He was sent to Vrindāvan to fetch Srinivās when the latter was delayed during his second visit. Jiva Gosvāmi gave him the title of *Kavirāj*, and he endeared himself to all the Vaishnava Masters there. Rāma Chandra lived for some months at kings Vir Hāmvira's palace whilst teaching the king the Vaishnava doctrine and literature. Yadunandan devotes a long chapter to this in his Karnananda.

Rāma Chandra and his *Guru* once more visited Vrindāvan where he was much respected as a vigorous preacher who could win over antagonists by his persuasive arguments. Govindadas, Vaishnavadas and other writes have celebrated him in their poems. He died childless before Srinivās, who predeceased Narottam, the latter being overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his friends.

Rāma Chandra was the *Guru* of many disciples of all castes, including Brahmanas, the first of who was Harirāma Āchārya, a great scholar. A favourite disciple of his was Balarāma Kavipati, whose poems are to be found

[1] Samgita Madhava, quoted in Bh.Kar.I.p.19

in Padamrita Samudra and other anthologies.

The following works have been ascribed to him:

(1) Siddhanta Chandrika[1] it contains 260 *slokas* in Bengali and refers to another work of his, Durlabhamrita.

(2) Smarana Darpana[2] containing 150 *slokas* in Bengali.

GOVINDA KAVIRĀJ

Rāma Chandra's younger brother was Govindadas Kavirāj. He said to have been a Shakta. Once, when seriously ill with dyspepsia and dropsy, on the point of death, his goddess Bhavani is said to have appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to surrender to Krishna and to become Srinivās's disciples. He was then bed-ridden. His son, Divyasimha, wrote to Rāma Chandra at Jajigrāma requesting him to bring Srinivās home to initiate his dying father. Srinivās complied with his wish and the invalid was immediately cured of his disease. Nityānandadās, in his Premavilās quotes a passage from Govindadāsa's earlier poems in praise of Shiva Durga, to emphasise that he was a *Shakta* before his conversion to Vaishnavism. We detect the sectarian touch here, for we know that Govinda's father and maternal grandfather were already Vaishnavas. His conversion is said to have occurred at the age of 36.[3]

We find his father Chiranjiva going to Puri to see Sri Chaitanya in 1511 A.D. when he was certainly a grown man. We can reasonably assume that his two sons were born during the next 23 years when Sri Chaitanya was still alive. According to Khriroda Rāya Chandhudi, Govinda was born in Saka 1447 (1525 A.D.).[4] After his initiation, Govinda was a devout Vaishnava. Srinivās commanded him to employ his poetic genius in celebrating the lives and deeds of Sri Chaitanya, Sri Rādhā Krishna and the Vaishnavas. He studied Rupa's works, his own poems

[1] S.P.P.Vol.XIII.p.198 [2] S.P.P.Vol.IV p.343; Vol.V.p.204 [3] Premavilas. XIV.p.110
[4] Gaurapada Tarangini .p. 70

being mere illustrations of the various aspects of *Rasa* as discussed by Rūpa in his *Rasa* literature.

When Govinda visited Vrindāvan with Jahnava Devi, he became very fond of Gopāl Bhatta, Jiva, Lokanāth, and the others. Krishnadās Kavirāj mentions him in his Chaitanya Charita.[1] We should remark here that Krishnadās places both Rāma Chandra and Govinda among Nityānanda's disciples. He neither mentions Srinivās nor calls them his disciples, an omission which is difficult to account for.

Vrindāvandās Thākur in his Chaitanya Bhāgavat also seems to have wilfully omitted mention of Narahari Sarkar, who was too important to be ignored. Krishnadās's book does not cover the period of Srinivās, because it closes with the passing of Sri Chaitanya.

Rāma Chandra and Govinda seem to have been of a very devotional temperament and greatly in favour of Vaishnavism in their earlier years. Moreover Krishnadās loved them very much when they met him at Vrindāvan, so he may have felt inclined to mention them. They may have been obedient to Nityānanda, so he put them in the list of his disciples.

Govinda charmed Jiva and the others with his poems, for which he was given the title of Kavirāj. When he left Vrindāvan, Jiva requested him to send his other poems as soon as they were composed.[1] Krishnadās, Bhāgavata Kavirāj and others gave him a hearty send-off. Jiva corresponded with him, and some of these letters are included in Karnananda, Premavilās and Bhaktiranakar. According to Jiva's wish, Govinda sent another instalment of his Gitamrita with deep humility. In this letter, he and Rāma Chandra and Narottam solicited an explanation of some passages in Bhaktirasamritasindhu on some doctrinal point[2] Jiva replied in affectionate terms, and in another letter, acknowledges two other instalments of Govinda's songs and asks for further poems, saying that they drank them in like nectar, and were always eager to receive them.

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[1] C.C. Adi.XI.p.51 [2] Bh.Kar.XI.p.675 [3] Premavilās XXV.p.306

As Jiva used to send Sanskrit works for the use of the Vaishnavas in Bengal, so Govinda sent the Bengali literature on Vaishnavism to headquarters at Vrindāvan.[1]

Govinda was always an active preacher of the faith. He was a firm friend of Santosh Datta, first cousin and disciple of Narottam and Prime Minister of the king of Gauda. Govinda dedicates his Sangita Mādhava Nataka to Santosh, who encouraged and requested him to write the said Sanskrit Drāma. He was loved by all the Vaishnavas of the sect. In his poems, Govinda mentions his other patrons, such as Raya Vasanta (p.320, Padamrita Samudra) Rūpa Nārāyana (p.453, P. Samudra), and Rājā Nara Simha.[2]

Govinda Kavirāj is decidedly the best and most voluminous of all Gaudiya Vaishnava poets. The whole of *Bhaktirasa*, in its various aspects, has found its musical expression in his poems. He illustrates in Bengali verse the loving sports of Rādhā-Krishna in accordance with every item of elaboration of *Rasa* as we find in the Ujjvalanilamani of Rūpa Gosvāmi. He describes delightfully the noble deeds of Sri Ghaitanya, the greatness of Vaishnavas like Nityānanda, Advaita, Narottam, Rāma Ghandra, Srinivās, and so on. During the period of Srinivās he adopted poetry and music to a great extent as vehicles for extolling the faith. It was through the poetical and musical genius of Govinda, that Srinivās could charm the population in this respect. Various types of music and song were created at this period. Narottam invented the *Garerhati* tune, which is called after his capital, Garerhat. His disciple, Gangā Nārāyana Ghakravarti composed *Manoharashai*, and another disciple of Srinivās Reneti, Govinda composed songs to set to these tunes.

The *Pada* songs were composed particularly to be sung in various *Raga* and *Raginis*. Govinda evinces extraordinary command of musical quality in his poems. Every one of which has been set with a particular tune, which he himself mentions in every case.

Govinda had a captivating gift for lyrical expression of

[1] Premavilās XXV.p.307 [2] No.29, p.10, Kalidasanatha's edition of Padas

a very high order, in regard to the spiritual depths of Vaishnavism. His poems are remarkably appropriate for concentrating on its music and meaning. The graceful mellow quality of his poems is primarily due to his acceptance of *Vrajavuli* as the fitting vehicle for his sweet imagination. Vaishnava poets had for so long primarily used pure Bengali in conformity with a Sanskrit model in composing songs. Govinda definitely broke down the traditional vehicle and introduced *Vrajavuli*; which is an admixture of Sanskrit, Maithili, and Hindi introduced into Bengali. Govinda has taken a good deal of Sanskrit, ordinary Maithili and Bengali, avoiding too many provincial idioms. This *Vrajavuli* proved exceptionally sweet and became popular in other provinces. His predecessors had primarily composed in pure Bengali. Narahari and Vāsudeva Ghosh tried to adopt *Vrajavuli* as a few of their poems betray, but the attempt was a feeble one. Govinda was the real innovator in this respect, a style soon adopted by his contemporary, Jnanadās and others, though their poems are few. Jnandās's greatness lies in his simple but forceful Bengali, while Govinda is at his best in *Vrajavuli*. No second poet could equal Govinda, in the art of alliteration, which we find in many of his poems, in perfect conformity with the music and sentiment of the poem. Some later poets like his grandson Ghanashyam, and Rādhāmohan, tried to imitate his style, but the results are poor in comparison.

As regards the metre of Govinda's poems, not only do all the metres found in previous works freely dance in his hand, but also he introduced many new metres and modified many old ones, so that the Bengali language and literature are infinitely indebted to Govinda who enriched them in many ways. Since his time, no other Bengali poet has been able to invent any new metre, with the sole exception of the *Amit-akhara* metre which is generally ascribed to the famous Madhusudhan Datta who flourished in the 19th century, but is really the invention of a Vaishnava named Thākur Bhakti Vinode, whom we will mention later on, who wrote his Vijanagram in Amit-

akhara Chanda for the first time in the Bengali language. It was only the Vaishnavas who have developed and nourished our literature.

HIS PADA POEMS

The number of his poems is considerable. Rādhāmohana Thākur (early 18th century) has collected no fewer than 240 songs by Govinda, in his anthology Padamrita Samudra. Vaishnavadās includes about five hundred poems in his Padakalpataru, including many comprised in the previous anthology, but Govinda's poems form the main portion in anthologies of Vaishnava poems.

Govinda survived Srinivās, his brother Rāma Chandra, and his friend Narottam. The author of Bhaktiratnakar says that he spent his later years compiling his poems. The late Satish Rāy has said Govinda died in Saka 1535 (1613 A.D.) at the age of 76.[1] If we accept this view, he was born in 1537 A.D. and initiated by Srinivās in 1573 A.D., as we know that he was initiated in his 36th year.[2] Mr. Rāy has surmised the date without giving any evidence to that effect. We know that his father visited Sri Chaitanya in 1511 A.D., when he was an adult, and that Govinda and Rāma were the only two brothers. It seems that he may have been born earlier than 1537 A.D. The two brothers contributed much to the success of the movement by their wise counsel and fine scholarship. They inherited from their honoured father the true spirit of Vaishnavism and poetic genius from their maternal grandfather, Dāmodar, one of the greatest poets of the day.

MAHĀRĀJĀ DHIRĀJ VIR HĀMVIR

He was the king of Mallabhumi which, in its flourishing condition, stretched as far as some parts of Santhal Pargana on the north, included a part of the Midnapur district on the south, and of the Burdwan district to the east. At one time it appropriated some part of Chota Nagpur. Its capital was Vishnupur, now in the Birbhum district. By means of

[1] S.P.P. Vol.XVIII p.71 [2] Premavilasa XIV p.110

the natural fortification of the swiftly flowing river Dāmodar, and extensive tract of dense forest as well as by many forts, kings of Mallabhumi could maintain their territory almost intact, and more or less succeeded in asserting their independence. They took part, particularly in the time of Vir Hāmvira, in interprovincial politics and made friends with the Moghul Emperor Ākbar against the Pāthan kings of Bengal, and occasionally stopped their tribute to the latter. The Pāthan rulers could not have any firm hold on the kings of Vishnupur, who developed the arts of civilization, architecture and culture to a very high degree from the 16th century onwards.

The Vamsavali pretends to give us a long list of kings who are said to have reigned uninterruptedly from the 7th to the 19th century, but Mr. Abhaypada Mallik, author of the History of Vishnupur-Raj rightly remarks that, "from the sixteenth century onwards, the history of Mallabhumi becomes more and more accurate" (p.25). The greatest king of this line was king Vir Hāmvir. Dr. D.C. Sen says that Vir Hāmvir ascended the throne in the year 1597 A.D. This he derives from the Vamsavali quoted in Mr. N. Vasu's Visvakosa. He further remarks: "We have every reason to believe the testimony of the Vishnupur court records":[1]

We cannot maintain Dr. Sen's date. The so-called court records are no more than a copy of the Vamsavalli, which Mr. Vāsu has published in his Visvakosa. It gives the list of 59 kings, with their respective dates, from the 7th century onwards; but the Vamsavali is not reliable for the dates of reigns for more than twelve hundred years, but if it were, it does not give us the date which Dr.Sen has taken on its authority.

According to the Vamsavali, 48 kings before Vir Hāmvir, reined for 935 years. Mr. Vāsu and Dr. Sen state that its first king Adimalla was born in 715 A.D. and became king in the first year of the Malla era. They do not tell us when the Malla era began. Adimalla was at least twenty if not more before he could establish a principality, so if he

[1] V.L.M.B.p.170

ascended the throne in 735, Vir Hāmvir would have become king in 1670 A.D., after the 935 years' reign of his 48 predecessors, and not in 1597 A.D., as Mr. Vāsu and Dr.Sen have calculated.

Mr. Mallik the author of Vishnupur History of Rāja, records that during the conquest of Orissa by Kālāpāhār (1565 A.D.), Daud Khān son of Suliman, surprised Vishnupur, but the king of Vishnupur (Vir Hāmvir) collected soldiers in hot haste and succeeded in defeating the invader with terrible slaughter (p.26). Vir Hāmvir, who was a contemporary of the Emperor Ākbar (15) seems to have ascended the throne in the fifties of the 16th century. Either Mr.Vāsu and Dr. Sen are wrong in assigning the dates of birth and accession of Adimalla, or the Vamsavali is faulty. It is certain that Mr. Vāsu and Dr. Sen are wrong in their date so as their so-called evidence and calculation are concerned, and are arbitrary in concluding that Vir Hāmvir ascended the throne in 1597 A.D. Had we known when Adimalla came to the throne, and his era began, we might have judged the validity of the Vamsavali.

Mr. Mallik, in his History of the Vishnupur Rāj, writes: "Tradition and fragmentary records of the Rājā family tell us that Raghunāth, Ādi Malla founded the Malla dynasty in the year 695 A.D." (p.9). In another place, he states: "In the temple of Rādhāshyāma both the Malla and the Saka eras are to be found in the inscription".

We are not in a position to verify the opinion of Dr. Block, who writes: "In one only of the temple inscriptions the equivalent of Malla 1064 is given as Saka 1680, and thus the difference between the Malla era and Bengali Saka appears to be exactly 100 years. I suspect that the Malla year in other respects entirely followed the *Fasli* year of Bengal, and the Rājas of Vishnupur, out of vain-glory, merely reduced the Bengali year by one hundred in order to establish a special era of their own. But this conjecture remains to be verified".

If we believe in the genuineness of the correspondence between the Malla and Saka eras in this very much later

temple, the Malla era appears to date from 694-5 A.D. This Rādhāshyām temple inscription, which contains the Malla and Saka eras, states that it was built and dedicated to God Rādhāshyām by Chaitanya Simha in Malla era 1064, Saka 1680 (1758 A.D.).

The Vamsavali places Vir Hāmvir as the 49th king, and Chaitanya Simha as the 57th king who ascended the throne 935 years and 1099 years-three-months, respectively, after the coronation of the first king, i.e. the first Malla era. In this case Vir Hāmvir and Chaitanya Simha must have succeeded in the 1629 A.D. and 1793-4 A.D., respectively, but the inscription of Chaitanya Simha says he was already on the throne some time before 1758 A.D. It is therefore obvious that we cannot rely on the *Vamsavali* for the precise date of Vir Hāmvir's reign. The inscriptions on the temples of Vishnupur Raj for about two reigns later than Vir Hāmvir contain records of the Malla era, which does not seem to have been mentioned in any trustworthy record before Vir Simha. We have another reason to doubt the Vamsavali chronology and names of kings. According to it, Vir Hāmvir was the 49th king, who was succeeded by Dhari Hāmvir (50th), Raghunāth Simha II (51st), Vir Simha (52nd), Durjana Simha (53rd), Raghunāth Simha III (54th) and so on. The inscription on the Mallesvara temple which is dated 928, Malla era, contains the name of Vir Simha as its dedicator, whereas that of the Kālā Chand temple, dated in Malla era 962, mentions Raghunāth Simha. It seems clear that one Vir Simha preceded Raghunāth Simha II, but the Vamsavali does not mention any Vir Simha before Raghunāth Simha II.

The Vamsavali states that the four immediate predecessors of Vir Hāmvir, who were the eldest sons of their respective predecessors, reigned 23, 41, 38 and 48 years respectively and Vir Hāmvir reigned 33 years. It is not feasible that the five successive kings who were all eldest sons of their respective predecessors could have had such long successive reigns. It is neeedles to emphasize that the dates on the inscriptions must be more trustworthy than the so-called Vamsavali which we cannot

accept as more accurate than the inscriptions, either as to names or dates of kings; and as there is no inscriptions either of king Vir Hāmvir, his immediate predecessor or successor, we cannot attempt to state with precision the date of his birth, accession or death.

In the absence of any recorded date of Vir Hāmvir, we shall confine our views to the dates of those historical events in which he took part. He defeated the Afghan chief, Daud Khān in 1565 A.D.[1] He sided with Rājā Mansiṃha, who was a Gaudiya Vaishnava, being the disciple of Rūpa Gosvāmi, and the greatest general of Akbar, in his war against the Afghan king Kutlu Khān of Orissa, and saved the life of Mansimha's son, Jaggat Simha, when he was taken captive to Orissa from Dharampur via Vishnupur. This incident took place about 1589 A.D.[2]

Dr. D. C. Sen is right in telling us "The Pāthan Emperor to whom Vir Hāmvir is said to have submitted was Kutlu Khan".[3] We know Kutlu Khān took complete possession of Orissa and extended his dominion as far as Midnapur and Vishnupur before 1582 A.D., when Khān Āzim, the Moghul Governor of Bengal reported in person to the Emperor Ākbar upon Kutlu's power. Next, Khān Āzim sent Fereed Addeen Bokhari, the famous author of "The History of the Emperor Jehangir", to subdue Kutlu, who was compelled to take refuge in the forests. This happened before 1584 A.D. Kutlu died in 1589 A.D.[4] So Vir Hāmvir submitted to Kutlu about 1580 A.D. or so. We may assume that Vir Hāmvir occupied the throne more or less from 1560 A.D. to 1590 A.D. If we believe the tradition, as recorded by Mr. Mallik and Mr. Vāsu that he reigned for 33 years until his death, it is also compatible with our assumption.

Srinivās petitioned the king to recover his books, stolen near Tumluka when he was going to Puri[5]. Anuragavali states that the king's initiation took place some time after Srinivās's return with Rāma Chandra and Vyasā Āchārya

[1] Mallik's "History of Vishnupur Raj" p.26 [2] Ākbar Nama. Vol.III. Fas.X.p.878.
[3] V.L. M.B.p.109 [4] Stewart's History of Bengal, p.177 [5] Karanananda, I

from Vrindāvan on his second visit.[1] Srinivās had already made many disciples at Vishnupur, the most important of whom was Vyasā Achārya[2]. Srinivās, who admired the scholarship of Vyasā Chakravarti, and made him his own Purohit[3], lived for some time at Vishnupur, and recovered his books through the influence of the king.

On his second visit to Vishnupur, Srinivās initiated the Queen Sulakshana and the Prince Dhari Hāmvir. Inspired by Srinivās, the royal family made religion the only aim of their life, and became absolutely devoted to their Guru .

King Vir Hāmvir exactly expresses in some of his poems, the new light that dawned upon him after his initiation by Srinivās. He soon caused all his subjects to become the disciples of Srinivās, and jealously served him and his Mission. Finding it difficult to live apart from his Guru, Vir Hāmvir built him a residence at Vishnupur and granted property for him. He placed his wealth and power at the disposal of Srinivās for the service of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. He used to visit Jajigrāma, the home of Srinivās, Katwa, Kheturi and other places of Vaishnava Āchāryas on his pilgrimages. He spared no pains to popularise the doctrine both within and outside his territory.

Vishnupur soon became a great center of Vaishnavism. The initiation of Vir Hāmvir is an epoch-making event in the history of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, because it is only in Vishnupur that Vaishnava civilization and art developed on their own lines without being impeded by any foreign deterrent influence. Vishnupur is an epitome of Vaishnava culture. The architectural and sculptural art of Bengal, from the beginning of the 17th century onwards, is nowhere found in such abundance as in the Vaishnava monuments of Vishnupur.

Srinivās gave the king the devotional name of Hari Charanadas.[4]

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[1] Anuragavali VI.p.95 [2] Karnananda, I.p.12 [3] Karnananda I.p.21
[4] Premavilās XIII.p.101

Jiva Gosvāmi conferred the names of Chaitanyadās and Gopiladās on Vir Hāmvir and his son, respectively. The king composed many *Pada* a good many of which have been collected in Narahari Chakravarti's Bhaktiratnākara. The king offers his homage to Srinivās for giving him new light. He also composed a long poem in which he mentions his own new name of Chaitanyadās.

The king visited Vrindāvan, whose magnificence and peaceful beauty charmed him, and returned thence to his own capital, to turn it into a second Vrindāvan. He perfectly assimilated the true spirit of Vaishnavism through the constant and unremitting influence of Srinivās and Rāma Chandra. He was a typical Vaishnava, intellectualized and refined. He was gracious, kind and extremely humble in manner. He resolved to infuse the lofty Vaishnava ideals into the national life. He laid out many lakes, named Yamuna, Rādhākunda, Shyāmakunda, Kālindi, etc., after those of Vrindāvan. He introduced the various Vaishnava festivals that were performed at Vrindāvan, installed the Kālā Chanda and Madan Mohana images like the various deities of the Gosvāmins of Vraja; collected Vaishnava books in his library; and granted aids to Vaishnava scholars.

He gave a great impetus to the development of Vaishnava culture, and succeeded in transforming the whole territory into a peaceful land of Vaishnavas. That spirit was prevalent both in conducting the government and in private matters. *Kirtana* music greatly developed. Peace, toleration, sympathy, and absence of harsh treatment prevailed throughout the kingdom. It is truly said that Vishnupur was a Gupta or veiled Vrindāvan.

As Rūpa Gosvāmi had made Vrindāvan with the help of Rajput Princes, by erecting temples, digging pools, and introducing Vaishnava culture in its different aspects, so Srinivās Āchārya founded another Vaishnava colony at Vishnupur in the same manner. In the latter part of his life he was delighted to find that the *Kirtana* was heard at every house. Vyasā Āchārya was his right hand in

fostering the people's interest in Vaishnava literature. In a word, Vir Hāmvir made his subjects happy in the truest sense of the term. His idea was faithfully carried out by his worthy successors, who were no less indefatigable in this regard.

The kings of Vishnupur, from that time on, assumed responsibility both for the material and spiritual welfare of their subjects. They made ample endowments for the maintenance of religious institutions. Some of the kings made the recitation of the name of Krishna and Sri Chaitanya and other Vaishnava observances, compulsory among their subjects. They introduced an extensive system of espionage to see whether the subjects were observing their religious duties. In this connection, king Gopāl Simha was a vigorous preacher of Vaishnavism and used to go out in disguise to see whether his subjects were saying the names of God by counting beads. There is a story that a labourer returned home after a hard day's work, utterly exhausted. His wife told him to go to bed, but he had not yet finished his daily prayer, and said: "How can I rest? Gopāl Simha's order has to be carried out".

The matter was reported to the king by his detective. The labourer was summoned to appear before the king, and commanded to say why he had complained at reciting the names of God. He confessed that excessive work in the fields had tired him so much, that it was difficult to pray as much, as was compulsory by royal decree. Gopāl Simha was pleased with his sincerity, and granted sufficient lands for his maintenance, so that he could devote his time to religious observances.

Mr. Holwell, Governor of Calcutta, writes, in his Interesting Historical Events: "To the west of Burdwan something northernly lie the lands belonging to the family of Rājā Gopāl Simha... From the happiness of his situation he is perhaps the most independent Rājā of Hindustan, having it always in his power to overflow his country and drown any enemy that comes against him, as happened at the beginning of Shujah Khān's Government... But in truth,

it would be almost cruelty to molest these happy people, for in his district are the only vestiges of the beauty, purity, regularity, equity and strictness of the ancient Indostan Government. Here the property as well as the liberty of the people are inviolate, here no robberies are heard of, either private or public; the traveller either with or without merchandise, on entering this district, becomes the immediate care of Govt., which allots him a guard without any expense, to conduct him from stage to stage, and these are accountable for the safety and accommodation of his person and effects... If anything is lost in this district, for instance a bag of money or other valuable, the person who finds it hangs it upon the next trees and gives notice to the nearest *Chowkey*, the officer of which orders immediate publication of the same by beat of *tom-tom* or drum".

"There are in this precinct, no less than three hundred and sixty considerable Pagodas or places of public worship, erected by the Rājā and his ancestors".

The French traveller, Abbe Raynal, says: "He (the visitor) would see the rise of the Government, which is being founded under happy auspices, in a simplicity and purity of manners, in the mild temper of the people and the integrity of the chieftains, has survived those innumerable systems of legislation which have made only a transitory appearance upon the stage of the world with the generations they were destined to torment. The singular situation of the country has preserved to the inhabitants their primitive happiness and the gentleness of their character, by securing them from danger of being conquered or imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellow creatures. Liberty and property are shared in Bessenpur. Robbery, either public or private, is never heard of; they are far from being guilty of an injury to each other...".[1]

It is perhaps the only country next to Vrindāvan where the Vaishnava spirit has been assimilated by one and all. The temple architecture of different types such as Bangala (The Jora Bangala temple), the lovely *Pancharatna* type

[1] Mallick's History of Vishnupur Raj

(Shyāma Raya temple), the *Sikhara* or curvilinear (Kālā Chand Temple), or one-domed temple (Madan Mohan Temple) and others, are developed to a very high degree of precision. Here in Vishnupur we can see all the epochs that distinguished the Bengal architecture. The huge stone *Ratha* and *Rasa Mancha* are unique in architectural conception. The *Rasa Mancha* is a very large square chamber, surrounded by three long rows of galleries. There are ten arched doors on each side and the whole space is covered by a large pyramidal roof. In the middle of the galleries is the sanctuary with the altar of the Deity. All these temples have been built from the time of Vir Hāmvir down to the latter half of the 18th century, and have been dedicated either to Sri Chaitanya or Sri Krishna. Only one temple, called the Siddhesvari temple, has been offered to Shiva, the sole exception to the tradition of the Vaishnava kings of Vishnupur. Its dedicator, Vir Simha was perhaps a *Shaiva*.

There are very few ancient temples built before Vir Hāmvir's time. It was only after the introduction of Gaudiya Vaishnavism that both the Malla kings and queens, prompted by religious feelings made a point of building magnificent temples to install Deities and make endowments for the maintenance. Religious schools were attached to these temples.

These Vaishnava temples are elaborately decorated with sculptures both in round and in friezes, illustrating the sports and deeds of Sri Chaitanya, Sri Krishna, and other incarnations of God, taken from the Bhāgavat, Mahābhārat, Rāmāyana and so on. As regards the decorative motifs and ornamentations, they betray the influence of the north Indian school as regards great detail and mathematical precision. The figure sculptures have marked affinity with those of Southern India. The freedom of movement, suggestiveness of space, varied expressions and emotions, impressionalistic movement vigour, are remarkable in the sculptures of the Vishnupur temples.

There is one remarkable characteristic in the conception of the ornaments in relation to the body

volume of these sculptures. The earlier ones of the Bengal school, from the time of Palas onward, are full of precise ornamentation which, mar the plastic beauty and movement of the figures. They are rather more meticulous than is necessary, but the snake-like and belt-like garments, and the jewellery seem to emphasize the vigour of the Vishnupur sculptures. Even in the brick panels of these temples, particularly the Madan Mohan temple, they are certainly of South Indian influence, but they differ from that school in the matter of the figures. South Indian figures are fundamentally slender, but Vishnupur sculptures are generally full and fleshy. The Vishnupur School of sculptural art has wonderfully succeeded in incorporating the influence of both north and south in its own way. Bengal would not have shown any sculptural art of the later period but for the Vaishnava kings of Vishnupur and Mahammadpur. It is really the storehouse of Vaishnava architecture and art.

Music had been developed to a very high degree. This is the vehicle of prayer among the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect. The kings of Malla used to bring musicians from different parts of India and employ them to teach their subjects. Gadādhara Chakravarti was one of the most famous musicians of Bengal who flourished in Vishnupur during the time of Raghunāth Simha II. He started a music shool at Vishnupur under the king's patronage. There were many notable musicians. Music is still a living art in the district.

In short, the Vaishnava kings, from Vir Hāmvir downwards, developed Vaishnava culture in all its branches. The practical religious lives of the kings, particularly Vir Hāmvir, Gopāl Simha and Chaitanya Simha, made the people of Vishnupur God-fearing, virtuous, humble and courteous in manner and pure at heart. It is not an easy matter to make the whole population happy and pious. The standard of morality of these Vaishnava people may be judged by the observation of two foreigners. The people regarded their kings as their *Guru s*. To this day it is their custom to offer edibles to Sri Chaitanya's altar in the name of the king, on the occasion

of public worship. Thus did Srinivās, through Rājā Vir Hāmvir, start a new era in the religious life of the country.

NAROTTAM THĀKUR

No exclusive biography of Narottam is known to have been written by any contemporary of his, but more than half of the Premavilās (excluding, of-course, the last seven chapters) has been devoted to the life and career of Narottam. The 18th century writer Narahari Chakravarti has written a biography of Sri Narottam styled Narottam Vilās, and has discussed some incidents in his life in his famous Bhaktiratnākara.

In studying his life, we have to depend mainly on Premavilās with reference to the lives of Srinivās and Shyāmānand who were his colleagues. His disciple, Vasanta, a very great scholar and poet of the time, gives us some account of his journey to Bengal, Vraja and Orissa[1], but we have not been able to collect all these poems.

Govindadās, the disciple of Srinivās and friend of Narottam, refers to his noble qualities in his Sanskrit Sangita Mādhava and his poems which have been included in Padamrita Samudra of Rādhāmohana Thākur, Padakalpataru by Vaishnavadās, and other anthologies of Vaishnava poems, but none of these references gives us any precise date of important incidents in his life. Premavilās tells us the exact time day and month of his birth, but has neglected to mention the year, which is of the utmost importance for our purpose.

Govinda Kavirāj gives the genealogy of Narottam in his Sangita Mādhava, which was composed at the wish of Santos Datta, the disciple and cousin of Narottam. Purusottam and Krishnananda Datta were two brothers who were the chiefs of Kheturi-Gopālapur Garerhat on the Padma. It is now in the district of Rajashahi. Santos was Purusottama's son, and Narottam was the son of Krishnananda. They were Kyastha by caste, feudatory chiefs

[1] Bh.Kar. I.

under the king of Gauda. Santos Datta was the Prime Minister to the king of Gauda (quoted in Bhaktiratnākara, 1.). They also bore the tiles of Majumdar and Rāya.

Dr. D.C. Sen assigns the year 1565 A.D. to the birth of Narottam. We do not know from what source he obtained the date, which is doubtful. The account in Premavilās seems to contradict Dr. Sen's date. Sri Chaitanya is said to have visited Gopālpur, the home of Narottam, on his way from Kānāinātshala in 1514 A.D. When He called aloud the name of Narottam in a flash of inspiration. Nityānanda asked Him who Narottam was, and He replied that in His lifetime a great Āchārya would be born in that village of the name of Narottam. We can easily separate the so-called miracles and prophecies from the simple fact that he was born during the lifetime of Sri Chaitanya.

Narottam was Lokanath's disciple, and many years after his initiation and his return from Vrindāvan, Narottam installed the Images of Śri Chaitanya and Krishna at Kheturi. Several years later, Jahnava Devi visited Narottam's home before she went to Vrindāvan and reported his missionary zeal and rich services in the temple, to his Guru , Lokanāth.

Lokanāth was, like Sri Chaitanya, born in 1486 A.D. Dr. Sen's suggestion that Narottam was born in 1565 A.D. and that the installation of his Deity took place between 1602 A.D. and 1606 A.D., cannot be accepted, for the simple reason that Lokanāth does not seem to have lived for over 125 years, nor can we believe that Jahnava Devi could have walked to Vrindāvan at the very advanced age of 120 or so! Furthermore, we will see that after his initiation and return to Bengal, he met Narahari Sarkar, Abhirām Thākur, Suklamvar Brahmachari, Uddharan Datta, Isān Thākur (Sri Chaitanya's servant), Gopāl Guru , Gopināth Āchārya and many others who were senior contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya.

Rūpa Nārāyana who visited Sri Chaitanya at Puri, as a great scholar, became the enthusiastic disciple of Narottam after the installation of the Deity, before which Rūpa

Nārāyana danced. How could all these people have lived for more than 130 years, if they met Narottam?

Narottam worked in Bengal with Raghunandan, Achyuta, Virabhadra Gopāl Misra and many others who also worked with Sri Chaitanya. It is hardly credible that he could have worked with them all if he had been born in 1565 A.D. and returned to Bengal in 1601 A.D. and set up the Images in 1606 A.D., on which occasion innumerable contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya assembled. It is very clear from the description in all extant books that Narottam was more or less of the same age as Vira Bhadra, Srinivās and others.

He must have been born in the twenties of the 16th century. This view may be supported by one of Narottam's songs[1] in which he expresses his grief that he was not born while Sri Chaitanya still lived at Navadvip with Nityānanda and Advaita, and when Haridās preached the doctrine there, etc.

Narottam was the eldest son of his parents, and exceptionally dear to them. Brought up amid the luxury of a great noble family, Narottam was nevertheless a born ascetic. His mind inclined towards the other world. He was gifted with great intelligence. His father appointed great scholars to teach him various branches of Sanskrit learning.

He was decidedly a great poet and a celebrated musician, who invented the *Garerhati* tune. He has left a vast amount of *Padavali* literature in Bengali. His education was completed under Jiva Gosvāmi.

Govindadās tells us that his acumen was so great that he was a terror to *Sankhya-Mimamsaka* and *Tarkikas*.[2] In his early youth he went into occasional trances and became intoxicated by the Name of Sri Chaitanya. He sought an opportunity to leave home. Finding him indifferent to the world of pleasure and preoccupied only with religion, his parents thought of getting him married.

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[1] Prasthana, No.43 [2] Padakalpataru, i.II.p.

He was greatly perturbed, and his feeling for God grew intense. He behaved like a madman. The physician prescribed Sivadighrta, which is prepared from the body of a jackal. The killing of an animal was too much for the tenderhearted Narottam. He requested his father not to slay any animal for his medicine. His so-called disease could only be cured if he went to Vrindāvan. He then composed himself to his parent's relief.

They kept constant watch over him. Narottam thought it proper to appear to pay attention to State affairs as his predecessor Raghunāthadās had done, so that his parents might think he had become worldly-minded, in which case they would relax their vigilance. In their relief, the parents set about finding him a bride. Meanwhile, the king sent for Narottam. Reluctantly, Rājā Krishnananda sent his son with a company of horsemen and attendants who were secretly instructed to watch him. Narottam was anxious to evade the custody of his parents who wanted him to marry when he returned from his visit to the king.

The party halted for the night at a place on the way. When all his attendants were asleep, Narottam made his escape, possibly on horseback like the great Buddha.[1] He rode hard and soon passed the hills of Rājmahal, dismounting and leaving his horse when he thought he was out of reach of his pursuers. The next morning, as soon as his escort understood that they had been tricked, they informed the Rājā of the Prince's escape. Rājā Krishnananda and Rāni Nārāyani were grief-stricken and amazed. They immediately dispatched a hundred men to overtake him and bring him back, but none could find any trace of him. The thought of the asceticism of Sri Chaitanya, Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunāth, who never returned to their homes after they had renounced the world, was too much for the mother of an only child. But her son had not been born for worldly enjoyment, but for the severest asceticism, which was remarkable all through Narottam's life.

He arrived at Benares in due course and visited the

[1] Premavilās, X.

house of Chandrasekhar Vaidya where Sri Chaitanya had lived for some time. According to the Premavilās, Narottam went to Vrindāvan direct from Bengal via Benares but Govindadās, who was the intimate friend of Narottam, almost like one of the family, tells us in his Sangita Mādhava that he visited all the *Tirthas* or places of pilgrimage.[1] To make a pilgrimage to all the holy places was almost a hobby with the Vaishnavas. Nityānanda wandered for twenty years, Sri Chaitanya made an extensive tour, visiting all the important places of pilgrimage in South, West, East and Central India. Lokanāth spent about four years on pilgrimage.

There is another difficulty in suggesting the period when he reached Vrindāvan. The Premavilās says that when Srinivās arrived there he heard that Sanātana had died about four months since, and Rūpa only a few days previously.[2] On his arrival, he met Narottam before Lokanāth in the latter's cottage and inquired how long he lived there. Narottam said he had arrived at Vrindāvan one year and three months since, and it was only three months ago that he had been initiated by his Guru . He served Lokanāth for fully one year like a typical Brahmachari before his initiation.

Lokanāth asked Srinivās whether he knew whence Narottam came and Srinivās said he was the son of Krishnananda Rāy of Garerhat. It seems that people all over Bengal knew of Prince Narottam's renunciation.[3]

If Sanātana had been dead four months, and Rūpa a few days before, Srinivās arrived at Vrindāvan, Narottam must have met them as he had already been there a year before their death, but the author of Premavilās does not seem clear on that point. It states that Narottam saw Sanātana and Rūpa in a vision.[4] In one of his *Prārthana* Songs, (No.17) he entreats Lokanāth to transfer him to Rūpa. However in the absence of positive evidence, we shall assume that he did not meet them, though he seems to have done so.

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[1] Sarva Tirtha Darsi quotes in Bh.Kar.I, p.19 [2] Premavilās p.31-32
[3] Premavilās. XII.76. [4] Premavilās. X.p.60

Narottam made his way direct to the Govinda Temple where he was received by Jiva and Lokanāth, who seem to have already heard of his coming. Jiva took him to his own Kunja or monastery and heard all about his life. He was gradually introduced to Gopāl Bhatta, Raghunāthdās, Krishnadās Kavirāj, Bhugarbha and others. He served Lokanāth taking the *Nama Mantra* from him, requesting Lokanāth to initiate him into the secret depths of Vaishnava mysticism, but it was Lokanāth's firm determination not to take any disciples, lest they should honour him, which might affect his asceticism. His strict aversion to anything worldly had already become proverbial. He forbade Krishnadās to allude to his name in his Chaitanya Charita; but Narottam was determined to be favoured by him. He also practised severe asceticism. Both Lokanāth and Jiva taught him and the latter regarded and addressed him as his friend.[1] Narottam used to finish all the menial work of the Lokanāth's Kunja at night, lest he should be forbidden, to do it. One night Lokanāth rose and found Narottam sweeping the courtyard, and exclaimed: "Withhold, my dear boy it pierces my heart". Narottam replied: "Be graciously pleased to grant me the boon of initiation, that I may devote myself to nothing else"[2] The very next day, Lokanāth disclosed to him the treasure of the devotional secrets. He sent him to Jiva immediately after, to say he had been initiated. Narottam prostrated himself before Jiva, invoking his grace. Jiva embraced him affectionately, and Narottam returned to his Guru . Narottam's asceticism and services to his Guru endeared him to all at Vraja. Jiva conferred on him the title of Thākur. Raghunāthdās highly praised Narottam's devotion and spiritual progress, to Krishnadās Kavirāj.[1] Three months after his initiation by Gopāl Bhatta, Srinivās went to Vrindāvan and began to study Vaishnava literature with Narottam under Jiva, having been initiated. They first met at the Kunja, when they became firm friends, and worked together to the last days of their lives in perfect unison.

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[1] Premavilās. XII.p.74-5 [2] Premavilās.XI.p.66 [3] Premavilās.XII.p.75

As the devotion of Narottam for his Guru had no parallel, so also was the affection of Lokanāth for his disciple. Their separation seemed unthinkable, but it became necessary that Narottam should go to Bengal to reproclaim the message of Sri Chaitanya. Jiva wanted him and Srinivās to resume the work in Bengal, which Sri Chaitanya had been anxious about, and which needed trained Āchāryas such as they were. Lokanāth commanded Narottam to preach the faith with untiring zeal, establishing the services of the Images of Sri Chaitanya and Sri Krishna, holding the religious festivals, entertaining the Vaishnavas, practising asceticism. He further forbade him to marry.

Narottam took leave of his Guru with tearful eyes, and wept when he left Vrindāvan. They safely returned to Bengal, bearing the burden of their tremendous work on their shoulders.

Narottam returned home, not as a Prince of Garerhat, but as a dignified ascetic, calm and happy. His parents received him with unspeakable delight. His return had been almost beyond the hope of his bereaved parents. The people of Garerhat greeted him as their saviour. Though he returned home, at the wish of his Guru and Jiva, he did not curtail his severe asceticism, living there absolutely unattached to worldly affairs, passing his time in devotional activities. Rumours of his spiritual power and scholarship, and his aversion to worldly things, soon spread throughout the country. Many people from different parts used to go to Garerhat to visit him and obtain religious instruction from him, convinced of his spiritual depth and force of personality.

Narottam began his preaching of Sri Chaitanya's doctrine. Many people became his disciples. A few years after their return from Vrindāvan, when Rāma Chandra Kavirāj was initiated by Srinivās he joined Narottam as his colleagae at the Kheturi Garerhat center.

The friendship thus established continued throughout their lives. Sometimes Rāma Chandra was obliged to leave

Kheturi for missionary work, but used to return to his friend as soon as he could. Narottam pays affectionate tribute to his friend in some of his poems, longing for his society. In his Prema Bhakti Chandrika (last verse) Narottam says the world seems void without Rāma Chandra. Rāma Chandra though a married man, was indifferent to his family, whom his brother Govinda looked after. He devoted his life to missionary work with Narottam. They were both great scholars and at their best in their discourses and studies.

Two Brahmana scholars named Harirāma and Rāma Krishna happened to meet Narottam and Rāma Chandra and entered into a religious disputation with them. They were impressed with the magnetic personality and spiritual knowledge of the two Vaishnavas. Rāma Krishna and Harirāma became the disciples of Narottam and Rāma Chandra, respectively–their first Brahmana disciples. Narottam was a *Kyastha* and Rāma Chandra a Vaidya by caste, but spiritual greatness raised them above social considerations. Rāma Krishna contributed to the mission of his Guru Narottam to whom he remained faithful all his life. Severe social opposition and even persecution could not make him swerve in allegiance to him; on the contrary, it served to augment his moral courage and devotion to his Guru .

When Srinivās delayed in returning from his second visit to Vrindāvan, Rāma Chandra was sent to fetch him, and Narottam resolved to visit Puri. Gopināth Āchārya, Kānāikuthia and others of Puri, who were elder contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya, seem to have been informed of Narottam's visit and received him cordially near the Jagannāth temple. Gopināth lodged him at his own house. All the surviving associates of Sri Chaitanya, who had heard of him, came to meet him, introduced by Gopināth.[1] Narottam spent some time at Puri visiting all the places associated with Sri Chaitanya. Gopāl Guru Gosvāmi, another contemporary, was in charge of the

[1] Bh. Kar. VIII

Gambhira where Sri Chaitanya had lived, showed him every token of his memory. Narottam wept, remembering the happy days of Sri Chaitanya's life.

A few months later, he returned to Bengal, where he visited other associates of Sri Chaitanya, before he returned home. He first went to Navadvip to see Sri Chaitanya's house. An old gentleman directed Narottam to Sri Chaitanya's house, where Isan, the old servant, received him kindly, and at his direction, took him to Dāmodar Pandit who used to look after Sri Chaitanya's family. He met Suklambara Brahmachari, Sripati and Srinidhi, two of Srinivās's brothers and others though many of Sri Chaitanya's old associates had died.

From Navadvip, he seems to have gone first to Saptagram where he met Uddharan Datta and other devotees of the place, and thence to Khardaha, where Nityānanda lived. Jahnava Devi, Vasudha, Vira Bhadra received him with affection and he met Paramesvaridās and Mahes Pandit, two of Nityānanda's principal disciples and contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya. Jahnava Devi sent him to Khanakul Krishnanagar to pay his respects to Abhirām Thākur another great disciple of Nityānanda. Next he visited Shāntipur, where Sri Achyuta received him cordially and introduced him to other disciples of Advaita. Thence he proceeded to Ambika Kalna, and visited the Images of Sri Chaitanya installed by Gauridās Pandit. At Srikhanda he met Raghunandan and Narahari Sarkar, an acquaintance of Narottam's father at Gauda, and saw the Sri Chaitanya Image at the temple there. Raghunāth sent him to Jajigram where Srinivās has arrived from Vrindāvan. They exchanged news, and discussed the proposition of founding the monastery at Kheturi by installing Sri Chaitanya and other Images in a new temple. From Jajigram, he went to Kātwa, where Sri Chaitanya had accepted sanyas, and met Sri Gadādharadās, one of Chaitanya's most beloved contemporaries. He returned home from Kātwa. His disciples were eagerly awaiting his arrival at Kheturi. We have somewhat modified the account of his journey as described in Premavilās, as regards chronology.

The next important incident of his life was to install the Images of Sri Chaitanya and Sri Krishna amid great festivities and a great council at Kheturi.

In the meantime Santos Datta, Narottam's cousin, who was Prime Minister to the king of Gauda, became his disciple and active supporter. Narottam wished him and his parents to build a new temple to install the Deities, and to prepare for a great festival. The whole family was eager to help him. It took some years to complete the temple but when all the arrangements had been made, Narottam met Srinivās at Vudhari, to settle the date, which was fixed for the full moon day of Falguna, Sri Chaitanya's Birthday. Invitations were sent to every Vaishnava village throughout Bengal and Orissa. Besides the spacious palace many temporary camps were pitched, and many houses in the town were lent for the reception of the guests. Leaders all over Bengal and Orissa, with their principal disciples, took part in the festival. Jahnava Devi, Virabhadra, Mādhava, Advaith's two sons Achyuta and Gopāl, Raghunāth Raghunandan of Srikhanda, Haridayananda of Kalna, Yadunandana Chakravarti of Kātwa, and Srinivās of Jajigram came with their huge following of disciples. Shyāmananda arrived with his disciples from Orissa. Besides, the following leaders may be mentioned, most of whom were comtemporaries of Sri Chaitanya: Murāri Chaitanyadās, Srijiva Pandit, Kamalakar Pippalai, Mineketana Rāmadās, Raghunāth Āchārya (son of Bhagavan), Kanu Pandit, Vishnudās, Jita Misra, Vaninath, Nayanananda (Gadādhara Pandit nephew) Sri Udhava, Kastakatha Jagannath, Puspagopāl, Dhruvananda, Sripati and Srinidhi (two brothers of Srivas Pandit, who were senior contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya), Parameswaridas, and many others.

The five Images of Krishna under the names of Vallabhikanta, Srikrishna, Vrajamohana, RādhāRāmana and Rādhākanta, with the Rādhā Images were carved out of stone. The Chaitanya Image was found in the house of Vipradās in Kheturi. This Image is believed to have been

made before Sri Chaitanya's *Sannyas*.[1] Srinivās acted as priest at the installation ceremony under the direction of Jahnava Devi. Rāma Chandra, Govinda, Santos Datta, Narottam's father Krishnananda and others were most attentive to the guests. The festivities were carried out with great pomp. The *Kirtana* and lectures on theology were the main items on the programme. The festival, which concluded successfully, had an importance of its own. It was the first of the series of the festivals and councils that were to be held every year in future. Scholars in their hundreds from different parts of the country joined it and took part in the religious discussions. Every year people in great numbers came under the fold of Vaishnavism.

Now Narottam celebrated as festivals the anniversaries of the Advent and Disappearance of Sri Chaitanya's associates, Krishna, Rādhā, and so on. His whole family turned Vaishnava, the whole State with its vast wealth being employed in his service. Santos was Narottam's right hand. So rich was the endowment of the temple that innumerable guests and visitors were entertained every day. Narottam taught Santos to put everything: wealth, power body and mind in the service of God. Narottam busied himself in teaching his disciples the Bhāgavata and the literature of the Gosvāmins. Rāma Chandra was his constant companion. Hundreds of proselytes of all castes became his disciples. The orthodox section of Brahmanas strongly objected to Narottam initiating the Brahmanas but his disciples were strong enough to stand against the criticism and convince their antagonists of the propriety of their action.

Another influential Brahmana named Gangā Charana Chakravarti, who was at first hostile to Narottam, became his most devoted disciple. He faced the opposition with unremitting energy. Narottam possessed almost miraculous powers to bring anti-Vaishnavas within the fold. Hari Chandra Rāy, the great Zamindar of Jalapath was a notoriously cruel man, whom Narottam changed into a

[1] Premavilās. XIX.p.177

typical Vaishnava, full of extreme humility, devotion to God and kindness to all. Another very important Brahmana family became disciples of Narottam. Chand Rāy was the feudatory chief of Garidvara Rājmahal under the king of Gauda. Taking advantage of the aggression of the Moghul Emperor against the king of Bengal, he asserted his independence by stopping his annual tribute to the Gauda treasury. He was a terror to the neighbouring districts, a great *Sakta* who used to sacrifice a number of animals before *Sakti* goddesses. The author of Premavilās has unduly exaggerated the vices of Chand Rāy in order to emphasize the difference in his life before and after conversion. It seems that Chand Rāy fell ill, which made him despair of his life. Narottam's reputation as a holy man was already a household word. Desiring a glimpse of him Chand Rāy's father, Raghava Rāy, wrote requesting Narottam to visit their estate and his dying son. He knew Krishnananda Rāy as the head of an important state in Bengal. On asking Rāma Chandra's advice, he was persuaded to go and try to reform the family. Rāma and Narottam therefore set out together for Rajmahal with a party of disciples. Raghava Rāy and his son Santos Rāy accorded them a warm welcome and conducted them to the palace through the main streets, which were lavishly decorated with flowers, banana plants, etc. The dying Chand Rāy entreated Narottam to initiate him. Not only he but also his father and brother were initiated by Narottam. Chand Rāy was soon restored to health, and then became a changed man given to humility and devotion, with no trace of his former arrogance and cruelty.

They paid a return visit to the temple of Kheturi and offered considerable treasure to the service of the temple. He stayed there for ten days taking religious instructions and listening to the *Kirtana* and the recitation of the Bhāgavat.

Some time afterwards when Chand Rāy was taking a ceremonial bath in the Ganges attended by a small cavalry escort of 100 horses and 400 men, a huge army of the king of Gauda overpowered him and took him captive to the

king. He was thrown into prison. The author of Premavilās clothes his subsequent release in miracles, both to humiliate *Saktism* and magnify the Vaishnavite merit of Chand Ray. What is more likely is that through the intercession of Narottam's disciple and cousin who was the king of Gauda's Prime Minister, Chand Rāy was released. After his release, he visited Kheturi, where he met his father and brother. This noble family gave all in their power to further the cause of Vaishnavism. As king Vir Hāmvir had supported Srinivās, so Chand Rāy supported Narottam, who subsequently became the *Guru* of all the population in Chand Rāy's lands, including his army.[1] It was the greatest triumph of Narottam's missionary life.

Another noble family soon fell at the feet of Narottam. Every year a grand council styled *Mahasabha* was held at Narottam's temple at Kheturi. Meanwhile, all orthodox Brahmanas formed a big party to thwart Narottam in initiating members of their caste into Vaishnavism.

They sent a deputation to Rājā Narasimha of Paikpādā (near Calcutta) explaining that Narottam had almost abolished the worship of the gods and goddesses and *Tantrika* rites of the country, introducing *Samkirtana* instead and that he had attracted a number of Brahmanas by sheer magical power. Brahmanism was at stake. He should save the caste restrictions, which were being abolished. The Rājā asked what he should do. They requested him to hold a discussion under his presidency between Narottam and themselves, confident that they would defeat him. His court Pandit Rūpa Nārāyana agreed. Accordingly the Rājā notified Narottam that some Brahmana scholars would engage in a scriptural disputation with him at the open meeting. This would decide the fate of Vaishnavism.

Rājā Narasimha started for Kheturi with some of his best Pandits. On receipt of his letter, Rāma Chandra consulted Narottam's principal disciples, and decided on

[1] Premavilās XIX

a strategic plan. The six Vaishnava scholars Rāma Chandra, his brother Govinda, Gangā Nārāyana Chakravarti, Harihara, Rāma Krishna and Jagannāth, disguised as hawkers calling out their wares, sat in the market place of Kumarpur where Rājā Narasimha was in camp with his Pandits. When the latter entered the market to make purchases, the disguised scholars spoke with them in Sanskrit.

The Rājā's Pandits were amazed that ordinary hawkers should speak Sanskrit and questioned them. They said they lived in Garerhat Kheturi where Sanskrit was almost the mother tongue. Narottam and his disciples had introduced Sanskrit learning on such a grand scale that everyone, from shopkeepers to barbers could speak it as the result of hearing continual scriptural disputations, which were common in Kheturi. The Rājā's Pandits, indignant at the pride of the petty dealers in betel and nuts, entered into a discussion, but to their shame and amazement, their arguments could not stand before the so-called hawkers, who demanded that their superiors should be brought for discussions with them. This created a sensation among the Rājā's Pandits, who immediately hastened to the place, prepared to subdue the vanity of the hawkers who thus dared to challenge them. This caused the hawkers to embark on a serious discussion with the scholars whom they totally refuted, to their chagrin.

Awed at the thought that petty shopkeepers were so learned, they wondered what Narottam and his disciples would be like. When the Rājā heard the news, he was astonished. He suddenly realized that Narottam must be a very great man, and when his scholars thought of returning home without proceeding to Kheturi for further humiliation, the Rājā persuaded them to accompany him. Their attitude had entirely altered by the time they met Narottam, who was able to purge their minds of all enmity and pride by the power of his spiritual life. The Pandits who had been so hostile a few days previously, intending to defeat him became his disciples. The Rājā and his court Pandit Rūpa Nārāyana were also initiated by Narottam.

Among the scholars the most important were the following: Yadunāth Vidyābhusan, Kasināth, (some editions read Kālinath) Tarkabhusan, Haridās Siromani, Chandra Kanta Nyayapanchanan, Shiva Charana Vidyāvagisa, Durgadās Vidyāratana.[1]

A few months later Rājā Narasimha returned to Khéturi with his wife, for initiation, after which this royal family of Paikpādā spared no pains to further Narottam's cause. The famous Vaishnava ascetic Lālā Bābu was born into this family. The dedicated numerous temples to the Vaishnavite Deities. Their service and contribution to the success of the Gaudiya Vaishnava movement is well known in Bengal.

Rājā Narasimha danced before the Deity of his *Guru* at Kheturi with the Khol across his shoulders, out of sheer joy in his new life. They used to attend the great council at Kheturi every year. Once, when Vira Bhadra delivered his famous lectures, establishing the exalted position of Narottam as the true Guru of the Brahmanas, another great multitude of Brahmanas became his disciples. king Vir Hāmvir was present at Kheturi that year. It was the most flourishing period in Vaishnava history. Kheturi was the headquarters of the movement in Bengal where leaders of Bengal and Orissa assembled. Narottam and Rāma lived there, but sometimes visited the other centers at Jajigrām, Vishnupur, Srikhanda, etc.

Narottam was remarkable for his asceticism, magnetic personality and zeal. Precept and practice were one to him. He carried out his Guru 's commands to the letter. When Jahnava Devi reported his activities to Lokanāth and Jiva, they were overjoyed. As Jiva had influenced Western India, so Narottam and Srinivās had worked in Bengal, and Shyāmananda in Orissa.

Narottam survived Jiva, Srinivās and his friend Rāma Chandra. He was intensely grieved at their death, which served to augment his love-in-separation for God. He used to weep passionately in solitude and composed his famous

[1] Premavilās XIX

Prārthana Songs during this unhappy time, his song No.41 expressing all his sorrow at the death of his companions. In his latter years his spiritual trances occurred very frequently. His disciples tried to console him for his grief-stricken yearning for God, but the feeling increased. He expressed the wish to bathe in the Ganges; weṇt to Vudhari, Govinda Kavirāj's home, and thence to Gambhila on the Ganges where he fell ill with fever.

One of his principal disciples, Ganga Nārāyana Chakravarti was an inhabitant of Gambhila. Expressing a desire to die on this occasion, he asked Ganga Nārāyana to arrange his pyre, then lay silent for three days, and was believed to have died and consequently placed on the pyre. A party of Brahmanas of the village began to speak against him, saying he had died a miserable death as a punishment for initiating Brahmanas. His disciples were hurt, and Gangā Nārāyana is said to have offered up a fervent prayer, invoking Narottam to wake to show his grace to his enemies; at which Narottam sat up, shouting the name of Sri Chaitanya. It seems from the above description by Narahari Chakravarti that he had gone into a prolonged trance, which was taken to be his death. This sort of trance was very common with Sri Chaitanya, Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunāthdās, Krishnadās Kavirāj and other Gaudiya Vaishnava Masters. Narottam frequently lay senseless, under the impulse of yearning for God. As Sri Chaitanya's disappearance from the world is shrouded in mystery, so was that of Narottam. No earlier writer has shed any light on it. Narahari Chakravarti has explained his death as some sort of miracle.

After this incident Narottam is said to have returned to Kheturi, having initiated the inimical Brahmanas of Gambhila. Later on he returned there, and asked his two favourite disciples, Rāma Krishna and Gangā Nārāyana to massage his body whilst bathing in the Ganges. He is believed to have "merged into the water of Ganges like milk" while his disciples were rubbing his body.[1] The fact underlying the supposd miracle seems to be that he may

[1] Narottam vilas XI

have walked into the Ganges, taking it to be the Jamuna, under the uncontrollable impulse of a beautific vision of Krishna and Rādhā sporting in it, and fainted with ecstasy as he was wont to do, and must have been drowned.

The Images of Sri Chaitanya and Krishna, which Narottam installed, are to be found at Kheturi. The old Vraja Mohana Image was transferred to Vrindāvan and the Gopināth Image was set up instead. That of Sri Chaitanya with Lakshmipriya and Vishnupriya on the other side. The Krishna Image has those of Rādhā by their side. It is one of the principal places of pilgrimage among Gaudiya Vaishnava. The palace of Narottam's father is now in ruins, covering over a hundred acres of land. Every year a fair is held in his memory. More than a hundred thousand people usually attend it. The place where Sri Chaitanya is said to have deposited *Prema* with the *Padma* for Narottam is called *Prematali*. The Images of Sri Chaitanya and Rādhāmādhav Gopināth are to be found in a temple.

HIS LITERARY WORKS

Govinda Kavirāj described Narottam as a great king of *Prema Bhakti* and Rāma Chandra as his minister. They used to spend a happy time in studying and teaching the literature of Rūpa, Sanātana and other Gosvāmins, and the Bhāgavat. Being a Prince of a wealthy State Narottam had the opportunity of studying with many great scholars of his day. He expressed the doctrine of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in his poems, which are as important as the literature of Rūpa Gosvāmi. Every poem of his is an exquisite gem and those who do not know Sanskrit can easily assimilate the spirit of Gaudiya Vaishnavism simply by going through the Prarthana and Prema Bhakti Chandrika of Thākur Narottam. The following works may be ascribed to him:

1. **Prarthana:** This contains 53 songs in Bengali. It was composed in the latter part of his life, after the death of Srinivās and Rāma Chandra whom he mentions with grief. (No.41) It is as popular with Vaishnavas as the imitation of Christ is with Christians.

It is impossible to say how many editions are on the market. It is daily recited in almost every village in Bengal, Orissa or the United Provinces.

2. **Prema Bhakti Chandrika:** This is as important as Prarthana. Visvanāth Chakravarti, another voluminous writer of the sect, has written a Sanskrit commentary on these Bengali poems. Visvanāth has also composed hymns to Narottam.
3. **Bhaktilatika:** This contains 480 *slokas.*
4. **Ragamala:** This contains 180 *slokas.*
5. **Sadbhava Chandrika:** Its incomplete manuscript contains 432 slokas (Vol.IV.p.341)
6. **Sadhya Prema Chandrika:** The number of *slokas* is 182 (Vol.VII.p.41)
7. **Smarana Mangala:** (Vol.IV.p.341)
8. *Guru* **Shishya Samvad:** This is an account of Lokanāth's teaching to Narottam. (Vol.IV.p.58)
9. **Rasa Bhakti Chandrika:** The number of *slokas* is 125. (Vol. VI.p.66)
10. **Bhakti Uddpana:** (Vol.VLp.255).
11. **Chamatkara Chandrika:** (Vol.VI.p.263)

Besides, many of his poems have been collected in Padamrita Samudra Pada Vralpatam, and other anthologies of Vaishnava poems.

We should remember that many Sahajia books have been ascribed to him. It was an attempt of the 17th and 18th century Sahajia writers to place interpretations of their doctrine in the mouths of earlier Gaudiya Vaishnava Āchāryas like Sri Chaitanya, Svarup Dāmodar, Rāmaraya, Krishnadās Kavirāj and Narottam.

A FEW OF NAROTTAM THĀKUR'S IMPORTANT DISCIPLES

SANTOS DATTA: He was the son of Narottam's uncle, Purusottam, and Prime Minister to the king of Gauda. Wise

and beloved by his countrymen he served his *Guru* in every possible way, and was always ready with his fabulous wealth to bring into effect projects of Narottam for the furtherance of Vaishnavism. He was the great patron of Govinda Kavirāj, who was his greatest friend, and speaks very highly of his devotional fervour, education, wisdom, etc. Govinda's Sangita Mādhava Nataka, written at his request, has been dedicated to him. It is needless to emphasize how greatly the sect is indebted to him for its success.

VIRA BHADRA: We can, however, take notice of another great leader of the period. Kavikarnapura, in his Gaura Ganoddesadipika (67) celebrates him as Ksiroda Vishnu Purusa, having the identical body of Sri Chaitanya. Krishnadās Kavirāj pays him high respect in the following lines: "Being God, He calls Himself the devotee and practices the Vedic rites while he is above them. Though possessing Divine bearing in His inner life, He is devoid of all pride and egotism in his dealings. He is the main pillar of the temple of devotion of Sri Chaitanya. Even to this day, people all over the world chant the name of Sri Chaitanya and Nityānanda through the magnitude of his grace. I resort to the feet of Sri Vira Bhadra Gosvāmi by whose mercy all wishes are fulfilled."

Vira Bhadra was also a forceful preacher. He constantly toured the country in the course of his preaching. He was a gifted orator, and, at his best, could always win over the audience.

He delivered an inspiring address at the annual council of the Vaishnavas at Kheturi, dealing with the supremacy of Vaishnavism, the necessity for *Sampradaya, Vaishnava Guru* , inclusion of *Brahmanahood* in Vaishnavism, and so on. A great controversy among the Brahmanas, on account of Narottam initiating them, occasioned Vira Bhadra to deliver this discourse in support of *Vaishnava Guru* and to silence all antagonists who questioned the propriety of Narottam's action. Vira Bhadra won the day. We always find him conspicuous at the councils and

festivities in the different centers of Kheturi, Jajigrāma, Vudhari, Kātwa, Srikhanda, Verakuli, Vishnupur, and so on. He conferred the title of Gosvāmi on Rūpa Nārāyana.

He paid a visit to Puri and other Orissan centers of the movement started by Shyāmananda.[1] On his return to Bengal, he went to Vrindāvan. Jiva Gosvāmi, Krisnadās Kavirāj, Anantāchārya, Haridās Pandit, Madhu Pandit, and others gave him a fitting reception at Vrindāvan. He circumambulated all the woods of Vraja with Krishnadās and others.[2] He was received with unreserved cordiality at all the temples at Vrindāvan where he lived for sometime with Jiva and others.

Vira Bhadra installed the Shyāma Sundara Image at Khardaha. In this connection the spurious section of Premavilās introduces some sort of miracle to magnify the greatness of Vira Bhadra.[3] He is said to have been invited by the Mohammedan king of Gauda to dinner. Vira Bhadra asked the king to offer him the same food as he was eating. The king ordered his footman at the table to give Vira Bhadra the *Khana* (dish of meat). When the cover was removed, the unclean food was found to have been turned into flowers. The king ordered a fresh dish of *Khana*, but the same thing happened as before. The miracle was repeated for the third time. At this the king asked him to accept whatever he wanted from him.

Vira Bhadra desired to have huge piece of polished stone, which was fixed on the wall near the doorstep of the king's hall. The king is said to have immediately removed the stone from its place and given it to Vira.

It is unbelievable that Vira Bhadra would have accepted an invitation to dine with the Mohammedan king, and that the latter would have removed the stone from the wall.

Vira Bhadra set up the Image of Shyāma Sundara at Khardaha. Advaita's son Achyuta acted as priest at the installation. This Image is still to be found there.

He had many disciples throughout Bengal, one of his

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[1] Premavilās.XIX [2] Premavilās.XIX. Bh. Kar. XIII [3] Premavilās XXIV

most important ones being Gati Govinda, the youngest son of Srinivās. He was also the *Siksha Guru* of Nityānandadās, the author of the Premavilās, in which he says that he had written an exclusive biography of Vira Bhadra,[1] though we have not been able to trace any information about it. Vira denounced his disciple named Jaya Gopāla Dās, a Kyastha inhabitant of Kadra, for his vanity and impertinence. The whole of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world excommunicated him from the sect on account of his offence against Vira Bhadra.[2]

Sri Jiva Gosvāmi, in his letter No.5 says the following: The fowler (*Vyada*) Jayagopāl has violated my grace. It is well known to the world. It is for this reason that none of my men here in Vrindāvan speaks to him. I have forbidden them to do so. You also should have no communication or talk with him".[3]

During this period Sri Chaitanya's religion became extraordinarily popular in Bengal. The king, like Vir Hāmvir, the important *Zamindar*, Chand Rāy of Rājmahal, Narasimha Rāy of Paikpādā, Rājā Harinarayan, Rājā Vasanta Rāy, Harischandra and others, almost all the poets of the day, and great number of scholars, prided themselves on their initiation into Vaishnavism either by Srinivās, Narottam, Rāma Chandra or Raghunandan.

They were not passive converts; the wealthy chiefs employed their fabulous resources and influence to furthering the cause; the poets made use of their genius in singing the glory of the doctrine; the scholars engaged in cultivating Vaishnava literature and teaching the faith. All sections of Bengali people from aristocrats to the most common were extraordinarily inspired with the religion of Sri Chaitanya.

Srinivās realized that no permanent result could be achieved unless the educated section took pleasure and an interest in the new doctrine. Jiva Gosvāmi sent a huge amount of Vaishnava literature of extraordinary merit to

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[1] Premavilās XIX.p.202 [2] Bh.R.Kar.XIV. Premavilās XIX.p.201
[3] Published in Bh.Kar.XIV.p.1047

offer to the intellectual classes of Bengal. Srinivās started several theological schools at Jajigrām, Vishnupur, Kheturi, Gambhila, Vorakuli, and so on. He created a vast number of Vaishnava scholars in a few years. The annual output of these schools was hundreds of professors and doctors of the faith. Srinivās could turn every house of his innumerable disciples into a preaching centre. A great wave seems to have flooded the country. It was Srinivās and Narottam who made Vaishnavism the principal religion of the province. Their personal life, scholarship and spiritual depth were certainly at work behind this unexpected success.

It is perhaps the best period in the development of Vaishnava poetry and music. The greatest of all Vaishnava poets Govindadās Kavirāj flourished during this time. The new life and light given by Srinivās was the constant source of Govinda's poetic inspiration. The people throughout Bengal and beyond were always eager to receive the message of Govinda through his delightful poems. The glory of Sri Chaitanya and of Rādhā Krishna was the absorbing theme of his poems. Hundreds of other poets of varying quality placed themselves at the service of Srinivās and Narottam.

These poets enriched our language with the most delightful compositions. As the Gosvāmins of Vrindāvan had created almost all the branches of Sanskrit literature to embody the doctrine, so the disciples of Srinivās and Narottam extolled it in the mother tongue of Bengal. The Gosvāmins of Vrindāvan used always to await eagerly any new poems by Govinda.

The development of music is the special characteristic of Gaudiya Vaishnavism since the time of Sri Chaitanya. Svarup Dāmodar, Rāy Rāmananda, Mukunda Datta and others were the greatest musician-singers of his time.

Music has been adopted as the vehicle of prayer among the Vaishnavas. In this period Govinda Kavirāj, Thākur Narottam, Srinivās, Govinda Ghakravarti, Rājā Narasimha and many others were celebrated singers. The new tunes

of *Garerhati, Reneti, Manorsahi* and others were created by them. Every *Rāga* and *Rāgini* has been employed in Govinda's poems. They gave a tremendous impetus to its further development. They invented many new types of musical instruments, particularly different kinds of Veena.

Bhakti Ratnakar gives us an account of the development of music, tunes, etc. Svarup's Samgita Dāmodara was perhaps the first book on the subject. Govinda's Samgita Mādhava was composed during this time. The development of musical works continued unabated.

In the next period, Vishvanath Chakravarti produced his Gita Chintamani on music and songs.

In the lifetime of Sri Chaitanya, no lady seems to have taken an active part in preaching. It was only Mādhava Devi, sister of Sikhi Māiti and Murāri Māiti of Puri, who was highly advanced in assimilating the mysticism of Gaudiya Vaishnavism and was counted as one of the four associates of Sri Chaitanya who are considered best in the whole of the Gaudiya sect in the first period, yet she has been described as *Arddhajana* or half-qualified, whereas Svarup, Rāma Rāy and her brother Sikhi Māiti were each fully so.[1] We do not know exactly whether she has been so called on account of her being a woman, or in proportion to her spiritual progress in comparison with the other three. At any rate she made exceptional progress in her personal spiritual life, but we do not know that she was a preacher like the men. The Vaishnava women of the first period were no different from other Hindu women in respect of public life. But in this Āchārya-Thākur period, we find several talented ladies taking immense interest in both the Sanskrit and Bengali literature of the sect, and assuming active leadership in vigorous propaganda. The illustrious Jahnava Devi, was the principal one in this regard.

She used to go on missionary tours and had hosts of disciples both men and women, including Mohammedans. The Gosvāmins of Vraja, and Srinivās, Narottam, Raghunandan, Narahari Sarkar and other Bengali leaders

[1] C.C. Antya. II. 106

accorded her very high respect. Jiva and Rūpa Gosvāmi read their Sanskrit literature to her. Srinivās performed the Kheturi *Utsava* under her direction. She took part in every function of a public nature. We find her images worshipped in many places, such an exalted position did she hold in the sect. She was the most spiritual lady in the Gaudiya sect and may still be regarded as unparalleled in this respect.

Sri Visnupriya had also many learned disciples, but she never emerged from her house. She was of a deeply meditative and extremely ascetic temperament, and loved seclusion.

We have already mentioned another illustrious lady who proved an able preacher. She was Sachidevi, a princess of the Puthia State. She was a Bengali and a great scholar of the Bhāgavat. She remained unmarried life-long spent several years of devotion and learning at Vrindāvan as the disciple of Haridās Pandit.

She was sent to Orissa to assume the leadership of the movement. She had innumerable disciples including Mukunda Deva, the king of Orissa.

It is not possible to mention all the other able women preachers of the sect. It was undoubtedly a new departure from the constitutional practice of the Hindu sect. They were active, achieved immense success, and deserve to be remembered with pride.

The concerted activities of all leaders with Srinivās proved one of the main causes of the success of the movement at this period. Raghunandan of Srikhanda, with a galaxy of poets, and scholars, were indefatigable in advancing the cause. It was he and Narahari who linked up the two periods between Sri Chaitanya's disappearance and the rise of Srinivās. Raghunandan, though Srinivās's senior, was in accord with him. All leaders used to assemble at the centre at Srikhanda. It was really a place of pilgrimage.

Gadādharadās and his disciple Yadunandan Chakravarti were two reputed leaders of the Kātwa centre.

The former died at the beginning of the flourishing stage of Srinivās's life; the latter worked in consultation with Srinivās, as did Hridaya Chaitanya of the Ambika Centre. Achutya and Gopāl, sons of Sri Advaita, and Vira Bhadra, loved Srinivās and Narottam as their own brothers. The advice of Sri Jiva Gosvāmi commanded unquestioning respect and obedience, for the Gaudiya Vaishnava world exerted the greatest unifying influence on them all. Obedience and affection for the *Guru* were the motive power that drove the different activities of various persons occupying diverse positions, into one common channel. The Vaishnava principle of life: that all honour should be given to others without aspiring to any of it in return, is another formative influence which enabled so many leaders to work in perfect harmony, having no regard for any personal gain or self-aggrandizement.

Though Raghunandan, Srinivās, Narottam, Vira Bhadra and Achutya died towards the close of the 16th century, their descendants and disciples continued the movement and handed it down to their own descendants for the further continuation of its traditions.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

THE AGE OF SHYAMĀNANDA AND RASIKA IN ORISSA (from 1560 A.D. to the 1st quarter of the 17th century)

The passing away of Sri Chaitanya and of His immediate followers was followed by an uneventful period in Vaishnava history in Orissa. The overthrow of the Emperor Pratāprudra's dynasty was no doubt a great hindrance to the further development of the Gaudiya Vaishnava movement in the province, with the frequent change of dynasties, anarchy, and the subsequent accession of the Pāthān rule accompanied by its inevitable series of wars with the Moghuls. The people are severely subjected to plunder and torture by both its alien rulers and their enemies. The country as a whole was demoralised as a consequence of various adverse circumstances. There is no doubt that Gopāl Guru Gosvāmi and his disciples continued the Vaishnava movement for some time but it soon came to an end. Gopāl Guru's disciples do not seem to have been as vigorous as an Āchārya ought to have been. Moreover their activities were confined to Puri and its immediate surroundings, northern Orissa being free from their influence.

The temple of Jagannāth was first desecrated by Kālā Pāhāra and next by Pāthān iconoclasts. The stronghold of Hinduism at Puri suffered a brutal persecution at the hands of the fanatical Pāthāns who spared no pains to humiliate

Hinduism in all possible ways. Orissa was then very badly in need both of great Āchāryas of extraordinary genius and also of a Hindu warrior to deliver Hindu religion. The former was wanted to inspire the people with religious vitality and bring back the moral life and courage of its population and the latter to secure, inviolate, the Jagannāth temple, the glory of the Hindus in eastern India, which was then trampled down by the Pāthāns, to the disgrace and chagrin of the Hindus as a whole. At this critical moment, Gaudiya Vaishnavism of western India sent its two worthy dependers in the persons of Shyāmānanda and Rājā Mānsimha, to restore the lost glory of Puri, which was the first headquarters and which had cherished Sri Chaitanya, the God of Vaishnavas, for about 24 years. If the two celebrated generals one of whom was spiritual, and the other political, had not gone to Orissa, God knows, what would have been the fate of Gaudiya Vaishnavism there. Rājā Mānsimha, as we know, was the reputed disciple of Rûpa and Sanatana. He was the greatest of all generals of the Emperor Ākbar. It was as though through the mediation of Providence, he was made governor of Bengal by Ākbar during the most critical time. Securing the sanctity of the Jagannāth temple and the peace of innocent Vaishnavas was the motive behind his political ambition in his relations with the Pāthāns of Orissa. Sri Jiva seems to have instructed Mānsimha to look after the glory of Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Jiva had already sent Shyāmānanda, creating him *Āchārya*, to take up the movement in Orissa. After the death of the Pāthān king of Orissa, Kutlu Khān, about 1589-90 A.D., his sons and minister Khuaji Issa were compelled to sign a treaty with Mānsimha by which Pāthāns agreed to give up the Jagannāth temple to the latter. Rājā Mānsimha was satisfied because his chief aim was to secure the temple. It held good for the next few years but after the death of the wise minister Khuaji Issa, the ministers of the sons of Kutlu again seized the Jagannāth temple which act so much irritated the religious-minded Rājā Mānsimha that he immediately obtained permission of Ākbar to exterminate the Pāthāns of Orissa, the cruel

enemies of Hinduism. Rājā Mānsimha himself led the expedition against the Pāthāns. A vigorous war ensued on the banks of the Suvarnarekha. The Rājā compelled the Pāthāns to flee and take refuge in the fortress in Cuttack, which he surrounded on all sides. Having placed operations in that state in the hands of his assistants and deputies, Rājā hastened to Puri, to visit the Jagannāth temple and other sacred seats and memorials hallowed by the memory of Sri Chaitanya. He was greeted by the afflicted citizens as their saviour. Here at Puri, he received overtures from the Afghans and the great Zamindār Rāma Chand and he distributed the territories among them under his supremacy. He restored the temple to the Hindu Rājā of Khurdah. It was the crowning success of his idea, which guided his political ambition in Orissa. He returned to Bengal and made Rāja Mahal the capital of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.[1]

We have observed in connection with the history of the Gangāmātā Math that the gifted princess of Puthia, Sachi Devi came to Puri in the fifties of the 16th Century, being commanded by her Guru Haridās Pandit Gosvāmi of the Govinda Temple at Vrindāvan, to reproclaim the doctrine of Sri Chaitanya in the province of Orissa. She took her religious training at Vrindāvan for many years. She set up a Math at the residence of Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya and had been working in Orissa from its seat at Puri. The latter period of her activities coincided with that of our great Āchārya Shyāmānanda. It should be remembered that her activities were also confined to the Puri district and its neighbourhood. She might have made Mukunda, king of Orissa, her disciple but his death in 1560 A.D. disappointed the Vaishnavas' high hopes, for they could have done wonders under his patronage. Sachi Devi guided the movement with ability in southern Orissa. But perhaps the most prosperous time of Vaishnava history in Orissa seems to have began with the rise of Shyāmānanda and reached its zenith of popularity and almost wholesale

[1] Stewart's History of Bengal. p.183-185

acceptance under Rasika Murāri who may be regarded as the most vigorous preacher of the movement. He may be placed only next to Sri Chaitanya Himself in the regard. Shyāmānanda and Rasikananda were the contemporaries of Srinivās and Narottam. They used to visit each other's headquarters.

THEIR BIOGRAPHY

One Gopijanavallabh Dās is said to have written a biography styled Rasika Mongala of Rasika Murāri, in which he also gives us an account of Shyāmānanda, because the life of Rasika is inseparable from that of his Guru Shyāmānanda. The dates of Rasika and Shyāmānanda given in this biography "Rasika Mongal" are hardly reconcilable with reference to the incidents of their lives in relations to the contemporaries. For instance, he assigns the birth of Rasika to Saka 1502 (1590 A.D.) but this is open to doubt. Shyāmānanda initiated Rasika about six or seven years (at most) after he arrived in Orissa from Vrindāvan with the mission to propagate the faith. The most important incident of Rasika's life was to initiate into Vaishnavism Rājā Vaidyanāth Bhanja of the Mayurbhanja State. The success of his Mission was mainly due to the influence of this Rājā. Rasika mongal gives us a graphic description of the Rājā's conversion from Saktaism to Vaisnavism. Mr. N.N. Vāsu in his archaeological report of the Mayurbhanj State, writes: "Before he came to the royal court, the Bhanjas were all Saktas, Rājā Vaidyanāth Bhanja was the first scion of the dynasty to adopt the Vaishnava faith as propounded to him by Rasika." The inscription on the Vaishnava temple Jagannāth at Baripada states that it was built by the Rājā Vaidyanāth Bhanja in Saka 1497 (1575 A.D.)[1] It seems that the Rājā was already initiated. According to Rasika Mongal Rasika met Rājā Vaidyanāth in his capital of Rajgada where the king was staying. Mr. Vāsu proves from other sources that Rājagada was made the tempory capital about the same year as the inscription on the temple and thus remarks: "From the inscription of the Bada Jagannāth temple at

[1] ibid. Baripada.p.3.

Baripada we learn that the Rājā Vaidyanāth was reigning in 1575 A.D. It has been mentioned above the Daud Khān was staying at Hariharapur (Capital of the Mayurbhanj state) in the same year. Rājā Vaidyanāth had removed to the Rājagada about this time and it was at this place that he received Rasika at the court." It seems that Vaidyanāth's initiation by Rasika took place about this time. Rasika converted him at least after his (Rasika's) 24th year because Rasika Mongal tells us that he converted Srikara and Bhima, the first important disciples in his twentieth year. He took at least a few years to convert the Rājā after the conversion of Srikara and Bhima. It is certain that Rājā Vaidyanāth was reigning since 1575 A.D. If we take the year 1590 as the date of Rasika's birth as given by Rasika Mongal, we find that Rājā Vaidyanāth must have reigned for more than the forty-five years that elapsed from the date on the inscription and Rasika's 30th year in 1620 A.D. plus at least 15 years if not more which must have elapsed both before the date of his inscription and after his initiation, because we know he lived on for many years to help his Guru Rasika. This is quite clear from the description of the Rasika Mongal. The date of Rasika's birth as given in Rasika Mongal cannot, therefore, be regarded as reliable. There is another fact. Mr. N.N. Vāsu tells us, on the strength of the *Dvadesa Sakha* that Rājā Jagatesvara was one of the twelve principal disciples of Shyāmānanda. The genealogical account of the Satapanthis mentions Rājā Jagatesvara as the immediate predecessor of Rājā Vaidyanātha.[1] From this account it appears that Shyāmānanda initiated Jagatesvara several years before 1575 A.D., the date of his successor Vaidyanātha's inscription. We know that Rasika was the first important disciple of Shyāmānanda, and that he was initiated in his 18th year. Rasika therefore must have been initiated by Shyāmānanda several years before; at least a few years before the initiation of Jagatesvara who died several years before 1575 A.D. Premavilās tells us that Rasika Murāri attended the Kheturi celebration with his Guru

[1] ibid Harihara pura. P.12

Shyāmānanda.[1] Kheturi *Utsava* may have taken place in the seventies at most which again proves that Rasika could not have been born as late as 1590 A.D. Jiva and Gopāl Bhatta sent two Vaishnavas to Bengal and Orissa with messages. They visited the home of Rasika. They reported to Jiva and Gopāl Bhatta, in glowing terms, the success of Rasika's mission.[2] Gopāl Bhatta certainly died before 1592 A.D. because Jiva mentions it in his letter to Srinivās in which he also mentions that he began writing the Uttara Champu which, is dated 1592 A.D.[3] So it is quite apparent that Rasika was working in Orissa many years before the death of Gopāl Bhatta. How could he have been born in 1590 A.D.? The Rasika Mongal tells us that Shyāmānanda's Guru Hridaynanda witnessed the famous *Utasav* at Rasika Murāri's residence in Gopivallabhapur. This *Utsav* was held in the latter years of Rasika and Shyāmānanda. According to Rasika Mongal we have to assume that it may have taken place at least after 1640 A.D. Thākur Narottam and others are said to have attended it. But we know that Thākur Narottam died before the close of the 16th century. Hridaynand was a contemporary of Sri Chaitanya so he could not have attended if it were held in 1640 A.D. Premavilās could not have recorded the work of Rasika if he were born in 1590 A.D. because the book was written in 1600 A.D. So both the contemporary writings and the inscription of Rājā Vaidyanāth contradict the year 1590 A.D. as the date of Rasika's birth. This book seems to have been written later on, but the author could quite well have ascertained the facts.

There is a later eighteenth century book called Shyāmānanda Prakasa written by one Krishnadās alias Krishna Garanadas who claims his discipleship from the descendants of Rasika Murāri. It contains 620 Bengali couplets.[4] It is full of incredible accounts of silly miracles, which seem to have been prompted by a schism against Shyāmānanda's Guru Hridaynandan and his order. There is hardly any historical importance attaching to it.

[1] Premavilās XIX.p.179 [2] Premavilās XVII. P.137
[3] Premavilās XXIV [4] S.P.P. VI. p.73

Bhaktiratnakar also contains some statements about their lives, which should only be accepted, with some reservation.

SHYĀMĀNANDA

The missionary life of Shyāmānanda was closely interwoven with that of Rasika Murāri, so we have to consider them together. Krishnadās, afterwards called Shyāmānanda, was the son of Krishna Mondal and Durika, a pious Vaishnava couple belonging to the Sadgopa caste (Non-Brahmana). They were Bengalis but the family settled at Dandesvar or Darenda Vahadurpur in Orissa a few generations before the birth of Krishnadās. Several children having died in their infancy, he was named "Dukhi Krishnadās" by his bereaved parents in the belief that the god of death would neglect and spare him. We do not know the exact date of Dukhi Krishnadās's birth. According to some, he was born in Saka 1456 (1534-35 A.D.) about one year after the passing away of Sri Chaitanya.[1] This date does note seem improbable. He, we know, was younger than Srinivās who, as we have observed, may have been born in 1520 A.D. We can accept this date of Shyāmānanda's birth, in the absence of any positive evidence either in favour or against it. He was a great pet of his parents. From his infancy they use to inspire him with the glory of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda and other Vaishnava masters. Krishnadās had a strong religious bent and exulted in the Name of Sri Chaitanya. The Name of Sri Chaitanya was then a household word in Orissa. Dukhi Krishnadās was gifted with a marvelous memory, which was very rare in the humble caste into which he was born. He finished his studies in Sanskrit grammar and other subjects at the local academy. He was calm and sober and hardly spent any time in play. He was a born philosopher. His Vaishnava parents wished him to be initiated by any Vaishnava master whom he chose, but they were reluctant to allow him to leave home alone as he was then very young. The names of the Vaishnava centres in Bengal were then well known to the people in Orissa where the

[1] Shyāmānanda Charita by Adhikari. p.7

movement had begun to decline. He resolved to visit the homes of Vaishnava masters in Bengal, urging his parents to send him to Navadvip with the pilgrims on their way to the Ganges, but his parents considered it would not be advisable to allow him to lead to ascetic life in his tender years. They requested him to wait a little longer but the religious feeling of Dukhi grew intense. One night he left home in quest of a Guru. He does not seem to have been more than eighteen or so when he left home. He reached Khānakul Krishnanager, the home of Abhirām Thākur, via Naradew and Chetua. He was then in a state of religious ecstasy. Thence he reached Ambikā Kālna where he lived Hriday Chaitanya Thākur, the disciple of Gauridās, in charge of the Sri Chaitanya temple. Dukhi engaged in the humble service of the temple and soon gained and deep affection of Hriday Chaitanya, who initiated him into the religion and gave him the name of Krishnadās. Dukhi was now happy, but his desire to make a pilgrimage to all the holy places grew strong. One day he appealed to his Guru to allow him to make a tour. His Guru consented and sent him with a few companies.

DUKHI KRISHNADĀS'S PILGRIMAGE

Rasika Mongal gives us a conventional account of his pilgrimage. He is said to have visited Vakresvara, Vaidyanāth, Gayā, Benares, Allahabād and Mathurā to reach Vrindāvan. He circumambulated every wood, visiting different shrines. From Vrindāvan, he went on to see Brahma Tirtha, Chandra Tirtha, Nimsar, Ayodha, Hastināpur, Kuruksetra, Haridvar, Badarika and so on. Next he pushed on in the direction of the south-west and reached Dvarakā, whence he seems to have crossed right through the Nizam's State to reach Setuvandha, having visited Saptagodavari, Reva, Mahismati, Gokarna, etc. in western India. From Setuvandha, he proceeded northwards and saw Jiyada Nrisimha, Kurmasthana and others before he arrived at Puri; thence to the mouth of the Ganges; and at last, reached home which was nearby. His brother Balarama made an extensive tour in search of him but could

not find him anywhere as Shyāmānanda was continually travelling. He returned home after more than a year, but could not settle at home, so he again hastened to his *Guru* Hriday Chaitanya at Ambikā who greeted him with all tenderness. Hriday Chaitanya wished him to study Vaishnava literature under Sri Jiva Gosvāmi at the theological school at Vrindāvan, sending him there with a letter of introduction to Jiva to that effect. Dukhi visited Navadvip, the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya before he departed for Vrindāvan.

Dukhi Krishnadās reached Vrindāvan in due course. He first happened to meet an inhabitant of Vraja named Sridās, who took him to Sri Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi and Krishnadās Kavirāj at Rādhākund. Dukhi Krishnadās introduced himself to them, mentioning his discipleship to Hriday Chaitanya of the Ambikā Kalna Centre. Hriday Chaitanya was held in high respect at Vrindāvan. His Guru Gauridās was one of the principal masters at Vraja. Raghunāthdās and Krishnadās Kavirāj received him with characteristic affection. They sent him to Sri Jiva Gosvāmi at Vrindāvan with some attendants.[1] Jiva was delighted to receive him and hospitably lodged him in his own monastery. Dukhi Krishnadās devoted his whole energy and attention to study, practicing extreme asceticism. He had to study grammar and *Kavya* before he seriously began the literature of Rûpa Gosvamins. As Jiva had taught Srinivās and Narottam, a few years previously, so he was indefatigable both in teaching and training him in the strict religious life. Dukhi mastered the whole of the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature from Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu to Ujjvalanilmani. He was then made professor at the theological school at Vrindāvan. Jiva Gosvāmi used to report to Hriday Chaitanya the progress of Dukhi's study. Hriday Chaitanya always warned Dukhi that he should be cautious in his dealing with Vaishnavas lest he should offend against them. He further advised him to regard Jiva Gosvāmi as his representative in relation to him. It is no

[1] Bh.Kar.VI

exaggeration to say that Dukhi Krishnadās was perhaps the most affectionate towards Jiva Gosvami.

DUKHI NAMED SHYAMANANDA BY JIVA GOSWAMI

Dukhi's regard for his *Siksha Guru* Jiva had no parallel. In the beginning of his Upasanasara Sangraha, Dukhi invokes the grace of Jiva in very touching language: "That Sri Jiva Gosvāmi is my lord. When will he make me his servant?" He closes it with a prayer at the feet of Jiva. Jiva conferred on him the new name of Shyāmānanda and henceforth he was known by this name. During his pupilage, he began writing some books.[1] Jiva seems to have trained him for several years together. When Srinivās arrived at Vrindāvan on his second visit, Shyāmānanda was introduced to him. Now Jiva thought that Shyāmānanda was well equipped with sound knowledge of the Vaishnava doctrine, he made him Āchārya head of the movement in Orissa where the work was at a very low ebb.[2] He charged Shyāmānanda with the tremendous task of continuing the movement in Orissa, which was first, started and guided for a long period by Sri Chaitanya himself. It was a more arduous task than that of Srinivās and Narottam. They had several senior colleagues such as Raghunandan Thākur, Hriday Chaitanya, Yadunandan Chakravarti, Achyuta, Virabhadra, Jahnava Devi, Sripati, Srinidhi and many others; moreover the work was already in motion, but Shyāmānanda had to begin the work afresh by himself as the movement had almost subsided in northern Orissa. Jiva sent him with Srinivās, Rāmachandra and Vyasa when they were returning to Bengal.[3]

He returned home to find that his parents had died. He started a preaching centre at his own house at Dharenda. Shyāmānanda had many qualities. He was a good scholar exceptionally courteous in his speech and behaviour, and a gifted leader. He was soon able to gather followers round him. His fame as a great Vaishnava soon began to spread in the province. It is said he was in constant touch with his Guru Hriday Chaitanya, Srinivās, Narottam and others.

[1] Premavilās. XII. p.85 [2] Anuragavalli VI p.95 [3] Anuragavalli VI. p. 94.

Next Shyāmānanda opened another centre of preaching at Narasimhapur. A number of people offered their services to assist Shyāmānanda. Having worked for a few years in different parts of northern Orissa, Shyāmānanda went back to Vrindāvan for the third time. Shyāmānanda was then a very important person in the Gaudiya Sect. Jiva Gosvāmi was astonished at the remarkable success, which he had achieved in such a short time. He was given a splendid reception by Jiva. Shyāmānanda established a monastery at Vrindāvan. It is still known as Shyāmānanda *Kunja*. Famous Baladeva Vidyabhusan was in charge of it in the 18th century. It has been in charge of the disciples belonging to the order of Shyāmānanda. Jiva Gosvāmi sent him back with Kishora, Valaka, Thākuradas, Shyāmadās to work in Orissa.

Shyāmānanda returned to Orissa perhaps in the sixties of the 16th century. He got into trouble with the Mohammedan police at Agra. He is said to have converted the Mohammedan police officers and lived at their house for a month. His presence gave a great impetus to the work which was suffering in his absence. He now organized it on a very extensive scale. Though he was a non-Brahmana *Sadgopa* by caste, many Brahmanas accepted his discipleship. He used to make missionary tours in different parts of the province in the company of his disciples, holding meetings, discussion, *Kirtana*, festivals and so on. He could equally attract the learned people by his intellectual power, and the general mass by means of his demonstration. He created a sensation in the province. As his disciples, admirers and patrons increased in greater numbers so also was a strong opposition offered from the *Sakta* Buddhists.

Though he could secure a great number of disciples, they were not men of genius to work without the guidance of Shyāmānanda. This course of propaganda was going on for some time until a young Rājā Kumara became his ardent disciple who drove the movement forward with extraordinary vigour, with the result that Vaishnavism became almost the only national religion of the provice in

the course of his life-time. This young man of exceptional merit and enthusiasm was none other than Rasika-Murāri.

RASIKA MURARI

Rasika-Murāri was born at Rauni, a town on the river Suvarnarekha in Orissa. We cannot assign any precise date to his birth. He seems to have been born in the fifties of the 16th century. He was the son of Rājā Achyuta and Rani Bhavani, the daughter of Haladhar Mondal who was also a chief but deprived of his estate by the Pāthān king of Orissa. Both Rājā Achyuta and his wife were very pious. The family came under the influence of Gaudiya Vaishnavism through a remarkable Vaishnava lady named Dayaldasi who was in charge of the local Vaishnava temple. She was held in great esteem both by the Rājā's family and the people alike, and was an ardent follower of Sri Chaitanya. She used to visit the palace and give instruction to the royal household. It was she who first initiated Rasika into the *Namamantra* while he was still very young. She predicted that Rasika would be a great Vaishnava in life. The court Pandit Mimamsaka Mandal Bhattacharya used to read the Bhagavat to the family. Achyuta was a cultured Rājā and had a special taste and regard for Bhagavat. The stories of Krishna and Sri Chaitanya were recited to Rasika from his early boyhood. Rasika was born and brought up in a purely Vaishnavite atmosphere. These happy circumstances served to nourish and augment his inborn religious fervour.

Rasika was first put under the tutorship of Vāsudeva who gave him an elementary education. He has been described as a boy of extraordinary intelligence. He began his studies at the age of five. Next, Mimamsaka Mondal undertook to teach him Sanskrit grammar, which he mastered in a comparatively short period. Rājā Achyuta appointed Vaidyanāth Vaidya, Valabhadra sen, Anukula Chakravarti, and Yadunandan Chakravarti to teach him *Kavya, Nataka,* Logic, *Mimamsa* and *Samkya* Philosophy. Rājā Achyuta was a great patron of learning. Many scholars used to attend his court and enjoyed gifts, grants and other

privileges from him. He placed his son under the best Pandits that were available. Achyuta desired him to make a special study of the Bhagavat, his own favrouite subject. He appointed Pandit Jagannāth Misra to teach Rasika the Bhagavat. Another renowned Vaishnava scholar Hari Dev undertook to teach him Vaishnava literature. This Vaishnava scholar encouraged in Rasika a great enthusiasm for religious sensibility. From his boyhood, Rasika could spontaneously compose beautiful songs and Sanskrit verses. Rasika found absorbing delight in Vaishnava literature. He also began to learn Persian, after the fashion of the day. His father made every possible arrangement in his power to give him a sound education and the best moral training.

RASIKA'S MARRIAGE

Achyuta had a very intimate friend whose name was Balabhadra Mahapatra a chief of Hijli, in the Midnapur district. When Balabhadra met the Pāthān governor, the latter made him captive because he had failed to pay his annual tribute to the royal treasury. Achyuta was on very friendly terms with the Pāthān governor. A soon as he was informed that Balabhadra was made captive, he hastened to the governor and secured his friend's release and returned to Rauni with him. Balabadra was struck with sheer admiration for Rasika's allround culture and education considering his extreme youth. He proposed the marriage of Rasika with his daughter, and Achyuta consented to his friend's wish. When preparations were being made on a grand scale for the marriage ceremony, Balabhadra suddenly died; however his elder brother Sadāsiva caused the ceremony to be performed in a style worthy of their status. The girl was charming, beautiful and extremely modest. Rasika's mother was perfectly happy in securing a worthy girl for her talented son. His marriage seems to have taken place while he was still under 16 or so.

Achyuta had several residences in different parts of his territory. Rasika used to live in different houses in different seasons. Indifference to worldly affairs, and a spiritual

impulse were already apparent in him before his marriage. His parents thought his marriage would effect a change but these innate characteristics only developed. After his marriage, he took up his abode at their Ghātsila residence. Ghātsila was a very charming place on the hill to the east of Dhundhua, where Achyuta had a magnificent palace. His tutor Hari Dev was with him. Rasika seemed to dislike the society of many people. He became very thoughtful and meditative. He devoted his whole mind to the discourse on the Bhagavat. His feeling for Krishna in the manner of the love-lorn Gopis as described in the Bhagavat, grew intense; so much so that one day he left the palace and entered the forest under an uncontrollable impulse of love of God. He passed the whole night in subconscious state under a tree. Rājā Achyuta sent his troops to find him, but none could trace him. He penetrated into a very depth of the dense forest. His father was seized with panic and thought that some wild animal might devour him in the night but luckily Rasika returned home safely the next morning, to the relief of his disheartened parents. He found comfort in the study of the Bhagavat. Both Rasika and his father used to spend a considerable portion of their time in listening to the said *Purānā* from the mouth of the Vaishnava scholar, Hari Dev.

RASIKA'S MEETING WITH SHYĀMĀNANDA

During this time, the name of Shyāmānanda was well known in every town and state of northern Orissa. Shyāmānanda paid a visit to Ghatshila where Rasika and his father were staying. Shyāmānanda attended the court when the Bhagavat was being read out to the Rājā and his courtiers. Shyāmānanda was introduced to Rasika on the conclusion of the meeting. Achyuta and Rasika received him with his disciples with great reverence as their guests. We know that ardent Vaishnavas observe the four-month vow called Chaturmasya, living at one place. Shyāmānanda arrived at Ghatshila only a few days before the beginning of the said vow, so Rasika and Achyuta requested him to stay the next four months at their residence and to give

them religious instruction. Shyāmānanda was pleased to comply with their request. His long stay, and constant discourse on religion with Rasika resulted in the initiation of the latter with his wife by Shyāmānanda. According to the Rasikamongal, Rasika was then 18 years of age. This initiation of Rasika marked a great epoch that was ahead. Shyāmānanda taught him the true Vaishnava doctrine in the manner of the Gosvamins. This initiation of the Rajkumar was soon followed by that of hundreds in the town. Rasika became so devoted an adherent of Shyāmānanda during these few months, that when Shyāmānanda was to leave Ghatshila for Puri, he insisted on accompanying him as he could not bear his separation. Shyāmānanda prevented him from following first because his princely life would not enable him to bear the hardship of the tour and secondly because his parents were likely to be displeased. Rasika persuaded him to take him to the house of his friend Dāmodar at Chakulia. Dāmodar was one of the celebrated scholars of the day in Orissa. He was also a *Yogi*, possessing great psychic power. He received his friend Rasika and his Guru Shyāmānanda with great respect and courtesy. Rasika's intention was to convert his friend to Vaishnavism by the influence of the magnetic personality of his Guru. Dāmodar specialized in his study of the *Samkha* system of philosophy. They stayed at Dāmodar's house for many days discussing the philosophical systems. Dāmodar upheld the Advaita philosophy while Shyāmānanda advocated the Gaudiya Vaishnava theory of the '*Achintyabhedabhedavada*'. Every day they embarked on discourses. Dāmodar was impressed with Shyāmānanda's scholarship. It was no wonder that he was so invincible because Sri Jiva Gosvāmi had trained him for several years.

Dāmodar now devoted himself to a study and appreciation of the Vaishnava doctrine, but he could not persuade himself to give up his practice of *Yoga*. The Vaishnava biographer tells a curious story as to how one day, when Dāmodar entered the dense forest on the river Kharva hard by where he used to practice *Yoga*, he found

Shyāmānanda and Rasika beside God Krishna in a vision which led to his immediate initiation and complete desertion of the *Yoga* practices.

Anyhow Shyāmānanda made one of his most enthusiastic adherents, who sacrificed his whole time and energy to the Vaishnava movement. Rasika and Dāmodar were the best disciples of Shyāmānanda. They lived for some months or so at Dāmodar's house and thence Shyāmānanda went to Puri, sending Rasika back to his home. He was instructed to meet him at Vrindāvan at his earliest convenience.

SHYĀMĀNANDA'S FOURTH VISIT TO VRINDĀVAN

Shyāmānanda reached Puri with his attendant disciples, and visited places of interest where Sri Chaitanya and His followers had lived. From Puri he set off for Vrindāvan where he had already set up a *Kunja*. He had many disciples at Vrindāvan. He was awaiting Rasika's arrival.

RASIKA'S JOURNEY TO VRINDĀVAN

Rasika's wife Shyāmādāsi accepted an invitation from her uncle to visit his house at Hijli. Rasika visited his fellow disciple Ananta at Tatia Tania, which was not very far from Hijli, so his wife went there to meet him and stayed there a few days. Rasika decided to start for Vrindāvan from there. She insisted on accompanying him but he prevented her going, as she was too delicate to bear the hardship of a long and unsafe journey. Rasika set out on his journey to Vrindāvan, to meet his Guru. Rasika arrived there and the remembrance of the Divine Sports caused him to go into frequent trances. He reached Vrindāvan when his Guru was about to return to Orissa; stayed a few days; and returned to Vrindāvan accompanying his Guru on his return journey to Orissa by way of Jhārikhand. They stayed for some days at the house of one Vishnudās at Meghala in Nagpur. Vishnudās with his family was converted by Shyāmānanda to Vaishnavism. He was renamed Rasamayadās.

From Meghala, they reached Rauni, the capital of Rasika's State. The Vaishnava citizens greeted their Vaishnava Prince with unreserved felicity, and Shyāmānanda proceeded to his home at Dhārenda. Now they planned to continue the movement with renewed vigour and on a very extensive scale.

Rasika was then an altogether changed man. Both he and his wife honoured and entertained the Vaishnavas whether they were their subjects or have low caste, ignoring their own princely position. He used to make obeisance to them, had meals with them and mixed with them like an ordinary man. His brothers considered it a disgrace that the Prince should lower himself by mixing freely with them and eating the leavings on their plates. They objected to this Vaishnavite humility, which was incompatible with their royal status. Rasika did not care about state affairs. He devoted his whole time and energy to devotional activities and holding religious festivals and feeding the Vaishnava *Sādhus*. He took no notice of his brothers protest. At this, his brothers and relatives began to abuse and insult Rasika's Vaishnava friends so that they should cease fraternizing with him. Rasika was greatly mortified to see his friends insulted when he would have worshipped them, so to say. He resolved, after consulting his wife, to leave the Rauni Palace and settle somewhere else where they could lead their religious lives without any opposition. He selected a very charming place on the Suvarnarekha near Nayavasana, which his elder brother Kasinathdās had named Kashipur after him. Rasika built a nice house in the centre of the hamlet and moved there with his wife and children, to live a happy religious life. He brought the Image of their family God (Krishna) from Mayurbhanj, the Rājā of which State had once forcibly seized it. Here there was none to stand in his way. He soon threw open his door to all Vaishnavas. His own house was no longer that of a Prince but a monastery of Vaishnavas, whom they served, regarding themselves as their servants. Both husband and wife were full of extreme humility and devoid of any pride or vanity. To serve the Vaishnavas and

sing the Glory of Sri Chaitanya was the aim of their pious lives. It is really a wonder that a Prince and Princess brought up in affluence and luxury, could live such an humble life. They were happy and exultant there Shyāmānanda soon paid a visit to Kashipur. He was given a splendid reception. Shyāmānanda was delighted with their exemplary Vaishnava lives. He named the Deity GopijanaVallabha, and the village Gopijanavallabhapur after the Deity. Shyāmānanda further wished him to devote his life to preaching the faith, leaving the charge of the temple and monastery to his wife Shyamadāsi. Their Guru made both the management and proprietory rights of the village over to her. Shyāmānanda submitted to the command of their Guru and relieved her husband of all responsibility regarding the service of the monastery and its property. She was a remarkable lady, possessing extraordinary strength of mind and spiritual power. She managed the whole affair with admirable ability. Her education, training, assimilation of Vaishnava spirit, and preaching zeal were exactly adequate to her responsible position as a celebrated leader. She was one of those ladies of rare qualities who deserve to be admired and affectionately remembered.

Shyāmānanda made Dāmodar and Rasika heads of two respective parties. He too led another band of workers. He commanded them to enter every town and village and preach the doctrine to all, irrespective of caste, or rank. They set out in different directions. Rasika is said to have been twenty years of age when he entered into a scriptural disputation with the Pandits of Srikara.

Rasika's first disciple was Kālindi, who was followed by Bhaktadās Yavana, Shyāmagopāl, Shyāmanarāyana, Rāma Krishna, Paramananda, Bhudara, Gaura Gopāl, Gopināth and Gokul. The second man Bhaktadās Yavana, as the name indicates, was a Mohammedan. In the course of his tour, Rasika arrived at Dharenda, near Kharagpur in the Midnapur district. Here lived two notorious Zamindār brothers named Bhima and Srikhara. They were moneyed men and an object of terror to their tenants. They

were *Sakta* by religion and so veritable enemies of the Vaishnavas. Dāmodar, another disciple of Shyāmānanda, had already initiated Rasamaya and Vamsi of the said village, whose maternal grandfather was Bhima, elder brother of Srikhara. Rasamaya and Vamsi enthusiastically received Rasika and accorded him high honour. Rasika was very prudent and tactful in dealing with different people. He had a psychological knack of quickly grasping what was needed to impress his audience or rivals. He thought that if he could convert the chiefs and Zamindārs, their subjects and tenants would automatically accept their faith. With this idea in view, Rasika made a special point of meeting them. His social position was a great advantage in this regard. He could easily meet any Zamindār or chief to whom he was known as a Prince of a ruling state. He resolved to convert Bhima and Srikhara, who were very powerful. Bhima and Srikhara were the friends of Rasika's father Achyuta. He consulted with Rasamaya and Vamsi, arranging to meet their grandfather, Bhima so that he should not cause trouble to their Vaishnava followers. Here Rasika met a very young man named Tulasi son of Gopāl who was the friend of Rasamaya's son. Gopāl was a gifted singer. He was the disciple of Hriday Chaitanya, Guru of Rasika's Guru Shyāmānanda. Tulasi was born into a Vaishnava family. His father Gopāl Das was the disciple of Subala Thākur.

Rasika preached the faith for four months in locality which attracted the attention of Bhima and Srikhara whom he one day met. They condemned the activities of Rasika saying that to preach Vaishnavism from door to door like a beggar was a gross disgrace to his family. They advised him to look after the state and lead a life commensurate with his position, giving up Vaishnavism. This led Rasika to plead for his faith. Rasika was extremely courteous and gracious in manner. He gave them to understand that Vaishnavism was the supreme religion. The chiefs asked him whether he could convince other Pandits of it. Rasika answered in the affirmative.

The chiefs Bhima and Srikhara convened a meeting of scholars to dispute Rasika's faith. The great Pandits Janakinath, Hari Chandana and others opposed Rasika at the open meeting, but Rasika proved successful, to the great delight of his followers. This historic incident resulted in the conversion not only of Bhima and Srikhara but also of many scholars. It was Rasika's first great missionary triumph. The whole population under the chiefs accepted Vaishnavism. Rasika introduced *Kirtan* into every house, performance of drama on Krishna Lila, and other religious mood. Rasika created another new form of festivities in this town. He caused the marriage of his Diety Gopi Vallabha to be performed with lavish pomp and grandeur. The population of the Dharenda estate took part in the function. They seemed to have been inspired with new life. This function was the first of its kind in Vaishnava history.

Having converted the Dharenda Estate to the new faith, Rasika returned to Gopi Ballabhpur in great triumph.

THE UTSAVA AT BALARĀMPUR

When Rasika was preaching in the Dharenda Estate, Shyāmānanda was converting the people in the Balarāmpur quarter where Gopināth, Jagannāth, Akrur, Srihari, Rādhāvallabhadās Manohara and others were helping him in the same way as Rasamaya, Srikhara, Bhima and others were helping Rasika. Shyāmānanda sent for Rasika for consultation as to the performance of the Dolayatra festival on a unique scale. Rasika met his Guru at Vada Balarāmpur. It was settled that it should be performed at Varakola, another centre of preaching and the whole Vaishnava population should join in it. In the meantime, Shyāmānanda, Rasika, and Dāmodar made many Zamindārs their ardent disciples, to help them in preaching in every possible way. A circular was sent to different centres and States, to make the necessary preparations and join it in time.

While Rasika was staying at Vada Balarāmpur, an unhappy incident took place: he was grossly insulted by

the Mohammedan chief of the place. But the extreme forbearance and spiritual personality of Rasika led to the Moslem chief's conversion to Vaishnavism and to his poignant remorse for having offended Rasika.

It took about a year or so to make adequate preparations for the Dolayatra festival at Varakola. All the people, from the chiefs to the poor, irrespective of caste and religion joined in their thousands. The chiefs, Zamindārs, *Bhuiyas*, *Senapatis* and others came in person with men and articles in abundance. The festivities were to spread throughout the province with the great eclat and rejoicings. The Suvadar of Midnapur was one of the distinguished guests. The religious discussions in groups, *Kirtana* and religious dramatic performances were important items in the programme. The net result of this famous ceremony was the initiation of a great number of people, one of the most important converts among others being Vaishnava Bhuiya, a very cultured Zamindārs and renowned musician of the day.

Rasika gave him initiation and conferred on him the name of Shyama Manohara Das. His brother Sasidhara Bhuiya also became his disciple. It evinced the wide popularity of the Vaishnava faith in the country, so much so that even the Moslem chiefs were filled with admiration for it.

Next, a certain Mohemmedan chief expressed his earnest desire to hold a Vaishnava festival in his territory and at his own expense. At this, Shyāmānanda and Rasika caused another great festival to be performed at Alamganj in the Midnapur district. All castes of every grade took part in the Vaishnava festivals. Every Utsava resulted in almost wholesale initiation by Shyāmānanda and Rasika. Rasika knew Sanskrit, Persian, and so on, and had studied various systems of philosophy. He was a gifted orator. He was always at his best in refuting other sect's in disptuation. He possessed immense intellectual power.

Hridayānanda paid a visit to Orissa to see with his own eyes the wide prevalence of Vaishnavism, which was

brought about by his disciple Shyāmānanda and his disciples. He arrived at Dharenda Bahadurpur, the home of Shyāmānanda. Shyāmānanda sent for his two greatest disciples Rasika and Dāmodar, who were the two generals, as it were of the movement, to introduce them to his *Guru*. Hridayānanda was immensely impressed with what he witnessed. He returned to Bengal with supreme satisfaction that almost the whole of Orissa was now proud of Vaishnavism.

Sometimes Shyāmānanda and Rasika used to go together on missionary tours. They had penetrated into the interior of the province. Once they went to Naihati and converted its headman, Arjuna, to Vaishnavism. Other important disciples of this place were Jagannāth, Dāmodar, Shyāmadās and others. He opened another centre at Kasiari, which is about one mile to the north of Moghulmari in the Mayurbhanj State. Their disciples Vraja Mohan, Shyāmadās, Nārāyana, Rādhāmohana, Yadavendra and others were in charge of it. Another important centre was the village of Mathura where lived a wealthy Zamindār named Bhimadhana. He became the disciple of Shyāmānanda and granted the village of Govindapur as a free gift for his residence.

ANOTHER OF RASIKA'S TRIUMPHS

In course of preaching Rasika arrived at Rajgada, the capital of the Bhanjaraj of Mayurbhanj. It is the biggest of all Garjat States. Rājā Vaidyanāth Bhanja was then the reigning king of Mayurbhanj, the territory of which extended as far as Midnapur in the north, to the boundary line of Keonjhar in the south. Mayurbhanj was then the most powerful state in Orissa, very often maintaining independence of the Mohammedan rulers of Orissa. When Rasika arrived at the Mayurbhanj capital, his fame as a great holy man had already reached the ears of the king, who received Rasika at his court. The Bhanjaraja was a great patron of learning. Many great scholars and poets were maintained by him. The king had a religious discourse with Rasika at the court, and was greatly impressed with Rasika's scholarship and

spiritual depth. The discourse continued for successive days, which served to dispose the king and his two brothes in favour of Vaishnavism. The court Pandits opposed Rasika and suggested that the king should not accept Vaishnavism from Rasika unless and until Rasika emerged victorious from a scriptural disputation with them, to which the king consented. They promised the king that they would also follow him in the event of Rasika defeating them, and would establish Vaishnavism against *Advaitabād* and *Saktaism*. Rasika agreed to the proposal. The king invited all the leading Pandits of the State to take part in the discussion. Rasika had to fight against the most violent opposition he had ever met with.

The famous historic discourse ended with singular victory for Rasika over his host of rivals, to the great satisfaction of king Vaidyanāth. This led to the initiation of the king, his two brothers and his principal courtiers by Rasika. He lived for several months at the palace to teach the king and his family the true Vaishnava doctrine. After his initiation, king Vaidyanāth became the staunchest follower of Rasika and employed all that was in his power for the service of his mission. As the Emperor Pratāprudra had been to Sri Chaitanya, king Vir Hāmvir to Srinivās and Rājā Mansimh to the Gosvamins of Vraja, so king Vaidyanāth was to Rasika. Mr N. N. Vāsu concludes in his report of the archaeological survey of Mayurbhanj: "In this manner the initiation of Vaidyanāth took place. His love and *Bhakti* began to increase daily. His brothers gave themselves up solely to Krishna and the Love of Krishna spread all over Utkala. The people of Bhanjabhumi thus became Vaishnava, and *Shaivas* and *Shaktas* gave up animal sacrifices". "The devotion of the young enthusiast had a marvelous effect throughout the surrounding country. The back woods of Orissa where the light of the creed of love had not yet penetrated, were soon lit up with the torch held aloft by the young devotee."[1] Rasika returned to his Guru in great triumph. Mr. Vāsu further tells us "After initiation by

[1] P.C III.

Rasika, Rājā Vaidyanāth, to perpetuate the memory of his Guru, in holy conjunction with *Istadeva*, erected a temple of Rasika Rāy in his capital at Hariharapur. Nowhere in the whole of Orissa is to be found a brick-built temple of such superior workmanship and grandeur. Such temples are rare even in Bengal.

Since the time of Vaidyanāth, the Rājās of Mayurbhanj have been ardent followers of Vaishnavism. Another devout Vaishnava Rājā of this family was Vira Vikramāditya, who greatly contributed to the further success of the movement in a later period. He founded the famous Gundicha temple at Vrindāvanapur and the Rādhāmohana temple at Harispur.

During this time Urddanda Rāy, the notorious chief of Narashimhapur, became intolerable to the Vaishnavas. He went so far as to kill the pious *Brahmanas* and Vaishnavas. Travellers could not safely pass through his State. Hundreds of the followers of Shyāmānanda and Rasika in his territory reported to them the chief's heartless persecution. Both leaders hastened to Narashimhapur to stop his repressive measures, and if possible, to convert him. Rasika mongal tells us that the curel Urddanda Rāy saw a holy man in a vision who commanded him to become the disciple of Shyāmānanda.[1] Anyhow Urddanda Rāy became extremely penitent for his past life when Shyāmānanda and Rasika met him. As was usual with others, Shyāmānanda was able to convert him. He therefore became a thoroughly changed man, giving up all malice and cruelty to others. He now placed his wealth and influence at the disposal of the Vaishnava faith. With him, his objects were converted to the new faith. Shyāmānanda and Rasika caused a great festival to be held at the expense of Rājā Urddanda Rāy, to celebrate his initiation.

The next important *Utsav* was held a Kesiari. The marriage ceremony of the deities of Rādhā and Krishna was

[1] *Gaudiya. VI. p.133*

the object of this *Utsav*. The most important of a great number of disciples who were initiated on this occasion, were Purusottam, Dāmodar Haraghos Mahāpātra, Dvija Haridās and others.

THE RĀSAYĀTRĀ FESTIVAL AT GOPIVALLABHAPUR

The crowning religious festival was perhaps the Rāsayātrā festival of Gopivallabhapur, which was celebrated next, and took one year to arrange. The town of Gopivallabhapur was gaily decorated. Every house was whitewashed; new flower gardens were laid out; many new houses were erected to receive the guests; and hundreds of camps were pitched. At this time, almost all the chiefs and Zamindārs were their disciples. Vaishnavism had been accepted almost as the only religion of the province. The invitation was sent to all parts of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world. It is said that the Vaishnavas from Mathura, Vrindāvan, Dwarka, Bengal, Puri and so on, took part in this memorable ceremony. Shyāmānanda's *Guru*, Hridayānanda, was given the grandest reception. Almost all the chiefs of Orissa honoured, by their presence, the ceremony, which was performed with grandeur and pomp. It is perhaps the only *Utsav* in which the Vaishnava from all parts of India joined, and marked the zenith of Shyāmānanda and Rasika's popularity.

The conversion of the Mohammedans to Hinduism by Rasika led to the extreme indignation of Mohammedan Suvedar, who was said to have been Ahammadi Beg. Rasika was sent for, to the horror of the Hindu population. The fanatical Governor was expected to punish Rasika severely, but Rasika was fearless. The biographer relates a story in this regard. When Rasika was being conducted to the Moslem Governor who was staying at Jagati, he met a mad elephant on the way, which, according to tradition, is said to have submitted tamely to Rasika who is believed to have uttered the *Namamantra* in its ear and named it Gopāladās. The matter was reported to the Moslem Governor, who was filled with wonder and dismissed him with honours.

Next, Rasika initiated Rājā Hari-Nārāyana of Pachavati, Rājā Nrisimha Gajapati of Pataspur and other Garjata chiefs. This he did on his way to Puri. He stayed there a few days and returned with two sculptors to Thuria, where his *Guru* Shyāmānanda was then living. The said sculptors made an Image of Krishna, which was named Vrindāvan Chandra. It was installed at Thuria. Rasika returned to Gopivallabhapur with the sculptors who carved the Govinda Image which was set up in the Gopivallabhapur temple amidst great rejoicing.

Rasika asked his disciple, the Rājā of Ghātsila, to make some endowment for the permanent service of the Vrindāvan Chandra Image of his Guru Shyāmānanda at Thuria. The Rājā granted the village called Satti as a free gift for the purpose. Shyāmānanda named it Shyāmānandapur and built a house there. Shyāmānanda had another residence at the village of Ayodhya. He is said to have suffered mentally for some time, a fact which Vaishnavas attributed to his excessive religious zeal, but he gradually recovered his mental balance.

The news of the death of his Guru, Hridayānanda, was a great shock to Shyāmānanda, who was overwhelmed with grief. Rasika, who was immediately sent for, ordered a great ceremony to be held at Shyamsundarpur in honour of Hridayānanda; after which Shyāmānanda returned to his Govindapur residence. A few years later, Dāmodar died. Shyāmānanda never recovered from this shock. A ceremony was performed at Govindapur to honour his memory in recognition of his great service.

Not long after the death of Dāmodar, Shyāmānanda fell ill at the house of Urddanda Rāy at Narasimhapur. Rasika was with him. All possible medical aid was given but to no avail. All the important disciples of Shyāmānanda were sent for. He made Rasika his successor and head of the movement in Orissa, declaring that all the other disciples should obey him who would look after them. None should defy the commands of Rasika. "Those who would disobey Rasika shall be regarded as hostile to me."

SHYĀMĀNANDA'S LITERARY WORKS

He is said to have written many works, but we have been able to trace only a few of them.

1. Govinda Mongala[1]
2. Advaita Tattava. This contains an account of the teaching of Mādhavendra Puri to Sri Advaita. It is written partly in Sanskrit and partly in Bengali[2]
3. Vrindāvan Parikrama. This is an account of the circumambulation of the woods in the circuit of Mathura[3]
4. Upasana Sara Samgraha. The Sahitya Parisad Patrika gives us a notice of the manuscript of this work, which contains about 500 *Slokas* in Bengali.

Rasika was indefatigable all through his life in continuing the movement with unremitting energy. No part, even the hilly corner of Orissa, could escape his influence. Every town state and village submitted to the teaching of Rasika. As the name of Sri Chaitanya was inseparably associated with the *Rathayātrā* festival of Puri, so also the name of Rasika. The Gajapati king of Khurda also came under his influence. He granted land as a gift to establish a monastery at Puri. It is called the Fultotamath and lies to the south of the Jagannāth temple.

Rasika's activities were not confined only to the province of Orissa. He converted many rude inhabitants of the Jhārikhand forest to Vaishnavism. They are said to have been gentle and pious, giving up their practices of robbery and crime. One of the leaders of such gangs who became Rasika's disciple was a Kol of the village of Sukapal. He preached also in Nagpur and Sekhara Country. He paid visits to Vishnupur, the capital of the Vaishnava king Vir Hāmvir, Kenduvilva, the birthplace of the famous Jayadeva, Ambikā Kalna, and other Vaishnava centres of Bengal. He carried out the command of his *Guru* with untiring energy to the last day of his life, and died in the happy knowledge that the whole of Orissa was singing the name of Sri

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[1] S.P.P. IV [2] S.P.P. V. p.197 [3] S.P.P. V.p.203

Chaitanya, giving up the practices of animal sacrifices and other *Shakta*, *Shaiva* and Budhist practices. It is said that he entered the temple of Gopināth at Remuna and did not come out again. He is believed to have entered into the body of the Deity Gopināth. His garlands, cloths, etc. are said to have been interred near the temple. His tomb is to be found at Remunā.

After Sri Chaitanya and Pratāprudra, the various adverse of circumstances of the country and the want of an able Āchārya allowed Vaishnava influence gradually to diminish. Animal sacrifices, immorality, and black practices of the *Tantric*, Budhist, *Shaktas* began to raise their heads again. The Mohammedans were forcing the Hindus to accept Islam. During this miserable state of affairs, Shyāmānanda was commanded by Jiva Gosvāmi to hoist again the banner of Vaishnavism in Orissa. It is a fact that the mission of Shyāmānanda was crowned with success, mainly on account of the tremendous activities of Rasika Murāri, whose life from first to last was remarkable for his sacrifice, ceaseless activities and undaunted spirit. Rasika began the work while Vaishnavism was really in a moribund condition. Rasika died with the supreme happiness of knowing that he almost entirely abolished animal sacrifice in Orissa. Almost all the Garjat chiefs, Zamindārs, *Bhuiyas*, sincerely practised Vaishnavism, giving up their hereditary religion of *Shakta*, *Shaivism*. Every village of Orissa from south to north resounded with the *Kirtana* of Sri Chaitanya and Sri Krishna. *Brahmanas*, *Khāndaits*, *Karanas* and all castes accepted discipleship to Rasika who was born in a non-*Brahmana Karana* family, leaving aside all caste prejudices.

Mr N. N. Vāsu observes: "Rasika's labour did not end in converting to his faith the chiefs and Rājās, but also the great body of Buddhists who were persecuted by Rājā Pratap and were lying scattered through the whole province, calling themselves *Brajasutas*, by which name Anakara Samhita and Rasika Mongal denominated the Buddhists. Vaishnavism has been accepted as the national religion in Orissa. No other province where hosts of Vaishnava

masters worked may be compared with Orissa in the magnitude of its followers. There is not a single important village in Orissa, which does not contain a temple of Sri Chaitanya for public worship. The *Prarthana* and *Prema Bhakti Chandrika* of Thākur Narottam are being daily sung from old to young. The influence of Rasika even today is as fresh as before. The 28 Garjata states headed by Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Nilgiri, and others, the Rājās of small States, Zamindārs, the Gosvamins of Kesari, Kapti Math in Puri, the important section of the best *Sasana Brahmana* families of Orissa acknowledge the descendants of Rasika as their spiritual guides and vie with one another in showing respect to the eldest member of Rasika's line who now occupies the Gadi and possesses immense influence and wealth." [1] The descendants of Rasika, though they have social intercourse with their *Karana* caste, worship the Deities with their own hands like the *Brahmanas*; accept obeisances from the *Brahmanas* who eat not only their food but refuse from their plates, considering it very holy. They used to wear the sacred thread like the *Brahmanas* but now a days they do so for a limited period after their initiation, and give it up believing that they become higher than the *Brahmanas*, and they do not need it. The descendants of Rasika have been guiding the Vaishnava movement in southern Orissa as its spiritual head. The people of northern Orissa are mostly disciples of the Rādhākanta Math, Gangāmata Math and other Gaudiya Vaishnava Maths in Puri. Rasika's son and successor, Rādhā Krishna, was also an able preacher. He was trained by his father and worked with him. Rādhā Krishna's son, Nayanananda Deva Gosvami, was also a remarkable man. His disciples were scattered even as far as Kanauja. The famous Kanauja Brahmana Dāmodar Sharma, author of Vedanta Shyamantaka, and Guru of one of the greatest Āchāryas of the sect, Valadeva, was his disciple. Visvambharananda Deva Gosvāmi of this family, who flourished in the 19th century, was a reputed leader of Vaishnavas in Orissa. The descendants of Rasika bear the

[1] R.A.S.M. P.C III.

surname of Deva Gosvami, which was first conferred on Rasika by Shyāmānanda.

The disciples of Shyāmānanda and his line were in perfect accord with the main body of orthodox Vaishnavas of Bengal and Vrindāvan in respect of doctrine, practices, and so on. But their *Tilaka* mark is somewhat different from that of the rest of Gaudiya Vaishnavas. A curious story is told of its introduction. Shyāmānanda is said to have found the ankle of Rādhā at Vrindāvan. Lalitā, the friend of Rādhā is believed to have met Shyāmānanda and recovered it from him. She imprinted the mark of the ankle on his forehead and since then, the disciples of Shyāmānanda wear the *Tilaka* resembling the ankle, to perpetuate the favour shown by the Goddess to their *Guru*.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE AGE OF VISHVANATH CHAKRAVARTI AND BALADEV VIDYABHUSAN

(from 1670 to 1775. A.D.)

The age of the Gosvāmins came to an end with the close of the sixteenth century after the vigorous activities of full three quarters of a century. After a long interval of about seventy years since the demise of Sri Jiva Gosvāmi, which included the most stormy days, Vishvanāth Chakravarti came on the scene to shoulder the Herculean task of the sect for the next forty years or so, which may be called the 'Chakravarti age', which was followed by that of his pupil Baladev which continued till the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

VISHVANÂTH CHAKRAVARTI

The uneventful period of the sect particularly at its headquarters at Vraja began with the disappearance of Jiva Gosvāmi. To make matters worse, Aurangzeb devastated the colony at Vrindāvan, demolishing their temples and monasteries and compelling them to take shelter, with their Gods, in the woods for the time being. We have noticed that disaster befell them in 1669-1670 A.D. There was need at the moment for an inspired leader like Rūpa and Jiva to reclaim the past glory which had been eclipsed both by the absence of a proper Âchārya and by the fanatical Emperor's brutal measures of suppression. Bengal sent her another worthy son in the person of Vishvanāth Chakravarti to

continue the work with renewed vigour and vitality. He was no less versatile and voluminuous as a writer than Rūpa. As the latter was assisted and followed by a genius like Jiva, so also Baladev succeeded Vishvanāth. These latter may be called the second Rūpa and the Second Jiva respectively. He was perhaps born in Saka circa 1560 (1638 A.D.) in a *Radhiya Brahmana* family of Devagram in the district of Nadia. He was the youngest of three brothers, the two others being Rāmā Bhadra and Raghunāth. According to some he was also known as Hari Vallabha. Having been sufficiently educated in grammar and other branches of Sanskrit learning, he went over to Saidābād in the district of Murshidābād to study *Bhakti* literature under Rādhāraman Chakravarti whom he accepted as his Guru. In the beginning of his commentary on the 29th chapter of the tenth canto of the Bhagavāt, Vishvanāth gives us the list of his preceptorial hierarchy from his immediate Guru upwards. It makes him the sixth and fourth in descent from Sri Chaitanya and Narottam respectively. It is as follows: The disciple of Sri Chaitanya was Lokanath; of Lokanath Narottam; of Narottam, Gangānārāyana Chakravarti; of Gangānārāyana, Krishna Charana Chakravarti; of Krishna Charana, Rādhāramana; and of his last, Vishvanāth. Vishvanāth has celebrated each of them in the poems of his *Stotra* verses, which have been included in the anthology of his poems called Stavamrita Lahari. About sixty years elapsed between the death of Narottam Thākur and the initiation of Vishvanāth.

When he was still in Bengal, he was fighting against the heretical movements one started by Advaita's son Balarama and his descendants and the other by Srinivās's disciple Rūpa Kavirāj who was expelled by Hemalata Devi, the illustrious daughter of Srinivās, from the Gaudiya community. Rūpa Kavirāj started an unauthorised sect which was designated *Ativadi*. When Aurangzeb's merciless persecution of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas at Vraja filled the mind of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world with extreme indignation and horror, Vishvanāth hastened from Bengal to Vrindāvan to take the helm possibly immediately after

the demolition of the temple in 1670 A.D. Since his arrival at Vrindāvan in the seventies of the 17th century, he lived there until his disappearance guiding the movement in western India, Bengal and Orissa from the headquarters at Vraja. By dint of his inspiring personality and keen intellectual powers, he revived the old glory of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. All the fugitives now returned from the woods and started the services in their respective Temples. He inspired the Vaishnavas with spiritual life and gathered innumerable new proselytes around him. His presence at Vraja brought back life into the movement. He himself lived in different places of the circle of Mathura such as Vrindāvan, Rādhākund, Yāvata, Govardhana, and so on, the names of which places are to be found in the verses and colophons of his numerous books which were written at those places. He set up the Image of Gokulānanda in a Temple at Rādhākund. He used to worship the Govardhana Shila, which Sri Chaitanya gave to Raghunāthdās Gosvāmi who had worshipped it to the last day of his life. It is to be found in the Temple of Gokulānanda at Rādhākund. The commentator of Krishna Bhāvanamrita seems to imply that he was the president of the Vishva-Vaishnava Rājā Sabha formerly founded and presided over by Rūpa and Sanātana (in the beginning of the commentary).

Krishnadeva Sārvabhauma, disciple of Vishvanāth, in his commentary on the latters's Sankalpa Kalkadruma, says that a certain disciple of Vishvanāth disciple who was a rich inhabitant of Mathura built a *Kunja* or bower at his own cost, in which Vishvanāth passed his latter days. This bower is to be found in ruins near the tombs of Vishvanāth and Krishnadeva at Pātharpura, Vrindāvan (Verse 101). Vishvanāth tells us that he was at Rādhākund when he finished his Sankalpa Kalpadruma (Verse 100).

Like the six Gosvāmins, Vishvanāth was also a great ascetic leading a cenobitic life. He remained a bachelor all his life. He had hosts of disciples and pupils, the most important of whom were Krishnadeva Sārvabhauma and Baladev Vidyābhusan, who were of course his younger contemporaries. In his old age in Saka 1626 (1706 A.D.). a

great controversy arose, as to the sectarian locus standi of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas between the Rāmānandi sect of Galtā and the Gaudiya priests of Govinda Deva. We know that the Govinda Deva of Rūpa Gosvāmi and other Dieties of the sect were then installed at Gati or Galtā by Rājā Raj Simha of Amber. The controversy became very serious and the Gaudiya Gosvāmi priests of Govinda Deva were unequal to the task of silencing their antagonists by meeting their challenge and convincing them of the doctrinal supremacy of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Rājā Jay Sinha II invited Vishvanāth Ghakravarti, as he was then head of the *Sampradaya* to come to Galtā and terminate the controversy with the Rāmānandi sect at an open meeting of scholars, of which he was the convener. Vishvanāth Ghakravarti was then too old to make journey to Galtā so he sent his two young pupils Krishnadeva and Baladeva firm in the conviction that they would defeat all the antagonists, maintain the supremacy of the Gaudiya doctrine, and establish its recognition by tracing its origin to the Madhva sect. An account of this historic incident will be discussed in connection with the life of Baladev. It was a matter of great joy to old Vishvanāth that his two young disciples came out victorious, defeating the hosts of inimical scholars and deciding the question once for all, to the great admiration of Rājā Jay Simha II and the Gaudiya Vaishnava world.

Vishvanāth is said to have disappeared a few years after this incident at the age of nearly seventy, leaving Baladev to guide the movement as head of the *Sampradaya*. There was nothing that he would not do for the progress of the movement. All generations will remember the serenity, the self-sacrifice and infinite vitality with which he led the movement.

He was the perfect picture of the Gaudiya Vaishnava Âchārya, wise, gentle, merciful, combining asceticism with extraordinary intellectual power. He resembled Rūpa Gosvāmi in every respect, and was called upon at a most critical moment to steer the affairs of the Gaudiya sect to safety.

VISHVANĀTH'S LITERARY WORKS

Krishnadeva Sārvabhauma has very rightly called Vishvanāth an *Avatara* (i.e. visible manifestation in this world) of Rūpa Gosvāmi. (Sri Rūpa Gosvāmino'vatara. His commentary on Sankalpa Kalpadrum verse 94). If anybody could be compared with Rūpa as a writer on *Rasa*, it is only Vishvanāth who comes to mind at once. Certainly Vishvanāth holds first rank in Vaishnava literature. He was a poet by nature. He possessed a very high standard of poetical genius, great intellectual gifts and an equally strong bent towards the analysis of *Bhaktirasa*. His voluminuous writings are remarkable for his clarity of thought and simplicity of style. Rūpa's writings are simplified by his quick understanding and assimilation. He discussed the whole problem of *Bhakti* with masterly skill and lucidity. His literary production is vast. We have not yet been able to prepare and exhaustive list of his works which are scattered over the country. We shall make a brief note of some of those which have come to our knowledge and which can be ascribed to him. All are written in Sanskrit and open with *Namaskriya* to Sri Chaitanya and his *Gurus*. His works may be divided into three classes – a) his original works and b) his commentaries on and abridgement of the previous wroks, particularly of Rūpa c) Anthology. They are as follows:

1) **Krishna Bhāvanamrita**

This is a huge *Kāvya* work dealing with the amours of Rādhā and Krishna. It is written in twenty *Sargas* containing 2929 *slokas*.[1] It was completed on the bank of the Rādhā-Saras on Thursday being the full moon day in the month of Fālguna in Saka 1601 (1680 A.D.). It is quite clear that this book was written several years after he settled at Vrindāvan.

Rājendralal Mitra has given a notice of a commentary on Krishna Bhavanamitra.[2] It contains 4944 *slokas* in prose.

[1] Mitra's notices of Sanskrit manuscripts, VII p.268 No.2519. [2] ibid, VII. p.270

2. Madhurya Kadamvini

This is a treatise on *Bhakti* written in 643 *Slokas* in verse and prose.[1] The author gives a very clear exposition of *Bhakti* as the only means of attaining God, dealing with the spiritual nature of souls, in which an individual may have communion with God. It discusses the various forms of *Bhakti* and their peculiarities. It opens with an obeisance to Sri Chaitanya and Rūpa Gosvāmi.

The very beautiful Bengali metrical translation of it in 8 chapters by an ascetic, named Krishnadās Bābāji, was published by the Chaitanya Chandrodaya press of Calcutta in 1861 A.D.

3. Gauranga Lilamrita

This is a poem describing the sports of Sri Chaitanya, particularly written for the recollection of the devotees. Mr.Rāmānārāyan Vidyāratna twice published it with its metrical translation in Bengali by Krishnadās.

4. Sankalpa Kalpadruma

This is the supplement to his Krishna Bhāvanamrita. In 104 verses it expresses a passionate feeling for the service of Rādhā-Krishna in obedience to the Six Gosvāmins, Lokanath and Narottam whom he addressed in their spiritual names. Krishnadeva Sārvabhauma has written a commentary on it. The text with this commentary has been published by Nitya Svarupa Brahmachari at Vrindāvan in 1907 A.D. It has also been included in Vishvanāth's anthology called Stavamrita Lāhari.

5. Ragavartma Chandrika

As the name indicates, it deals with the *Raganuga Bhakti* or spontaneous love of God arising out of natural affection and attachment to Him. Krishnadās's metrical translation of it in 6 chapters or *Prakasas* has been published by the Chaitanya Chandrodaya Press of Calcutta.

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[1] Mitra's notices. VI. p.161 No.2101.

6. Chamatkara Chandrika

Rājā Rājendra lal Mitra has taken notices of the two manuscripts of Chamatkara Chandrika which mention Kavikarnapur Gosvāmi as the author in the following colophon found at the end of the said manuscripts: *Iti sri kavikarnapura Gosvāmi virachita chamatakara chandrikayam chaturtha kutuhalam samapta ceyam chamatkara chandrika*[1]. But at the India office manuscript[2] contains no such colophon. The Gaudiya Math manuscript ascribes its authorship to Vishvanāth Chakravarti. The editor of the *Manjusa Samahrti* attributes its authorship to Vishvanāth.[3] An old metrical translation in Bengali has also ascribed it to Vishvanāth. The latter has been published. It begins with the characteristic greeting to Sri Chaitanya. It consists of four *Kutuhalas* dealing with the amours of Krishna occurring in four *Praharas* of the night, which amours the Vaishnavas meditate upon in the respective periods and neophytes also practise the same by sitting by through the night following every eleventh lunar day. It has, in its four *Kutuhalas*, 37, 33, 101 and 55 verses respectively, totaling 226 verses in all.

7. Sadhya Sadhana Kaumudi

This is a very important treatise on *Bhakti* and its object, dealing with all its phases in the most scientific manner. It is as important as Rūpa's Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu, which has been followed by it. It treats of *Rasa* in relation to God in the same way in which Rūpa has discussed it in his two works on *Rasa*. This book of Viswanath is a valuable contribution to the field of poetics. In four *Kaumudis* or chapters it consists of 497 *slokas* in prose and verse.[4]

8. Gauranga Smaranika Dasaka

This poem of 10 stanzas was written in praise of Sri Chaitanya.[5]

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[1] ibid.VI. pp.2 2-213 [2] Eggling No.1177e. [3] Part I. p.61
[4] Mitras Notices VII. p.267 No.2517 [5] ibid IV. p.200 No.1624

9. **Vrajariti Chintamani (Kāvyam).**
10. **Prema Sanputam (Khānda Kāvyam)**
11. **Gitvali (songs)**
12. **Khānodagitu Chintamani**
13. **Stavamrita Lahari**

Class B. (Commentaries)

14. **Suvodhini**
    A commentary on Kavikarnapura's 'Alamkāra Kaustubha', which has been published with the text of *Alamkāra Kaustubha* by Rāmānarayan Vidyāratna at Maurshidavad.
15. ***Ânanda Chandrika.*** This is a commentary on Rūpa Gosvāmi Ujjavalanilamani. We have already noticed it in connection with Rūpa's original work.
16. **A commentary on Gopāl Tāpani**
17. **A commentary of Rūpa's Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu**
18. **A commentary of Rūpa's Danakeli Kaumudi.**
19. **A commentary of Rūpa's Lalitā Madhava Nātaka.**
20. **A commentary of Vidagdha Madhava Nātaka**
21. **A commentary of Rūpa's Hamsaduta**
22. **A commentary of Brahma Samhita (5th chapter)**
23. **Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhurvindhn.** An abridgement of Rūpa's Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu.
24. **Ujjvalanilamani Kirana less.** It is the sum and substance of Rūpa's Ujjvalanilamani.
25. **A commendary on Krishnadās's Bengali Chaitanya Charita.**
26. A Sanskrit commentary of Thākur Narottam's Bengali work called Prema Bhakti Chandrika. It is published by Rāmā Doyul Ghosh at Vrindāvan, Chaitanya 410.
27. **A commentary styled Sarartha Varsini** on the Bhagavāt Gitā.

28. **The Sarartha Darsini**, a commentary on the Bhagavāt. The Gaudiya Math has published the Bhagavāt with this commentary Sararthadarsini. Though Jiva Gosvāmi had written his Krama Sandarbha, it is not running commentary. In it Vishvanāth has commented on the whole of the Bhagavāt. In the beginning of it, Vishvanāth says that he sets forth the views of Sri Chaitanya basing them on Sanātana's Vaishnava Toshani and Jiva's Sandarbhas (Verse No.3). He amply cites the work and views of Rūpa and other Gaudiya Masters and of Sridhara in his commentaries to support his interpretation of it. It is dated as having been completed in the month of Māgha. Saka 1626 (Feb. 1705 A.D.) We have already noticed that his Krishna Bhāvanamrita was completed in 1679 A.D. The best period of his literary activities seems to have been the 25 years since the date of the Krishna Bhāvanamrita to that of his Sarartha Darsini, which may be his last work.

29. **Sukhavartini** a commentary on Kavikarmapur's Ânanda Vrindāvan Champu. It was written while the author was living at Rādhākund.[1]

MANOHARADĀS

Manoharadās was an ascetic Vaishnava scholar and contemporary of Vishvanāth, living at Rādhākund. He was an elegant writer of the history of the sect. He evinces a good knowledge of Sanskrit. He is the author of an historical treatise called Anuragavalli, written in Bengali verse, dealing with the life of Srinivās Âchārya of Bengal and his missionary activities. He says nothing about his own life and home before he went to live with his Guru Rāmā Saran Ghattoraj of Vaigankola near Katwa in the Burdwan district on renouncing his home. His Guru, Rāmā Saran, was the disciple of Rāmā Gharan Ghakravarti, disciple of Srinivās Âchārya. Rāmā Saran's father was

[1] Eggling's catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the India Office No.645 Vaishnava Manjusa Part I p. 107

Krishnadās who was also the disciple of Srinivās Âchārya. So Manohara was the fourth in discipular succession from Srinivās Âchārya. Anuragavalli is dated in Saka 1618 (1696 A.D.). It is written after he was sent by his Guru Rāmā Charan to Vrindāvan. The author informed us that his Guru sent him to Vrindāvan telling him that he would join him there the following year. When the visit was due, he saw the coming of his Guru in a dream but a few days later he heard of Guru's disappearance. He composed Sanskrit verses expressing his deep feeling for him and glorifying his love of God. Manohara may have arrived in Vrindāvan immediately after Vishvanāth's arrival.

He made a searching inquiry into the history of the four sects of the Vaishnavas and was able to acquire material, which he marshalled with great skill and economy of words. He tells us that when he was searching for the origin of the Gaudiya sect, one Pitāmbara das, a disciple of the order of Gopālguru, a contemporary devotee of Sri Chaitanya and founder of the Rādhākanth Math at Puri, then living at the monastery of Jiva Gosvāmi, lent him the manuscript of Gopālguru's book in which he found the list of the Guru's hierarchy from Sri Chaitanya to Sri Mādhvāchārya who has been accepted as the original formal traditional Âchārya of the Gaudiya sect. Manohara deals with the question as to why Sri Chaitanya, being an *Avatara* of God and founder of the sect should acknowledge allegiance to others. He cites a verse from the Padmapurāna to the effect that the Mantra, if administered by anybody outside the pale of the pure theistic sects, would bear no fruit and that in the age of Kali, there are four such sects, i.e. those of Madhva, Rāmānuja, Vishnusvāmi and Nimbārka, the original founders of which sects were Brahma, Sri, Rudra and the Sanaka brothers respectively. For the sake of this scriptural injunction Sri Chaitanya accepted Sri Madhva as the ancient *Âchārya* of his sect. Manohara has written this valuable historical book with moderation and conscientiousness. Dr. D.C. Sen seems wrong in attributing the authorship of this book to Narahari

Chakravarti, the author of Bhaktiratnakar.[1] Manohara not only gives his name as its author and the account of his own life in relation to his *Guru* Rāmā Sarana, but the later writer Narahari Chakravarti also cites Anuragavalli attributing it to Manoharadās.[2] This Manoharadās should be distinguished from the author of Dinomani Chandrodaya who was the great grandson of Vaninath Pattanayaka, brother of Rāmānanda Rāy and attendant of Sri Chaitanya.

Vaidagdha Vilasa

This is an important volume of Manoharadās. It is a devotional account of the Love of Rādhā and Krishna as manifested in their pleasure and dalliance. The author quotes verses from Rūpa's Nātakas Ujjvalanilamani, Stavamālā, Lalitā Madhava, Vidagdha Madhava, Bhagavāta, Gitāgovinda, Vishnupurāna, *Krishnadās* Govindalilāmrita, Baladeva's Siddhāntaratna, Bharata's Sutras, and so on, and arranges them as his subjects demand and renders them into sweet Bengali metrical verses. It is divided into twelve *Prakasas* or chapters, the first chapter of which is devoted to the description of Sri Chaitanya's Divinity and magnanimous gift to the world in the form of God-love. The author composed several stanzas of a Sanskrit poem in praise of Sri Chaitanya. He owes obedience to Rūpa who is regarded as the pioneer in describing Rasa and similar subjects in the Gaudiya sect.

RĀDHĀDAMODAR SARMA

He was the most important colleague of Vishvanāth Chakravarti. He was one of the great philosophers in the Gaudiya sect. Rājā Rājendralal Mitra seems wrong in supposing him to be an Odiya by birth.[3] His disciple Baladev distinctly tells us that he was a *Kanauj Brahmana*.[4] He settled at Vrindāvan as an ascetic of the Gaudiya sect being the disciple of Nayanananda Deva, grandson of Rasika Murāri of Orissa. Baladeva

[1] V.L.M.B.P.178 [2] Dr R. K. Taranga. IV. p.141 [3] Mitra's Notices IX p. 228
[4] Commentary on Siddhantaratna. VIII. 34

Vidyābhusan celebrates his *Guru* Rādhādamodar in his Siddhāntaratna or Bhāsya-Pithaka (VIII.34) "May the dust of the feet of Rādhādāmodara, at the rise of which I experienced great bliss, be glorified." Baladeva's disciple Udhavadās, in his Upasana Paddhati, gives us the following list of Gurus from Baladeva upwards:

1) Baladeva, 2) Rādhādamodara, 3) Nayanananda Deva, 4) Rasikānanda Murāri 5) Shyāmānanda, 6) Hridaya Chaitanya, 7) Gauridas 8) Sri Chaitanya

Vedānta Shyāmāntaka

This is a philosophical treatise in which Rādhādamodar interprets the Vedānta in the light of the Gaudiya Vaishnava faith. It contains 643 *Slokas* in six chapters.

Mr. Krishna Gopāl Bhakta in his introduction to his edition of Baladeva's Govinda Bhāsya likes to attribute the authorship of Vedānta Shyāmāntaka to Baladeva. But all the manuscripts contain the said verse attributing its authorship to Rādhādamodar. (A contribution towards an index to the bibliography of Indian Philosophical systems by Hall Fiszedward P.103. Mitra's notices of Manuscripts Vol. IX No. 3145 P.228. Suchipattra 6. or the list of Mss of Fort William, the Asiatic society Calcutta, 1838.8.) Collection of Mss belonged to the late Pandita Rādhā Krishna of Lahore and so on. It is perhaps the first book of its kind connected with the sect in which the author tried to assimilate the Vedānta as a whole in the Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophical system. Though Sri Chaitanya Himself in his discourse and Jiva in his Sandarbhas made ample use of the Aphorisms of the Vedānta, both to support their views and to interpret the Vedānta in the light of their faith, accepting the Bhagavāta as the connecting link, none before Rādhādamodar had tried to appropriate it in its entirety to base the Gaudiya Vaishnava faith upon it, as the other school had interpreted it in commentaries of their own, according to their particular doctrines, and built up a literature upon it. For instance,

[1] Vaishnava Majusa Part III.P.75

Rāmānuja has given the interpretation of the Vedānta in his Sribhāsya in the light of his *Visistadvaita* system of philosophy and has further written Vedānta Tattvasāra or the philosophy of the Vedānta, as reflected in his particular line of thought. We have not any such book on the Vedānta in the Gaudiya sect before the time of Rādhādamodar. The earlier Âchāryas were quite satisfied with the Bhagavāt, which they used to interpret as the true commentary of the Vedānta. Sanātana and Jiva earnestly endeavoured to establish this view of Sri Chaitanya. They busied themselves in writing original works on their own faith rather than imposing it on the Vedāntas and Upanishads in the form of commentaries on them. It was only the Bhagavāt on which they worked with indefatigable labour. Jiva's commentary on Gopāl Tāpani, a section of the Pippalada Sakha of the Atharvaveda, and that on Brahma Samhita are too brief and are outside the sphere of the Upanisads, and the Vedant which remained almost untouched in this sect till the time of Rādhādamodar except that Jiva and others had cited verses from them in support of their views. To get support from them is one thing and to build upon them is another. When a sufficient quantity of original works had been produced on the new faith, it was the duty on the part of the later *Âchāryas* to go beyond the confines and suffuse all other classical literature with their new light in the form of commentaries and glosses. Rādhādamodar made the first attempt in this regard and wrote his Vedānta Shyāmānanda appropriating the Vedānta to the service of the *Bhakti* cult of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. We will soon see that this attempt was fully carried out by his brilliant disciple Baladev and was crowned with success.

BALADEV VIDYĀBHUSAN

Baladev is believed to have been born in a *non-Brahmana Khāndaite* family at a village near Remuna in the Balesvara district, Orissa. We know very little about the history of his family and life before he came to Sri Vrindāvan in his

youth to study Vaishnava literature under the Gaudiya ascetics. We know from tradition, as it came down through his successive disciples, that he defeated the Rāmānandain ascetics in a scriptural controversy at Galtā in Saka 1626 (1704 A.D.) and finally established the recognition of the Gaudiya sect. His commentary on Rūpa's Utkalia Vallari is dated in Saka 1686 (1764 A.D.). It seems to be his latest wrok. This famous incident at Galtā occasioned him to write his famous Govinda Bhāsya, the Gaudiya commentary on the Vedānta. He must have been at least twenty years old. It will not be unreasonable, unless we get some positive historical data, to assume that he was probably born in the eighties of the 17th century.

His natural predilection for the religion of Sri Chaitanya is certainly due to his having been born in the Balesvara district which was converted to the Gaudiya Vaishnava faith by the great missionary activities of Shyāmānanda and Rasikānanda Murāri. The preaching zeal was kept alive with great vigour by Rasikānanda's son Rādhānanda, grandson of Nayanananda and others. The latter was the grand-preceptor of Baladev whose immediate Guru was Rādhādamodar. Rādhādamodar was then incharge of the Shyamsundar *Kunja*, at Vrindāvan, a monastery founded by Shyāmānanda. Baladev was initiated by him and became immersed in his studies of the Vedānta under his direct Guru Rādhādamodar, the Bhagavāta under Vishvanāth, and other *Bhakti* literatures under Pitāmbharadās. As Rūpa and Sanātana taught Jiva, so Vishvanāth and others trained Baladev, who strikingly resembles Jiva in the exact range of his interest and knowledge. He is believed in the Gaudiya sect to be an incarnation of Jiva. We shall see that as Jiva was pre-eminently a philosopher and grammarian, so also was Baladev. Baladev in his Siddhāntaratna (verse 35) thus says of Pitāmbhara 'by the grace of Pitāmbhara, I have gathered in this book the philosophies of others who controlled their minds by the study of the Vedānta. May this book please the learned.'

This Pitāmbhara seems to be the author of Bhagavāta-Tattva-Dipa-Prakasavarana-Bhanga.[1] This manuscript was copied in 1796 A.D. The book consists of 2990 *slokas*.

Baladev possessed extraordinary intelligence and immense strength of mind not only to defend the sect from the aggressive animosity of the rival sects but also to overwhelm them by his sheer force of intellect. This age of Vishvanāth Chakravarti and Baladev was the second great period in the history of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. Baladev's career was particularly remarkable for two broad achievements, one was his fight against the rival sects, and the other was his Gaudiya Vaishnava interpretation of the Vedānta and Upanishads, in the form of commentaries and independent treatises on them.

A great controversy arose between the Rāmānandin sect and the Gaudiya Gosvāmin priests of Govindadeva at Galtā or Ghati, which is very close to the old capital of Amber. We know that the prince of Amber had installed the Govinda deva of Rūpa Gosvāmi at Galtā to save it from molestation by the Mohammedan iconoclasts. The headquarters of the Rāmānandi sect in northern India has been situated at Galtā since the time of Paihari Krishnadās who initiated Prithvirāj, great-grand-father of Mānsimh. The prince of Amber made a grant of landed property for the use of the Rāmānandi sect.[2] Rājā Jay Simha II built a large temple at Galtā and installed there in the Govinda Deva of Mansinha's Guru Rūpa. The Rāmānandin sect was certainly chagrined to find itself superseded by the Gaudiya sect in the favour of the princes of Amber. During the early days of Rājā Mānsimh and his immediate successors were in close touch with the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters; so the Rāmānandi sect could not venture to express their sectarian animosity against the Gaudiya sect. When the strong personality and scholarship of the Gaudiya Gosvāmi priests of the Govinda temple at Galtā diminished and their successors became ordinary priests, the learned ascetics of the local Rāmānandi sect attacked them under

[1] Kielhorn's list of Mss. Purchased

[2] Vasti Prakasika Tika on Nabhaji's Bhaktamala, quoted by Gaudiya. VI. p.206

various pretexts to deprive them of the service of the Govinda temple and to expel the Gaudiyas from the place. The Prince Jay Simha II was distressed to hear that the Gaudiya were not eligible to act as priests in the temple on the ground that they had no sectarian locus standi. They argued, citing the verses from the Padma Purānā "that Mantra however is never effective unless a person actually enrolls himself as an active member of any of the recognized theistic communities which, according to the said text, are four in number in the Iron age, founded respectively by four great Âchāryas viz. Vishnusvami, Nimbarka, Rāmānuja and Madhva, who in their turn accepted Rudra, Sanakas, Sri and Brahma as the first Gurus of their respective hierarchies. They further challenged the Gaudiyas to a scriptural controversy as to the validity of their philosophical system in conformity with the Vedānta and Upanishads. The Bengali priests of the Govinda temple at Galtā failed to defend their position, but Rājā Jay Simha II, himself a great scholar, could not bring himself to expel the Gaudiya priests and hand over the temple and Deity to the Rāmānandi sect without first confronting them with the leaders of the Gaudiya sect. He therefore invited Vishvanāth Chakravarti to come to Galtā and to silence the rival party, if he could, by convincing them of the solidarity of their faith and establishing their sectarian recognition. Vishvanāth was then too old to come to Galtā but sent his two young pupils, Baladev and Krishnadev, two rising stars in the firmament of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world.

There were two broad questions at issue: whether the Gaudiyas belonged to the Madhva sect, in which case they should identy themselves with the parent sect in their system of philosophy and ritual, or whether they were independent, in which case they must have their commentaries on the Vedānta. It is an established custom that any sect asserting its independence should have its own commentary on the Vedānta in the light of its particular faith by deriving support from its aphorisms. The Gaudiyas had been maintaining a peculiar position, tracing their historical origin from the Madhva sect, but without

accepting their Sutra Bhāsya as their own because they upheld the *Achintya Bhedabhedavada* docrtine whereas Madhva founded and advocated *Suddha-Dvaitavada* in his Sutra Bhāsya. The Gaudiyas differ so much from the Madhva's in their philosophical system and ritual that other sects do not consider them as Madhvas. Neither Sri Chaitanya nor the six Gosvāmins accepted Madhva's Sutra Bhāsya in its entirety as the official version of the Gaudiya sect, nor did they write any separate commentary of their own. The Gosvāmins have no doubt cited commentaries and views of Madhva in support of their faith but that does not mean that they accepted them entirely. They took as much from Madhva as from Rāmānuja, Sridhara and other Âchāryas. Sri Chaitanya in His discourse with the *Mayavada* ascetics of Benares and on many other occasions tried to interpret the Bhagavāt Puran as the true commentary of the Vedānta. We have observed in connection with his life how he established it. Sanātana Gosvāmi in his Brihat Bhagavātamrita, and Jiva in his Sandarbhas, earnestly endeavoured to stengthen this view of Sri Chaitanya, that the Bhagavāt should be accepted as the standard commentary on the Vedānta. But we should bear in mind that the Bhagavāt is not the exclusive possession of the Gaudiya sect. It is an ancient book and every Vaishnava sect accepts it as authoritative. The Rāmānandi sect demanded that either the Gaudiyas should wholly identify themselves with the Madhvas, accepting their Bhāsyas and mode of worship, and so in toto, or that they should publish their own commentary on the Vedānta if they were to be a recognized independent sect.

Baladev followed a middle course, that is to say, he traced the sectarian origin of the Gaudiya sect and some of its fundamental points of doctrine and philosophy to those of Madhva whilst emphasizing the original contribution and distinctiveness of the doctrine and practice of the Gaudiyas towards perfection, which placed their system higher than the system of the Madhvas. We have already discussed the points of similarity between the Gaudiyas

and the Madhvas in the chapter dealing with Madhva and his sect in relation to the Gaudiyas.

Baladev endeavoured to impress on his rivals how much the Gaudiyas had developed Madhva's certain points in their own way, which had culminated in the promulgation of their *Achintya-Bhedabhedavada*. The Gaudiyas do not differ from Madhva, but on the contrary, constructed in part the supestructure of their doctrine on the basis of Madhva's philosophy of difference between Jiva and Godhead. We have remarked elsewhere that though Madhva was the promulgator of the *Suddha Dvaita* system of philosophy, which is the theme of all his writings, yet it was he who for the first time gave the idea of and mentioned the *Achintya-Bhedabhedavada* theory in his Bhagavāt Tatparya[1], citing a verse from Brahma Tarka, an ancient treatise on Tantra.

Jiva Gosvāmi was aware of the existence of the clue to his *Achintya Bhedabhedavada* in Madhva's Bhagavāt Tatparya when in the beginning of his Sad-sandarbha he tells us that he followed Madhva's Bhagavāta Tatparyas and accepted reference in them to works such as Brahmatarka and so on, as genuine, though he could not consult the latter in the originals.

Baladev embodied this discussion of his later on in his Siddhāntaratna, Prameyaratnavali, his commentary on his Govinda Bhāsya and other works, acknowledging supreme allegiance to Madhva. Though the Rāmānandi leaders were convinced that the Gaudiyas were sprung from the Madhva sect and were indebted to Madhva in certain respects for their philosophical system, yet they demanded that Baladev should produce a commentary of their own on the Vedānta when doctrinally, they had more to say than Madhva had said, and had developed a distinct philosophical system of their own. It is true that though Madhva mentioned the *Achintya Bhedabhedavada*, yet he did not attach importance to it, nor develop it into a system. He stuck to his favourite doctrine of pure duality, which

[1] XI.7. p.51.

has been combined with monism in a way that is peculiar only to the Gaudiyas. The refusal of the Rāmānandin scholars to accept the Bhagavāt as a substiute for the commentary of the Vedānta occasioned Baladev to write his famous Govinda Bhāsya at Galtā to silence his rivals. It is said that Baladev was allowed eighteen days' time to write and produce their Sutra Bhāsya. Baladev tells us in his Bhāsya Pithaka that God Govinda Himself directed and encouraged him in a dream to write it. Baladev finished it within the appointed time to the admiration of the prince, and again embarked on a disputation on it with Rāmānandi sect, and silenced all their arguments, establishing the supremacy of the Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy. The Gaudiya Vaishnava world is indebted to Baladev for saving the Gaudiya sect from disgrace at the hands of the rival sects and finally setting at rest all doubts about the recognition of it as an authorized sect. There is no doubt that if the Image of the Govindadeva of Rūpa Gosvāmi, which is the principal Image of the sect, had been seized by the rival sect, and if the Bengali Gosvāmi priests had been driven out of Amber, the prospects of the Gaudiya community in western India would have received a great setback. The wide-spread success of the Gaudiya Mission had caused jealousy to the other sects which took advantage of the period of decline after the death of Jiva Gosvāmi and before the arrival of Vishvanāth and Baladev, in which period there was hardly any Gaudiya Vaishnava of extraordinary genius at Vraja to stand against the oppression of the aggressive sects.

Until the time of Rādhādamodar and Baladev, the Gaudiya Masters were self-sufficient by creating their original works on the new faith, but they had their value only within the sect. The people outside its pale could hardly be expected to attach a much importance and to submit to its authority, as they did to the classical scriptures such as Upanishads, Vedānta and so on. Baladev conceived the idea of appealing to the public mind and inviting its interest in the Gaudiya Vaishnava doctrine, through the commentaries of the sect on the classical scriptures, which

have been established as authoritative in the country. He resolved to write both commentaries and treatise on the Vedānta and Upanishads with a view to imposing the Gaudiya doctrine on the country and showing to the world that the Vedānta, Upanishads and other ancient authorities support it. If Baladev had not produced his monumental volume on the classical scriptures, the world would have neglected the Gaudiya sect, saying that it had no foundation on the Vedānta and Upanishads and was not valid, and consequently not acceptable. The Indian religious mind is extremely conservative and refuses to accept any idea, however noble it might be, if it is not supported by the Vedānta and other old scriptures. The Gaudiya sect would have been missupposed to be limited within its narrow confines but for Baladev. If Baladev had not prepared the ground by means of his solid philosophical volumes, the wonderful treasures of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature of the Gosvāmins would have been denied the opportunity of gaining adequate appreciation from the savants.

Baladev returned to Vrindāvan in triumph. Vishvanāth greeted his victorious pupils Baladev and Krishnadev with the utmost joy. It was the greatest happiness in his old age to realize that he would leave two such eminent leaders to further the cause after his death. Baladev's career is remarakable for his many-sided qualities. As a writer he proved a great polymath. He was as vigorous as Jiva as his preaching. He was also a typical ascetic. After the disappearance of Vishvanāth he successfully directed the movement throughout the Gaudiya Vaishnava world from its headquarters at Vraja. Orissa contributed no less than Bengal to the success of the movement. Of the Orissan leaders, Baladev is most important, not only in guiding it during the most crucial period of its history but in enriching it with an abundance of literature of abiding quality. We do not know how long he lived. His commentary on Rūpa's Utkalikavallari is dated in Saka 1686 (1764), when he may have been about 86 years of age. It seems to be his latest work. If he disappeared a few years after this work of his, he must have lived to the good old age of about ninety.

Baladev may be called the second Jiva in the history of the Gaudiya Vaishnava. It is very true, indeed, that history repeats itself. The range of interest and knowledge of Baladev may be compared with that of Jiva. These two *Âchāryas* are the mightiest writers on philosophy, the greatest grammarians and no less important as writers of *Kāvya*. Jiva prepared the solid philosophy of the sect. Baladev projected it into the heart of all-important classical writings. Both Jiva and Baladev were original writers. The later owed the highest obedience to his predecessor and inherited his tremendous intellectual force in refuting the arguments of the rival sets.

BALADEV'S WORKS

He deals with Philosophy, Grammar and Kāvya Alamkāra and incidentally with history. His works may be divided into two classes – original works and commentaries on previous works. We shall make a brief note of them.

Govinda Bhāsya

This is the earliest and most famous of all the works of Baladev. It is the commentary on the Vedānta written in the light of the *Achintya-Bhedabhedavada* doctrine of the Gaṇdiya Vaishnavas. Baladev, being the latest of all classical writers on the subject, has been able to survey all existing thought on it and to establish the supremacy and perfection of his own theory. His intellectual qualifications proved exactly adequate to the tremendous task of reviewing the philosophical thought of India. He has succeeded in establishing a position of comparative excellence for the Gaudiya sect. As a philosophical writer, in this Bhāsya and in other works, he places the theme of the sect in an appropriate setting by basing his case upon the most effective polemics against the philosophy of Sankara. The leading contention on his critical side may be summed up as an attack upon the *Kevaladvaitavada* of the *Mayavadins* that *Brahman* is undifferentiated oneness, the world is false and Jiva has no objective reality of its own in an absolute sense. Positively, Baladev's arguments, apart from their admirable

advocacy in favour of theistic conception, turn in a very large measure upon the *Achintya-Bhedabhedavada* view that the relation between God and Jivas is, though inconceivable to human minds, identical and dualistic at the same time. He shows at great length the philosophical difficulties that arise, if one of the two views, dualism and monism, is taken exclusively and at the expense of the other. Philosophically speaking, either the dualism of Madhva or the absolute monism of Sankara cannot be accepted as wholly valid on the authority of the *Srutis*, which seem to express both views. Baladev in his writings earnestly endeavoured to reconcile the two apparently contradictory views of the *Srutis*. Shankara seems to base his system to some extent on an inconclusive interpretation of that portion of the *Sruti*, which speaks of absolute monism, and Madhva cites that which supports dualism. Each of them refers only to that portion of the *Sruti*, which is favourable to their theory, ignoring what goes against them. Baladev seeks to show that every word of the *Sruti* is equally valid and has equal value. In the *Achintya-Bhedabhedavada* he accommodates both views. The importance of Baladev's balanced intellectualism lies in the fact that he could make the two points meet without committing any logical flaw. This Bhāsya of Baladev and his other works reveal his gift of argument at its best, which is really remarkable for its thoroughness, clarity and wit. We cannot but submit to the general validity of Baladev's central message of *Achintya Bhedabhedavada* doctrine. His works constitute a very notable addition to the theistic philosophical literature of India. Through Baladev's works the Gaudiya Vaishnava came into explicit contact with other recognized thought in India and gained a very conspicuous place in Indian religious society. Baladev's versatility and power of assimilation cannot be questioned at all. His philosophical writings have an intrinsic excellence of their own and are entitled to be regarded as a perennial source of potential illumination in philosophical thought and experience.

We have already observed that his disputation with the Rāmānandi sect caused him to write this book. It is said

that it was written within eighteen days. According to another tradition, Baladev took three months to finish it. There is no doubt that while he was studying the Vedānta under his Gurus Rādhādamodar and Pitambar, he was thinking of writing its commentary for the Vaishnava students of the Vedānta. His discourse with his rivals at Galtā occasioned him to find it. It is the official commentary of the Gaudiya sect on the Vedānta. He says in his Siddhāntaratna Govindadev directed him to write his Bhāsya (VIII.31), that he named after Him and dedicated to His pleasure. Baladev used to worship this Govinda Image of Rūpa Gosvāmi, that is why he is also known by another name of Govindadas or servant of Govinda.

He himself has written a sub-commentary on this commentary "Govinda Bhāsya". This sub-commentary is not his immediate work because it refers to his Siddhāntaratna or Bhāsya Pithaka (in its beginning) which mentions Govinda Bhāsya by name (verse VIII.31). This sub-commentary begins with an obeisance to the Govinda Image, which as Baladev mentions, was installed by Rūpa and Sanātana who dispelled the darkness of *Māyāvādism*. Next he celebrates Jiva saying: "May Jiva who delivered all rival thinkers belonging to *Samkha, Pasupata, Vivarta* and other schools, be my recourse." He proceeds with salutations to Sri Ghaitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita and others. Baladev deals with the historical origin of the sect before he begins his subject, tracing it to the Madhva sect. He gives us a list of the successive *Âchāryas* from Madhva to Sri Ghaitanya through the line of Padmanābha and Narahari who were immediate disciples of Madhva. Baladev seems to have got the list from the writings of Kavikarnapur's Gaurganoddesa Dipika, Gopāl Guru's Sadhana Paddhati, and the works of Dhyāna Ghandra, Chaitanyadās, and Manohardās.

Baladev tells us beforehand that his views and arguments in his commentary would be in obedience to Sri Bhagavāt Purānā based on the approval of Sri Chaitanya and in accordance with the views of Madhva *(Sri Chaitanyahari svikrta Madhva muni mataanusaratah)* or

in other words, the philosophy of the commentary of the Gaudiya sect is mainly based on Madhva's system modified by the teaching of the Bhagavāt which Sri Chaitanya particularly emphasized to form His own system of philosophy.

Siddhānta Ratna or Bhāsya Pithaka

This is an original work embodying the arguments to support and strengthen the nine truths that have been dealt with in his Govinda Bhāsya. He says the following to that effect, 'May this golden seat of Siddhāntaratna be fit to receive the Bhāsya of the Vedānta which expresses Krishna and which contains the nine truths' (VIII.32)

It begins with the author's obeisances to Shyāma Sundara (Krishna), Sri Chaitanya, Vyāsa, Rūpa and Sanātana. The two last names are described as having arisen like the Sun and Moon to dispel the darkness of *Māyāvādism*. At the end, he sings the glory of Govinda Deva. Baladev defines the basic principle of his philosophy in the last verse of this book 'Let my bee-like heart drink the God-love honey of the lotus-like Siddhāntaratna or the flowers of principles which were brought to blossom by Sri Chaitanya and disseminated by Ânanda Tirtha (Madhva)'.

Prameyaratnavalli

This is a very important treatise written in a concise form dealing with the nine principles of the Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy. They are as follows: 1) Vishnu is the highest truth (Paratattva); 2) Vishnu is knowable through the Vedas or is the object of the Vedas; 3) the world is true; 4) Jivas are different from Vishnu; 5) there exists a gradation among the souls in accordance with their status either in connection or in bondage; 6) Jivas are servants of Vishnu. 7) Salvation (Mukti) lies in reaching Vishnu's lotus-feet; 8) Undivided devotion is the means to that end (Salvation); 9) Sruti, direct sense perception and inference constitute the triple evidence. The author has accepted the above nine truths from Madhva and developed and moulded them according to the Gaudiya Vaishnava views by means of

citations from the Katha, Svetasvatara, Gopāla, Mundaka, Chandogya, Isavasya Upanisads, Bhagavāt, Vishnupurān, Nārada Pancharātra, Mahābhārat, Gitā, Mahāvaraha, Harivamsa, Gautamitantra, Smriti, Vedāntasutra, Kauthumi section of the Vedas, Brahma Samhita. Verses from Padmapurān have also been cited in emphasizing the importance of obedience to any of the four recognized sects of Vaishnavas.

It begins with the author's homage to the three main Deities of the Gaudiya sect, Govinda, Gopināth and Madan Mohan, invoking Their grace by which the author believes he will write these subtle nine truths. In the second verse, he salutes Sri Ghaitanya together with Nityānanda and Advaita. In the next five verses he traces the origin of the Gaudiya sect to Madhv's supplying a list of Âchāryas from Madhva to Sri Chaitanya. Next he enumerates the nine truths before he proceeds to elaborate them in nine chapters respectively. At the end the author says 'Let the learned place in their hearts these nine jewels of truths which Madhva Ânanda Tirtha composed.' He ends the book with this following homage to Sri Ghaitanya, "May Sri Ghaitanya Who was the soul of Murāri (Rasika) and by whose grace the Gajapati (Pratāprudra) became faultless and calm (*Niravadya* and *nirvrtiman*)..." This verse also occurs in the beginning of his Siddhānta Darpan. Baladev seems to delight in thinking that Sri Ghaitanya greatly blessed Pratap, the Emperor of Orissa, from whose country he came. Prameyaratnavali with its Sanskrit commentary, 'Kantimālā' has been published by Gokula Gosvāmi and also by the Gaudiya Math. The author of the Kantimālā Tika calls himself by his academic appellation of Vedānta-Vagisa.

Baladev himself has written a commentary on his Siddhāntaratna.

Siddhānta Darpana

It is a treatise on the Vedānta containing various arguments in favour of the Gaudiya Vaishnava system of philosophy. Baladev's learned disciple Nandana Misra has written a

commentary on it. The said commentary in its last verse contains its author's name.

Commentaries on ten Upanishads

Baladev had also written commentaries on ten of the principal Upanishads – Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Munda, Brahdaranyaka (introduction to the Gaudiya Math edition of Baladev's commentaries on the Gitā). The Gaudiya Math has published Baladev's commentaries on the Isopanished together with Madhva's commentary and Thākur Bhakti Vinode's gloss "Vedarkadidhitih".

Commentary on the Gitā

Baladev has written a running commentary on the Gitā in the light of the *Achintyabhedabhevada* theory. The Gaudiya has published it.

He is said to have written a commentary on the Bhagavāt.

Baladev's other books on philosophy are the following:

Commentary on Jiva's Sadasandarbha

It has been published by Shyāmalal Gosvāmi at Calcutta, and others.

A commentary on Gopālatapani

A Commentary on Rūpa's Laghu Bhagavātamrita

His grammatical works

He has written a grammatical treatise called Vyakarana Kaumudi, which has not yet been published. Its manuscript is with Mr. Rādhā Charana Vidyābagisa[1]

His Kāvya works.

Asvairya Kadamvini

This is a poem in praise of Krishna's Life and Career at Vrindāvan and Gokula. There are 224 verses in 7 Vristis or chapters.[2] The editor of the Gaudiya ascribes its authorship to Vishvanāth Chakravarti (Vol.i.part XVIII.

[1] Gaudiya I. part 16 p.2. [2] Mitra's notices of Sanskrit manuscripts. VII. No.2512. p.263

p.8.). But the last verse of the manuscript under Mitra's notice contains the name of Baladev Vidyābhushan. It has seven chapters.

Sāhitya Kaumudi

This commentary by Baladev on Bharata's Kārikās Kāvyalaksna, on which several other commentaries such as Kāvyaprakasa, Kāvya Pradipa were written previous to Baladev, who writes thus at the end: 'I have explained the whole of the Kāvya-laksanam. This is the short commentary on the Sutras of Bharata, which has been composed with the help of the existing commentaries of Mammata, and others, by Vidyābhusana." Prof Peter Peterson clearly brought out the wrong notion that the Kārikās on which Baladev wrote his Sāhitya Kaumudi were written by Mammata.[1]

Baladev begins this treatise on *Alamkāra*, as usual, with the following homage to Sri Chaitanya, "I worship that Vishnu – the ocean of delight, by Whose mercy, when He dwelt among men in the form of Sri Chaitanya, Gajapati's sins were washed away and instantly found peace. Him none can conquer: yet His saints subdue Him. He suggests the title of it in the next verse, 'In this work of mine, the learned will find (1) the Suttras Bharata wrote (2) a succinct commentary and examples whose only theme is Krishna's praise: this is the title to their consideration.'

He closes the book of ten chapters with a supplementary chapter on matters not discussed by authority. He says: "May Krishna shine in my heart, through His mercy nothing is wanting to His faithfull ones. In the following chapter some rules which are wanting in Bharata's work will be discussed."

[1] Peterson's 2nd report of operation in search of Sanskrit Mss in the Bombay circle. April 1883-1884, published in extra number of journal of the Bombay branch of Royal Asiatic Society 1884 p.10-12

Its commentary 'Krishnanandini

Baladev has written a commentary styled Krishnanandini on his own Sāhitya Kaumudi. Prof. Peter Peterson has given notice of its manuscript in the collection of the Mahārājā of Alwar.[1]

Another of Baladev's books on *Alamkār* is his commentary of Jayadeva's Chandraloka (Introduction to the Gaudiya Math edition of Baladev's commentary on the Gitā.)

Chanda Kaustubha

It is an elaborate treatise in 270 verses on versification. The different metres are all illustrated by stanzas in praise of Krishna. It begins with the famous verse *'Nityam Nivasatu Hridaye Chaitanyatma Murāri'* etc. which is so common in Baladev's writing. Rājā Rājendralal Mitra is not correct in attributing its authorship to Rādhādamodar, Guru of Baladev.[2] Its author at the end pays his respect to Rādhādamodar saying that he (Rādhādamodar) is the jewel of the Brahmana family and the best beloved of Hari and so on. It is quite clear that Rādhādamodar's disciple pays him respect, so its author must be someone other than Rādhādamodar. The two manuscripts of it contain the name of Vidyābhusan (Baladev) as its author[3]. It has a commentary styled Chanda Kaustubha Tika by Krishnarama.[4]

The editor of the Gaudiya Math edition of Baladev's commentary on the Gitā tells us in its introduction that Baladev himself has written a commentary on his own Chanda Kaustubha.

Kāvya Kaustubha. This is a treatise on Kāvya.[5]

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[1] Extra number of the journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society 1884. XVII. No. XLIV p.99-100.

[2] Notices of Sanskrit Mss. VIII. p.22 No.2570

[3] Catalogue of Sanskrit Mss existing in Oudh, compiled by Pandit Devi Prasad. VIII.6.XIV.40

[4] Catalogue of Sanskrit Mss in private Libraries of the North West Provinces, compiled by order of Govt. of N.W.P. Part i. p.616-617. printed at Benares. The manuscript is with Mr. Veni Dutta of Benares.

[5] G.M. edition of Baladev's commentary on the Gita (introduction).

His commentary on Rūpa's Nātaka Chandrika or dramaturgy.

His commentary on Rūpa's Stavamala. As we have noticed, it was written in Saka 1686 (1764 A.D.) It has been printed by different editors.

Baladev and his friend Krishnadeva Sārvabhauma seem to have disappeared before the seventies of the 17th century and were succeeded by their disciples of two generations, the most important of which were Vrindāvan Chandra Chakravarti, Uddhavadās, Vanka Vihari Vidyābhusan and others.

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It is an elaborate treatise [illegible] The different metres are all i[illegible] of Krishna. It begins with [illegible] *Nivasita Hrindavana Chandra* [illegible] common in Baladev's writing[illegible] [illegible] of Radha [illegible] he and pays his respects [illegible] Radha [illegible] of the Brahmana family a[illegible] beloved of Hari [illegible] quite clear that [illegible] disciple [illegible] someone other [illegible] manner [illegible] author. It is [illegible] Vrinda [illegible] Vibhu [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] dya [illegible] of the [illegible] tells us in its introduction [illegible] commentary [illegible] on [illegible] is a [illegible]

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ACTIVITIES IN BENGAL FROM THE 17TH TO THE 18TH CENTURY

Raghunandan Thākur, Srinivās, Narottam, Achyuta, Virabhadra and other leaders all seem to have died possibly by the end of the 16th Century. Their descendants and disciples succeeded them and continued the movement, which was by then firmly established. It must be admitted that these successors who worked in the 17th Century in Bengal were not as vigorous as Âcharyas ought to be. In the latter part of the 17th Century a great Âcharya in the character of Vishvanāth arose but he had to hasten to its, headquarters at Vraja, which had been rendered desolate by the fanatical Emperor Aurangzeb. He could not work in Bengal. Immediately after the death of Srinivās and his colleagues, Gati Govinda, son of Srinivās, Kanai Thākur, and Madan Thākur, son and grandson of Raghunandan, Divyasimha and Ghanashyām son and grandson of Govinda Kavirāj and others raised their heads. They were both preachers and poets. Ghanashyām's Gitāgovinda Rati Manjari a, poem written partly in Sanskrit and partly in Bengali is of abiding merit. Besides this, his many poems have been collected in later anthologies particularly in Vaishnavadās's Padakalpataru. It was mainly through songs and music that these workers preached the doctrine. There is another important Vaishnava preacher named Gopāldās who deserves our notice.

GOPĀLDĀS

He was a celebrated poet and writer on Rasa. We cannot give the exact date of his birth but his book Rādhākrishna

Rasa Kalpavalli is dated as having been written in Saka 1565 (1643 A.D.), so he may have been born towards the end of the 16th century. He gives us the genealogy of his family and that of his Guru Ratipati who was the great grandson of Raghunandan Thākur. He says that his ancestors Chakrapani and Mahānanda were two brothers. They lived at Srikand and were disciples of Raghunandan. They met Sri Chaitanya at Puri who blessed them by touching their heads with His leg. Chakrapani's son Nityānanda Chaudhuri, who was the father of Gangarām Chaudhuri. The latter's son was Shyāma Rāy who was the father of Madan Rāy and Gopāldās. Madana Rāy made the Bengali metrical Translation of Govindalilāmirta.

Gopāl expresses his deep humility saying that he was averse to God, illiterate and so on. It is the manner of a Vaishnava to make himself appear to be very humble. His father died when he was very young so his mother Chandravali brought him up. The family of his maternal grandfather Gaurangadās was also Vaishnava. Gaurangadās's father Madhusudhan used to play the *Khol* in the *Kirtana* party of Srikhanda at Puri during the lifetime of Sri Chaitanya. Raghunandan was the dancer of the said party. Gopāl studied under Rāmesvara Bhattacharya. He also pays his respects to Devidas Thākur, Rūpa, Ghataka (disciple of Srinivās), Jayarāmadās, Giridhara Chakravarti. Gaurangagatidās, Mukunda Gosvāmi, his uncle Krishnadās as his teachers. He was educated both at Jajigrām and Sudpur. Besides his Rādhā Krishna Rasa Kalpavalli, he has written many *Pada* poems, which are to be found in Vaisnava anthologies.

His book Rādhākrishna Rasa Kalpavalli in its 12th Chapter, deals with *Rasa*. He is one of those such as Yadunandan Thākur, Kavivallabha who have written treatises on *Rasa* in Bengali. All of them followed Rūpa's Sanskrit Ujjvalanilamani. He tells us that Srinivās's disciple and brother-in-law, Rāmā Charana Chakravarti entrusted him with the teaching of his disciples and this book was written for him. Gopāldās was also the author of

Sakhanirnayas of Narahari and Raghunandan Sarkar. Gopāldās's son Pitāmbara was also a good writer. He has written a book named Rasa Manjari dealing with the development of some topics taken from his father's book. Pitāmbara was the disciple of his father's *Guru's* son Sachinandan. The only result of the eventful period, worth mentioning was the development of *Pada* literature. Towards the end of the 17th century dawned another period of vitality and life in the Gaudiya Vaishnava history in Bengal. The descendants of Dvija Haridās Thākur and Srinivās Âchārya played a conspicuous part in this period.

Krishna Vallabh, Krishna Kinkar, Krishna Prasād and Krishna Kanta were four brothers who were the worthy descendants of Dvija Haridās a devoted follower of Sri Chaitanya. Haridās's sons Gokulānanda and Sridās were the disciples of Srinivās. Krishna Vallabha and his brothers are found to have lived at Teya in the Mursidavad district. All the brothers were great Vaishnava Scholars.

RĀJĀ SITĀRĀM

Rājā Sitārām, the great and last independent Hindu Rājā and warrior may have been born between 1657 and 58 A.D. Sitārām established his capital at Mahāmdadpur now in the district of Jessore. He was a terrible warrior.

The Rājā 's family was *Sakta* by religion. The *Sakta Guru* of the family came in conflict with the Vaishnava family of Krishna Vallabh. A great disputation took place under the auspices of Sitārām and Krishna Vallabha as to whether Vaishnavism was superior to *Saktaism* or vice versa. Krishna Vallabha totally defeated him and impressed Sitārām with the supremacy of Vaishnavism. This success of Krishna Vallabha led to the initiation of the king by him into the religion of Sri Chaitanya.[1] Like other Vaishnava Rājā Sitārām also became the most active patron of Vaishnavism. *Guru* Krishna Vallabha and his brother Krishna Prasād became his chief advisers. Krishna Vallabha did not accept any property from his disciple, but Sitārām

[1] Yadunatha's Life of Sitaram p.75

persuaded Krishna Prasād to accept the village of Yaspur, near Mahāmmadpur at the nominal rent of 24 rupees a year and gave ample property to his Guru's sons Ânanda Chandra and Gauri Chandra.

Like Rājā Vir Hāmvir, Sitārām resolved to establish another Vrindāvan in his territory by erecting temples and introducing Vaishnava education and culture. He founded a town and gave it the name of Kanaipur (the city of Krishna). Its surroundings were named Gokulnagar, Gopālpur, Hare Krishnapur, in the manner of Vrindāvan. They created the temple of Krishna Balarama in the centre of the new Vaishnava town. It is one of the finest temples in Bengal. The inscription reads: "This temple of Krishna was built by devotee Sitārām in the city of Yadupati (the city of the King of the Yadu race i.e. Krishna) for the pleasure of Krishna.[1]

It is a typical five-towered temple richly decorated with fine sculptures, illustrating the sports of Rādhā Krishna and Their Incarnations. Another Vaishnava temple of Lakshminarayana, according, to its inscription, was built in 1704 A.D. He erected many Vaishnava temples throughout his territory. Sitārām was not satisfied merely with the establishment and decoration of the Vaishnavaite town of Kanaipur but brought many Vaishnava leaders and preachers and caused them to settle in different parts of his territory. He turned many villages into Vaishnava colonies containing at least one Vaishnava temple each, and placed them under Vaishnava professors and teachers for teaching and training the people in Vaishnava doctrine, morality and culture.

What a vigorous patron of the Vaishnava faith he was may be judged from the simple fact that he established so many Vaishnava towns, villages and temples and within his very small territory. The Vaishnava religion had degenerated somewhat, at the hands of the illiterate masses of the country who had been converted in the 16th century as the consequence of the vigorous activities of Nityānanda,

[2] Krishna Vallabha,His Guru Sitaramacharit p.121

Srinivās, Narottam and others. The want of able leaders in the 17th Century was the main cause of its degeneracy among the common people. Sitārām tried his best to reform those abuses and encourage the masses to assimilate its morality and spirit.

It is needless to emphasize that Krishna Vallabha and Krishna Prasād were guiding this gigantic movement in Sitārām's territory. Sitārām was the most devoted adherent to his Guru. We should not think that Sitārām persecuted other sects. He never disregarded the *Sakta Guru* of his father, but he employed his energy and resources for the furtherance of Vaishnavism. Krishna Vallabha was indefatigable in fostering the well being of his beloved disciple. It is, said that Sitārām committed to memory almost all the poems of Vidyāpati and Chandidās.[1]

Innumerable Vaishnava temples, sculptures and large tanks are to be found at Mahāmmadpur and its neighborhood. The name of Sitārām ought to be written in golden letters in the annals of Vaishnava history. Krishna Vallabha and Krishna Prasād were certainly responsible for these tremendous activities in Eastern Bengal.

Premadās

Premadās was a remarkable Vaishnava who flourished between the last quarter of the 17th Century and the first quarter of the 18th. He was a typical Vaishnava combining great scholarship with asceticism. He says of himself at the end of his metrical translation of Kavikarnapura's Chaitanya Chandrodaya Natak that his full name was Purushottam Siddhānta Bagisa but his *Guru* gave him the name of Premadās by which he was known to the Vaishnava society. He refers to Rāmā Chandra Dās Gosvāmi grandson of Vamsivadana as his great grand *Guru*. Premadās was the youngest son of Gangādās Misra, son of Mukunda Misra, whose father was Jagannāth Misra who was a native of Kulnagar and a contemporary of Sri Chaitanya (Vamsi siksa). Premadās's brothers were Govindaram and

[1] Sitaramacharita, p.39

Rādhācharan who were also Vaishnavas. He went to Vrindāvan at the age of 16 and occupied himself in cooking for the Deity Govinda Deva of Vrindāvan, which, was, then at Kāmyavan under the incumbency of Krishna Charan Gosvāmi. The Deity was removed there to assume molestation by Aurangzeb. His brother brought him back home. Premadās was a vigorous preacher throughout his life.

His works

1) The Bengali metrical translation of Kavikarnapura's Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nātak, completed in Saka 1634 (1712 A.D.)
2) Vamsi Siksa, dated Saka 1638 (1716 A.D.)
3) Chaitanya Chandrodaya Kaumudi[1]
4) Ânanda Vairava [2]

RĀDHĀMOHAN THĀKUR

He is perhaps the greatest Âchārya of this period and a contemporary of Baladeva Vidyābhusan, the head of the movement at its headquarters at Vrindāvan. In his Padakalpataru, Vaishnavadās tells us that Rādhāmohan was the replica of Srinivās Âchārya whose descendent he was. Rādhāmohan in his Padamrita Samudra calls one Jagadānanda his Guru.[3] Jagadānanda's father and Guru was Krishnaprasād.

Next he mentions Gatigovinda and Srinivās. We are not sure whether he gives us the full list of successive ancestors from Srinivās to Jagadānanda, or the first and last most important two, neglecting the intervening ones or whether he mentions his Guru and father and his own illustrious ancestors, Srinivās and Gatigovinda. His description is not clear so that we can conclude that it is a genealogy. If we believe it to be so, he should be the great great grandson of Srinivās. It is not improbable to assume it from the

[1] S.P.P. vol. VI p.55 [2] G. P.T. p.113 [3] Verse No.3 again p.492 No.25

standpoint of their respective ages. About one hundred years seems to have elapsed between them. Dr. D.C. Sen seems wrong in saying that his Padamrita Samudra was compiled towards the end of the 16th Century.[1] That was the date of Gatigovinda at most. We will see in a moment that his career is associated with the important personages of the 18th Century.

Vaishnavadās is right in stating that he was the veritable reincarnation of Srinivās Âchārya, his illustrious ancestor. He was a most forceful preacher, possessing a magnetic personality. He lived at Maliati another village in the same district of Burdwan. He had a band of able workers as his disciples to assist him in his missionary work. The abandonment of vigorous preaching in the 17th Century brought about many evils both within and outside the Vaishnava community. *Saktaism* proved extremely inimical to Vaishnavism. Rājā Krishna Chandra of Nadia supported *Saktas* while vilifying and suppressing Vaishnavism. *Saktas* and Vaishnavas were thrown at each other's throats. Eighteenth Century writer Narahari Chakravarti describes how the wrathful *Saktas* went to the Kāli temple and prayed that she might kill the followers of Sri Chaitanya that very night.[2] It was the most critical time in the Vaishnava history of Bengal and it wanted an extraordinarily strong man of outstanding ability to save its existence, in the teeth of such fierce opposition. Like his illustrious ancestor Srinivās, Rādhāmohan took the lead in the great fight.

In 1125 (1718 A.D.) a great controversy arose among the Vaishnavas as to whether *Sakiya* (wedded love of God Krishna) or *Parakiya* (His love with mistresses of Vraja) is acceptable. It created a division of opinion. Rādhāmohan advocated the latter view and won the war. The letter of victory, which was signed by the other party was registered in the court of Mursidkulikhan in Mursidavad for setting at rest any future dissension over the question. Rādhāmohan was then only thirty years of age[3] so he was born in 1683 A.D.)

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[1] H.B.L.L. p. 526 [2] H.B.L.L. p. 577 [3] G.P.T. p.171

Rājā Jayasimha II (1700-1743 A.D.) of the Jaypur State became the disciple of Rādhāmohan after Baladev defeated the Rāmānandi sect in the disputation as to the sectarian locus standi of the Gaudiya sect. Bhaktamāl tells us that this account of the victory of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas has been recorded in 'Jayasimha' and 'Bhakti Siddhānta dipika'.[1] Rājā Jayasimha became a very ardent devotee of Rādhāmohan and rendered immense service to the Gaudiya Vaishnavas as the consequence of his inspiration by Rādhā Mohan.

The success of Rādhāmohan's mission against the *Saktas* and its adherents was greatly due to the influence of his enthusiastic disciple the famous Mahārājā Nanda Kumār who was hanged by Lord Hastings in 1775 A.D. Mahārājā Nanda Kumār was a great *Sakta*. Mr. N.R. Rāy has published an old letter of the Mahārājā in which he advises his son Gurudās to install the image of Kāli in the village of Akali near his birthplace 'Vadrapur'.[2] The temple remained unfinished. Mr. Rāy thinks that some mishap may have overtaken the family after its erection, which prevented its completion. It does not sound probable. He left it unfinished intentionally because of his initiation into Vaishnavism, deserting *Saktaism*. Each sect was a terrible enemy of the other. From the description of Bhaktamāl, it seems clear that Nanda Kumār used to exert his political influence to save the prestige of Vaishnavism.[3]

Rādhāmohan used to send his disciples to preach in groups in different parts of the country; once two of them became guests of the Puthirāj, and were given ample food, which contained that offered to the Goddess Kāli. The Puthirāj was a great *Sakta*, being the disciple of the Bhattacharyas of Bhatpada. He had the image of Durgā in the palace for daily worship. The two Vaishnava preachers understood that it was the *Prasād* of Kāli, so they refused to eat it. Their refusal to partake of Kāli's *Prasād* irritated the *Sakta* waiter and attendants of the temple who reported the impertinence to Rājā Ravindra Nārāyan who

[1] S. Chakravarti edition. p.295 [2] S.P.P. X. p.63 [3] S.P.P. p.273

immediately ordered the guards to prevent the Vaishnavas departure the next morning. He would meet them. Next day they were brought before the Rājā Ravindra who asked whether they had refused to eat the Prasād of Kāli, the goddess of devotion. The two Vaishnavas humbly submitted that they could not accept it on account of their religious obligation. Their answer infuriated him. He abused them, demanded to know which scripture forbade them accept the offerings of the goddess Kāli and finally the Rājā 's insolence reached a point when the Vaishnavas were obliged to say that he should not threaten them thus as they were the humble servants of the Guru of Mahārājā Nanda Kumār under whom there were hundreds of Rājā s. The author Bhaktamāl remarks that the threats of Rājā Ravindranāth could not frighten the two Vaishnavas on account of their spiritual relationship with Mahārājā Nanda Kumār who was then as powerful as the god of death. The Rājā s and Zamindārs of Bengal were dependent on his fervour. The reference to Nanda Kumār however, served to cool the Rājā 's temper and frighten him not a little. Next he politely asked them to convince him of the worth of their faith and proposed a discussion between them on the one side and his court Pandits on the other, under his own presidency. They agreed to his proposal. Bhaktamāl deals with the discourse in great detail (XVIII). The discussion centres round the validity of Vaishnava principles in contrast to *Saktaism* and the worship of many gods. This disputation and the consequent victory, of the Vaishnava scholars resulted in bringing Rājā Ravindranāth in favour of Vaishnavism and led to the ultimate initiation by Rādhāmohan, the scholars' Guru.

Rādhāmohan's crusade against *Saktaism* and its rich votaries like Rājā Krishna Chandra and others, was crowned with success for two main reasons. First he was a great scholar and had a band of Vaishnava scholars to assist him. They invariably defeated their rivals in scriptural disputations. The initiation of Mahārājā Nanda Kumār and of Ravindanath as the result of their victory over the *Saktas* in such scriptural fight. The reason was the political

influence of Nanda Kumār who became the protector of Vaishnavism in the Eighteenth Century. Nanda Kumār's influence over the Zamindārs is well known to any student of politics of the period. This period of Rādhāmohan and Nanda Kumār is very important and eventful but is followed by the dark age of Vaishnavism. Rādhāmohan was a vigorous ruler all through his life. He was the contemporary of Baladev Vidyābhusan but the responsibility for its success in Bengal entirely rested with Rādhāmohan, who was also respected by Baladev himself and by the Vaishnavas of all provinces in general.

Rādhāmohan was both a scholar and a great poet. He compiled an anthology of Vaishnava poems called Padamrita Samdudra, which contains about 736 poems by thirty-five Vaishnava poets. It contains 228 poems of his own composition and not less than 240 of Govinda Kavirāj. Rādhāmohan must be regarded as one of the best Vaishnava poets of Bengal. He has written a very learned Sanskrit commentary on his anthology. Many of his poems have been collected in other anthologies of Vaishnava poems.

Mr. Bhadra says that Rādhāmohan died in 1778 A.D., three years after the sad death of his famous disciple Mahārājā Nanda Kumār. His death at the age of 90 was followed by the dark age of Vaishnava history in Bengal, which continued for more than one hundred years, until the last quarter of the 19th century. When the modern movement raised its head.

JAGADĀNANDAN THĀKUR

He was another contemporary preacher of Rādhāmohan. He was the son of Nityānanda Mohanta Thākur whose father was Paramananda Thākur, a descendant of Raghunandan Thākur of Srikhanda. He is said to have been born between 1698 and 1708 A.D. and died in 1786 A.D.[1] Jagadānandan settled at Jophalai in the Burdwan district where he set up the Image of Sri Chaitanya for daily worship. It is still to be found there. He founded a

[1] G.P.T. p.89

monastery at Amlala in the Panchakota estate. He also installed another Image at Sri Chaitanya, which is still worshipped there. The Rājā of Panchakota came under his influence and granted him the village of Amlala for the permanent maintenance of the monastery.

He was a scholar of very high order. He is said to have written commentaries on grammar, astronomy and the Bhagavāt.[1] Mr. Kālidās Nāth has published a volume of his poems. Padakalpataru has collected at least five of his poems. He mastered the vocabulary and all sorts of metres. He seems to be a sophisticated poet, but his thoughts are very deep indeed. An incomplete Kāvya work Bhasasavdarnava has been ascribed to him. He has written two other poems: Daminidama and Gaurakalevara. He was a very vigorous preacher.

NARAHARI CHAKRAVARTI

Narahari alias Ghanashyām Chakravarti was one of the most voluminous writers and vigorous preachers of the sect. He was the contemporary of Rādhāmohan Thākur. Narahari says of himself that he was the son of Jagannāth Chakravarti, a disciple of Visvanath Chakravarti. He had two names Narahari and Ghanashyām. He has used both the names in his writings. He was a great scholar, poet and historian. He left the family and became an ascetic. He expresses deep humility saying that he is a sinner and so on. He is said to have been a disciple of Nrisimha Chakravarti who was a member of the spiritual family of whom Virachandra is the head[2]. At Vrindāvan he studied the Vaishnava literature. He was a wandering ascetic preaching the doctrine.

His works

1) Bhaktiratnakara

This is a huge work written in Bengali verse dealing with the lives and missionary activities of Srinivās Âchārya,

[1] G.P.T. p. 89 [2] V. L.M.B. p. 179

Narottam, Jahnava Devi, Vir Chandra, Achyuta, Shyāmananda and so on, of the 16th century. He also gives an account of Sri Chaitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita. It is particularly the history of the Srinivās-Narottam age. He cites many verses from previous works in both Sanskrit and Bengali. The outline of the history of the 16th Century with which he deals is quite right, but occasionally he seems to confuse one with another in the matter of detail, due to the remoteness of their period, otherwise he is a very conscientious writer. He has evinced accurate geographical knowledge, particularly Navadvip and Vrindāvan, which he saw with his own eyes before he described them. His Vrindāvan and Navadvip Parikrama, included in the Bhaktiratnakar gives us a vivid picture of the two places. Narahari was an accomplished musician and singer. He deals with the origin and development of Raga and Raganis, and of dancing, and gives us an account of musical instruments.[1] He is a very elegant writer, displaying a wide range of varied and thorough knowledge of *Bhakti* literature of the sect, both Sanskrit and Bengali and also that on fine arts such as song, music, dancing and so on discussing those subjects with thoroughness and accuracy.

2) Narottamavilas

In 12 chapters, it gives a biographical account of Narottam Thākur.

3) Namamrita Samudra

Dr. D.C. Sen attributes its authorship to Narahari Sarkar Thākur[2], but the author mentions Narahari Sarkar among those whom he salutes, so its author must be our later Narahari Chakravarti. Sāhitya Parishad Patrika has taken notice of its manuscript.[3]

(4) Paddati Pradipa.

(5) Gaura Charita Chintamani.

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[1] Bh.Kar.V. [2] C. & C. p.102 [3] S.P.P. VI.p.60

(6) Chanda Samudra

(7) Gitā Chandrodaya.

(8) Srinivās Charita.[1] Besides these, he composed many Pada poems.

VAISHNAVADĀS

Gokuldas Sen, son of Vraja Kishor of Teya in the Mursidavad district, was given the name of Vaishnavadās by his Guru Rādhāmohan Thākur. He was a Vaidya by caste. Gokulānanda Sen is better known by the name of Vaishnavadās. His Guru, Rādhāmohan who was the son of Gauri Charan, and grandson of Krishna Prasād the brother of Krishna Vallabha, Guru of Rājā Sitārām, is not the same as Rādhāmohan belonging to the family of Srinivās Âchārya, whom we have already mentioned. Vaishnavadās has written the genealogy of this other Rādhāmohan called Gurukula Panjika in which he tells us that his Guru Rādhāmohan was the descendant of Dvija Haridās, an enthusiastic follower of Sri Chaitanya, and lived at Teya while Srinivās's descendant Rādhāmohan, who seems to be senior to him, was an inhabitant of Malihati.

Vaishnavadās had a son named Gaur Hari and a daughter whose name was Rukmini, whose son Kālidās Kavirāj.[2] Vaishnavadās's most intimate friend and fellow disciple was Krishnakanta Majumdar who was better known by his name of Uddhavadās which was given by his Guru. He had one daughter whose descendant is now the Zamindār of Agradvipa. Both friends were poets and singers. Vaishnavadās tells us at the end of his Padakalpataru that he used to sing the Padamrita Samudra of the elder Rādhāmohan Thākur, the descendant of Srinivās. These beautiful songs of Padamrita Samudra excited his desire to collect such songs, which were scattered over the country. He had performed the tremendous task of collecting the Vaishnavite devotional poems to compile his famous Padakalpataru for which work his name should ever be remembered.

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[1] G.P.T. p.79, V.L.M.B. p.178 [2] S.P.P. XII.p.67

Padakalpataru

It is a huge anthology containing 3101 beautiful poems psychologically arranged in accordance with the divisions of *Rasa*, which those poems bring out. It is divided into *Sakhas*, which were again subdivided into *Pallavas*. He included almost the whole of the Padamrita Samudra in it for instance Padamrita contains 228 poems by Rādhāmohan out of which 186 have been included in the Padakalpataru. Padamrita Samudra has only 610 poems whereas Padakalpataru has 3101 by about 116 poets. About two hundred poems give no author's name. It contains about 25 poems of Vaishnavadās's own. The poets, whose poems have been collected in Padakalpataru, are of varying periods from that of Jayadeva, to the 18th century. It is needless to emphasise the great service Vaishnavadās has done to the literary world by preserving these beautiful poems, most of which would have probably been lost forever. It is the valuable treasure of Vaishnavite devotional poetry and gives us an opportunity to study its development. The number of Govindadās's poems exceeds that of any of those numerous poets. Mr. Satish Chandra Rāy has published it from the Bangiya Sāhitya Parisad.

NIMĀNANDADĀS

Nimānanda was a Brahmana ascetic. He refers to Vamsi as his younger brother.[1] He seems to have been a little junior to Vaishnavadās. He compiled another huge anthology called Padarasasara, containing 2,700 poems. Though many of these poems are the same as those of Padakalpataru, yet it contains many compositions by Govindadās, Vidyāpati, Chandidās and others, which have not been included in previous works. Nimānanda was himself a great poet, who contributes about 150 of his own poems to his anthology. Nimānandadās has given us for the first time the *Padas* in *Tuk*, *Chut* metres. It is really a very valuable treasure in our *Pada* literature. During this time several other anthologies were compiled, but they are not popular or

[1] VII1.13

very important. The following among others may be mentioned:

Padakalpalatika by Gaura Mohanadās, Pada Cintamanimala by Prasād Dās, Lilā Samudra, Padarnavasaravali, Gitāratnakara, Gauracharita Chintamani, and so on.

During this period, Jagabandhu and Vira Chandra, two great ascetic preachers flourished. They were the worthy descendants of Sri Advaita through his son Krishna Misra. They revived the circumambulations round Navadvip which had been started by Srinivās and Narottam to establish Navadvip as a sacred place of pilgrimage, being the Birthplace Sri Chaitanya. They established the Images Sri Chaitanya at Katwa, and were known as Bada Prabhu or senior Lord and Chota Prabhu or junior Lord. They were indefatigable in preaching the doctrine throughout the country.

This period of able workers ended in the third or last quarter of the 18th Century and was followed by another uneventful period of about hundred years until the modern movement began.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE MODERN MOVEMENT (19th century)

We have found that in two previous ages two great voluminous writers and mighty preachers worked together and the seniors were succeeded by their juniors. As Rûpa was succeeded by Jiva, Visvanâth by Baladev Vidyâbhusan, so in our modern time, Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was succeeded by Sri Bhakti Siddânta Sarasvati Gosvâmi Thâkur who was the founder of present Vaishnava movement. The dark age of about hundred years beginning from the seventies of the 18th century brought about manifold abuses among the Gaudiya followers, particularly in Bengal. Gaudiya Vaishnavism was almost abandoned by the aristocrats and educated public. Its literature was hardly read. The *Kirtan* was looked upon, not as a form of prayer, but as a means of gratification by men of loose morals. The general downfall of the country in this period served to augment the degradation of the so-called followers of Gaudiya Vaisnavism, which seems to have lost its high standard of morality loving ascetism, intellectual supremacy and religious fervour, which were the main characteristics of the previous Vaishnava masters. The Christian missionaries were trying to capture the religious field of the country. The Brahmo movement was started by Râjâ Râm Mohan Rây to save the educated public from falling into the hands of the Christians. When the Christians and Brahmos were fighting each other for supremacy, the great Vaishnava Thâkur Bhakti Vinode took up the cause of long-neglected Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

THÂKUR BHAKTI VINODE

Kedârnâth (Thâkur Bhakti Vinode) was born in 1838 A.D. at the residence of his maternal grandfather Isvara Mustafi at Ulâ Virnagar in the Nadia District. Isvara Mustafi was perhaps the richest man in the district. Kedar's father's name was Ânanda Chandra Datta, great-grandson of Madan Mohan Datta, the great Zamindâr of old Govindapur, the site of the present Fort William of Calcutta. The English East India Company took the village of Govindapur to build a fort, in exchange for another village, now called Hatkhola, in the centre of the present Calcutta. This *Kayastha* Datta family of Hatkhola was perhaps the premier and most aristocratic family in our Calcutta history. Before his birth, Kedar's grandfather and father were deprived of their property in Calcutta, so they went to Chuti Mongalpur in the Cuttack district in Orissa, where his grandfather had inherited some landed property through his maternal grandfather. Kedârnâth's father mostly lived at Ulâ. Kedârnâth was placed under a French teacher, Mr. Barret, for his English education. Ulâ was then a very prosperous town, inhabited by many rich and educated people of all shades. Next he was admitted to the Krishnanagar college at the early age when the college was first started. He lived at Krishnanagar with his elder brother under the care of his nurse. Krishnanagar was not very far from Ulâ. The sudden death of his elder brother caused his parents to withdraw him from Krishnanagar and he was admitted to the local English school. One Jagat Bhattacharya used to teach him astronomy at the age of nine. The immense wealth of his maternal grandfather began to dwindle very soon. His sons died. It was as if by the stroke of a finger a whole chapter of calamities befell the family. At this time his father suddenly inherited an estate of six villages on the death of his (Ânanda's stepmother). Kedar's father and maternal grandfather had many English and French friends who were the indigo-planters within their estate. To make matters worse, his father Ânanda Chandra suddenly died when Kedar was only eleven, and his other brother died before the death of his father. The whole family was overwhelmed

with deep grief. His maternal grandfather, Isvar Chandra, left Ulâ and came to Bhavânipur, leaving Kedar with his mother and others, as the loss of relatives and property made life intolerable in his palatial residence at Ulâ. Kedârnâth was always a very thoughtful and inquisitive child. The stories of Râmâyana and the Mahâbhârata used to hold him spellbound in his early boyhood. His grandfather had about fifty up-country guards who used to recite the Tulasidâs's Râmâyana. Kedârnâth was delighted to listen to them. When he was under eleven, he used to ask questions about the existence of God to many old men of the village. Many of its inhabitants accepted the new Brahmo religion of Râjâ Râm Mohan Rây. He felt very uncomfortable when he was told by some that there was no God. He was a born poet. At the early age of 11, he composed a Bengali poem in praise of Ulâ Chandi, a rural goddess.[1] He was then living with his mother at Ulâ while his grandfather Isvara was in Bhavânipur. Four up-country guards were left to protect them. His mother was a remarkable lady of extraordinary intelligence and courage.

He finished such education as might be given at the local English middle school. When the famous poet Kâli Prasâd Ghosh of Calcutta who married Kedârnâth's aunt who persuaded his mother to send him to Calcutta for his further education. He went to Calcutta in his 14th year and was admitted to the Hindu Charitable Institution, where he studied for four years, during which time he began to write English poems and articles. Kâli Prasâd Bâbu was a very rich man and a conspicuous figure in the learned society of Calcutta in those days. He was then editing the "Hindu Intelligence" the very famous newspaper of the day. During his school days Kedârnâth began to contribute articles to that paper.

Kedârnâth began a vigorous study of English philosophical books. He used to deliver lectures at many debating clubs and other societies. He entered the Hindu school as a student of the first class in 1856 A.D., when

[1] His autobiography p.49

the University of Calcutta was first established. Satyendranath Tagore, brother of the poet Ravindranâth, Ganendra Tagore, Kesav Sen, afterwards the famous Brahmo leader, was his school friends. Kedârnâth composed many beautiful English poems when he was a student of the first class. His poetic composition earned him the high admiration of Mr Clint, the principal of the institution. He came in contact with Rev. Duff and Mr. George Thomson. The latter taught him how to become an effective orator. Mr Thomson told him that he used to deliver lectures to the cornfields on his way from his home to the Parliament.

He wrote the first part of his English book 'Poriyead' in 1856 A.D. He soon published it's two other parts. Rev. Duff highly praised it and asked him to compose such poems dealings with the Zamindârs' oppression and torture of their tenants. He studied the works of Addison and Edward Young's Night Thoughts under 'Rev. Greaves. He then studied with deep attention the works of Carlyle, William. Hazlitt, Jeffery, Macaulay and others. During this time he published his many English poems in the Library Gazette. Mrs. Locke very much admired his (Poriyaed), which was dedicated to her.

He was then only 17. He was then the most intimate friend of Dvijendranâth Tagore. The elder brother of his class friend Satyendranath. He studied the works of Kant, Goethe, Hizel, Swedenborg, Schopennauer, Hume, Voltaire, and others, with Dvijendranâth. He then came to the philosophical conclusion that there was nothing but quality of substance. Dvijendranâth Tagore respected him very much for his deep study. He delivered a lecture on the said philosophical system at a very learned meeting. His great friend the famous Taraknâth Pâlit who bore all the expenses of the Department of Science at Calcutta University was charmed to hear his lecture, He was persuaded to deliver a lecture before the British India Society, which European citizens attended. At the next meeting of this Society he read his dramatic rendering of

[1] His Autobiography p.71

the Vetal Pancha Vinsati, which vas followed by a heated discussion.

He studied the works of the Brahmo Movement, through having come in contact with his friends Dvijendranâth, Satyendranâth and others of the Tagore family who were recognised leaders and guides of that Movement. He had very frequent discourses with the Rev. Duff at whose direction he studied the Bible and other Christian books. Now he occupied himself in studying the religious works. He minutely read the works Mr.Channing and the controversy between Râjâ Râm Mohan Rây and the Christian missionaries. He read the Koran. He deeply studied the works of Theodore Parker, Newman and others. He frankly admits in his autobiography that he preferred Christianity to Brahmoism on account of the former's clearer admission of regarding the transcendence of Godhead and function. He was always in favour of one God, but never liked the Brahmo system and worship. (p.80) but he never ceased his discussions with Dvijendranath Tagore. He remarks: "If I had any friend of my heart, among mankind it was Dvijendra. (p.78). This was at the time of the Sepoy Mutiny. He used to read all the important newspapers on the subject. He discussed it with the editor of the Tattvavodhini and the great Pandit Vanesvara Vidyâlamkar. He became the guest of Mahârâjâ Mahâtap of Burdwan along with Vidyâlamkar and other Pandits. He presented a copy of his 'Poriyaed' to the Mahârâjâ who read it with pleasure. On his return to Calcutta, he had to face many difficulties. The money was almost all spent. He accepted a berth as a teacher at The Hindu Charitable Institution. Mrs. Locke was a great admirer of his English poems. She was a spiritualist. Ghanendranâth Tagore and he became great friends, when they used to visit the old English lady Mrs. Locke.

His income ran short and he incurred some debt. He was then hard pressed. At this critical moment, his paternal grandfather who was living at Chuti Mongalpur in Orissa, sent for him saying that he had not long to live but would like to meet him at once. The great Isvara Chandra

Vidyâsagar was Kedar's patron; he wrote letters to several high officials of Orissa requesting them to help Kedârnâth.

He reached Chuti Kendrapâdâ safely with his family and met his grandfather. He accepted a post as school master at Kendrapâdâ English High School. His grandfather died soon after. He had to move from place to place in connection with his duties. When he was in Bhadrak School in 1860 A.D., he wrote his "Maths of Orissa", in English. His next work is "Vijanagrâma", written in Bengali blank verse. This is the first poem ever written in blank verse in the history of the Bengali language and literature. It is not true that Michael Madhusudan Datta is the inventor of the blank verse in Bengali. Next he was transferred to Midnapur school where he came in contact for the first time with a Vaishnava who happened to be a Pandit of the same school. He asked him to read Chaitanya Charitamrita but he could not secure it though, he earnestly desired to read it. Here he made friends with Mr. Thomas, who used to write for a newspaper called The Phoenix. Kedârnâth also wrote articles for it. Kedârnâth had a natural inclination towards devotion to personal God.

He came to Calcutta and held temporary posts at different places. He composed his Bengali poem "Sannyâsi" and "Our Wants" in English. He entered into the sub-executive service as special deputy registrar with powers of a Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector at Châpra, in 1866 A.D., at the age of 28. He delivered a learned lecture entitled "Gautama speech" dealing with Gautama's philosophy. This he did on his visit to Godana the birthplace of Gautama, which was not very far from Châpra. He became very popular there, here he learnt Urdu and Persian under a Munshi. He made a short pilgrimage to Benares, Mirzapur, Allahavad, Agra, Mathura and Vrindâvan where he met Râjâ Râdhâkanta Dev and returned to Châpra. He wrote his Valedi-Registry in Urdu. He was appointed Deputy Magistrate at Dinâjpur in March 1868.

Here in Dinâjpur he came in contact with Vaishnavism, which was very prevalent there under the patronage of Râjâ

Sâheb Kamal Lochan, the great Zamindâr of Dinâjpur who was the descendant of Râmânanda Vâsu, an ardent follower of Sri Chaitanya. He made the acquaintance of many Vaishnava gentlemen. Here he secured the printed Chaitanya Charitamrita and the Bengali translation of the Bhagavât; also a copy of Bhaktamâl. This was the first time in 1868 A.D., that he touched the Vaishnava books. On first reading the Chaitanya Charita, he formed a high opinion of Sri Chaitanya. The next impression on his second reading was that there was none second to Sri Chaitanya in learning. But he could not understand how a great Pandit like that should indulge in devotion to Sri Krishna, which appeared to be no better than immorality, He prayed to God in all sincerity to shed light on his doubt; and a few days later joyously declared that he had realised that the principle of Sri Krishna was too deep and that all Divinity has culminated in Him. Since this time, he began to regard Sri Chaitanya as God.[1] He seriously engaged in this study of Sri Chaitanya's religion in the company of the Vaishnavas at Dinâjpur. He had already secured "Chaitanya Gitâ" which he sent to the Press together with "the life of Sri Chaitanya", for pubhcation. He gave his name as Sachidananda Premalamkar, as its editor. A struggle was going on there between the Hindus and Brahmos. The latter invited him to their meeting, but he told them that he was the servant of the followers of Sri Chaitanya.[1] The Hindus formed a society with him. He delivered his famous Bhagavâta speech.

This was his first lecture on Vaishnavaism. Many Europeans were pleased with his speech. Now Kedârnâth became an out-and-out Vaishnava. Day and night he studied its literature. He deeply studied the literature of Brahmoism, Christianity and Islam. He made a comparative study of' Vaishnavism with reference to other religions, but he found the perfect consummation of his own thought in Vaishnavism. He was impressed with the *Manoharsahi Kirtan*. He was next transferred to Champran

[1] Autobiography p.130

for a few months, and later posted at Puri. Now his devotion Sri Chaitanya grew very intense.

He came to Puri with his family, taking with him his two favourite books Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita (see p.151 5th line) and the Bhagavât. He expressed his deep felicity for having been able to visit Puri where his God, Sri Chaitanya had spent so many years. He was very happy in the company of many Vaishnava friends there. Here he tried a very interesting case. One Vis Kisen declared himself to be an incarnation of God and began to commit various crimes immoral, political and blasphemous. He used to live in a forest near Sardaipur. Mr.Ravenshaw, then Commissioner asked our Kedârnâth and the S.P. to enquire into the matter and try the case. Vis Kisen had acquired a good deal of psychic power. Kedârnâth investigated the case and found him entirely guilty. He arrested him and sent him to Puri. He himself tried and sentenced him to eighteen months imprisonment. This created a great sensation.

His stay at Puri gave a great impetus to his religious feeling for Vaishnavism. He appointed one Gopinâth Pandit with whom he studied the whole of the Bhagavât with its commantary of Sridhar Svâmi. Two other Pandits named Hariharadas and Markendeya Mahâpatra who studied the Nyaya and Vedânta at Navadip and Benares, began to study the Bhagavât along with him, but they could not keep pace with his progress. Kedârnâth used to teach them. He had begun his study of Sanskrit grammar and literature under Isvara Chandra Vidyâsagar, Dvijendranâth Tagore and others during his school days at Calcutta. He continued his study of Sanskrit all through. Having finished the Bhagavât he studied Jiva Gosvâmin's Sadasandarbha, Baladev Vidyâbhusan's Govinda Bhâsya, Prameyaratnavali, Rûpa's Bhaktirasâmrita Sindhu, and Hari Bhaktikalpalatika, and others, which he could secure from the Library of the Râjâ of Puri. Now he mastered the philosophy of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Here he finished his Sanskrit book "Datta Kaustubha" and began his famous Sanskrit work Sri Krishna Samhita. The latter is

philosophical, on Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy. His other works composed during this time were Gargha Stotra Vyakhya, or Samvondha Tattva Chandrika in Bengali, "Reflection", a poem in English, Bengali poem on the tomb of Thâkur Haridâs, "Jagannâth temple" and "Akhra of Puri" in English.

He started a class for teaching the Bhagavât. He formed a society styled the Bhagavât Samsat in the Jagannâth Vallabh Garden, for the study and culture of the Bhagavât. All the principal Vaishnava leaders were impressed with his learning and religious fervour. He was in charge of the Jagannâth temple on behalf of the Government. He started another society called Vidyât Sabha for promoting the study of *Bhakti* literature. He came in contact with a very great Vaishnava saint named Svarupadâs. He was a great ascetic and wholly devoted to God. Kedârnâth had high regard for him. He used to go to him and receive instruction. Every day he used to hold a conference at the Jagannâth temple and discussed various doctrinal aspects of Vaishnavism. He lived at Puri for five years. He became very popular at Puri. Here on the 6th Feb 1874 A.D. was born his illustrious son Bimalâ Prasâd, who latter on was known as Bhakti Siddhânta Saraswati Thâkur, the founder of present Gaudiya Vaishnava movement.

He was posted at Araria where he worked for three years, at the end of which he was transferred to Mahisarekha in 1877 A.D. He was next transferred to Bhadraka in Orissa and to Nârail in the Jessore district in 1878 A.D. He became popular in the subdivision as a great Vaishnava magistrate. *Kirtan* singers used to come to him to entertain him with songs. Here he published his Krishna Samhita in 1889 A.D. and and Kalyan Kalpataru a collection of his own Pada poems, in 1880 A.D. Krishna Samhita was highly praised throughout the country. Sir Reinhold Rost of the India Office, London, has written the following remarks on it: "By presenting Krishna's character and His worship in a more sublime and transcendent light than has hitherto been the custom to regard him in, you have rendered an essential service to your co-religionists, and no one would have taken

more delight in your work than my departed friend Goldstucker, the sincerest and most zealous advocate the Hindus ever had in Europe." – dated 16th April 1880 A.D.[1] Some remarked that he infused a faith into it. It was the first time the conception of Krishna had been revealed according to the Bhagavât, and was the fruit of his profound study of it. He was initiated by one Bipin Vihâri Gosvâmi at Nârail. He adopted all Vaishnava practice in its strictest form. Now he resolved to interest the educated people in Gaudiya Vaishnavism. With this purpose in view he started a Bengali monthly called 'Sajjana Tosani' dealing with Vaishnava religion in 1881. He edited it for the next 17 years with occasional intervals of suspension, after which Sri Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati, (Bimalâ Prasâd) was entrusted with its editorship. He worked at Nârail for three years, at the end of which he made a pilgramage to Allahâbâd, Ayodhyâ, Benares, Vrindâvan, and so on. At the latter place he met the famous Jagannâth das Babâji a renowned Vaishnava. He subsequently became the religious guide of Kedârnâth and helped him in his missionary activities. Kedârnâth returned to Calcutta three months later.

Here resumed his service at Jessore and bought a house at Calcutta. He became very famous in Bengal as a great Vaishnava. Sâradâ Charana Mitter, who afterwards became a judge of the High Court, bought for him a good collection of manuscripts of Vaishnava books of which Visvanâth Chakravarti's commentaries on the Bhagavât and the Gitâ were particularly mentionable. He had now secured all the Gaudiya Vaishnava books. He published a very thoughtful article on the transcendent Body of God (1883 A.D.)

He was next posted at Srirampur. Now he decided to take up the preaching of the Gaudiya doctrine in earnest. He founded a printing press known as Vaishnava depository. Philosophical books of the Vaishnavas were in Sanskrit. He undertook to place before the educated public

[1] Autobiography p.154

the system of Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy in a most simple and popular form, writing such works in a way which could be understood by all. He possessed a style that was easy, invigorating, cheerful, lucid and uniform, and enriched with the fresh wealth of an ample vocabulary culled from the inexhaustible store-house of Sanskrit and adapted to Bengali in a natural way. The Bengali language in his hands has thus been improved as a very powerful vehicle for the conveyance of the sublimest and most highly philosophical truths of religion, with an ease and precision that makes his works highly interesting and at the same time perfectly intelligible to the most ordinary reader. His famous work 'Sri Chaitanya Sikshamrita' was written in 1886 when he was at Srirampur. This book evinces his perfect assimilation of the Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy in relation to other systems of a different school. It is one of the most important books, and was first published very same year. The public hailed the book with great enthusiasm. It decidedly established his name as an authority on the Gaudiya doctrine. Many learned scholars are said to have been interested in Sri Chaitanya religion through this book. It is one of the most wonderful books in our Gaudiya literature. The same year he also published, the Gitâ with its commentary by Visvanâth Chakravarti and his own Bengali commentary called "Rasikaranjan". This is the first time that Vishvanath's commentary was published. He wrote another book called "Bhakti Vinode" in which he published his Sanskrit commentary on Sikshastaka or the 8 verses of Sri Chaitanya. Another important book, which was published at this time, is Gunaraj Khân's Krishna Vijaya. He used to visit the places in memory of the past Âchâryas of Bengal.

In addition to his official duty at the Court, he had to write, read, and publish so many books. He had secured another lot of manuscripts of Vaishnava books. This is the time when several educated men both *Brahmanas* and *Kayasthas* became his disciples. He resolved to give up his judicial service and retire to Vrindâvan for his personal devotion to God and to work there. Another *Brahmana*

gentleman named Râmâ Sevak Chatterji consented to live with him and assist him in his work there, Thâkur Bhakti Vinode tells us that he was commanded by his God in a dream to render his service to Navadvip, the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya, which had fallen into oblivion. The frequent shifting of the course of the river Bhâgirathi caused the inhabitants of old Navadvip to leave it, in the 18th century, and the new town was gradually planned on the other side of the river, then called Kulia, but which has now reverted to the original name – Navadvip. The *Brahmanas* and *Vairagis* set-up temples and Images to extract money in the name of Sri Chaitanya. It was, and is, the great commercial centre of religion. The ordinary people did not care to investigate the real Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya.

Kedârnâth made up his mind to discover the Birth Site of Sri Chaitanya, giving up his idea of retiring to Vrindâvan, for personal devotion. He preferred the life of vigorous activities for the service of the cause Sri Chaitanya, to that of a recluse. He managed to transfer his judicial work to Krishnagar, the headquarters of the Nadia district, so that he could investigate the Birth Site of Sri Chaitanya. His enthusiasm knew no bounds. He came to Krishnagar with joyous hope to seek the place where his beloved God Sri Chaitanya had been born. When he was at Puri, he secured Narahari Chakravarti's Bhaktiratnâkar and Paramânanda das's book, which greatly helped him in his archaeological investigations. It was during this time the famous Jagannâthdâs Bâbâji, was living at the present town of Navadvip. Kedârnâth first met him when he went to Vrindâvan. Kedârnâth found in him an ideal Vaishnava. Jagannâth was more than 100 years old. He could not walk. One Bihâridâs, his disciple, used to carry him on his shoulders from place to place, but he was as enthusiastic as a young man. He was highly advanced in his devotional life. Kedârnâth became his favourite. Another two or three ascetics named Bhagavandâs Bâbâji of Kalur, Chaitanyadâs, and Sri Gaurakishore Dâs Bâbâji of Navadvip flourished at this time. The former lived at Kâlna and the later two settled at Navadvip, coming from Vrindâvan. The

asceticism of the Gaurakishore Dâs can only be compared with that of Raghunâthdâs Gosvâmi. Kedârnâth came in close contact with them. The Gosvâmins of Vagnapara conferred on him the title of 'Bhakti Vinode' in 1894 A.D. in recognition of his indefatigable services to the cause of Vaishnavism. He was then known as Thâkur Bhakti Vinode, so henceforth we shall use this popular name of his.

He was transferred to Krishnanagar in 1887 A.D. During the Christmas holidays, he went to Navadvip, still with the intention of discovering Birth site of Sri Chaitanya. He lived there at Navadvip for several days but none could give him any clue as to the holy place. He remarks in this connection that the people of Navadvip are interested in nothing but their selfish interests in exacting money from ignorant pilgrims, and do not care for the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya.[1] He was very disappointed; but one night, thinking deeply on the subject, while he was siting on the roof of his residence, which was on the Ganges at Navadvip, and is said to have seen in a vision a luminous building towards the northeast. He was filled with wonder. The next morning he asked for the particulars of the place from which the vision had appeared to him. He hastened to the place with such topographical accounts, old maps and other data, as he could gather for his investigations. On enquiry he learnt from the local people that it was the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya. They pointed out an extensive mound covered with Tulasi plants as the actual Site of the house of Sri Chaitanya. They added that they used to point it out as such from generation to genereration. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode visited all the surrounding villages to see whether they were situated exactly in their respective positions, as described in Chaitanya Bhagavât, Bhaktiratnâkar, and in Paramânanda's book. They were situated precisely as described. It was a blissful moment when he realised that he had at last succeeded in his attempt, which had cost him so much anxiety. He returned to Krishnanagar and related the whole matter to his friend, Rai Bahadur Dvarika Sarkar who was then District Engineer

[1] Autobiography p.181

of Krishnanagar and who prepared a map of it. He composed his famous Navadvip Dhâm Mahâtmya in praise of every place within the circle of Navadvip. It was published in the same year. He further verified his discovery by means of old Court records, maps and so on. He was confident and certain that it was the Birth site of Sri Chaitanya. Soon after, he was transferred to Netrokona, in the Mymensimha district. In the meantime, he built a residence at Svarupaganj to the south of Sri Mâyâpur, the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya, between which two places flows the river "Kharia". This he did for the purpose of staying there while the restoration work went on at Sri Mâyâpur.

He went to Kâlna in the Burdwan district in 1890 A.D., having worked in several places. Kâlna was very near to Navadvip. He used to visit the places of Sri Chaitanya's followers in the Râda country and Navadvip. During this time he had many disciples. He used to make missionary tours with them, addressing the meetings, holding festivals and so on. Again he went to Dinâjpur where, as on the previous occasion, he came in touch with the Vaishnavas. Here he wrote his Bengali commentary called Viddhvataranjan on the Gitâ, following the commentary, by Baladev Vidyâbhusan. He took about two years' leave from his judicial service for the purpose of driving the Vaishnava movement with great vigour.

The people greeted him with unreserved enthusiasm whatever he preached. He moved from village to village addressing the meetings and introducing the *Samkirtan*. He opened a centre of preaching at Râmjivanpur in the Midnapur district. Almost all the important people of the locality were his disciples. Yadunâth Bhaktibhusan was the most important of all in this village. He lectured at Ghatal, Vadanganj and other places. Having worked in the Midnapur district in the first few months from the beginning of his leave, he came to Krishnanagar not as a Deputy magistrate as he did on previous occasions, but as a Vaishnava preacher. He had many of his important disciples with him. He delivered a series of lectures at the

big public meetings at Krishnanagar. Many European officers of the district used to attend these meetings. He was then a regular itinerant preacher.

During this time, he entered the 24 Parganas with Râm Sevak Chattopadhyaya, Tarakbrahma Gosvâmi and others. He toured, as usual, from village to village, addressing the public meetings. The most important places, which he visited in this district, were Basirhata, Danderhat and so on. In the meantime he succeeded in initiating many educated people into his discipleship. It was merely through his zeal that the educated section of the Bengali population became well disposed towards Gaudiya Vaishnavism and began to study it. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was a voluminous writer. He never failed in meeting with the demand of the educated public for its literature. Besides his monthly magazine, Sajjona Toshani, he wrote and published Bhavavali and its commentary, both in Bengali and Sanskrit; Prema Pradipa, a devotional novel in Bengali prose; the commentary on Baledev's Vishnu Sahasra Nâmâ; his Sanskrit commentary on Chaitanya Upanishad; Vaishnava Siddhânta Mâlâ, a philosophical treatise in Bengali prose; Aamnâyasutra, a philosophical treatise in Sanskrit; its Sanskrit commentary and Bengali explanation, Sri Harinâmâ, Srinâmâ Tattva, Srinâmâ Mahima, Srinâmâ Prachara all in Bengali poems; Sri Mahâprabhu's Siksha, in Bengali prose, Tattvavivek, the philosophical system of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas in relation and contrast to Western and other Eastern systems of philosophy, written in Sanskrit with its Bengali explanation; Saranâgati, a collection of his devotional songs, Sokasatan, a Bengali poem. Jaiva Dharma, a voluminous book on the Gaudiya doctrine and philosophy, Tattvasutra, a purely philosophical treatise in Sanskrit with its Sanskrit commentary and Bengali explanation; Vedarka Didhiti, a commentary on Ishopanishad; Tattvamuktâvali, a Bengali explanation of the Mâyâvada-sata-dosani, Bhajanâmrit, Râmânuja Upadesa Vyakhya, and so on. Jagannâthdâs Bâbâji went with him to Amlajora in the Burdwan district where Thâkur Bhakti Vinode had many disciples. Here he

opened a preaching centre in March 1892. A great festival was performed in this connection. From Amlajora he went to Vrindâvan and visited all the woods.

He halted at Allahâbâd, Kânpur and other places on the way. He soon returned to Calcutta and resumed his preaching, lecturing at different places. He revived the old Visva Vaishnava Râj Sabha, which was started by Rûpa and Sanâtana Gosvâmi at Vrindâvan. He inspired Mr.Sisir Kumâr Ghosh to accept Vaishnavism and undertake to preach it. Mr.Sisir Kumâr Ghosh the editor of the famous English daily, Amrita Bazâr Patrikâ regarded Thâkur Bhakti Vinode as Saptama Gosvâmi (the Seventh Gosvâmin). Through his numerous books and preaching by means of lectures and Magazines, he was able to change the views of the educated section of Bengalis on Gaudiya Vaishnavism. People began to study it in right earnest through his writings. Krishnanagar and Calcutta were two principal centres of his activities. He used to go to Sri Mâyâpur with hosts of his followers and admirers and hold *Kirtana* on the site of house of Sri Chaitanya. He passed his two years leave in vigorous missionary activities.

He returned to his judicial duties in April 1893 A.D. and was appointed to Sasarama in Behar. He obtained a transfer to Krishnanagar so that he could improve Sri Mâyâpur, which is very near. Now he set his mind to the restoration of Sri Mâyâpur. Dwarika Bâbu, the district engineer of Krishnanagar, and Bâbu Nafar Chandra Pâl Chaudhuri, Zamindâr in the Nadia district, were his two great friends in this matter. A great public meeting was called in January 1894, at Krishnanagar in which the Birthsite of Sri Chaitanya was finally identified as Sri Mâyâpur. Many historians, archaeologists, and men of letters of the country attended this meeting. The resolution was unanimously passed to the effect that the restoration of the place should be taken up immediately. A society was formed under the name of 'Navadvip Dhâm Prachârini Sabha' with Nafar Bâbu as Secretary. A public fund was started. The land was soon secured and the Deities of Sri Chaitanya and Vishnupriya, were installed in a thatched hut

amidst great festivities. People from all parts of the country attended the function. At last the stigma was removed from the Vaishnavas for having so long neglected to preserve the Birthsite of their God. This is one of the monumental achievements of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. The service of the Images depended and still depends on voluntary contributions by the public. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's ideas were that the temple of Sri Mâyâpur should not be mistakenly regarded by the public as his private concern. He used to conduct it on behalf of the public. Being in the Government service, he could not appeal to the public for funds, so he retired from the service in 1894 with a view to devoting his whole time and undivided attention to the service of Vaishnavism.

After retirement he devoted entire time for the erection of the temple at Sri Mâyâpur, which he began in the company of Râm Sevak Chattopadyaya and soon had the temple, guesthouse, kitchen and Nâtmandir erected. Rich and poor readily responded. His Highness the Mahârâjâ of Tipperah State became the president of the society "Navadvip Dhâm Prachârini Sabha", the State granting a fixed monthly sum for the service of the temple. Several other Râjâs and Zamindârs became other office-bearers. The princes of the Tipperah State are its hereditary Presidents.We will see later on how this village has been transformed into a very nice town. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode ran the temple on public contributions. He himself spent a good deal of his own money on its improvement. Every year the anniversary of the Birth of Sri Chaitanya is held at Sri Mâyâpur, when people from different parts of India in their thousands visit it as a place of pilgrimage.

From his retirement in 1894 A.D. till his demise in 1914 A.D., he laboured day and night for the cause of Vaishnavism. He started another religious magazine "Nivedana". His writing, whether in magazine or in book, was of abiding merit. Both in practice and precept he was a perfect Gosvâmi. Innumerable savants of the conntry used to visit him. Many disciples gathered round him. His life was full of activities. He respected Jagannâthdâs Bâbâji as

his spiritual guide. He was a great polymath and produced a good deal of literature on his retirement. He published the Chaitanya Charita by Krishnadâs Kavirâj with his commentary, styled Amrita Pravaha Bhâsya in 1895, which greatly helps readers to appreciate the ideas of Chaitanya Charita. He made the whole literature of the Gosvâmins as simple and intelligible to the reader as possible.

The next year he published 'Gauranga Smarana Mongala Stotra' in Sanskrit; "The Life and Precepts of Sri Chaitanya" in English; and Râmânuja Upadesa Vyakhya in Sanskrit with its Bengali explanation. He edited the "Brahma Samhita" with his commentary, styled Prakasini in 1897 A.D. In the next year he published Rûpa's Upadesamrita with his own commentary called 'Pijusvarsini", the Gitâ with Maddhva's commentary, and part of Brihat Bhâgavâtamrita with its Sanskrit commentary and his own Bengali explanation. Navadvip-Bhâva-Taranga a poem in praise of Navadvip, and Bengali Explanation of Bhanamrita by Narahari Sarkar were published in 1899 A.D.

His fourth son Bimalâ Prasâd who was a born ascetic. Since his infancy he was above the average in intelligence and religious fervour. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode trained him with the utmost care. Bimalâ Prasâd who assisted Thâkur Bhakti Vinode in his literary production, was the first person to start an independent school of astronomy in Bengal. He was a great authority on the subject. It was through his help that Thâkur Bhakti Vinode introduced the Vaisnavite system of almanac called 'Navadvip Panjikâ', for observing religious rites, fasts, ceremonies and so on. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's other important book in poetry "Harinâmâ Chinta Mani" was written and published in 1900 A.D. His next work is "Bhagavat Arka Marchi Mâlâ". He also edited "Samkalpa Kalpa Druma" with his own Bengali explanation. "Padma Puran" was published in 1901 A.D.

Another very popular work of his, "Bhajan Rahasya" was published next. He edited Gopâl Bhatta's "Satkriya Saradipika" in 1904. Jagadânanda's "Premavivarta" and his "Svaniyama Dâsakam" were brought to light in 1906 and 1907 respectively. He had many more books. Many of them

have been published either in books or in his two Magazines, Sajjana Tosani and Nivedana. Towards the end of his life, he wholly entrusted his fourth son Bimalâ Prasâd with the work, which he had begun, but could not bring into effect all his projects for popularising Vaishnavism owing to a lack of whole-time workers. Most of his disciples were family men so they could not work with him as was necessary for the tremendous task, which he had undertaken. But he was infinitely happy in seeing that he could interest the educated people of Bengal in Vaishnavism. His demise took place in 1914 A.D. at his Calcutta residence. It was mourned throughout the Gaudiya Vaishnava world. As Rûpa, was succeeded by Jiva, Vishvanâth by Baladev, so was Thâkur Bhakti Vinode by his fourth son, Bimalâ Prasâd, as the head of the movement. The latter has been doing great service such as no other previous Âchâryas could have dreamt of.

Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was really an extraordinary man. Despite his heavy official duties as Deputy Magistrate he was able to write more than a hundred volumes, each of which is certainly of abiding merit. He studied the whole Gaudiya Vaishnava literature in comparison with and contrast to the philosophical literature of the East and West. He was in constant touch with the leaders of other Movements of the day. His views were neither dogmatic nor one-sided. He was equally open to the influences of Brahmoism, Christianity, Mohammedanism and Saktaism before he got an opportunity of interesting himself in Vaishnavism. He preferred Christianity to Brahmoism on account of the clear conception of Godhead in the former. He says in his article on *Bhakti* that he found the extension of the Christian conception of God, in Vaishnavism.

His works may be mainly divided into two sections (1) philosophical and (2) poetical. He had a special taste for philosophical study. He was also a born poet. He composed his Ulâi Chandi Kâvya, Harikathâ and Sumva Nisumva Yuddha when he was between 11 and 12. He wrote his English poem, *Poriyead* in 1857 A.D. in his 19th year. After his self-conversion to Vaishnavism, he employed all his

poetic genius in celebrating Vaishnavism. He was indefatigable in extolling Navadvip, the Birthplace of his God Sri Chaitanya. His songs breathe just in the same spirit as those of Rûpa and Raghunâthdâs. He sang: -

(1) When will that day be mine?
When, my offences ceasing,
The relish for the pure Name (God Krishna)
Will be communicated to me by the mercy of the Name,

(2) Deeming myself more lowly than the blade of grass,
Summoning in my heart the quality of patience;
Offering honour to all, desiring none for myself,
I shall taste the essence of *Rasa* of the name.

(3) Wealth, following, the beautiful maid of poesy,
I shall not ask from Thee for making me happy;
May Thou, O Gaura Hari, grant me at every birth
Spontaneous devotion at Thy feet.

(4) In articulating the Name of Sri Krishna,
My hair will stand on end; my voice grow husky;
I will pale and tremble,
And tears will overflow my eyes.

(5) Oh, when at Navadvip, by the bank of the stream,
Guilelessly calling the name of Gaura Hari,
Shall I roam about, running, dancing, singing;
Giving-up all other thought in ecstasy?

(6) Oh when will my Master out of pity
Free me from the world's temptations,
Afford me the shade of His protecting wings,
And have access to the Mart of the Name?

(7) And I shall buy and freely gather the *Rasa* of His Name;
Be overwhelmingly intoxicated with its mellow quality;
And, touching the feet of those immersed within the
Rasa of His Name,
Be mellowed by the luscious *Rasa* of His Name.

(8) Oh, when will kindness for all souls manifest itself?
And, with a lowly heart, forgetting his own pleasure,
This servant by humble persuasion
Set out to preach, obeying the Divine command?

JAGANNÂTHDÂS BÂBÂJI

Thâkur Bhakti Vinode met Sri Jagannâthdâs Bâbâji at Vrindâvan in 1880 A.D. He was impressed with the spiritual depth of the great Bâbâji, who was then about 100 years old. Jagannâth was in a village in the sub-division of Tangail, Mymensinha. He came of a very respectable family. He renounced the world in his youth and led a strict devotional life at Vrindâvan till the eighties of the 19th century. He was the disciple of Madhusudandas, whose Guru was Uddhava or Addharadas, who was the disciple of the famous Baladev Vidyâbhusan. Jagannâth was a perfect saint in the true sense of the word. He had hosts of sincere disciples who were mostly ascetics. He came to Navadvip about 1881 A.D. to spend the last part of his life, in the places where his God was born and passed His early years. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode came in close touch with this great saint since his settlement at Navadvip. He built a brick shed for him. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode regarded him as his Guru. It was Jagannâthdâs who was his ardent supporter in identifying Sri Mâyâpur as the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya, and it was he who pointed out the exact sites of important places in this connection. Everyone believed in the strength of his spiritual visions. Jagannâthdâs was called Vaishnava Sârvabhauma, that is to say, the supreme head of Vaishnavas. He played an important part in the installation ceremony of the Images of Sri Chaitanya, at Sri Mâyâpur. Though he was too old to go about much from place to place, he was carried there on very important occasions. We found him celebrating the Utsava at Amlajora in 1892 A.D. He had grown very thin and shrunken in his extreme old age. A very strong up-country man named Vihâridâs who was his faithful disciple used to carry him on his shoulders from place to place. Jagannâthdâs began to live with Thâkur Bhakti Vinode in his Svarupganj residence on the other side of the river opposite the present Navadvip in 1886 A.D. He had a deep affection for Bimalâ Prasâd and foretold his future career as a great *Âchârya*. Jagannâthdâs expired in 1895 A.D. at the very ripe old age of about 120. His tomb is to be found at Navadvip.

MADHUSUDAN GOSVÂMI

Madhusudan Gosvâmi was a worthy descendant of the nephew (brother's son) of Gopinâth Pujari disciple of Gopâl Bhatta. This family is very influential at Vrindâvan having innumerable disciples in Western India. It is this family that kept alive the influence of Gaudiya Vaisnavism in Northern and Western India. Madhusudan was perhaps one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of the day. He became the most sincere friend of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode in his mission. He visited Sri Mâyâpur after its discovery, and used to stay with Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. He commanded high respect from various parts of the country. His active sympathy with the work of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode greatly facilitated his activities.Madhusudan Sârvabhauma used to call Thâkur Bhakti Vinode a true Gosvâmi. Madhusudan was also the supporter and admirer of Sarasvati Thâkur (Bimalâ Prasâd) to the last day of his life. When a controversy arose in Bengal as to the relative position of the Vaishnavas in relation to the *Brahmanas*, and a great meeting was held at Balighai for a resoution, Madhusudan represented the Vaishnavas of Vrindâvan. It was at this meeting that Sarasvati Thâkur advocated the cause of the Vaishnavas. Madhusudan was filled with awe at the intellectual might of Sarasvati Thâkur. He declared at the meeting that Sarasvati Thâkur is as if an incarnation of Sukadeva Gosvâmi the great saint and singer of the Bhagavât. Madhusudan was a zealous upholder of the Vaishnavite practices and rites in the teeth of the *Smartas*' opposition.

VISVAMBHARÂNANDA DEVA GOSVÂMI

Another great enthusiastic preacher of the Vaishnavism of the day was Sri Visvambharânanda Deva Gosvâmi, the worthy descendant of Sri Rasika Murâri, disciple of Syamananda. Visvambharânanda was head of the family and consequently was on the Gadi. He was the Guru of the princes of the 28 Garjata States of Orissa and hundreds of Sasana Brahmana families. He was a fearless preacher and supporter of Vaishnavite Varnashrama

Dharma. He was a great Sanskrit scholar and a typical Vaishnava. He was in constant touch with Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. He died in 1918 A.D.

RÂMÂ NÂRÂYANA VIDYÂRATNA

Another scholar named Râmâ Nârâyana Vidyâratna, of Berhampur in the Mursidâbâd district began to publish the Vaishnava literature of the Gosvâmins. The late Mahârâjâ Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi of Kossimbazâr was his patron. Râmâ Nârâyana Vidyâratna has done immense service to the Vaishnava world by editing a huge number of Gaudiya Vaishnava books. He was also in touch with Thâkur Bhakti Vinode, but his activities are of a different kind from that of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. He was not a preacher in the strict sense of the term yet his service to the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature is laudable. It was he who for the first time edited and printed the important works of the Gosvâmins.

THE MAHÂRÂJÂ SRI MANINDRA CHANDRA NANDI OF KOSSIMBAZÂR

The Mahârâjâ spent immense treasure for the sake of Vaishnavism and he was an exceptionally good man. He used to meet Thâkur Bhakti Vinode and had high regard for him, but the movement of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode is different from, rather than similar to, that of the Mahârâjâ. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's movement was reformative as well as constructive. He realised that the innumerable abuses which vitiated the so-called Vaishnavas of the day were mainly due to the lack of religious life among the hereditary Gosvâmins, who mainly claimed their position as Guru, but actually were unfit for the exalted office. They were of depraved character, and shrewd businessmen. They degraded the religion into a commercial proposition for the furtherance of their easygoing life. They were, as a whole, illiterate and devoid of moral life.

This reformtive tone of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode filled the mind of hereditary Gosvâmins with anxiety lest in

course of time they should be deprived of their privileges. They began to organise themselves to protect their interests. The Mahârâjâ was born into a low Tili caste and was blindly obedient to the Gosvâmins on account of his superstitious fear and consciousness of his low caste. He was eager for the favour of the so-called Gosvâmins. Moreover, the Mahârâjâ was extremely simple and the shrewd Gosvâmins took advantage of his goodness and formed the "Vaishnava Sammilani" under his patronage and with his money. The Mahârâjâ used to hold the annual session at his own residence and spent much of his fabulous wealth in entertaining the so-called Vaishnavas and Gosvâmins and making gifts to them. He was simply deceived by them. The Mahârâjâ caused several Vaishnavite books to be published. He was very sincere in his efforts on behalf of Vaishnavism but was a puppet in the hands of the Gosvâmins. He was also a patron of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode and Sarasvati Thâkur. He used to meet them occasionally and attended their meetings.

SPRITUAL INFLUENCE OF THÂKUR BHAKTI VINODE

The activities of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode are mainly responsible for bringing about the change of view in the educated Public. Mr.Sisir Kumâr Ghosh, editor of Amrita Bazâr Patrikâ, a very influential English daily, took up the cause of Vaishnavism, being inspired by Thâkur Bhakti Vinode whose sincere admirer he was. He used to regard him as Saptama Gosvâmi and worked in obedience to him. His brother and successor as editor, Mr.Mati Lal Ghose also had firm faith in Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. This family of Bengal contributed a great deal to the cause of Vaishnavism in general and the discovery of Sri Mâyâpur in particular. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode is the pioneer of the Pure Bhakti Vinode that is, at present, sweeping over the whole of India. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's movement is in strict obedience to and in conformity with that of Rûpa and Jiva, Srinivâs and Narottam, Visvanâth and Baladev. The late Sir Gurudâs Banerji, Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University proved a vivid similarity between the

literary production, devotional fervour and preaching zeal of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode and that of Rûpa and Santana. The great savants like Jatindra Nâth Chaudhuri, of Taki, Bepin Chandra Paul, appealed to the educated young men of Bengal to read Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's Krishna Samhita. M.M. Hara Prasâd Sastri, Dr. Satish Chandra Vidyâbhusan, the Late Mr. Justice Sâradâ Charana Mitter, Mr. Nalini Ranjana Pandit and many other leaders of the country have said that the life of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was a fulfilment of the prophesy of the Chaitanya Bhagavât that Sri Chaitanya's name would spread throughout the country. His storehouse of literature on *Bhakti* has secured for him a very high place in the hearts of the people.

He died in 1914 A.D. leaving the helm of the Movement in the hands of his fourth son Bimalâ Prasâd whom he trained for the purpose with great care and affection for the completion of his undertaking. He believed from his extraordinary intelligence, devotion to truth and religious fervency, that he would be a great Âchârya in future. The tomb of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode is to be found at Svarupganj near Sri Mâyâpur. Another temple has been raised over the tomb of his affectionate disciple Krishnadâs Bâbâji close to his tomb. Every year the annivarsary of his birth and death are commemorated with great eclat. Vaishnavas from different parts of the country come to demonstrate their respect to the great Âchârya. The Gaudiya Vaishnava world is infinitely indebted to him, who deserves to be remembered by posterity with deep affection and reverence. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was indeed a powerhouse, whose stored virtues and spiritual influence benefited everyone with whom he came in contact. He will be ever remembered.

SRI BHAKTI SIDDHÂNTA SARASVATI GOSWAMI THÂKUR

Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's fourth son, Bimalâ Prasâd was born on February 6th, 1874 A.D., at Puri, in Orissa, when Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was Deputy Magistrate, and also incharge of the temple of Jagannâth on behalf of the Government.

Bimalâ Prasâd began to show extraordinary intellectual power from his boyhood. He was educated first at the Serampur Union School and later at the Metropolitan Institution at Calcutta, from which he passed his entrance examination in 1892 A.D. While at school, he began to read Sanskrit grammar, and a little astronomy in 1885 A.D. He soon mastered the latter subject. When he was only 12 he began the study of the Upanishads with his Sanskrit professor. He was a gifted mathematician. He could handle logarithms and Indian methods of Trignometrical calculations concerning Astronomy in 1888 A.D., when he was only 14. He began to read and then translate into Bengali two classical astronomical treatises, "Surya Siddhânta" and "Siddhânta Siromani" which he published in 1893 A.D. Having passed his entrance Examinations he entered the Calcutta Sanskrit College in 1892 when he gathered several pupils to teach them astronomy. He made such progress in the subject that his teacher began to learn from him! During this time, the reformation of the calendar was undertaken by M.M. Mahes Chandra Nyayaratna, the Principal of the Sanskrit College and M.M. Bapudev Shastri. He pointed out some mathematical discrepancies adopted by the reformers and protested against their erroneous method at a public meeting. One of his pupils published a book both in English and Bengali showing conclusively the inaccuracies of the reformers of the calendar. The whole thing verged on the precision of the equinox. The Indian calculation is made from a fixed point of the Zodiac. His opposition incurred for him the displeasure of his Principal. Bimalâ Prasâd was a man of very independent spirit and persisted in his opposition, exposing the mistakes of his Principal. The quarrel rose to such a point that he had to give up his college altogether. During this time he published several books on astronomy and began to teach this subject while he was still in the College. His name as a great astronomer became very well known in the country. There was none then to teach his astronomy, so he could not persuade himself to enter any other college. Thus ensued the conflict between the professor of astronomy of the Sanskrit college on the one hand, and him and his pupils on the other.

His ambition was then very high. He was a great astronomer of Bengal. He had already finished his study of the Upanishads and many works of *Bhakti* literature. He became a great debater. He had a mind to start a big academy of higher astronomy so that the Bengali student should not have to go to Benares to study it. He was then really qualified to remove the long-felt want of Bengal by setting up an institution of astronomy. He did not like the idea of his father giving him money. He therefore accepted a job as one of the compilers of the family history of the Tipperah State, which was being written in Sanskrit. He entered the State in 1895 A.D. He was for some time one of the guardian tutors of the Heir Apparent, and later on entrusted with the Calcutta Agency of the State, in which capacity he came in contact with many administrative heads of the Bengal Government. It proved a task unworthy of his genius. He devoted most of his time to his study of *Bhakti* and philosophical literature and the cultivation of Astronomy. He was able to save sufficient money from his pay for the realisation of his projects. He gave up his service and started his Academy of Astronomy known as Sarasvata Chatuspati in 1897 A.D. He was given the title of Siddhânta Sarasvati on account of his great merits as a mathematical astronomer. The Prince of the Tipperah State offered to allow him to retain his pay after he gave up the service, but he refused it. He has always been a severe moralist.

Many advanced students joined his Sarasvata Chatuspati. He started two astronomical journals "Brihaspati" and "Jyotirvid" - in which he published many astronomical books and astrological primers. He had correspondence with the renowned Indian and foreign astronomers of the day. The S.S.Navy presented him with their astronomical publications. He became a friend of M.M.Vapudeva Shastri, M.M. Sudhakar Dvidedi, and others, who were then reputed scholars of Astronomy, creating a great sensation in the astronomical field. The students of the Sanskrit College proved too poor in their astronomical knowledge, to match those of the Sarasvata Chatuspati.

The great Pandit Panchanan Sâhityacharya at this time held the chair of Astronomy at the Sanskrit College. He felt very uncomfortable at the sudden rise of young Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati. He came into conflict with him with regard to the examination of the students of the Sarasvati Chatuspati. Pandit Panchanan was the examiner, but he could not always follow the advanced students of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati. The relations between Pandit Panchanan and Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati grew very bitter, and at last Dr. Satish Chandra Vidyâbhusan, principal of the Sanskrit College, brought about a meeting between the two disputants for a discussion with regard to their points of dissension under his presidency. A young man of 24 embarked on a disputation with an old and reputed professor who was regarded as the greatest astronomer then in Bengal. Panchanan gave him some problems to solve, which he did with ease and complete thoroughness, but when our young prodigy himself put some problems for solution, the old professor was nonplussed. He politely asked him to do it himself. When Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati was giving his own exposition, to the delight of all present, his vanquished rival was so perplexed that be nearly fainted. This victory marked the zenith of his reputation as the greatest Bengali astronomer of the day. Now the present renowned astronomers and astrologers are either his pupils, or the pupils of his pupils.

It would be wrong to call him only an astronomer. He had already finished his study of the Upanishads and Govinda Bhâsya. He published his Bange Samajikata, in which he has shown the keenness and penetration of a great scholar in tracing the origin of the castes of Bengal. His desire to study the philosophical systems of the world grew too strong to allow him to remain in his school of astronomy. Being then sufficiently established, he left it in the hands of his advanced students and went to Puri, excludively to devote himself to the study of the religious and philosophical literature of various sects.

He went to Puri in 1903 A.D. to study with undivided attention, both the Shankara and Vaishnava philosophies

before he could officially take up the cause of the latter and begin fighting Shankara's Mâyâvâdism. With the said purpose in view, he came in contact with the head of the Govardhan Math of Puri - one of the four principal Maths founded by Shankara. The Govardhan Math library was placed at his disposal. He studied the Mâyâvada literature with the head of the Math. People misunderstood him thinking that he would turn a Mâyâvadi scholar, but he had other ideas. This is the period of his vigorous study, which he continued with unabated energy until he was satisfied that he had mastered the Mâyâvada philosophy. Along with his studies of Shankara philosophy, he took up those of Râmânuja and of Madhva. He was the last person to be satisfied with narrow ideas or insufficient knowledge before he would pronounce judgment on any School. He thoroughly studied the philosophy of his own Gaudiya School in comparison with that of Shankara, Râmânuja, Madhva and Nimbarka. He was not able to gather the literature of the Vishnusvami School until he went to the South of India a few years latter. Now he is in a position to establish the excellence and supremacy of Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy over other schools. We should remark here that he was greatly influenced by the Râmânujiya philosophy. He was perhaps the first Bengali who thoroughly studied the Râmânujiya and Madhva literature and history. We will see later on that he introduced some Râmânujiya practices such as *Tridanda Sannyâs, Pancharatrika Diksha* and so on into the Gaudiya Sect. Now Siddhânta Sarasvati became the fearless champion of Vaishnava philosophy against Mâyâvâdism.

Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati was then seized with a desire to visit the important places of the Madhva, Râmânuja and Vishnusvami sects to complete his studies and knowledge. One of his learned friends Mr. Râjendra Kumâr Vidyâbhusan, who is well known in Bengal as a Mâyâvada scholar, consented to accompany him on his tour in the South. Siddhânta Sarasvati set out on his journey to those important headquarters of the different sects in the South. He had also visited the places where Sri Chaitanya had

lived and halted in the course of His tour. Siddhânta Sarasvati visited Udipi, the headquarters of the Madhvas, Sringeri Math, the Sankarit stronghold in the South, Srirangam, the important place of the Râmânuja sect, and many others. He met the heads of the respective sects, held discussions with them, regarding their history and philosophy and gathered such information. He was not a sightseer but a keen student of history and philosophy. During this tour, he made a penetrating search for the whereabouts and particulars of the old Vishnusvami sect. He had been able to gather some historical data and some Paddati literature embodying their doctrine in the Pandiyan country. Siddhânta Sarasvati was perhaps the first scholar to write the history and philosophy of the Vishnusvami sect. He is really the living encyclopaedia of the history of the religious sects of India.

He returned to Calcutta from his long and laborious journey, invigorated, vibrating with new hope and simmering with new ideas. He was then well fortified by his aide range of knowledge.

The keynote of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati's life is seriousness. His tall figure, thoughtful face and penetrating eyes never fail to impress the public as a dignified philosopher. Asceticism was innate in him. He took great delight in practising it. He used to chant the name of Krishna since 1885 when he was only 11 years old. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode himself undertook to teach him the Sad-Sandarbha of Jiva Gosvâmi and other books. He liked to view religion in the light of his philosophical knowledge. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode, wanted him to be a pure theist and practical religious man, instead of a pure scholar and debator; but he could not yet adjust his philosophical investigations to the life of any practical religious man whom he came across or then knew. He admired an ascetic religious man rather than a religious family man, as Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was. In the religion of Sri Chaitanya there is not very much difference between a stern ascetic devotee like Raghunâth or Rûpa, and a house holder devotee like Rây Râmânanda or Pundarika, provided the latter masters

his senses and lives at home, having withdrawn himself from a materialistic outlook of the world. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati preferred the life of an ascetic to that of any householder however good an ascetic he might be. He studied all the literature of Vaishnavism. He was a vigorous student. If there was any joy in life for him, it was his study of religious philosophy. In this state of mind he felt the need of the help of a practical spiritual man to adjust his academical conception of religion with inner experience. He became restless in quest of such a practical religious man to set towards the realisation of his ideal. According to his own idea, a practical religious man should necessarily be an ascetic. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode had many disciples but he could not appreciate his conduct as he was at home. Asceticism was guiding him in quest of his Guru. During this time, a great ascetic Vaishnava named Sri Gaur Kishor Gosvâmi used to visit Thâkur Bhakti Vinode to listen to him. He was just what a true Vaishnava hke Rûpa and Raghunâth should be. He was born in a village near Tepakhola in the Faridpur district. He left his home possibly in the thirties of his life and led a strict devotional life at Vrindâvan for many years. He was the disciple of Bhagavâtdas who was the disciple of Jagannâthdâs. He came to Navadvip in his later years. He was really a holy saint. He was then the most revered of all the pure devotees of that time and was equally well known in the East and West of India. This saint practised the most thoroughgoing asceticism in his conduct as a man wholly dedicated to the service of God. He lived a severely solitary life, and avoided the company of men as much as possible. But his reputation for sanctity had drawn to him a number of persons who gave themselves out to be his attendants, though he did not like to accept any service from any body. He used to live on raw rice or some grain or sometimes only on water of the Ganges. He seemed to be an incarnation of Raghunâthdâs Gosvâmi or Lokanâth Gosvâmi of the 16th Century. One day the Mahârâjâ of Kossimbazar, Sir Manindra Chandra, came to his hut and entreated him to grace his annual "Vaishnava Sammilani" at his residence at

Kossimbazâr by his presence. He told him that he would cause him to be safely carried in a palanquin. Sri Gaura Kishor in his reply asked him to live with him in his hut, renouncing his wealth and palace for his spiritual well being. He further added that he (Gaur Kishor) would provide all comforts for him. Gaur Kishor did not like to be under an obligation to any worldly-minded people. He was the respected friend of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. Sometimes he used to live in a shed at Thâkur Bhakti Vinode's Svarupganj residence. In a word, Gaur Kishor was a perfect Vaishnava.

Like Lokanâth Gosvâmi he had no intention of making any disciples, lest they should honour him as *Guru*. He thought himself too humble to be so. Siddhânta Sarasvati approached him with a prayer to be graced by him with initiation. Gaur Kishor refused to do so. He was extremely sad at this refusal. But like Narottam he was not to be put off by refusal. He represented Sarasvati's ideal, and finally granted him initiation. He is the only disciple of Sri Gaur Kishor Gosvâmi, who began to love his disciple with infinite tenderness. Those who used to come to him for religious instruction and messages were sent to Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur, whose devotion and affection for his *Guru* were just the same as that of Thâkur Narottam for his *Guru* Lokanâth. Sri Gaur Kishor is said to have inspired him with that light for which he was eager at the moment. For a full year after his initiation, he remained in a mystically overpowered state in consequence of the shock of his new experience in initiation; the astounding revelation of mystic communion with the personality of Godhead. His spiritual quest had been fulfilled by the grace of Sri Gaur Kishor. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati thus writes to us:

"But later on when I met my preceptor, his deeds and actions gave me entire satisfaction as to mastering the subject I was so earnestly searching for; I became a practical man in associating myself with this great Master of religious atmosphere, from the day I actually met him. It was by providential dispensation that I was able fully to understand the language and practical side of devotion after I had met the Practising master, and on my full submission

unto him. No education could have prepared me for the good-fortune of understanding my Master's attitude. He is free and adept in all movements regarding the teachings of Sri Chaitanya and Srimad Bhagavât. Before I met him my impression was that the writings of the devotional school could not be fully realised in a practical life in this world. My study of my Master, and then the study of the books, along with the explanations by Thâkur Bhakti Vinode, gave me ample facility to advance towards the true spiritual life. Before I met my Master, I had not written anything about real religion. Up to that time, my idea of religion was confined to books and to a strict ethical life, but that sort of life was found imperfect unless I came in touch with the practical side of things."

Thâkur Bhakti Vinode adds the word of *Bhakti* to his academic title "Siddhânta Sarasvati" in recognition of his deep knowledge of *Bhakti* literature. Now he began his absorbing devotional life practising severe ascetisicm, and teaching a few advanced students, the *Bhakti* literature. His reputation as a very learned Vaishnava ascetic spread throughout Bengal, Puri and Vrindâvan, from which places pupils came to him to study Vaishnava literature under him. He accepted only those students who were sincerely earnest in leading a truly religious 1ife. His great friend, Pandit Vanamâli Lal Gosvâmi of Vrindâvan, lived with him for some time. He had already built residences, one at Sri Mâyâpur and the other at Puri. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode placed him in charge of affairs at Sri Mâyâpur. He used to live at his own residence now called Sri Chaitanya Math. A very earnest young man named Rohini Kumâr Ghosh, nephew of the late Mr. Justice Chandra Madhava Ghosh entreated him to initiate him into his devotional life. It was the first time that Siddhânta Sarasvati had made a disciple. Mr. Rohini Kumâr Ghosh began to live with him. Several other young men were initiated by him, Paramânanda among others. During this time, Sri Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati began to write his famous commentary styled Anubhâsya and Krishnadâs Kavirâj's Chaitanya Charita. In it he explained the life and teaching of Sri

Chaitanya in the light of the Upanishads, Vedânta and other classical literature. He cites full quotation from at least 208 works. It evinces his wide range of knowledge and interest. He discusses every teaching of Sri Chaitanya from different points of view, in order to show the all-round perfection of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. This Anubhâsya may be regarded as the best of his literary works. It is written partly in Sanskrit and partly in Bengali. It is dated as having been completed in 429 of the Chaitanya Era. (1916.A.D.) Another young man whose name was Padmananda Brahmachari became his disciple, and was appointed curator of the Lord's Birth site temple.

During this time a great controversy arose between the Vaishnavas born in a non-*Brahmana* family to initiate others. A great public meeting was organized at Balighai Uddharanpur in the Midnapur district in August 1911 A.D., for a definite ruling. It is one of the memorable incidents in the history of the Bengal Vaishnavas.

Invitations were sent alike to *Brahmanas* and Vaishnava scholars of all parts of Bengal and other provinces, to take part in the discussion. Madhusudan Sârvabhauma came to represent the Vaishnava scholars of Vrindâvan. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was requested to be present. As Vishvanâth Chakravarty sent Baladev Vidyâbhusan to Galtâ in the 18th century, to save the prestige of the Vaishnava community, so Thâkur Bhakti Vinode sent our Bimalâ Prasâd Sidhanta Sarasvati to advocate the cause of the followers of Sri Chaitanya. He started for Midnapur with the enthusiasm of a gallant fighter.

More than ten thousand Pandits assembled there to decide whether the Vaishnava masters were eligible to initiate the *Brahmanas*. Siddhânta Sarasvati was the youngest of all scholars to enter into the fierce disputation. Elaborate police arrangement was provided as such a meeting might have resulted in a sectarian riot. Siddhânta Sarasvati read his famous speech styled "Brahmana O Vaishnaver Taratamya Visayaka Siddhânta", or "Arguments

as to the relative superiority of the Vaishnavas to the *Brahmanas*." He read it on three successive days under a strong police guard. It was for the first time that he challenged the *Brahmanas* to prove the unsullied purity of their blood on the strength of which they claimed their superiority. He definitely proved that there could be no *Brahmanas* if they based their claim on blood heredity. He traced the origin and object of the *Varnashram* system and argued at great length that it was not the accidental physical birth but the individual aptitude and merits that should be the true criterion to decide whether one is a *Brahmana*, a *Ksatriya*, a *Vaisya* or a *Sudra*. Siddhânta Sarasvati cited innumerable concrete examples from various scriptures that the child of a Sudra became a *Brahmana* and vice-versa.

Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati in his speech proved that the claim to Brahanahood on the strength of seminal birth is invalid on several grounds. He emphasized the necessity of introducing Diksha to confer Brahmanahood, and thus to revive the true spirit and object of the time-honoured *Varnashram* institution. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati seemed to have struck the audience with a thunderbolt. He is gifted in argument, and vanquished his hosts of rivals by the sheer strength of his fiery speech. He won the day, to the delight of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world.

Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati was absolutely fearless and terribly vigorous in establishing what is truth. When his victory, nay the victory of the Vaishnava community, was proclaimed, several thousand people of the meeting rushed to touch his feet in deep gratitude, but he refused to allow himself to be so honoured. This is the first triumph of the series, which were in store for him in future. From this time, Visvambharândanda Deva Gosvâmi of Gopivallabhapur, began to respect him as the greatest Âchârya of the day. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode received him with great delight. Madhusudan Gosvâmi Sârvabhauma expressed his deep gratitude to Thâkur Bhakti Vinode saying that he would leave a mighty Âchârya like his worthy son, Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati. The Gaudiya Vaishnava world

is relieved of all anxiety to learn that Jiva and Baladev seem to have reincarnated, as it were, in the character of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati, to defend Vaishnavism from the aggression of both Mâyâvadins and the Smarta *Brahmanas*.

It is at Vâlighai Uddhavapur that he launched upon his gallant campaign against the *Smarta Varnashram*, and has been successfully fighting to establish his Daiva *Varnashram*. He seems to have revolutionized the social problem of India. Thousands of his disciples born either in a *Brahmana* or non-*Brahmana* family are being given the sacred thread to worship the Deities in the temple, at the time of their initiation. He has made merits the criterion to decide whether one is eligible for Brahmanahood or not. He had to face tremendous opposition from the Orthodox society at the outset but it has become almost an established institution, surmounting all difficulties. His idea is to from an exclusive Vaishnava society independent of the non-Vaishnava Smartas because the princilples of the latter are detrimental to those of the Vaishnavas. The first aim of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur is to free his Vaishnava disciples from the caste prejudices from which they are bound to suffer, unless and until they give up their respective castes and relations with the caste people. The Vaishnava writers untiringly rebuke those who are likely to regard the Vaishnavas from the caste point of view.[1] Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur has abolished the Smarta worship of many gods and goddesses, the Smarta Sradha, Smarta almanac, and so on, among the extensive communities of his disciples throughout India. But he has yet to solve a very difficult problem arising out of his reform. There is no difference between two disciples coming from different castes. They freely use on another's food, enter the temples and enjoy all privileges of a *Brahmana*. But the marriages of these or their children are still confined to their respective original castes, which they pretend to have given up at the time of their initiation when they are given the sacred thread and become *Brahmanas*.

[1] C.Bh.M. X. Madhya p.102

It is the duty of his disciples to shake off the last trace of obedience to the *Smartas* and carry out the logical fulfillment of their Gurus' mission to its fullest degree.

The late Mahârâjâ of Kossimbazâr requested him to grace the Samminlani of the Vaishnavas at his Kossimbazâr residence in 1912. He went there with one of his disciples. The Mahârâjâ received and lodged him in his own palace called Khasvadi. We have already observed that it was a meeting mainly of the descendants of the ancient Vaishnava masters. Their purpose was to protect their selfish interests, which were likely to be jeopardised by the movement of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode and Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati. They asked the latter to lecture on a few subjects which were not exactly religious, so that he should not get an opportunity of saying something which might affect their interests. He refused their proposal so they made a clique and granted him only five minutes for his lecture. The spirited Âchârya Siddhânta Sarasvati was the last person to tolerate this. He observed a complete fast for four successive days as a protest against their deliberate attempt to prevent him speaking. He could not make either the Mahârâjâ or anybody else understand that he would not take any meal at the palace, but the steward disclosed the fact to the Mahârâjâ after he left the palace. His idea was that if he was not given an opportunity of benefiting the Mahârâjâ, why should he accept his food, and come under an obligation to him? He is a man of principle; the last person to deviate from his path of religious conviction for any consideration, whatever it might be. Various doctrinal problems were placed before him for solution. These discussions were held in groups outside the general meetings. He severely attacked the various abuses, which the so-called Gurus brought about on account of their lack of religious scruples. It created a sensation in every camp that Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati was exposing their weakness. Since this meeting in 1912 A.D., the so-called Gurus of the Vaishnava community began to regard Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati as an object of terror.

In the meantime, he was universally accepted as the

greatest Vaishnava scholar of Bengal. Whenever any doctrinal problem was to be solved, it was invariably referred to him for decision. Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was getting very old, and incapable of active work. The whole responsibility, both for the movement and the Sri Mâyâpur affairs, was imposed on him alone. He had to edit the "Sajjana Tosani" though the name of Sri Bhakti Vinode appeared as its editor. Several young men of devotional temperament rallied round him. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati made up his mind to start a printing press of his own for the publication of Bhakti literature. He Now established a press at 4, Shanagar Street, Calcutta, in May 1914 A.D. During this time several young men became his disciples and began to live with him there. He published some part of Sri Chaitanya Charita, the Gitâ with Chakravarti's commentary, Gaur Krishnadaya, a Sanskrit biography of Sri Chaitanya and so on. He subsequently moved the press from Calcutta to Sri Mâyâpur in February 1915 A.D.

Thâkur Bhakti Vinode passed away, on June 23rd 1914 A.D. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati succeeded Thâkur Bhakti Vinode in every respect as the Âchârya of his Movement.

He next moved his press to Krishnanagar, the headquarters of the district, in 1915 A. D. He sometimes used to live there. One of his disciples name Paramânanda was appointed its custodian. He served his *Guru* in this capacity for a long period. This press was named The Bhagavâta Press. Innumerable books on Bhatkti have been published from it. It greatly facilitated his missionary activities. When he used to live at Krishnanagar, the leading citizens came to listen to him. It was characteristic of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati that he never tires of talk on God. He was always eager to help people to understand the doctrine of the sect of which he was the head. His talks were always memorable and exhilarating.

He had no sooner composed himself after the shock at the passing away of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode than his own *Guru* Kishor passed away on the 16th of November 1915 A.D., in the present town of Navadvip. Sri Siddhânta

Sarasvati was overwhelmed with grief at the demise of his Guru. He felt very lonely and disheartened. The mission of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode was unfinished. He had written books but many of them were in manuscript or published in the Magazine. These activities should be carried out. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati was badly in need of men. The disciples of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode were all family men. They were not serious in carrying out the mission of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode.

When he was thinking how he could continue the Movement, a young man of extraordinary enthusiasm came to him in quest of spiritual enlightenment. He is none other than Sri Kunja Behari Vidyâbhusan, who later on became famous as Bhakti Vilâs Tirtha Gosvâmi Mahâraj. He lived with him for several months to study the doctrine before he was initiated. The initiation of this young man may be regarded as a definite turning point in the history of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. He found in Sri Sarasvati Thâkur an infinite source of spiritual inspiration. He became eager to bring into effect the mission of his Guru. Now Saraswati Thâkur was making plans to begin preaching. In the meantime, another band of young men accepted his discipleship. He trained them in their religious life. He resolved to approach the people individually, address meetings from village to village, teach the people at the theological school, and train his disciples in monasteries. In his philosophy, there is no room for disappointment. He sincerely believed in the truth of the teaching of Rûpa that patience and enthusiasm are sure to lead one to success.

In the month of Fâlguna, 1918 A.D., he accepted *Tridanda Sannyâs*. Siddhânta Sarasvati who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, wore only two small pieces of cloth, began to practise severe asceticism worthy of a *Tridanda Sannyâsi*. As a Brahmachari, he used to observe severe asceticism. His acceptance of *Sannyâs* definitely made an epoch in his life. The rapid progress of his missionary success immediately followed it. As Sri Chaitanya turned the tide of His Movement towards success almost in a moment, by accepting *Sannyâs*, so did

Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati, following the example of his God. His acceptance of *Sannyâs* and particularly *Tridanda* is an act of very historical importance. No-one of the Gaudiya sect, after the passing away of Sri Chaitanya, Svarup Dâmodar, Paramânanda Puri and others, who were all *Sannyâsis*, is known to have accepted *Sannyâs*. It is Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati who revived this institution. There is another point of importance. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur has introduced for the first time the *Tridanda Sannyâs* into the Gaudiya sect by accepting it himself and later on conferring it on his disciples. It is certainly due to the influence of the Râmânujiya sect, who adopt *Tridanda* to distinguish themselves from the *Ekadanda Sannyâs* of the Sankarite *Mâyâvada* sect.

He turned his own residence at Sri Mâyâpur into the headquarters of his mission by installing the Image of Sri Chaitanya on the very same day of his *Sannyâs*. It is a memorable day in Gaudiya Vaishnava history.

Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur just realized that unless and until true Vaishnavism as practised by Sri Chaitanya and six Gosvâmins and their faithful followers, could be presented in its real perspective, the public could not be expected to take a genuine interest in it. Gaudiya Vaishnavism, particularly in Bengal, has suffered horrible degradation at the hand of the so-called hereditary Gurus.

Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur both by precept and practice vehemently protested against the acts of the pseudo *Gurus*. He proved from the writings of the Vaishnava Masters that it is only the liberated souls who have mastered their senses, who alone are eligible to become a *Guru*. Preceptorship is not a hereditary right but must be based on Divine spirit. Guru is one who can show his disciples God, and guide them in their devotional life. The so-called '*Gurus*' are mere moral drugs of society. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur educated the public in this respect from the writings of Sri Jiva Gosvâmi that "Such pseudo Guru who has no spiritual life, whether he is a hereditary Guru or not, must be denounced, and a really qualified Guru

must be accepted." Sri Sanâtana Gosvâmi the premier of the six Gosvâmins of Vraja warns that if one happens to be initiated by such a false Guru; or if any Guru initiates any disciple for any selfish interest; or if any disciple accepts initiation from inferior motive, both the Guru and the disciple are sure to go to hell".[1]

His introduction of these rights, together with the principle of *Daiva Varnashram*, seems to have revolutionised the orthodox ideas of the selfish section of the Hindus. They called him a revolutionary.

The Sankarite Mâyâvâdism was reigning supreme in the religious field of Bengal. The orthodox Panditas and scholars were almost invariably upholders of Mâyâvâdism. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati has a special gift not only of defending the Vaishnava Theistic system but also of fearlessly attacking Mâyâvâdism. It is said that he is never unsuccessful in his disputations with the Mâyâvadins. His masterly writings and speeches show how thoroughly he grasped the two antagonistic systems, - *Mâyâvada* and Vaishnavite, and how absolutely fearless he is in criticism. In this connection, we cannot but mention his "Relative worlds", "The Vedânta", "Paratantra Jagadvaya", "Vaishnava Darsan", "Purusartha Vinirnaya" and so on. He is universally regarded as the greatest theistic philosopher of Bengal. He has occasion to meet the renowned *Mâyâvad* Scholars, both of different universities, and also of the different Maths in the course of missionary tours throughout the country; he is always at his best in refuting his rivals. Pandit Adamar Vittala Dvaita Vedântavid of Madhva sect has written: "Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Dig Vijaya", recording his victories over the Mâyâvadins in his disputations throughout India. It is written in Sanskrit. His antagonists are the hereditaryGurus and the Mâyâvadins. Many sinister and ignoble attempts have been made by the hereditary Gurus to put a stop to his reformative movement, even by means of bloodshed; he maintains his fortitude, animated by his tremendous moral

[1] Hari Bhakti Vilas I. 62, 40; II, 5

courage. To his selfish antagonists, he appears to be censorious but the general public has come under his deep and vital influence." The Mahârâjâ of Susang writes: "Your very mission makes friends wherever you go. We did very much appreciate your simplicity and faith".[1] His popularity may by judged from the simple fact that wherever he went, he received unreserved demonstrations of homage and greetings as saviour of the country: from the native states of Mysore, Jaypur, and so on, to the ordinary mass of any out-of-the-way village; the Viceroys of India, and the Provincial Governors of Bengal, Madras, U.P., Behar and Orissa, Bombay, are the active patrons of his mission. The governors of Bengal, Madras and U.P., have actually participated in their functions, paid their visits to his Maths in the respective provinces. Viceroys have recived his representatives on many occasions. He is equally popular with officials and non-officials. The leaders like Madan Mohan Mâlâvya, Sir. P. C. Rây and so on, were frequent visitors to him. His activities spread from village of Sri Mâyâpur to every part of India from Kashmir to Cape Comorin; from Bombay to Madras and Burma; and at last have reached the West.

Though the Movement of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati is the continuation and logical development of that of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode, he began his wrok almost exclusively with his own disciples. His activities have been officially put under the auspices of the 'Visva-Vaishnava-Râj Sabha', which was started by Rûpa and Sanâtana and which was revived by Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. His headquarters at Sri Mâyâpur are named Sri Chaitanya Math, situated on the old site of the house of Chandra Sekhar Âchârya, where Sri Chaitanya held His dramatic performance.

Sri Chaitanya Math is the first establishment founded to serve as a training institution for preachers. He revived the monastic life among the Vaishnavas, which was first introduced, by Rûpa, Sanâtana and Jiva at Vrindâvan in this sect. The inmates of the Math live under strict

[1] Gaudiya. III. Pt. 35. p.10

discipline, and wholly engage themselves in various devotional activities. They are given theological education and practical training in their religious lives.

Just after his *Sannyâs*, Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur began his vigorous missionary activities. He had already taught several disciples of his the Vaishnava doctrine. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur began his missionary tour with a band of his young disciples. He visited Daulatpur in the district of Khulnâ. Several people of the districts of Khulnâ and Jessore had already become his disciples. At Daulatpur, he opened a preaching center called Prapannashrama-Bhakti Vinode Asana. He lectured, held discourses, and performed *Kirtan* and so on for several days together. People from different parts of the district and sourroundings attended his lectures. This was his first missionary tour and he became hopeful of his success. Many people became his disciple here.

A few days after his return from Daulatpur, he made his long missionary tour with his 50 disciples in the district of Midnapur, in Bengal, Balesvar, Cuttack and Puri in Orissa. He with his 50 disciples marched from town to town from village to village, delivering lectures performing *Kirtan*, holding discourses. Everywhere he was greeted with enthusiasm. The local people organized public meetings for him; gave him addresses and kind hospitality. Many people became his disciples and admirers. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur's mind was filled with hope. He successfully returned to Sri Mâyâpur after several months. It is true that he had several young enthusiasts to work with him.

As he was receiving welcome and appreciation from the public, so also an antagonistic party of the hereditary Gurus was planning to subvert his movement lest they would be exposed. He made up his mind in consultation with his favourite disciple Sir Kunja Behari Vidyâbhusan, to start a monastery and center for preaching at Calcutta in which case they would be able to meet innumerable people of different opinions at one place. Mr. Vidyâbhusan's enthusiasm in this regard knew no bounds. He was always

eager to preach what he received from his Guru. A branch was started at 1, Ultadanga Junction Road, Calcutta, where Sri Sarasvati Thâkur founded a monastery named Sri Bhakti Vinode Asana. The newspapers gave wide publicity. Here ardent seekers after truth were received. This center became the turning point in the history of his life.

Having established it, he set out on another missionary tour with a band of his disciples in the districts of Jessore and Khulnâ. He addressed public meetings at the town of Jessore and Khulnâ, and also visited Svalpa Bahirdiya and so on. Many became his disciples including Rai Bahadur Radhika Prasâd Datta, the Government advocate of Jessore. Two great antagonists of the opposition party severely attacked him at Toothpada, Khulnâ, but he had never been lacking in valour to refute his rivals. He is always a brave man fighting gallantly and remains invincible. He entered many villages and small towns of these two districts.

On his return to Calcutta, he celebrated with great eclat a festival at the Calcutta center by way of re-instituting the Vishva Vaishnava Râj Sabha. He opened different departments for preaching, publications, teaching, public discussion, festival committee, the Board for refuting the opposition, and so on.

In March 1919 A.D., he celebrated the anniversary of the Birthday of Sri Chaitanya at Sri Mâyâpur and called a great meeting, which was attended by innumerable Panditas and was presided over by M.M. Ashutos Tarkabhusan. Many educated people from different parts of the country attended it.

In April 1919 A.D. he made another missionary tour in the Midnapur district and addressed meetings at Chandra, Kona, Râmâjivanpur and other places. He was given a rousing reception at Râmâjivanpur, where he opened a center of preaching.

On his return from the Midnapur-district, he again penetrated into the interior of the Jessore and Khulnâ districts. He had about 50 disciples with him. He visited Jessore, Daulatpur, Lohagora Vinodeanagar, Naldi, Purulia,

Khulnâ and so on. He had many occasions to meet many great scholars of the districts.

He had already prepared more than two dozen able preachers. Many people, including several *Brahmana* leaders, were initiated by him on this tour. He returned with immense success. He created a great sensation, particularly in the districts of Jessore, Khulnâ, and Midnapur. His disciples soon increased in great number. Jessore is the home of many renowned orthodox *Brahmana* families, but his success there was admirable. He took the country by storm. The savants of the country were impressed with his wisdom, depth of scholarship and above all, the spiritual force of his personality.

In September 1919 A.D., he held a great festival covering over a month at the Calcutta Bhakti Vinode Asana, to commemorate the birth day of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. A very learned gathering was held at the Sâhitya Parisad Hall under the Presidency of the great Vedantist Mr.Hirendra Nâth Datta. Many savants like Dr.S.C. Vidyâbhausan, Ph.D., M.M., Ajit Nyayaratna and others, spoke on the many-sided activities of Thâkur Bhakti Vinode. This festival had created a great sensation at Calcutta. Lectures, discourses, *Kirtan* were the special items of the daily programme. Everybody, savants and aristocrats, and the masses, ladies and gentlemen, participated in it.

Thus he led campaigns in every district, addressing meetings, holding discourses. The whole of Bengal was thus taken by storm. Everywhere he was appreciated. Many people belonging to different castes including *Brahmanas*, gathered round him as his disciples. Now he had many workers to assist him. Every year he could produce qualified preachers from his theological schools. The country definitely felt the need of his activities.

He visited Dacca in the course of his itinerary preaching. Dacca is one of the greatest strongholds of the so-called Gurus. The wealthy merchants who were mostly Shahas Banikas and Tantis, were their followers and blind to their abuses. The educated class hailed Sri Siddhânta

Sarasvati with greetings. He resolved to start a big centre at Dacca to combat pseudo Vaishnavism there. He started vigorous preaching in every town and village of the district – exposing the perversion and abuses of Vaishnavism brought about by the hereditary Gurus. He was fiercely attacked by the antagonists, but the general public, particularly the educated class, became his admirers. To make a permanent centre at Dacca, he rented a big house at 90 Nawabpur Road, and installed the Deities of Sri Chaitanya and declared a monastery open, in October 31st, 1921 A.D. It is now the principal branch of the sect in East Bengal.

The Zamindârs of the Bâliati Estate have contributed a fabulous amount to the construction of the very loft temple, assembly hall, guest houses, library, and so on. It contains the theological school, publication department, etc. It has been successfully fighting against the hereditary Gurus and replacing true Vaishnavism, destroying the perversions and abuses. Two other branches have been opened in the district, one at Kamalpur and the other at Baliati. Many leading families of the district became the disciples of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati. The Dacca Math is named Sri Madhva Gaudiya Math. Another important branch of East Bengal is Jagannâth Gaudiya Math in the town of Mymensingh. It was also very flourishing. These two branches have brought the whole of East Bengal under its control. The preachers from these branches were constantly touring into the interior.

Two other important events of this year, 1921 A.D., were the beginning of the compilation of the Vaishnava Encyclopedia, called Vaishnava Manjusha, and the revival of the circumambulation of the nine islands of Navadvip on nine successive days, and ending with a three-day-Utsva at Birthsite temple of the Lord on the occasion of the Birthday of Sri Chaitanya. It is a huge festival. Thousands of pilgrims join it. They are conducted from place to place within a radius of 32 miles in a procession showing the importance of the locality in memory of Sri Chaitanya. The programme is so arranged that pilgrims may always attend

religious discourses, *Kirtan*, lectures, and so on. The pilgrims are supplied with all safety and comfort by the Mission, which bears the whole expenses. Both ladies and gentlemen from every part of India, from princes to ordinary men, join it. It is the annual function. Another mentionable event of the year was the acceptance of *Tridanda Sannyâs* by Mr. Nayanabhiram Bhaktisastri, who was so long studying the *Bhakti* literature under Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati, as his favourite disciple. This young man is full of vigour. His name is now Swami Bhakti Vivek Bharati Mahâraj. His contribution to the success of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur's Mission is more than can be described. He is one of the best orators of the sect and commanded universal respect. Many estates of Bengal, Orissa and UP have become the disciples of his Guru, through his influence. He was a typical Vaishnava, combining in himself scholarship with asceticism. He was chronologically the third *Tridandi Sannyâsi* of the sect. Other two were also equally able personages.

The Calcutta centre had already become very popular in the city. The next year (1922 A.D.), he set out on another preaching tour in the districts of Orissa. The Mayurbhanj State organized meetings for the preachers. Both the prince and princess of the State appreciated the genuineness of the Mission. Since then the said State has been helping the Mission in all possible ways. The Puri centre of the Movement was founded this year.

His Highness the Mahârâjâ of Mayurbhanj has built the temple and the monastery of this Math. The establishment of this Math was soon followed by that of Brahma Gaudiya Math of Allâlnâth, the Sachidananda Gaudiya Math at Cuttack, the Tridandi Gaudiya Math at Bhubaneswar, and Gaudiya Math of Balesvar. All the States and Râjâs of Orissa are the patrons of the Mission.

From Puri, Sri Sarasvati Thâkur sent a preaching party to the Madras Presidency. They met the Râjâs of Khalikota, Surangi and Parlakhemdi and preached in their estates under their patronage. They were given a splendid reception. Mass meetings were organised everywhere.

Having returned from the successful campaign in Orissa and the Madras Presidency, he started his famous religious weekly Magazine, "Gaudiya" from the Calcutta Gaudiya Math. It has immensely facilitated the popularity of the Mission. It is through this and other magazines of the Math that the general population of Bengal knows so much about the religious philosophy and doctrine of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. The Mission was then publishing "Sajjana Tosani", the monthly, and the "Gaudiya", the weekly. He visited with a dozen of his disciples Vrindâvan, Delhi, Kanpore, and other places of U.P. Madhusudan Gosvâmi cordially received him at Vrindâvan. He lectured at the Lala Bâbu temple and other important places.

The year 1923 A.D.

The itinerant parties preached and doctrine throughout the different districts of Bengal and Orissa. The one-month festivities were performed in the Bhakti Vinode Asana in Calcutta which was then named the Gaudiya Math, and also at the Dacca Madhva Gaudiya Math. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur visited Vanaripâdâ with about a hundred disciples. Another important event of this year was the foundation of the famous Gaudiya Printing works in Calcutta. It is the very big electric press, which has been printing the storehouse of Vaishnava literature. The Gaudiya is being published from it. The publication of the Bhagavât with Sri Sarasvati Thâkur's Gaudiya Bhâsya, including Ananta Gopâl Tathya and Sindhu Vaibhava Vivriti, Gaura Kishoranvaya and Svananda Kunja Anuvada was begun from the Gaudiya printing works. This Gaudiya Bhâsya of the Bhagavâta by Sri Sarasvati Thâkur evinces his great erudition and penetrating scholarship of the literature of India. He took charge of the ancient temple of Gaura Gadâdhara at Champahati in the Burdwan district. These Images were founded by Dvija Vaninâth who was the disciple of Gadâdhar Pandit and contemporary of Sri Chaitanya. The temple and the service were in a miserable condition when Sri Sarasvati Thâkur took charge of it. He built a magnificent temple in which to place the Images;

guest-houses, and so on. It is one of the principal centres of the Mission. These Images of Sri Chaitanya and Gadâdhar were made during their lifetime. Now the whole year is divided into distinct periods for holding long festivities at Calcutta, Dacca, Puri and Navadvip. The preachers were on tour in different parts of the provinces. The publications increased in number from the two printing presses; the theological academies were also in full swing. The leaders of the country began paying frequent visits to the Maths; Bengal and Orissa, and Northern part of the Madras Presidency came under its complete influence before 1924 A.D. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur and his band of preachers were then always indefatigable in furthering the cause.

1924 A.D.

The most laudable event of this year was the starting of the daily paper known as Nadia Prakash from its headquarters at Sri Mâyâpur, where another printing press has been founded for the purpose. It is perhaps the only religious daily in the whole of India, and has a very wide circulation.

His Excellency, General Punya Samser Jung Bahadur, son of the late Mahârâjâ of Nepal, visited the Gaudiya Math and listened to Sri Sarasvati Thâkur. He was so much impressed with the aims and objects of the Mission that he not only paid a large donation but also promised it all help in his power. The Hon. Justice and Sir M.N. Mukherji came to the Math for the first time and since then he had been an active supporter of the Mission. As the popularity of the Mission was then established in the country, a vigorous antagonistic party of the hereditary Gurus raised its head. It began to cause immense trouble by unfair means. The mission had several publications with which to silence them. Their interests had suffered as a consequence of the preaching and activities of the Gaudiya Math. Now that the people understood their worthlessness and how much harm they have done to the religion, they were trying their best to subvert the Mission by any means. At the end of

the year, Sri Sarasvati Thâkur resolved to lead the preaching campaign in U.P., particularly at Benares, the stronghold of Mâyâvâdism. The Hindu University of Benares invited him to deliver lectures. He accepted their invitations and delivered one of his famous lectures on Gaudiya Philosophy in the religious history of the world, on December 16th, 1924 A.D. M. M. Pramathnâth Tarkabhusan presided at the meeting. It was largely attended by the professors and other learned philosophers of the renowned seat of learning. The President frankly admitted that his lecture was too intellectually deep to be understood by his audience.[1] The Servant writes: "Oh Tuesday last His Exalted Holiness, Paramahamsa Paribrajakacharya Sri Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati Gosvâmi Mahâraj of Sri Mâyâpur, delivered a most learned lecture at the Benares Hindu University before a very scholarly gathering, whose spokesman, M.M. Pandit Pramathanâth Tarkabhusan, expressed high appreciation of His Exalted Holiness's vast erudiction." [2]

He visited Allahâbâd, Nimshar, Ayodhyâ and so on, and selected places to start his centres of preaching in the respective cities. He returned from his tour in January 1925 A.D.

1925 A.D.

He sent a preaching party headed by Svâmi B.P. Tirtha Mahâraj and Mr Atul Chandra Banerji to the Tippera State. They had interviews with the Viceroys and Governors to represent the Mission. His Highness the Mahârâjâ of Tippera received the party with great interest and organised meetings in the palace for their lectures. The princes of the said State were already the presidents of the Navadbvip Dham Pracharini Sabha, and granted a monthly allowance to Sri Mâyâpur temple. He promised all help for the success of the mission. It will not be out of place to mention here that the present Mahârâjâ paid a visit to Sri Mâyâpur on the 20th March 1935, and stayed there a few days. The

[1] Sarasvati Jayasri, p.27
[2] Dec.25, 1924 A.D.

preachers of the Gaudiya Mission work in the State under His Highness's patronage.

The most important event of the year 1925 A.D. was the organisation of the Gauda Mandal Parikrama. He led a huge party of several thousand pilgrims visiting every place in Bengal in memory of the associates of Sri Chaitanya and other later Vaishnavas. It took him one month from January 29th to 27th February, 1925 A.D., to complete it, which was immediately followed by the annual Navadvip Dham Parikrama which precedes the Advent ceremony of Sri Chaitanya at Sri Mâyâpur.

A great danger befell the Mission when it was conducting the huge procession of several thousand people who came from different provinces, through the present town of Navadvip. Navadvip is the greatest stronghold of the influence of the hereditary Gurus. They had suffered a great loss as the consequence of the Movement of the Gaudiya Math. Now the people refused to pay their fees, or to obey them blindly.

Navadvip is their commercial city possessing many temples. They used to extract taxes from the pilgrims for showing them the Images of Sri Chaitanya. The Gaudiya Math protested against the collection of the tax, as opposed to the teaching of Sri Chaitanya. They determined to attack the procession when it passed through their town. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati suspected their sinister motive immediately before they entered the town. Many princesses were among them that year. As the procession was passing through it, placing the elephants and horses in front, the enemies fiercely attacked them from all sides with bricks, weapons, and so on. The party could not stand for long when the bricks were hurled from the roofs. They attacked Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati with a view to killing him, but happily he managed to escape the hands of the assassins. Some pilgrims were wounded. The inhuman attack on the Mission filled the country with deep sympathy for the Mission, and great indignation against the hereditary Gurus. Both the public and the

Government came forward to protect the Mission, and henceforward the superintendent of police with an armed force has been conducting it every year – when it passes the said town. Not only the Bengalis but also the Marawari community of Calcutta, headed by Râjâ Dâmodaradas Burman, Rai Bahadur Hare Râmâ Goenka, and others, came forward for the development of the Mission. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati has a magnetic personality to command respect from every class and race. It is only the hereditary Gurus who are his enemies, but many of them have now become his disciples.

Another important event of the year was the visit of Pandit Madan Mohan Mâlâvya to Sri Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati at the Calcutta Gaudiya Math. He has since then been the active supporter of the movement. An extensive propaganda had already begun in Âssam and was fully carried out this year. Now he has succeeded in taking Assam by storm. He opened several centres of preaching in the said province, the most important of which are perhaps the Gaudiya Math, Sarbhog, Kâmrup, Prapanyashramas at Dhubri and a Goalpadâ. The Kirtan – the fortnightly Âssamese Magazine of the Gaudiya Mission began to publish. Hundreds of disciples have been recruited from Âssam. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati himself visited every important town of the province, and was universally greeted by the public. He delivered one of his important lectures at the Gauhati Government College.

Two of the most important preachers of the Mission took *Tridandi Sannyâs* that year. One of them was known as Tridandi Svâmi B.H. Bon who had been working in England and Germany. He was a gifted orator. The other one was Svâmi B.S. Giri, a deep scholar, orator and a typical Vaishnava. He was sent to Burma. This young *Sannyâsi* was well known to all the states of the Bombay Presidency, to which he was introduced by the then Governor of the Province. The Governor of Burma listened to him. He commanded a wide respect from the Public.

1926 A.D.

In addition to the activities in Bengal, Âssam, and Orissa, several parties were sent to work in Behar and U.P. They visited every important town, addressing public meetings, holding discourses, enrolling subscribers to the Gaudyia and Sajjana Tosani, and selling Vaishnava literature. The people of Bhagalpur, Châpra, Chakradharpur and other towns gave the preachers a rousing reception. Both officials and non-officials vied with one another to greet and listen to them. The Sanâtana Gaudiya Math was established at Benares that year. His Highness the Mahârâjâ of Benares and leading Zamindârs have been active supporters of it. The local paper thus writes on the opening of the Math. "Sri Sanâtana Gaudiya Math at Benares., - to the Great Fortune of Benares, the Math has newly been established. Casting aside the rind of fruitive acts and the seed of dry wisdom, the luminaries of the Math are approaching every denizen of the city with the ambrosial substance of the *Veda Shastras*. There is no denying the fact that the disinterested endeavour of the devotees will ere long draw out the fallen from dusty oblivion. We are happy to see the Mission gaining sympathy daily from all quarters."[1] It occasionally holds the theistic exhibition on a grand scale to educate the public in the doctrine and philosophy of Vaishnavism by means of dolls and electric demonstration.

Sri Sarasvati Thâkur himself led another preaching party in the north western provinces and addressed public lectures at Taxila, Multana, Srinagar, Jammu, Jaypur, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Amritsar, Nimsdar, Kurukshetra and so on. He established the Vrindâvan Centre known as Krishna Chaitanya Math. Now several other monastries have been founded in the same district. Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati with his disciples visited Bombay. He was given a public address. Sri Gokulnâth Gosvâmi, the head of the Vallabhi sect of Bombay, received him with great cordiality. Having preached the doctrine for sometime, he came to Udupi by steamer, leaving his disciple Svâmi Bon and others to further

[1] The Mahasakti, June 19th, 1926 A.D.

the cause in Bombay. Mr. Mohanlal H. Duve writes of Svâmi Bon: "It is said that the right light comes from the East; and we should say of our Svâmiji who comes from the Eastern corner of India to the Western extremity and the Vidvad Parisad: why only the Vidvad Parisad? Whole Bombay – not only Bombay, India – the world – should boast of such a spiritual giant, a luminary of the spiritual firmament who will surely enrich and ameliorate the spiritual atmosphere of the present day. The Bombay public heartily welcome His Holiness". Another centre was opened at Nimshar in the Sitâpur district. It is called Paramahamsa Math. It contains a large Academy called Bhagavât Pathasala. Here Sri Sarasvati Thâkur was given almost a royal reception.

Several Tâlukdârs became his disciples. He gained unexpected success in Northwest India. Three permanent centres of preaching at Benares, Nimsar and Vrindâvan were opened. Vigorous preaching was carried out throughout North and West India in that year.

Another new branch was opened at Chirulia Vâsudevapur in the Midnapur district. The Sachidananda Math at Cuttack in Orissa was also established that year. The Utkala Mirror thus announced: "It will be a matter of great delight for the people of Orissa, to know that a new Vaishnava Math, as the Branch of the Chaitanya Math of Navadvip, has recently been started at Cuttack. The well-known Gaudiya Math of Calcutta and the Purusottam Math at Puri are two branches. The Sabha commands the service of a large number, and also highly educated Vaishnavas who are solely devoted to the task of preaching the true Vaishnava religion."[1] It become highly popular and consists of a grand temple, assembly hall, guesthouse and general buildings. It contains as usual a good Seminary for training the neophytes.

1927 A.D.

The works in U.P. and Delhi were further carried out this year. Several parties worked in different parts, such as

[1] July 22nd 1926 A.D.

Kanpur, Delhi, Allahâbâd and so on. Everywhere the educated public received the preachers. The colleges, schools, academies, learned societies, and so on, invited the preachers to deliver lectures. Both officials and non-officials equally received them. Another branch was opened at Kurukshetra. The work went on in full swing throughout the year, in Bengal, Orissa, Âssam and North and west India. Now at least four hundred workers were devoting their whole energy to the propagation of the doctrine so they would work in groups in different districts simultaneously. A great Madhva Pandit named Admara Vittalachârya of Udupi was brought to Sri Mâyâpur to teach the Madhva literature at the Mâyâpur Academy, which was greatly enlarged then. Several new departments were opened. It was then affiliated to the Government Board of Sanskrit Education. It was given the name of Paravidyâ Pitha. Another very important event of that year was that the Bengah Monthly, Sajjana Tosani, began to be published, in three languages – English, Sanskrit and Hindi, for the convenience of non-Bengali people who became disciples since 1925 A.D. in North and West India.

1928 A.D.

A new monastery was set up at Dumarkonda in Sautal Pargana, in the Manbhuma district. Special stress had been laid on preaching in U.P. and in the Punjab. A new system of preaching by means of demonstration was first introduced at Kurukshetra on the occasion of the solar eclipse, when a great fair is usually held there; and about 8 to 10 hundred thousand people usually assemble to bathe in the Brahmakunda. Preaching was organised on a huge scale to educate the mass in the religion of Sri Chaitanya. A new Math was established this year on the banks of the sacred Brahmakunda. The Amritabazâr Patrikâ thus published: "The annual celebrations lasting for two weeks of Sri Vyâsa Gaudiya Math, a Punjab branch at Kurukshetra of Sri Chaitanya Math of Sri Mâyâpur have been accomplished with signal success. Everyone of the pilgrims 10 lacs was delighted to have a Darsan (glimpse) of His

Divine Grace Paramahansa Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati Gosvâmi Mahâraj, and to witness the most picturesque demonstration of the real meaning and spiritual significance underlying the bathing ceremony here by means of installing very beautiful Sri Vigrahas and the devotees of the Math clearly explained everything to the audience in Hindi, Urdu and English. Many princes, Chiefs, Râjâ s, Zamindârs, merchants, *Sâdhus*, High Government officials, both Indian and European and other respected persons in large numbers gladly listened every day - both morning and evening – to the Paramahamsa Mahâraj explaining the superiority and highest rationality of the religion of Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu." – (25.11.1928).

Srila Sarasvati Thâkur's disciple, Svâmi Bon, had an audience of Mr. Lambert, then Governor of U.P. His Excellency promised all help with propaganda for the Movement in his Province. The said Svâmi delivered lectures at the Lucknow University. All the ministers and executive members of the Governor who were in sympathy with the Mission attended the lectures. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur was enthusiastically received by the public of Delhi - Ayodhyâ, Mathurâ and other places,. He vigorously preached there. In every province, which already came under its influence, the preaching was going on with equal vigour. The number of publications was greatly increased.

Another new item of activity was introduced that year. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur decided to set up the footprints of Sri Chaitanya in a temple at every place, which had been visited by the latter. This work was undertaken that year and is going on. The erection of the marble temple and new building of the Calcutta Gaudiya Math were begun that year at the cost of the late J. B. Datta, one of the wealthiest merchants of Calcutta. He was the disciple of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur. He employed his whole fortune in the cause of the Mission.

Sri Sarasvati Thâkur also visited the different places in the Province of Âssam in which he led the different parties. His influence had by then been well established

in the very wide area from the Punjab to Âssam and from Bengal to the Northern part of Madras Presidency. He had then about 600 workers, excluding those who lived in different Maths and householder disciples. Several magazines – daily, weekly and monthly – were being regularly published.

1929 A.D.

The work of that year spread through a greater area; preachers penetrated as far as Simla. Several new districts such as Darbhanga in Behar, Fayzavad in U.P., Karauna in the Punjab and so on, came under their direct influence. The Mahârâjâ of Darbhanga presided over their meetings and actively helped the workers in their activities in his state. His Highness the Mahârâjâ of Mayurbhanj gave a large donation for the permanent maintenance of the Puri Math of the Mission. New Monasteries at Delhi, Krisnanagar and Maju Bamanpara in Bengal, at Alalnâth in Orissa and at Allahâbâd in U.P, were opened. The restoration work of the old Alalnâth temple, which Sri Chaitanya used to visit, very frequently was taken up by the Mission. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur was given a rousing reception at Karauna by the Tâlukdârs of the Panjab headed by Thâkur Sâheb Raghunandan Singha of Karauna, who was his disciple. He also paid a visit to Âssam and accepted public addresses from the citizens of Dhubri and Goalpara. The installation of the footprints of Sri Chaitanya was made at Kânâinâtshala, Mandara and so on. A series of Guest Houses were built at Sri Mâyâpur.

1930 A.D.

The most important and memorable work of that year was the all-India Exhibition at Sri Mâyâpur. It was one of the most interesting innovations perhaps in the religious history of the world. The immense utility of an exhibition is admitted by all. The provincial Governments took part in it. It was broadly divided into two sections, spiritual and secular. The latter included the various departments of industries medical, educational, agricultural, arts and

crafts; cattle and livestock; child-welfare; athletics, amusements and so on. The Governments helped them in these sections. The spiritual section concerns everything spiritual such as (1) Museum, containing articles valued in religion, used by the saints, different figures of Visnu, Krishna, various sacred things, which were collected from every part of India. (2) Display of books published by different religious sectors all over India: (3) Manuscript editions of rare unpublished religious books. (4) Photos and paintings of eminent saints and of various sacred places with their shrines. (5) A very big map of India executed in relief on ground treated with stone, cement, brick and mortar and occupying an area of over a-third of an acre. All the holy places and the locations of the branch Maths of the Movement and the routes of Sri Chaitanya and Nityânanda's tours were made visible to the eye at a glance. (6) Demonstration of Sri Chaitanya's teachings; more than fifty stalls were devoted to the demonstration of diverse religious practices of India. The practices of the pure Vaishnavas, pseudo-Vaishnavas and other religious sects were illustrated by means of groups of life-sized dolls against a background of appropriate painted scenes, representing incidents in the career of Sri Chaitanya. The whole ground was brilliantly illuminated by electricity which was installed at Sri Mâyâpur that year. The people from all parts of the country flocked to the place in their thousands for a sight of this unique demonstration. The effect of this Exhibition in educating the public in the religion and true teachings of Sri Chaitanya in contrast to its perversion at the hands of the pseudo-Gurus-in particular was so remarkable that the Mission is now obliged at the request of the public to hold it occasionally in different parts of India, where their preaching centres are established. This exhibition of Sri Mâyâpur was opened by Sir P.C. Rây, one of the greatest constructive leaders in India. He remarked in the course of his lecture: "The religion of spiritual love taught and practised by Sri Chaitanya Deva, has not been preserved in its true condition among his professed followers. This is the plight of all the

religions at the present day. It is a most encouraging circumstance that the question of the restoration of purity to the religion of Love has been taken up in right earnest by the Viswa Vaishnava Râj Sabha who have organised this exhibition for the purpose, and who are themselves persons of irreproachable moral character and real culture".

Another important feature of this year's activities was the installation of the Gaudiya Math in its newly built marble temple, assembly hall, and general buildings, covering over about three acres of land. It is the largest and the most beautiful temple in Calcutta. The very spacious hall, libraries and residential quarters of the devotees greatly facilitated the activities of the Math. Another religious exhibition was held in connection with its opening, which was of an unique kind in the history of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. The Deities from the old Math were conducted to the new premises in a most gorgeous procession spreading over two miles. The "Liberty," says (Oct.12, 1930): "Calcutta had not witnessed such a gigantic religious procession within the memory of its oldest citizens. All from the princes to the poor - joined it. It is nothing but the outcome of the India-wide popularity and activity of Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati. The Mayor of Calcutta paid the ceremonial homage of his visit with a feeling of becoming humble at the opening of the spiritual home of the Supreme Lord and his pure devotees, manifested within the mayoral jurisdiction, by the causeless mercy of his Divine Grace." Another remarkable feature of this introduced this year was the annual Annakuta ceremony. About two thousand varieties of food were offered to the Deity and exhibited to the public in its very spacious hall. The old-art of cookery which was developed in the time of Sri Chaitanya and also in the later period in the sect, has been revived and developed to a considerable degree.

The workers made their way into the interior of the Panjab. The parties lectured and aroused the sympathy of the people of Deradun, Meerut, Bulandarsahar, Ambala, Kolihnur, Jaunpur, Kathiawad, Broach, Vijnaur, and so on. Several parties were sent to the Madras Presidency. They

have met with signal success. There workers lectured and conveted the people at Ichapura, Kurmachala, Vijianagaram, Pitapura, Barhampur, Chattrapore, Simhachalam, and so on. The Râjâs of several of the above places received them as their guests and organised meetings for them. Mr.T. Austin collector of Chatrapure, Mr.J.B. Brown, collector of Kokonada, greatly helped them by introducing them to the Râjâs and important personages within their jurisdiction. The people of Madras showed their great sympathy and admiration for the religion of Sri Chaitanya. These parties installed several footprints of Sri Chaitanya in places, which had been visited by the latter in the course of His tour in the South. This work was also carried out at Chatrabhog in Bengal, Jajpur in Orissa and so on. The Gaudiya Math at Madras was opened that year. It was the greatest branch of the Movement in the South of India.

1931 A.D.

The special feature of that year's activities was the vigorous propaganda in the South of India led by Sri Sarasvati Thâkur himself. He installed the Footprint of Sri Chaitanya at Kovvur A.P. A big reception by the local public was given to him. Next he visited Pana Nrisimha at Mongalgiri where he installed another Footprint of Sri Chaitanya in a shrine. From Mongalgiri he arrived in Madras amidst great acclamation. People received him as though he were their saviour. Next he went to Chengelpet, Conjiveram and thence to Trichinapoli and Srirangam respectively. He was received by the representative of the Trivandrum State at station and was conducted to the Padmavilasa Pâlace at Trivandrum. Several meetings were organised at the Jubilee hall by the principal of the Arts College and others. He visited and lectured at Padmanâbha, Tiruvatta, Nagarcoil, Cape Comorin and other places before he returned to Madras. The missionaries lectured in different quarters of the city where they created a sensation. The prominent citizens like Sir PC. Sivasvami Iyer, Sir Dewan Bahadur, C.V. Kumâr and others, came forward to help the Mission. Many educated *Brahmanas* became his disciples. This

success is unprecedented in the history of Gaudiya Vaishnavas. The leading paper "The Hindu" (Jan.6, 7, 9, 10, 1931) paid him high respect, welcoming him to Madras. Many of the Gaudiya Vaishnava books have been translated and published in Telugu, Tamil and other languages of the South. Hundreds of families sing every day the name of Sri Chaitanya and extol their Guru Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur.

Svâmi B.H. Bon of the Madras Gaudiya Math represented Sri Sarasvati Thâkur when he visited His Excellency, the Right Honourable Sir George Frederick Stanley, Governor of Madras and told him of the aim and object of the Mission. His Excellency assured him of his sympathy and support in the Presidency.

The Governor of Bengal received Mr. Atul Chandra Banerji, a disciple of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur and one of the secretaries of the Mission at Government House at Darjeeling, on April 21, 1931. His Excellency the Viceroy of India, Lord Willington, granted a long interview to Svâmi B.H. Bon at the Viceregal house at Delhi, on Nov.14, 1931. His Excellency promised his whole-hearted sympathy and support for the noble and selfless activities of the Mission.[1] Mr. Frederic Wynne Robertson, I. C. S., the commissioner of the Presidency Division, paid a visit to the headquarters of the Mission at Sri Mâyâpur and assured them of his help and support. A new free residential English High School under the name Thâkur Bhakti Vinode Institute, has been opened at Sri Mâyâpur to impart education to the students on a truly religious basis. It aims to give the boys an idea of the spiritual self and mould their character like true Brahmacharis. It is affiliated to the Calcutta University. A Theistic Exhibition on an unprecedented scale was organised that year at Calcutta. The Sheriff of Calcutta opened it. It is impossible to estimate its importance. All day and half the night for more than one month, the people thronged to witness and learn its object. Dr. D.C. Sen writes: "It is indeed a great surprise to see this temple rise and

[1] Delhi Statesman, No.V.18, The Hindu Nov. 21, 1931

flourish as if by the touch of a magician's wand. The onrush of people from all parts of Bengal and many of the neighbouring provinces to visit the present Exhibition is an evidence of the popularity and fame achieved by its Founder, Srimad Prabhupad Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati Thâkur. The whole exhibition is a regular panorama of scenes of high religious significance, and I am sure the masses of Bengal will now learn to realise Hindu spiritual philosophy without any Academic career. The cultural element is the striking feature of the Gaudiya Math.

A very remarkable feature of this work was perhaps the circumambulation of the circle of Mathura by the Mission. It was an unprecendented event. About five thousand people were conducted from place to place for one month and a half, visiting the holy places. The Government of U.P. helped the Mission in many ways. The whole of the year was full of tremendous activities. Another monthly paper in Hindi was started this year from the Paramahamsa Math at Nimsar. It is known as Bhagavâta. His Excellency Sir Malcolm Harley, Governor of U.P., granted a long interview to Svâmi B.S. Giri, a disciple of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur on the 11th August 1932, at the Government House. His Excellency laid the foundation stone of the lecture hall of the Rûpa Gaudiya Math, the Allahâbâd branch of the Mission on the 21st November 1932. All the ministers and executive members of the Government of the U.P. listened individually to Svâmi Giri. He also met the Râjâs and Chiefs of the Province.

1932 A.D.

With a big party of his disciples, Sri Sarasvati Thâkur, started for Madras on the 8th January 1932. A huge procession, consisting of musical parties, boy-scouts, *Kirtana* with flags, festoons, etc. was organised by the Madras public to receive him at the Madras Station. As soon as he alighted from the train, Mr. T.S. Rangasvami, President of' the Madras Corporation, garlanded him on behalf of the citizens of Madras. He was next garlanded

and greeted by the Hon. Minister, T. Râjân, Mr. S.V. Râmâsami Mudaliar, Honourable Dewan Bahadur, G. Nârâyanaswami Chettiar, C.I.E., M. Ponurullu Pillai and others respectively. He was conducted in a well-decorated carriage, provided by the Prince of Arcot, preceded by the huge procession. The English troops were required to regulate the crowd. Thirty-two guns were fired in his honour on behalf of the citizens of Madras. He was presented with an address by the public. The Hon. Minister, Dewan Bahadur, S. Kumârasvami Reddiar also addressed on behalf of the population of the Province, and paid homage to Sri Sarasvati Thâkur. They received him as their saviour. All the important papers such as Madras Mail, The Hindu, Justice and others, welcomes him to their city.

His Excellency Sir George Frederic Stanley and Lady Beatrix, came to the Madras Gaudiya Math and laid the foundation Stone of the assembly hall of the Math. His Excellency observed: "In spite of the very short, time in which the Mission has been established in Madras, it has obviously made great headway; it has attracted many influential men to its fold and has succeeded in finding a permanent site on which to expand. I wish to say what a great pleasure it is to me to meet today the spiritual head of the Mission, the President Âchârya Sri Sarasvati Thâkur, and I pray that his work and that of all the members of the Mission may be blessed by the Divine Grace which inspires them, and that they may ever progress towards their object of bringing peace to India and all mankind." (Justice, 28th Jan. 1932). The corporation of Madras gave Sri Sarasvati Thâkur a Civic Address on the 29th January 1932. He was given another rousing reception by the public of Ellore, a town in the then Madras Presidency. He was received by hundreds of citizens of the town, headed by Rao Bahadur Mothay Gangârâju, Zamindâr. He passed through a dense crowd in the streets under a shower of flowers, in a well-decorated coach drawn by four horses. The huge procession consisted of elephants, horses, band-party and hundreds carrying flags, festoons, spears etc. He was accorded a

hearty welcome by different religious associations and given Addresses by them. These receptions by the people of Madras are sure evidences of his wide popularity and tremendous influence on the people of India.

His Highness Mahârâjâ Sir Bhim Sanser Jaung Bahadur of Nepal, received the representatives that year. From Madras he proceeded further South and was given another public reception at Coimbatore by both the officials and non-officials. A big procession followed him. He visited many places before he arrived at Ooty where many savants and princes listened to him. His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Nizam State listened attentively to his discourses. On June 21, 1932, His Highness the Mahârâjâ of Mysore received him with his disciples as guests of the State. His Highness had a long discussion, and paid high respects to Sri Sarasvati Thâkur. He gave an Address from the Mysore University. Several meetings were organised for their lectures. He stayed more than ten days as the State guest in the Pâlace.

Sri Sarasvati Thâkur founded another permanent monastary at Kovvur, to commemorate the memory of Rây Râmânanda. It became a very important centre from in the north of Madras Presidency.

Another important addition to the work was the starting of an Odiya fortnightly called "Paramarthi" from the Sachidananda Math at Cuttack. It has a wide circulation among the Odiya speaking people. So far, the Mission has five magazines as its official organs.

1933 A.D.

The most memorable event of that year's activities is perhaps the holding of the Theistic Exhibition at Dacca. It was also on a very grand scale. The district officials rendered all possible help to the Mission in this connection. The educated public took an active interest in it. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur opened it amidst the learned, gathering of the important people of the city, both Indian and European, on the 6th January 1933. His Excellency the Governor Behar

and Orissa granted a long interview to Mr. Atul Chandra Banerji, one of the secretaries of the Mission on the 17th January, 1933. His Excellency expressed his whole-hearted sympathy with the activities of the Mission.

The most remarkable feature of that year's work is perhaps the sending of a party to Europe for the purpose of interesting the Western world in the philosophy of Sri Chaitanya's religion. It is really one of the most laudable features in the religious history not only of Vaishnava but also of India. The Mission is headed by Svâmi B. H. Bon. The Viceroy of India, and the Provincial Governors of Bengal, Bombay, Madras and U.P. gave him introductions to the Secretaries and under Secretaries of State for India and other men of position and letters, requesting them to help the Mission in England; and other great men of India supplied them with credentials. This shows, how influential and popular the Mission became by then, both with the Government and the people at large.

The Work in Europe:

Svâmi B.H. Bon worked in England, and also on the continent, for the past two years (1933-34 A.D.). He met all sorts of people in England, and lectured at different Universities and learned Societies. He had the great honour of being presented as the representative of the Mission, to His Majesty King Emperor on July 20th, 1933 A.D. The Secretary and Under-Secretary of State for India have been greatly helping him in his activities. He discussed the Vaishnava Philosophy with the Graces the Archbishop of Canterbury and York. He has been able to form a society called The Gaudiya Mission Society in London, with the Most Honourable the Marquess of Zetland as its President. His lordship has been indefatigable in helping Svâmi Bon; Lord Goschen, Lord Lamington, the Lady Carmichael of Skirling, Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., and others, were its Vice Presidents. Its aim is that of reciprocal spiritual fellowship between India and England to help the West to understand the religious outlook of India.

Svâmi B.H. Bon delivered a series of lectures at almost all the Universities of Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. His lectures in Germany were published in book form. It seems that the people of the West take an interest in Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

The Mission opened another branch at Bombay in 1933 A.D. It commanded respect from the people throughout India, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, from Bombay, Kathiavad in the west, to Orissa in the East. Several parties have been working in Burma and in the islands of Indo-China. His Excellency the Governor of Burma gave a long interview to Svâmi B.S. Giri the preacher-in-charge of the Movement in Burma, on the 5th February. His Excellency assured him all his sympathy and support for carrying out the activities of the Mission in his province.[1] The Burmese hailed the preachers with great enthusiasm.

"The Statesman" of Calcutta (17.1.'35) tells us that His Excellency Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal, paid a visit to the headquarters of the Mission at Sri Mâyâpur the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya. "The Statesman" observes: "The success of its activities is testified to by the visit of the ruler of the province to Sri Chaitanya Math at Mâyâpur, which is fast growing into a great centre of pilgrimage and settlement."

SRI SARASVATI THÂKUR AND SRI MÂYÂPUR

When Sri Sarasvati Thâkur assumed his leadership, Sri Mâyâpur, the Birthplace of Sri Chaitanya, contained two small brick buildings, one built by Sri Bhakti Vinode Thâkur by public subscription, and the other the personal residence built by Sarasvati Thâkur himself. To-day, Sri Mâyâpur is a very charming town, containing more than 25 high-towered temples, a series of guest-houses, innumerable residential buildings, tanks, lakes and so on, with a fine metalled road with electric lights on either side, running right through. Electricity and telephone have been

[1] The Rangoon Daily News, 7.2.'35

installed. A residential English School, one Sanskrit academy, and one theological school are being run by the Math. The occasional long festivities draw thousands of pilgrims from every part of India. The Government officials including His Excellency the Governor and his Ministers frequent the place by way of encouraging the Mission. It is a great cultural colony of the Vaishnavas and this wonderful achievement has been brought about by Sri Sarasvati Thâkur during the short period of about 15 years.

He began the work in 1918 A.D. with a handful of his young disciples, contending with many obstacles and disadvantages. He had no money, and tremendous opposition from the hereditary Gurus and the *Smartas*, who tried their utmost to suppress the movement.

He has borne all difficulties; fought valiantly; and continued the Movement with untiring energy and force. He is a great optimist. Disappointment had no place in his philoshophy. His intellectual power and spiritual experience were his true friends. To reform society and make it Godfearing on truly religious lines and to eradicate the evils that the hereditary Gurus introduced into Vaishnavism, are the guiding principles of his aim. He is a great reformer. He introduced almost every Vaishnava practice in the society, which had hitherto been sealed to the public. Many of these practices were perhaps only mentioned in the books of Sri Sanâtana, Gopâl Bhatta and Jiva Gosvâmi. No other Âchârya before Sri Siddhânta Sarasvati would have had the courage to introduce them into the society in the teeth of fierce opposition from the Smartas. He freely gives initiation to all, blesses them with the consecration of the sacred thread, and the right to worship God in a temple.

He has been successful in establishing the *Daiva Varnashrama* and working all reforms. It is true that he was formerly regarded as a revolutionary and disruptive in social ideas; but today is almost universally accepted as a very healthy reformer. Thousands of *Kuhn Brahmanas* of every province pride themselves on being his disciples.

Many hereditary Gurus are now initiated by him. The public has been able to realise what true Vaishnavism of Sri Chaitanya is. Pseudo Vaishnavas can no longer deceive their ignorant disciples. The religious outlook of the Bengalis on Vaisnavaism has undergone a remarkable change. Wherever he or his disciples go, they are received with unreserved enthusiasm. Almost in every district of India, his picture is daily worshipped, and his birthday is celebrated. He opened 64 branches, monasteries throughout India, which are run by voluntary contributions from the public of the respective places. Sri Jiva Gosvâmi was perhaps the greatest Âchârya before him, but he never left Vrindâvan whence he guided the Movement in Bengal, Orissa and in his own province. The monasteries of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur spread from the far South to the extreme North of India and from Bombay to Madras. Gaudiya Vaishnavism is now found to be professed and practised among people of all Indian races. Its preachers have crossed the seas with its messages. Vaishnava books have been translated and published into many important languages of the East and the West. It is true that Sri Chaitanya preached His doctrine in the south for about 14 months, but its effect seems to have been temporary; but today Sri Sarasvati Thâkur together with his God Sri Chaitanya receive worship in the temple from the people of all parts of India alike. He is decidedly the greatest Âchârya of the sect of all time so far, as preaching zeal and its effects are concerned. Vaishnavism was almost about to be abandoned in Bengal but today it is in high favour, due to his herculean activities, which are of many kinds. He undertook to restore all ancient sites in memory of any Vaishnava masters, improve the neglected temple, further the importance of the birth sites of ancient Vaishnavas. More than one thousand selfless whole-time workers constantly on tour from village to village. His Theistic Exhibitions, his literary publications, his volumes of works in Sanskrit, Bengali and English, and those of his disciples in other languages, the daily, weekly, fortnightly and monthly journals and his organising theistic conferences as well as occasional celebrations, offer facilities to all, for understanding the practical spiritual life.

His contribution to the literary productions of Gaudiya Vaisnavism is more than can be described in our limited paper. Besides the six journals, the Mission has about 175 publications, each of which has several editions. The published works are in Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, Telegu, Tamil, Âssamese, English, German and so on. He has trained a good number of writers among his disciples who are now authorities of the doctrine. Three big printing presses were at the service of the Mission.

As we know, the Sanskrit or Bengali works of the earlyVaishnava Masters have a peculiar note of their own which seems to distinguish Vaishnava literature from the rest - so also the Bengali literature of the Gaudiya Math has been developed in a way which is really wonderful and original and somewhat communistic, if we are allowed to use the term. Its ideas, technicalities, vocabularies and so on, are peculiar to the Gaudiya Movement.

Sri Sarasvati Thâkur has many lady disciples belonging to aristocratic families. There is however no women's organisaation in the Movement. They live with their respective families under the care of their husbands, sons or other guardians. They are in no way public preachers of the doctrine. They practise Vaishnavism at home, combining strict asceticism with devotion to God and culture of Vaishnava literature. They preach the doctrine among the ladies who come in contact with them. They do not receive any encouragement from the authorities of the Mission to display their preaching zeal. The Mission would have further benefited society if it were liberal enough to employ these highly cultured ladies in activities among the women of the country. They come to the Math during the day when lectures and religious functions are held, and go home on its conclusion. It should have a separate organisation for women but the authorities do not seem to like the idea, – thinking that their antagonists might find some opportunity for bringing allegations against the good name of the Math.

In spite of these difficulties some of the lady disciples of the Mission work at home and in their way to further the cause among their relatives and neighbours.

Some important literary works of Sri Sarasvati Thâkur

He began his career as a writer from his very early years. His first works are the translation of the two astronomical treatises – Surya Siddhânta and Siddhânta Siromoni with annotations. These were published in 1893 A.D., when he was only nineteen. His next work is Banger Samajikata, a book on the social history of Bengal. It is his research into the origin of the castes of Bengal. He started two astronomical journals known as Vrihaspati and Jyotirvid in 1897 A.D. He published many astronomical books with his commentaries and astrological primers. But we are mainly concerned with his literature on *Bhakti* which he began in 1895 A.D. when he used to contribute articles to be published in Sajjanatosani and the fortnightly Nivedana, which Thâkur Bhakti Vinode had been editing. His writing had been gradually developing at the sacrifice of that on astronomy which he abandened in time. His first important book on Vaishnavism is "Brahmana O Vaisnaver Taratamya Visayaka Siddhânta" which contains his famous speeches delivered at Balighai from the 8th to 10th September 1911 A.D. He began to edit the Sajjana tosani in 1915 A.D. Most of its articles are his own.

Anubhâsya

This is his commentary on the Chaitanya Charita by Krishnadâs Kavirâj. It is dated as having been completed in Chaitanya Era 429 (1916 A.D). In it he explains the teaching of Sri Chaitanya in the light of the Upanishads, the Vedânta and other classical works. He has clarified both philosophical and historical accounts of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in it. It is of supreme value in understanding Gaudiya Vaishnavism. It is written partly in Sanskrit and partly in Bengali. In it he quotes verses and evidences from at least 208 previous works. It is one of his very important works.

Gaudiya Bhâsya on the Bhagavât Purânâ.

This commentary consists of Gaura Kishora Anvaya Svananda Kunja Anuvada, Ananta Gopâla Tathya, and Sindhu Vaibhava Vivrti. It is his most voluminous work,

convincing the reader of his penetrating scholarship and vast erudition. He explains the Bhagavât from two points of view both in the light of the Vedânta and Upanishads and also in that of Sri Chaitanya's teachings. He offered 40 kinds of explanation to the first *Sloka* of the said Purânâ. This work of his compels us to say that as a scholar he can be compared only with Sri Jiva Gosvâmi. His edition of the Bhagavât with his commentaries and that of Vishvanâth Chakravarti and Madhva is perhaps the best edition. It has been highly praised by the savants in India.

Gaudiya Bhâsya on the Chaitanya Bhagavât

This also consists of Anvaya, Tathya, Vivriti and Anuvada of the Chaitanya Bhagavât text. His point of view in it is just the same as in Anubhâsya on Chaitanya earlier. It is also a huge work explaining every point dealt with in the text. It is very helpful to our study of the Chaitanya Bhagavât, for he leaves his readers in no doubt as to its meaning. It was completed in 1932 A.D.

Gaudiya Bhâsya on Jiva Gosvâmi's Bhakti Sandarbha

In it also he displays his keen philosophical genius in simplifying the Gaudiya Vaishnavite system of philosophy. It is of supreme importance to the student of Vaishnava doctrine.

Gaudiya Bhâsya on Râmânuja's Vedânta Tatva Sara

This undoubtedly represents the fruits of his study of Râmânujiya literature. He endeavoured to use the *Vishistadvaita* system in the service of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. His main object in writing and publishing it with its original text is to encourage Bengali scholars to take an interest in Râmânujiya philosophy. He has written a very interesting preface to it. It was published in Chaitanya Era, 441 (1921 A.D.)

Gaudiya Bhâsya on Hari Bhakti Kalpa Latika

It is a Bengali explanation of Hari Bhakti Kalpa Latika, a treatise on Bhakti by some anonymous writer. It has been plublished from the Madhva Gaudiya Math, Dacca,

"Relative worlds"; "Râmânanda"; "A few words on Vedânta"; and a translation of the **Brahma Samhita** are among his important English books. Some of his lectures have been published in two volumes by the Gaudiya Math. Besides, he has commentated many Vaishnava books, such as Siddhânta Darpan, Tattva Muktavali, Vadiraja Svâmi's Yukti Mallika, Manimanjari, Chaitanya Chandrâmrita, Navadvip Satam, and so on.

His works are invariably philosophical in character. Some of his disciples are pre-eminently philosophers. The Mission as a whole particularly emphasises the philosophical side of Sri Chaitanya's religion.

His personal inclination towards asceticism seems to lead the Movement towards philosophical channels. Sri Sarasvati Thâkur believed that the sacrifice of the philosophical aspect in favour of too much culture of *Rasa* literature is the real cause of the perversion of Gaudiya Vaishnavism at the present day. *Rasa* literature should not be read by anyone unless and until he has been able to master his senses by means of asceticism and the study of philosophy. He does not like to allow any disciple of his to read *Rasa* literature in the state of a neophyte.

The Gaudiya Math movement seems to be extremely puritanical indulging in philosophy and asceticism, which are the remarkable characteristics of its Founder- President Âchârya, Paramahamsa Vishnupada Ashtottarasata Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhânta Sarasvati Gosvâmi Thâkur.

APPENDIX – A

THE DATE OF BIRTH OF SRINIVAS ACHARYA

Dr. D.C. Sen assigns the birth of Srinivas to 1561A.D.[1] and thus writes: - "The author of Premavilas distinctly puts it in the mouth of Srinivas that he regretted the fact of his not being born while Chaitanya was alive."

"This statement is supported by other facts which are of unassailable character. We find in the Premavilas that Srinivas in his youth visited Vrindavan and found the temple of Govindaji complete. The inscription of the temple shows that it was built by Mansimha in 1590 A.D." "Srinivas came to Vishnupur about the year 1600 A.D., for the first time, on his way from Vrindavan and initiated him, when Vir Hamvir caused him to be robbed of his books. Vir was the reigning king there and ascended the throne in 1596 A.D. Srinivas came to Vrindavan three days after the death of Sanatana in 1591 A.D. He must have been about twenty years of age at the time; so we may take the date of his birth to be about the year 1561 A.D." [2]

Dr. Sen's calculation of the said date seems to be based mainly on the passage in Premavilas, and on the dates of the Govinda temple, the death of Sanatana and the accession of Vir Hamvir. We shall take up the last three evidences for our discussion suspending the first one for the moment, because it will have some bearing on details.

Premavilas tells us that "on his arrival at Vrindavan, Srinivas heard that Sanatana had died four months previously, and Rûpa a few days since."[3] We have already discussed the dates of the death of Rûpa and Sanatana, which may have taken place about 1556 A.D. They seem to have been born about 1470 A.D. We have no evidence to show that both lived the very old age of one hundred and twenty, if they died in 1590 A.D. Dr. Sen accepts another statement of Premavilas, that Srinivas, immediately before

[1] V.L.M.B. p.86 [2] V.L.M.B. p.86 [3] Premavilas. p.31

his departure for Vrindavan to meet Rûpa and Sanatana, paid a visit to Shantipur. But Advaita, the venerable head of the Vaishnava Community there, had died three years before.[1] So if Srinivas went to Vrindavan in 1591 A.D., Advaita died about 1588 A.D. Dr. D.C. Sen is certainly correct in assigning the birth of Advaita to the year 1434 A.D.[2] Have we got any evidence or reason to believe that Advaita lived in the world for 157 years?

Premavilas further tells us that Srinivas went to Vrindavan with the permission of, and at the request of, Narahari Sarkar Thakur, who died on Srinivas's return from Vrindavan.[3] Both Dr. Sen and other scholars are of the opinion that Narahari Sarkar expired in 1541 A.D.[4] We do not understand how Dr. Sen reconciles this date with his view that Srinivas went to Vrindavan in 1591 A.D. Srinivas took blessings from Sita Devi, wife of Advaita, Vishnupriya Devi; the consort of Sri Chaitanya; Isan the servant of Sri Chaitanya and many others; before he went to Vrindavan.[5] Vishnupriya Devi was born in 1490 A.D. Isan was senior to Sri Chaitanya by many years; Sita Devi might have been ten or at most fifteen years younger than her husband Advaita. Should we believe that all of them lived for more than one-hundred-and-twenty-five years? According both to Premavilas (IV) and other biographies of Srinivas, he met Gadadhar Pandit Gosvami at Puri before he departed for Vrindavan. When Srinivas appeared before him, he found him soliloquizing, grieving at the death of Sri Chaitanya. Dr. Sen says that his visit to Puri took place in 1581.[6] Gadadhar was of the same age as Sri Chaitanya. We know Sri Chaitanya passed away in 1534 A.D. It is hardly believable that he was loudly lamenting the death of Chaitanya about fifty years later, and that he would have had for a long a period in that miserable state of bereavement.

Premavilas and all other biographers tell us that Srinivas married a few years after his return to Vrindavan.

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[1] V.L.M.B p.90. Premavilas. IV. p.24 [2] C.&C.p.29 [3] Premavilas V. p.29; XIV p.104 [4] C.&C.p.103 [5] Premavilas IV [6] V.L.M.B.p. 89

Premavilas ascribes to one Chaitanyadas, the impartment of two items of news to Gopal Bhatta: That Srinivas had recently married, and news about the great festivities of Kheturi.[1] Dr. Sen, in order to support his main view of Srinivas's date of birth, places the Kheturi *Utsava* about 1602-1606 A.D.[2] Premavilas, Karnananda, Bhaktiratnakar, include several letters of Jiva Gosvami to Srinivas. In one of these letters, Jiva finished his Purva Gopal Champu, which he sent through Shyamadas, and just finished writing Uttara Champu, but it ought to be considered. In this letter, he refers to Srinivas's children. (letter No.3) We know the dates of the two volumes of Gopal Champu were 1588 A.D., and 1592 A.D., respectively. How could we agree with Dr. Sen in his view that Kheturi *Utsava* took place in 1602-1606 A.D., when Srinivas married, that he returned from Vrindavan, in 1600 A.D., having gone there in 1591 A.D.? The Kheturi Utsav took place many years after the return of Srinivas and Narottam from Vrindavan. Premavilas further tells us that Jahnava Devi went to Vrindavan and spoke very highly of the rich service of the Deities of the Kheturi temple, to Gopal Bhatta.[3] Jahnava Devi was born in the nineties of the fifteenth century. Would she have been able, supposing that she were alive, to go to Vrindavan on foot some years after 1607 A.D., at the age of more than one-hundred-and-twenty, or so? In the before-mentioned letter, Jiva advises Srinivas not to give way to grief at the death of Gopal Bhatta. So Gopal died before 1590 A.D. How could Jahnava Devi meet him, to praise Narottam some years after 1606 A.D.? Srinivas worked for many years with hosts of contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya after his return from Vrindavan. If he returned in Dr. Sen's date (1600 A.D.), we cannot believe that all these contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya would have worked with Srinivas for so many years. Dr. Sen has accepted Premavilas as the greatest authority in assigning the said date,[4], so we have also cited our evidences only from Premavilas to show that his views cannot be accepted as tanable. Nowhere in the Premavilas do we find

[1] Premavilas XVI.p.131 [2] V B.M.B.p.127 [3] Premavilas XV.p.119 [4] V.L.M.B.p.85

any single evidence that he might have been born in 1561A.D., have gone to Vrindavan in 1591A.D.; returned in 1600 A.D. – and so on. We cannot resist the temptation to give another positive evidence, which seems to discredit Dr. Sen's view. Srinivas was kindly received by Vithalanath, - the son of the famous Vallabhacharya.[1] We know Vitthalanath died in 1585 A.D.[2] Vitthalanath died many years after he separated from the Gaudiyas. Srinivas could not have come to Vrindavan as late as 1591 A.D.

The next evidence of Dr. Sen on the basis of Premavilas is that when Srinivas went to Vrindavan, the Govinda temple was complete.

Its inscriptions state that it was completed in 1590 A.D. by Raja Mansimha. Premavilas tells us that Srinivas was received by Sri Jiva Gosvami when the evening service of the deity was being performed.[3] We have discussed the question of the date of the Govinda temple in connection with the life of Rûpa Gosvami. It would be enough to record here our observation that the main temple (Sacrarium) in which the Deity is set up, was built while Sri Chaitanya was still alive. Raja Mansimha has added the nave and choir to it. We have no reason to connect the arrival of Srinivas with the completion of the later addition of the temple.

Dr. Sen's other basis is that Srinivas met Raja Vir Hamvir on the way from Vrindavan to Bengal, when he was caused to be robbed of his books by the Raja , and that Raja Vir Hamvir ascended the throne in 1596 A.D., - so Srinivas could not have returned from Vrindavan before 1600 A.D., when the King had already occupied the throne for at least some years. We have already discussed, partly in connection with Premavilas, and partly in the lives of Srinivas, Vir Hamvir and Vyasa Acharya, the initiation of the King, which took place many years after the return of Srinivas from Vrindavan. We have also observed that Raja Vir Hamvir may have ascended the throne about 1560 A.D.

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[1] Amragavalli IV. p.60, Bk.Kar.V [2] Vaishnavamanjusa, part ii, p.65
[3] Premavilas VI.p.34

So we have no reason either to synchronize the return of Srinivas from Vrindavan with the accession of king Vir Hamvir, or to assign his accession to the year 1569 A.D., when he might have been in his grave.

The next evidence advanced by Dr. Sen to establish that Srinivas was born in 1561 A.D., many years after the passing away of Sri Chaitanya, is surmised from two citations from the Premavilas.[1] We shall first give the translation of the whole passage and then let us examine whether it could be accepted either in its literal sense or in the light of Dr. Sen's view. The author of Premavilas ascribes the following lamentation to Srinivas when he was a boy at home: "I could not have the glimpse of Sri Chaitanya Prabhu. I did not see the feet of Nityananda, I will see Advaita no more. I could not attain Svarup, Rûpa and Sanatana. I did not hear the *Kirtana* in the company of the *Bhaktas*; why did my cursed birth takes place then?" If we interpret the meaning in the light of Dr. Sen's view, we have to say that Sri Chaitanya, Advaita, Nityananda, Svarup, Rûpa and Sanatana all died before the moment when Srinivas grieved. But Premavilas in several passages, tells us that many years after this occasion, Srinivas resolved to see Rûpa and Sanatana, and Jahnava Devi, Narahari repeatedly told him to hasten to Vrindavan lest he could not see Rûpa and Sanatana.[2] He heard of the death of Rûpa and Sanatana on his arrival at Vrindavan.[3] Furthermore, several years after the occasion of his said grief, he visited Shantipur.[4] It seems quite clear that the author ascribes the lamentations to the moment when they were all alive. It is nothing more than poetic exaggeration of the religious feeling and devotion of Srinivas to the Vaishnava masters. Let us now show some clear evidence both from the Premavilas and all available biographies of Srinivas, that he was born and sufficiently grown up, when Sri Chaitanya was still alive, and we all know that Sri Chaitanya passed away in 1534 A.D.

Yadunandandas in his "Karnananda" which was written

[1] Premavilas IV.p.16 [2] V.P.28, p.29, p.27 [3] Premavilas, V.p.31 [4] Premavilas V.28

in 1607 A.D., in collaboration with his *Guru* Hemalata, the talented eldest daughter of Srinivas, tells us that Srinivas heard the news of the death of Sri Chaitanya on his way to Puri, where he was going to see him; and on his arrival found the devotees of Sri Chaitanya grieving and weeping.[1] Yadunandan was a conscientious historian, and recognized writer of the sect. This book was written in his seventieth year, so he was a contemporary of Srinivas and eyewitness to his activities. Moreover, Yadunandan tells us that he followed two other previous biographies of Srinivas one by Kavirkarnapur Kavikaraj, one of the best poet disciples of Srinivas, and the other by Thakur Mahasay (Narottam) friend and colleague of Srinivas, Dr. Sen informs us from the said book of Narottam Thakur, that "Srinivas heard on his way to Puri that Sri Chaitanya had disappeared."[2]

Yadunandan also quotes nine Slokas from the writing of Nrisimha Kaviraj, one of main eight poet-disciples of Srinivas to the same effect that Sri Chaitanya had passed away, while Srinivas was on the way to Puri.[3]

The eighteenth century writer, Narahari Chakravarti also quotes the same passages in his Bhaktiratnakar.[4]

Anuragavalli by Manohardas, which was written in Saka 1618, (1696 A.D.) also states that Srinivas was overwhelmed with grief and disappointment at the news of the death of Sri Chaitanya, on his way to Puri.

Premavilas seems to corroborate this statement in some of its clear passages.

When Srinivas, reached the Tota Gopinath temple at Puri, and met Gadadhar Pandit Gosvami, he found him bewailing, fainting, loudly grieving, at the death of Sri Chaitanya.[5]

It is clear that, when Srinivas reached Puri, Sri Chaitanya had expired recently; otherwise the grief would not have been so fresh. Premavilas made Gadadhar Pandit

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[1] Karnananda VI [2] VL.M.B. p.85 [3] Karnananda, VI
[4] Bh.R.K. III.p.101 [5] Premavilas. IV, p.19

say to Srinivas: "It is well that you have come. In the latter years, the Lord (Sri Chaitanya) asked me to teach you the Bhagavat and send you to Vrindavan with a letter of introduction to Rûpa and Sanatana for your training."[1] The author of Premavilas is quit clear that Sri Chaitanya was expecting the arrival of Srinivas at Puri. Yadunandandas, in his "Karnananda", tells us that Jiva showed Srinivas the letter of Sri Chaitanya in which the latter requested Rûpa, Sanatana and Gopal Bhatta, to teach Srinivas the doctrine, when he met them. The Premavilas also seems to re-echo it. When Srinivas wanted initiation from Narahari Sarakar, the latter refused it saying that Sri Chaitanya desired Gopal Bhatta to initiate him and that he would not violate the command of Sri Chaitanya.[2] It is unnecessary to quote further passages in this respect. It is quite clear that Srinivas was old enough to visit Sri Chaitanya, and for the latter to desire his training under Gadadhar Pandit at Puri, and under Rûpa, Sanatana and Gopal Bhatta at Vrindavan. We should not be far from the truth if we assume that he was born about 1520 A.D. and could have gone to Puri to visit Sri Chaitanya in his 14th year in 1534 A.D., when unfortunately he missed him by a few days. Dr. Sen's view that he was born in 1561 A.D., and returned to Bengal from Vrindavan in 1600 A.D. is untenable from every point of view. We have no evidence to agree with him in his view. We shall close the discussion by giving a few instances only from Premavilas which he likes to accept as very valuable to show that his view cannot be reasonably acceptable.

When Rûpanarayan, was already a scholar and had finished his education at Navadvip, he met Sri Chaitanya at Puri. He also met Rûpa and Sanatana, and studied for some time under Jiva. Rûpanarayan became the disciple of Narottam Thakur many years after the Kheturi *Utsava*.[3] After his initiation, he used to sing and dance at the Kheturi Utsava. Can we believe that Rûpanarayan could have accepted initiation from Narottam and would have

[1] Premavilas, IV p.20 [2] Premavilas, IV, p.18 [3] Premavilas XIX

been strong enough to take part in song and dance, many years after 1606 A.D. – which is given by Dr. Sen as the date of the first Kheturi Utsava?

Madhava Acharya, the reputed author of Krishna Momgal, was the first-cousin of Vishnupriya Devi. Madhva was initiated by Advaita at the direction of Sri Chaitanya on the famous Abhiseka day about 1509 A.D., at the house of Srivas Pandit, before Sri Chaitanya accepted Sannyas. Madhava was a great ascetic. He used to live with Rûpa Gosvami, at Vrindavan. On the death of his mother, he paid a visit to Bengal, when the Kheturi *Utsava* was being performed. He joined the ceremony with Achyuta, the son of his *Guru* Advaita. He went again to Vrindavan and lived there till the last day of the life. Sri Jahnava Devi met him on her visit to Vrindavan.[1] He was quite old enough to accept initiation in 1506 A.D. he was certainly born about 1490 A.D., if not earlier. Should we believe that he was strong enough to go to Bengal from Vrindavan on foot in 1606 A.D. (in his 116th year?) Not only that, he lived for many years after his return to Vrindavan from Kheturi.

We know Chand Ray became the disciple of Narottam many years after the installation of the Deities at Kheturi. He visited the Deities after his initiation, and several years later, he paid another visit to the Deities. If we accept Dr. Sen's view that the Kheturi *Utsava* took place in 1606 A.D., a few years after the return of Srinivas and Narottam, we have to consider that Chand Ray paid his visits about 1610 A.D. and 1615 A.D., if not later. We have shown in the life of Chand Ray that he was deprived of Raja Mahal when it was made the capital of the Maghul Governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1590 A.D. It is clear that Chand Ray visited Kheturi *Utsava* many years before he was deprived of his capital by Mansimha in 1591 A.D.

The late Mr. Satish Ray, could not advance the date of the Kheturi *Utsava* later than 1582 A.D.[2] The actual date seems to be earlier than Mr. Ray's view. But we have no reason to agree with Dr. Sen in his date 1600 A.D. because

[1] Premavilas XIX [2] S.P.P. XIV. p.101

this would make contemporaneous a host of Vaishnavas who were either senior to Sri Chaitanya in age such as Sripati, Srinidhi, Suryadas, Krishnadas are of the same age as Sri Chaitanya, such as Raghunandan Thakur, Kamalakar Pipplai, Minaketana Ramadas, Raghunath Acharya, and many others; or who were a little junior to Sri Chaitanya, such as Achyuta, Jiva, Chandita, and many others. More than three-fourths of the important Vaishnavas who joined it were the contemporary followers of Sri Chaitanya. If, on the other hand, the date of Kheturi *Utsava* is fixed as 1582 A.D. we can hardly force ourselves to believe that most of them had lived for more than a hundred years. If one or two men lived to such a good age, it is not to be expected that all of them did; therefore Dr. Sen's date 1606 A.D. is out of the question. The main fact of Srinivas and Narottam's lives is that they worked in Bengal under the constant direction of Jiva Gosvami and Gopal Bhatta, which suggests that their period more or less synchronized with that of Srinivas and Narottam. It is true that Jiva was a little senior to Srinivas and Narottam. But the difference in age between them does not seem wide, because Jiva used to address both Srinivas and Narottam as friends.[1] In other letters Jiva bows to the feet of Srinivas, and latter used to do to Jiva. We know Jiva was born about 1509 A.D. So 1520 A.D. our suggested date of the birth of Srinivas is not unreasonable.

We shall refer to another fact that discredits Dr. Sen's date, before we close our discussion. Premavilas and Karnananda, the biographies are dated as having been written in 1600 A.D. and 1607 A.D. respectively. Karnananda was written by Yadunandandas who was the disciple of Srinivas's daughter Hemalata. She supervised the work. From her speech to Yadunandandas, it is clear that she was then an elderly lady. In all of his works, Yadunandandas refers to his *Guru* Hemalata. Yadunandandas's other book, which contains his homage to Hemlata, is a metrical translation of Kaviraj Gosvami's

[1] Premavilas VI. p.34 Letter No.3. XXV.p.304 Karnananda. Bhaktiratnakar XIV.

Govindalilamrita. This book of Yadunandan is also dated in 1610 A.D. How could we agree with Dr. Sen that Srinivas married several years later than 1600 A.D. when he returned to Bengal from Vrindavan? Hemalata must have been at least 40 years of age in 1607 A.D., when "Karnananda" was written in which her disciple bows to her feet at the end of every chapter. So she seems to have been born to Srinivas about 1565A.D. Srinivas seems to have been married about 8 years before her birth, because she was the first child. If Srinivas married, say about 1558 A.D. he must have returned to Bengal from Vrindavan, at least one year or so earlier.

We can support our view that Srinivas returned to Bengal about the middle of the fifties of the 16th century from another consideration. Srinivas's missionary life is inseparably connected with that of Raghunandan Thakur of Srikhanda. Raghunanda's son Kanai also worked with his father and Srinivas. One Gopal Das wrote his book, Rasakalpavalli, in Saka 1565 (1643 A.D.) He gives us the genealogy of the family of his *Guru* Ratimati, who was the great-grandson of Raghunandan. So if the disciple of the great-grandson of the contemporary of Srinivas could write a book in 1643 A.D., can we believe that Srinivas began his missionary life after 1600 A.D.? We think we have sufficient reason to assume that Srinivas was born about 1520 A.D. and married about 1558 A.D., after his return from Vrindavan, and died towards the close of the 16th century.

This view of ours may be supported by another historical fact. Shyamananda of Orissa was the younger friend of Srinivas. According to Premavilas and others, Jiva sent him with Srinivas on his first visit to work in Orissa. The most important disciples of Shyamananda were Raja Jagateswara of the Mayurbhanj State, and Rasika Murari. The latter's disciple was Raja Vaidyanath, the immediate successor of Jagatesvara. The inscription on the Bada Jagannath temple at Varipada States that the said temple was built by Raja Vaidyanath in Saka 1497 (1575 A.D.), when Shyamanandas disciple, Jagatesvara died.

Shyamananda's missionary life began after Srinivas's, so how could we believe that Srinivas was born in 1561 and came to Bengal begin his missionary life in 1600, A.D.?

If the disciple of Srinivas's younger colleague, Shyamananda, died several years before 1575 A.D. we have every reason to believe that Srinivas may have been born about 1520 A.D. and died before the close of the 16th century.

Dr. Sen's view that he began his missionary life after 1600 A.D. is wholly untenable.

APPENDIX –B

THE ORIGIN OF THE GAUDIYA SECT FROM THE MADHVA SECT

Sri Chaitanya entered the Madhva sect by obtaining initiation from Sri Isvara Puri, disciple of Madhavendra Puri, whose fellow disciple was Nityananda, and disciple was Advaita, two of the Gaudiya Vaishnava Trio. Kavikarnapur in his Gauraganoddesadipika. (1576 A.D.) and Gopalguru Gosvami in his Sanskrit – Stotra verses give us the following list of Acharyas from Madhva to Sri Chaitanya. (Both these writers were contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya.) 1) Madhva. 2) Padmanabha. 3) Nrihari. 4) Aksobhya. 5) Jayatirtha. 6) Jnanasindhu. 8) Dayanidhi. 9) Vidyanidhi. 10) Rajendra. 11). Jayadharma. 12) Purushottama. 13) Vyasatirtha. 14) Laksmipati 15) Madhavendra. 16) Isvara Puri. 17) Sri Chaitanya. We should remark here that Padmanabha, Nrihari and Madhava Tirtha were the three contemporary disciples of Madhva and not successive disciples of one another like the rest of the list.[1] Aksobhya was also the contemporary of Madhva. Gopal Guru's disciple Dhyanachandra and the

[1] Vide our article on the Madhva sect. Gaudiya Vol. VI. p.209.

17th century writer Manohardas in his Anuragavalli, the next authentic writer Baladev Vidyabhusan in his Premayaratnavali and the sub-commentary on his Govinda Bhasya corroborate the above the list of *Gurus* and trace the origin of the Gaudiya sect to the Madhva sect. The next work Bhaktiranakar by Narahari Chakravarti also echoes the same. We have discussed in connection with the Madhva, Jiva Gosvami, and Baladev Vidyabhusan how doctrinally the Gaudiya Vaishnavas borrowed and based their philosophical system "*Achintyabhedabhedavada*" on Madhva's doctrine and literature. Baladev Vidyabhusan finally set at rest all doubts as to the origin of the Gaudiya sect both historical and philosophical, particularly on the occasion of the disputation with the Ramanandi sect at Galta. It may be enough to say here that, historically speaking, the Gaudiya sect sprang from the Madhva sect but introduced many new ideas, which are the logical development of Madhva's idea in this particular line. Lakshmipati Tirtha, or more precisely Madhavendra Puri, was the first to add the ecstatic *Bhakti* in the form of Love-in-separation for God, which reached its zenith under Sri Chaitanya.

Nowadays a school of thought has it that Sri Chaitanya's Gaudiya sect has sprung from the Shankarite sect instead of the Madhva sect. They advance the following grounds 1) Madhavendra Puri, the grand preceptor of Sri Chaitanya was a Shankarite *Sannyâsi* because "Puri" was his designation. 2) Vishnu Puri who has been accepted as an authority on the Gaudiya system of *Bhakti*, was also a Shankarite *Sannyâsi*. 3) Sridharaswami who is another authority in the development of the doctrine as a *Mayavadi*. 4) If Sri Chaitanya belonged to the Madhva sect, He should not have differed from the head of the Madhva sect of Udupi with whom He entered into a disputation. (Introduction to Dr. S. K. De's Padyavami recently published from the Dacca University.)

We will discuss the above four questions:

Q. 1. Madhvendra Puri was a Mayavada *Sannyasi* because he bore the title of Puri.

The word Puri is one of the ten designations of (*Dasanami*) of *Sannyasins* adopted by Shankara in his sect, out of 108 designations (*Astottarashata*) belonging to the ancient Vedic order of *Sannyas*, Muktikopanishad and the Sattvata Samhita give us the whole of these names saying that these designations were Vedic. *Sannyas* is of two kinds. *Tridanda* and *Ekadanda*. The *Tridandins* keep the sacred threads, tuft of hair on the top of the head (*Sikha*) and so on, while the Ekadandins, give them up. Javalapanishad (VI), Manusamhita (XII.10), the Bhagavat Purana (XI.23.34) Haritasamhita (VI.23) and other works refer to the *Tridanda Sannyas*. Shankara and Madhva accepted and introduced *Ekadanda*, Vishnusvami, Ramanuja and Nimbarka adopted the other one. This title of "Puri" is not the exclusive possession of the Shankarite sect. Any sect which has adopted *Sannyas* claims all the titles including "Puri". We have observed in our notice of his life and Madhva Puri was inimical to the Shankarite *Sannyasins* whom he could not bear to see. It is unthinkable that he could have been a *Mayavadin Sannyâsi* or that Sri Chaitanya would have accepted any Mayavadin as His *Guru* or grand Guru. Sri Chaitanya used the terms "*Pashanda*" (Blasphemous) "*Asprsya*" (Untouchable) and so on, about the Shankarite *Mayavada Sannyasins*.[1] The main purpose of the Gaudiya Vaishnavite philosophical literature is to destroy *Mayavadism*. The literature of the sect and the lives and career of its Acharyas, would be meaningless if we stated that Sri Chaitanya belonged to the Shankarite sect. We can feel almost at every step in the history and literature of the Gaudiya Vaishnava that they were enemies of *Mayavadism*.

But we should remember that it is merely a social or *Varnashrama* rule that one must accept *Sannyas* from another *Sannyâsi* and on this point the early Gaudiya

[1] C.C.M.VI

Vaishnavas were not as strict as they are now. They seem to have been eclective. A *Sannyas Guru* is not like *Diksha Guru* who is to be recognized in relation to spiritual and doctrinal consideration. In the earlier stages, a *Mayavadin* could accept *Sannyas* from the Vaishnava *Sannyâsi* as Rama Chandra did from Madhva Puri, or vice versa, as Svarup Damodar did from Chaitanyananda of Benares, who seems to have been a *Mayavadi* while Svarup Damodar did not allow Bhagavanacharya and other followers of Sri Chaitanya of whom he was the guardian, to hear a word of scripture from the lips of a *Mayavada* scholar Gopal Bhattacharya. He remarked "the sayings of the Mayavadins that *Maya* is false, the Jivas are illusory and Isvara comes under the adjunct" cut our heart [1] but his *Sannyas Guru* seems to have been a *Mayavadi*.[2] The Gaudiya Vaishnavas trace their spiritual and sectarian identity through the *Guru* who initiate them.

Q.2. Vishnu Puri

We cannot agree with Dr. S. K. De in his view that Vishnu Puri was a *Mayavadi* and that Sri Chaitanya accepted him as such. Krishnadas Kaviraj described Vishnu Puri together with eight other *Sannyasins* as the nine roots of the Tree of *Bhakti* which has been compared with Sri Chaitanya. The seed of *Bhakti* was first sown by Madhavendra Puri.[3] It seems from the above description that Vishnu Puri like other eight *Sannyasins* flourished between the time of Madhavendra and Sri Chaitanya or more precisely like the others, he was the senior contemporary of Sri Chaitanya. All scholars even Dr. S. K. De invariably identify this Vishnupuri with the author of Bhaktiratnavali. We do not find any reason to regard him as a *Mayavadi Sannyâsi*. Bhaktiratnavali is a treatise on the Bhagavat, dealing with the pure nine-fold *Bhakti*. It does not contain any vestige of Mayavadism. In its 14 Chapters, it contains 405 *Slokas* of which the first and last four *slokas* are by the author. A few slokas have been quoted from Hari *Bhakti* Sudhodaya and the rest from the Bhagavat. These verses have been arranged

[1] C.C. Antya. II. p.98-99 [2] C.C.M.X.p.105 [3] C.C. Adi. IX.p.13-14

according to the nine kinds of *Bhakti* called *Navadha Bhakti* in our Gaudiya literature. Vishnupuri himself has made a Sanskrit commentary on it styled Kantimala Tika. Gaudia Krishnadas, a disciple of Sri Advaita has made the Bengali metrical translation of it. Daivakinandandas in his Vaishnava Vandana refers to Vishnupuri as Gosvami and his treatise on *Bhakti*. Bhaktamala also mentions his *Bhakti* to the God Jagannath of Puri.[1]

Furthermore he was the disciple of Jayatirtha Dharma[2] Madhavendra Puri was the fourth in degree from Jayadharma in the Gaudiya line from Madhva. We cannot reconcile the view that if Vishnu Puri was a disciple of Jayadharma, he could be a *Mayavadi*. Jayatirtha Dharma defeated the Sankarite *Sannyâsi* Vidyaranya at an open meeting, of which Vedantadesika was the judge. The biography "Jayatirtha Vijaya" contains the account of this disputation. He was one of the greatest enemies of the Sankarite *Mayavadism*. His following books in this regard may be mentioned. 1) Nyayasudhaa, 2) Nyayavivarana Tikaa. 3) Prameyadipika Tika 4) Nyaayadipikaa Tika. 5) Tattvaviveka Tika. 6) Upadhikhandana Tika 7) Pramanakhanda Tika. 8) Sadaprashnabhsya Tika 9) Maayaavaadakhanda Tika. 10) Vadavali. 11) Tattva Sankhyana Tika and ten other similar works. We have no reason to think that Vishnupuri, disciple of Jayatirtha would have been a *Mayavadi*. In the colophon of one manuscript of the Bhaktiratnavali, Vishnu Puri seems to imply that he was the disciple of Purushottama Tirtha who was the disciple of Jayatirtha. Anyhow Vishnu Puri belonged to the Madhva sect. He is generally known as the Tirhutiya Paramahamsa or the great Vaishnava of Tirhut.

Q.3. Sridharasvami was a Mayavadi

We have already observed that Sridharasvami may have belonged to the Vishnusvami sect. We do not get the faintest trace of suggestion in his voluminous writings in which he upholds *Bhakti*, that he was a *Mayavadi*. Anyhow he was

[1] Vaishnava Manjusa. Part.I. p.80 [2] Bhaktiratnakara V
[3] Mitra's notices. I. C.40

an out and out Vaishnava. He refutes *Mayavadism* and establishes *Bhakti* proving the distinctiveness of *Jivas* after Mukti,[1] Shakti of God, difference between God and *Jiva* and so on.[2]

Q. 4. Why Sri Chaitanya differed from the head of the Madhva Sect?

Sri Chaitanya during His tour in the south of India, met Raghuvarya Tirtha (according to some, Vyasatirtha), then leader of the Madhva community at Udupi. He embarked upon discussion with him and defeated him by solving the question of the nature of *Sadhya*, the object of devotion and of *Sadhana*, the means for attainment of *Sadhya*. The *Tattvavadins* or professed followers of Sri Madhva, were then far away from Madhva's teachings. Sri Chaitanya's discussion with the *Tattvavadins* does not mean that he defied Sri Madhva, as some people think. He however brought home to them the important fact of their deviation from Madhva's path. They were degraded at that time to a state like that of the *Karmins* and *Jnanins*, by giving way to *Varnashrama Dharma* as the means to *Mukti*, which they accepted as their highest aim. Sri Chaitanya advocated the doctrine of Sri Madhva: that *Bhakti* is not the produced effect of *Karma* but is the self-contained means to *Prema*, the only true end. *Bhakti*, according to Sri Chaitanya, consists in hearing and chanting the Name, Beauty, Quality and Retinue of Vishnu. Sri Madhva in his *Sutra Bhasya* says the same.[3] We find an exact parallelism in Madhva's following line in his commentary on Mundaka *"Kalau tu Namamatrena Pujyate Bhagavan Harih"* and in the lines of Chaitanya Charita by Krishnadas Kaviraj to the effect that the recitation of the Name of God is the good form of *Bhakti*.[4] Like Sri Chaitanya, Madhva also denounced Karma as we find in his Sutra Bhasya.[5] Sri Madhva in his Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya upholds *Bhakti* as the only means to that end.[6]

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[1] Bhavarthadipika. I.6. p29 [2] ibid.I.7 p.6 [3] ibid 3.45.51. [4] C.C. Adi 77
[5] III.3.50 [6] ibid. I.77: I.86: I.105-109: I.116: II.54.

He further demonstrates it in his Gita Tatparya.[1] Sometimes Madhva seems to have favoured *Karma* but not as an independent means. What he wishes is to employ it in obedience to *Bhakti*. The *Tattvavadins* of Sri Chaitanya's age lost this true spirit of their great teacher and confused *Sadhana* with mere performance of *Karmakandin's Varnashram Dharma*. They also misunderstood Mukti which, according to Madhva, is nothing but *Bhakti*. Madhva's *Mukti* is full of bliss arising out of loving service to God. In order to show the differences and similarities between Madhva and his followers of Sri Chaitanya's age on the one hand, and between Madhva and Sri Chaitanya on the other, it should not be out of place to give Madhva's own definition of *Mukti* *"Muktirhityanyatha rupam svarupena vyavasthitih"*.[2] Sri Rûpa Gosvami of the Gaudiya community echoes the very self-same idea in the following line". Nitya siddhasya bhavasya prakatyam hridi sadhyata.[3] Sri Madhva says *"Muktavananda visisyate"* [4] Mukta'pihi kurvanti etc.[5] Devotional activities towards God's pleasure never cease in Madhva's *Mukti* which may be otherwise called *Bhakti*.[6] But unfortunately it appears from their discussion with Sri Chaitanya that the *Tattvavadins* of His period depreciated this teaching of their master under the unconscious influence of non-devotional people.

It does not mean that if Sri Chaitanya belonged to the Madhva Sect, He ought to have agreed with them in all respects. He has given something of His own which greatly differentiated Him from the parent sect in the conception of devotion. But historically He belonged to the Madhva sect. We have no reason to doubt this fact because the contemporary writers of Sri Chaitanya have recorded it in their writings.

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[1] ibid.II.11 [2] Sutra Bhasya. I.i.17. [3] Bh.R.S. Purva. II.2.
[4] Sutra Bhasya. III.3.33. [5] ibid III.3.27 10 Gita Tatparya.ii.II. Anuvyakhya.III.
[6] M.bh.Mhh. Tatparya.I.86.

APPENDIX-C

TWO DOUBTFUL BIOGRAPHIES OF SRI CHAITANYA

Dr. D. C. Sen has attached a good deal of undue importance of Govindadas's *Karcha* and Jayananda's Chaitanya Mongal. Neither of these two books nor their authors seems to have any objective existence in Gaudiya Vaishnava history and literature.

Karcha by Govindadas:

Govinda's parents, as the supposed author says, were Shyamadas and Madhavi. His wife was Sashi Mukhi. He belonged to the blacksmith caste (*Karmakar*) of Kanchana Nagar and is said to have been dull and worthless and could not earn his livelihood, so his wife abused him for his illiteracy.[1] which led him to leave home and wife in Saka 1430 (1508 A.D.) He came first to Katwa and there he heard of Sri Chaitanya Whom he immediately went to see at Navadvip when the latter was twenty-three years old, and became willing servant of the family. Next year accompanied Sri Chaitanya to Katwa where the Latter accepted *Sannyas*. When they passed by Kanchan Nagar, his wife Sashi Mukhi managed to restrain him from following Sri Chaitanya, but Govinda shortly joined him on the way to Puri and accompanied Him during His journey in the South. This book is supposed to be the record of the journey written at the time. Dr. Sen further says that "on their return to Puri from the Deccan, he constantly remained with Sri Chaitanya. Dr. Sen likes to identify the author of the said *Karcha* first with *Dvarapal* Govinda and next with Isvara Puri's disciple Govinda who was the life-long attendant of Sri Chaitanya at Puri, with a view to establishing the identity of the author of the *Karcha* in

[1] Nirguna Murkha. C.&C.p.240

Gaudiya Vaishnava history.[1] Again he writes "The services offered to Sri Chaitanya by Govinda Karmakar and by Govinda of the Puri temple are of such similar nature that we take it as another reason for believing that the persons were not really two but identical. This passage of Dr. Sen seems unintelligible with reference to any biographical text. There was no man of the name Govinda of the Puri Temple who offered services to Sri Chaitanya. We know that it was Tulasi Paricha who was appointed by King Prataprudra to serve with the *Prasad* (food) from the temple.[3] Vaninath Pattanayak also rendered the same service to Sri Chaitanya. We do not know whether Dr. Sen mistakes this Odiya devotee Tulasi Paricha of the temple for his Govinda.

Let us refer to the standard biographies of Sri Chaitanya to see whether Dr. Sen's identifications and consequently the authenticity of the Karcha, are tenable at all in the light of history. Dr. Sen distinctly says from the *Karcha* that Govinda Karmakar heard of Sri Chaitanya for the first time at Katwa in Saka 1430[4], one year before Sri Chaitanya's *Sannyas*. But the gate keeper with whom Dr. Sen identifies his Govinda, is found with Sri Chaitanya in the rising state of His reputed professorship, about seven years before Saka 1430.[5] So Govinda Karmakar who heard of Sri Chaitanya in Saka 1430 and lived in the family for one year immediately before the *Sannyas* of Sri Chaitanya could not be the same as *Dvarapal* or gatekeeper Govinda who had long since been the servant of the family.

Dr. Sen's second identification of the author of the *Karcha* with Sri Chaitanya's personal attendant Govinda at Puri is also untenable. The attendant Govinda and Kashisvara were the two disciples of Isvara Puri, *Guru* of Sri Chaitanya. They served and lived with their *Guru* Isvara Puri who commanded them to render their services in the same way to Sri Chaitanya after his death. And accordingly Govinda went to Sri Chaitanya for the first time at Puri

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[1] C. & C.p. 235-237 [2] ibid.p.236-237 [3] C.C. M.XV.27
[4] ibid.p.239-240 [5] C.Bh.XI.p.38.41

after the latter's return from the south in 1511 A.D. that is to say about 18 months after the latter's *Sannyas*.[1] So this Govinda who was the disciple of Isvara Puri and who was the life-long attendant of Sri Chaitanya at Puri, could neither be the same as the *Dvarapal* Govinda nor the author of the *Karcha* as Dr. Sen suggests. Dr. Sen says that when his Govinda, the author of the *Karcha* came to Nadia, he took his seat at the Misra Ghat where he saw Sri Chaitanya for the first time. The Latter with his companions among whom was the venerable Advaita with beard and hair all hoary with age; had come to bathe there. He became a willing servant of the family.[2] Govinda mentions the names of the followers of Sri Chaitanya and described their sorrow at His proposed *Sanyas*. It is clear that Advaita, who was an inseparable companion and immediate neighbour of Sri Chaitanya, knew Govinda very well. But when Sri Chaitanya sent Svarup Damodar and Isvara Puri's disciple Govinda to greet Advaita with garlands on his visit to Puri, a few months after Sri Chaitanya's from the south, Advaita asked Svarup Damodar who Govinda was. Krishnadas Kaviraj's Chaitanya Charita distinctly says that Advaita did not know Govinda. Svarup Damodar said to Advaita "He is Govinda by name, a very fortunate servant of Isvara Puri who commanded him to serve our Master; so he is with our Lord."[3] If the author of the *Karcha* whom Advaita is supposed to have known very well, were identical with Isvara Puri's disciple, as Dr. Sen suggests, or if he had joined Sri Chaitanya at Navadvip a little more than one year before the latter's *Sannyas*, Advaita would have known him and need not have inquired of Svarup Damodar about his identity and particulars. It is quite obvious that the author of the *Karcha* is certainly different from Govinda, the disciple of Isvara Puri. Supposing that they were identical, he could not have attended on Sri Chaitanya during His pilgrimage to the south and so written the *Karcha* during the said journey, because Govinda went to Sri Chaitanya after his return

[1] C.C.M.X.131-144. Kavikarnapura's C.C. XIII [2] ibid.p.240 [3] C.C.M.XI.79-81

from the south. If he had written any Karcha, the contents of it would have been the accounts of events that happened subsequent to his arrival at Puri. But the supposed *Karcha* contains what had happened before Isvara Puri's Govinda joined Sri Chaitanya.

Dr. Sen says "On Sri Chaitanya's return from the Deccan we find Govinda always with him".[1] But we know that there was only one Govinda who constantly lived with Sri Chaitanya till the Latter's departure and that he was Isvara Puri's disciple. There were at least five other Govindas:. (i) Govinda Gosvami, disciple of Kashivara Gosvami, fellow disciple of Isvara Puri's disciple Govinda. He lived at Vrindavan.[2] 2)Govinda Ghosh, brother of Madhava and Vasudeva Ghosh who belonged to the *Kayastha* family of Agradvipa.[3] 3) Govinda Datta of Sukhachar, near Khardaha.[4] 4) Govinda Bhakta who lived at Vrindavan with Rûpa, and Govindananda, an associate of Sri Chaitanya at Navadvip, but neither of them could be identified with Govinda Karmakar of Kanchan Nagar, the author of the *Karcha* nor did they live with Sri Chaitanya at Puri although they paid occasional visits to him. So Govinda Karmakar seems to have no identity at all.

All the standard biographies of Sri Chaitanya perfectly are unambiguous and perfect agreement with one another in stating more than once that it was a Brahmana Krishnadas (Kala Krishnadas) who accompanied Sri Chaitanya on His tour in the south. Sri Chaitanya resolved to journey alone but Nityananda thus entreated "Who will take care of You when You fall senseless in trance on the road? Have mercy on me, take this innocent *Brahmana* Krishnadas with you. He will carry Your cloth and gourd of water. Sri Chaitanya consented.[5] All the devotees accompanied Him up to Alalnath where He bade farewell to all. He set out on His journey grieving at His separation from them. They fainted at His departure. Krishnadas

[1] C&C. p.235 [2] C.C.M.XVIII.50 [3] C.C. Adi.X.115. etc.
[4] C.C. Adi.X.64 [5] C.C.M.VII.38-41

followed Him.[1] This Krishnadas was lured away by a Bhattamari who seduced him from Sri Chaitanya's company but Sri Chaitanya managed to save him.[2] He took him back to Puri where he denounced him. Krishnadas was all along with Him during His journey.[3] Kavikarnapur also agrees with Krishnadas Kaviraj in this.[4] Sri Chaitanya's tour in the south are the most important landmarks in His life which all His biographers do not seem to have invariably misrepresented. Krishnadas Kaviraj has given Isvara Puri's disciple Govinda the highest honour by counting him with Paramananda Puri, Ramananda Ray, Svarup Damodar, Gadadhar and Jagadanand, as the best devotees of Sri Chaitanya, on account of his good fortune in serving the God of the sect, and mentioned him more than most of His devotees in the biography.[5] If he accompanied Sri Chaitanya in the south, He could have praised him all the more; moreover he is not identical with the author of the Karcha.

Some of the accounts recorded in the *Karcha* also contradict those of the standard biographies of Sri Chaitanya. For instance Sri Chaitanya is said to have met His old associates Ramananda Vasu and another Govinda of Kulingram at Dvarka who were always with Him throughout the journey and returned to Puri with him.[6] But when Krishnadas (attendant whom Sri Chaitanya denounced) reached Bengal with the good news of Sri Chaitanya's return to Puri, all the devotees hailed him with great rejoicings and decided to go to Puri to have a glimpse of their God Sri Chaitanya. Krishnadas's Chaitanya Charita distinctly says "At the report of about Sri Chaitanya, Satyaraj and Ramananda of Kulingram came to Advaita with a view to proceeding to Puri.[7] If Rama Vasu met Sri Chaitanya at Dvarka and returned with Him to Puri, the Chaitanya Charita text of Krishnadas says that "he heard the news of Sri Chaitanya's return to Puri from Krishnadas and on hearing from him, they came to Puri" is unintelligible. Kavikarnapur also agrees with Krishnadas Kaviraj in this respect.[8]

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[1] ibid 93 [2] ibid. IX 233 [3] ibid. X. 65 [4] C.C. XII.78 [5] C.C. M. II. 78
[6] C.&C. P.P. 261-268 [7] C.C. M. 89 [8] C.C. XIII

The standard biographies say that Kala Krishnadas (attendant on the tour) was sent to Bengal with the news to Advaita, Sachi Devi and others, whereas the author of the *Karcha* says that he was sent for the purpose.[1] We have already discussed the identity of Govinda, the author of the *Karcha*, but we do not succeed in establishing his objective existence in connection with the life of Sri Chaitanya. He seems to possess some reminiscence of Kala Krishnadas's character in the name of Isvara Puri's disciple Govinda so it will not be very unreasonable to assume that it was an after work written on heresay and has been attributed to a fictitious Govinda Karmakar through inadvertence and ignorance, who is neither Kala Krishnadas nor Govinda, the disciple of Isvara Puri, but seems to possess some faint resemblance to their characters.

It is also doubtful whether Govinda Karmakar whose wife hated him for his illiteracy, could have written a voluminous poetical biography of Sri Chaitanya. In spite of its questionable authenticity it has a good deal of value of its own, like Narahari Chakravarti's Bhaktirantakar so far as its geographical accounts are concerned, and we may cautiously make use of its accounts in conformity with that of the standard biographies of Sri Chaitanya.

Chaitanya Mangal by Jayananda

Dr. D. C. Sen has accepted another doubtful Bengali biography entitled "Chaitanya Mongal" by Jayananda, which is stated to have been written about the year 1575 A.D. at the command of his *Guru* Gadadhar and Vir Chandra.[2] The poet is said to have been born between Saka 1433 and 1435 and named Jayananda by Sri Chaitanya Himself Who is stated to have been a guest at their house at Amaipur on His way from Puri to Navadvip. His father's name is said to have been Suvuddhi Misra. Both Krishnadas Kaviraj[3] and Kavikarnapur[4] mention Suvuddhi Misra who was an inhabitant of Belgaon in the

[1] C.&C.p.235 [2] C&.C.p.91-S.P.P.Vol.IV.p.200 [3] C.C.Adi. X. III [4] G.G.194 & 201

Murshidabad district. This Suvuddhi Misra installed the Image of Sri Chaitanya, which is to be found there. We are not sure whether the supporters of the Chaitanya Mangal mean this Suvuddhi Misra as the father of Jayananda. No biographers have ever mentioned Jayananda either in connection with his father Suvuddhi Misra as they invariably mentioned the children in the case of Sivananda Sen, Bhavananda Ray, and others, or in the list of Gadadhara's disciples.

Mr. Nagendra Nath Vasu says that his *Gurus* were Abhiram Thakur and Gadadhar[1] But we do not find the name of Jayananda in the list of Abhiram's disciples given in "Abhiram's Patha Paryatana".[2]

If Sri Chaitanya was a guest at Jayananda's house, during His journey from Puri to Navadvip, it was too important an incident to escape mention in the biographies of Sri Chaitanya as they describe it in minute detail. All the biographers particularly praise, in the most glowing colours, the boys such as Achyuta, Kavikarnapur and others who were Sri Chaitanya's affectionate protégés and whom He blessed in the same way as Jayananda claims. But Jayananda's name is singularly conspicuous by its absence, not only in this connection but also in the whole of Gaudiya Vaishnava history and literature. We cannot reconcile that such an important person like Jayananda, at whose house Sri Chaitanya was once a guest, whom Sri Chaitanya named, and who wrote His biography should be utterly neglected, while even the most ordinary members of the sect are given honour and praise. If he were the son of Suvuddhi Misra of Belgaon and Sri Chaitanya were his guest, the Vaishnava biographers would certainly have mentioned it when they chanced to celebrate Suvuddhi. So he seems to be the son of a different Suvuddhi who is unknown in the Gaudiya Vaishnava world. Neither the most exhaustive historical writer Devakinandandas, nor the authors of other historical works such as Gauraganoddesadipika, Premavilas,

[1] S.P.P.Vol.iv.p.200 [2] S.P.P.Vol.XVII

Karnananda, Anuragavali, Vira Chandra Charit, Bhaktiratnakar and others give us the faintest clue to the suggestion of his name. Devakinandandas made a special tour in all the places of Vaishnavas with a view to gleaning particulars of the devotees and followers of Sri Chaitanya for his book "Vaishnava Vandana".

"Vaishnava Vandana" is the most valuable record and register of the names of the contemporary followers of Sri Chaitanya. The author says that he consulted all the records of the Vaishnava whom he heard of or whom he saw and whom he reads about in books. So he could not have missed the name of Jayananda who is supposed to have been his contemporary if he were existent at all in the period at issue.

In the circumstance, we cannot accept Jayananda as the contemporary of Sri Chaitanya and his book as old and authentic. Dr. Sen further says to explain away the mystery about this book that "he seems to have written this book without the permission of any recognized authority of the Vaishnava community.[1] and that it begins with the hymns in praise of Ganesha, such a thing would not have been possible.[2] But the author distinctly says that it was written at the command of his *Guru* Gadadhar and Vira Chandra.[3] and Dr. Sen also admits it.[4] We do not know whether there was anybody who is more authoritative in the Vaishnava community than Gadadhar Pandit and Vira Chandra. They were the undisputed leaders of the sect. So if it were written at their wish and command, it would have enjoyed the widest popularity and commanded the highest respect from the members of the sect. We all know that Chaitanya Mangal by Lochanadas opens with hymn in praise of first Ganesha and Hara Gauri and Sarasvati but its popularity and authenticity are as good as any other standard biographies. There seems to be no evidence to show that Jayananda was the contemporary of Sri Chaitanya, or that he had the good fortune of being specially blessed by Sri Chaitanya or that he may have written His biography in

[1] V.L.M.B. p.80 [2] C&A. p.89 [3] S.P.P.Vol.IV.p.200 [4] C&A. p.91

1575 A.D. The Founder Acharya of the Sri Chaitanya Math and Sri Gaudiya Maths has also contemptuously rejected it as unauthorized in his preface to the Chaitanya Mangal by Lochanadas.

APPENDIX - D

THE GAUDIYA SECT AND ITS TWO PARASITICAL SECTS ONE STARTED BY HITA HARIVAMSA AND THE OTHER BY VALLABHACHARYA

HITA HARIVAMSA

Nityanandadas in his Premavilas (1600 A.D.) remarks that though Harivamsa had many great qualities they were all nullified by his disobedience to his *Guru* Gopal Bhatta Gosvami, one of the six Gaudiya Vaishnava masters of Vrindavan. There are various traditions as his being a partisan to the schism and establishment of his independent Radha-Vallabhi sect. All these traditions and the fact that he fell in love with two women whom he married long after he had renounced the world and his former wife and children had entered the order of *Sannyas*, would suggest that his moral lapse caused his stern ascetic *Guru*, Gopal Bhatta, to expel him from the Gaudiya sect. Like Rûpa, Sanatana, Raghunathdas and other Gaudiya Vaishnava masters, Gopal Bhatta was an extreme ascetic, mastering all his senses and denouncing all secular concerns. Uncompromising asceticism and fervent devotion to God earned for the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters the title of "Gosvami" which means 'one who has mastered the senses." Gopal Bhatta could not have approved of sensual indulgence on the part of his disciple Harivamsa, particularly when he had already become a *Sannyâsi*. It is a disgrace for a *Sannyâsi* to have any connection with any woman in which case he is called a *"Vantasi"* (One who imbibes that which has been eschewed). Gopal Bhatta

discouraged his act of immorality both for the sake of the good name and prestige of his own sect and for the moral and spiritual benefit of his degraded disciple Harivamsa. But the latter took a different view and separated himself from his *Guru* and his sect. This is the origin of the Radha-Vallabhi sect.

Harivamsa was the only son of Vyasa and Tara, a Gauda Brahmana couple of Devavan of the Saharanpur district. He was born at Bad near Mathura in Sambat 1559 or 1502 A.D. He was married to Rukmini and had two sons and one daughter. After the marriage of his daughter he became a *Sanyasi*, renouncing the family, under the discipleship of Gopal Bhatta and settled at Vrindavan to lead a life of an ascetic.[1] According to Premavilas, the names of his two sons by his first wife, are Suryadas and Krishnadas.[2] Unfortunately he broke his vow by marrying the two daughters of a Brahmana of Charthaval near Hodal and was subsequently denounced by Gopal Bhatta. Harivamsa was very enthusiastic. He proceeded to establish a separate sect and established the Image of Radha-Vallabha in a temple between the Yugal Kishore Ghat and Kaliya Ghat at Vrindavan in 1585 A.D.[3] He tried to support his action in marrying a second time after his *Sannyas* by stating that he had done so at the divine command of Radha-Vallabha, which he received in a vision. Mr. F. S. Growse is perhaps quite correct in his remarks but in consequence of the mysterious incident, by which he had been induced to forego his intention of leading a celibate life and take to himself two new wives or rather in consequence of his strong natural passions, which he was unable to suppress and therefore invented a fiction to excuse etc.[4]

By his later wives, he had two sons Vraja Chand and Krishna Chand of whom the latter founded the Radhamohan temple. The former temple of Radha-Vallabha is now in the possession of the descendants of his elder son Vraja Chand, and the later temple is under the care of

[1] Mathura by Mr. Growse.p.199-200 [2] Premavilas XVIII.P.154
[3] The temple inscription Growse's Mathura. Vide article on Harivamsa.
[4] Mathura.p.200

those of Krishna Chand. Whereas, the author of Premavilas states that the two sons of Harivamsa by his later wife were known as Vana Chand and Vrindavan Chand.[1] Harivamsa was able to gather many disciples round him. He composed his Chaurasi Pada, a poem of 84 stanzas in Hindi for the use of his disciples.

The later disciples of the sect have tried unlawfully to appropriate some literature of the Gaudiya sect and count some of the renowned Gaudiya Vaishnava masters among the disciples of Harivamsa. So great was the ill feeling between the Radhavallabhi sect and its parent sect that it felt no compunction in trying to humiliate and subjugate the latter in various ways. They have attributed the authorship of the celebrated Radharasasudhanidhi to Harivamsa, whereas it is the work of Gopal Bhatta's uncle and his *Guru* Prabodhananda Sarasvati, who wrote it after he settled at Vrindavan, together with his Vrindavansataka. His tomb is to be found near Kaliyadaha at Vrindavan. The sectarian animosity rose to fey pitch when Priyadas of the Radhavallabhi sect attempted to include Sri Sanatana, Gosvami, Jiva Gosvami, Haridas Pandit Gosvami and other Gaudiya Vaishnava masters in the list of Harivamsa's disciples in his Suslokamanimala, the manuscript of which may be found in the Bengal Government collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.[2] Since the time of Gopinath Pujari and Harivamsa, one a faithful disciple of Gopal Bhatta and the other a renegade (though both are Gauda *Brahmanas*) the social animosity between the descendants of Gopinath and those of Harivamsa, has been perpetual, without any modification on account of the schism brought about by Harivamsa. We do not know what truth there is in the tradition that Gopinath Pujari decapitated Harivamsa on account of his disobedience to Gopal Bhatta. Belief in this tragic event is the principal cause of personal and sectarian hostility between the descendants of these two disciples of Gopal Bhatta. The author of Premavilas (1600 A.D.) a biography of Srinivas,

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[1] Premavilas XVIXI.p.154 [2] No.3132

the most important disciple of Gopal Bhatta, tells us that Harivamsa was beheaded by a gang of robbers.[1]

VALLABHACHARYA (1479-1531 A.D.)

We have observed that Vallabha was initiated by Gadadhar Pandit Gosvami at the instance of Sri Chaitanya at Puri. Vallabha was so long the devotee of Boy-Krishna (Bala Gopala) but as the result of his association with the Gaudiyas particularly with his *Guru* Gadadhar Pandit, was inclined to enter into devotion to the Juvenile lover Krishna, into which he was initiated.

After the death of two Bengali priests of the Image and temple of Gopal Bhatta set up by Madhavendra Puri, trouble arose among several claimants for its possession. The Gaudiyas were the legitimate heirs to them because Madhavendra Puri was the grand preceptor of Sri Chaitanya. Moreover the Gaudiya Vaishnavas were too influential at Vrindavan to be outvoted. The Gaudiya Vaishnava masters headed by Raghunathdas Gosvami placed Vitthala, son of Vallabhacharya in-charge and possession of them.[2] Vitthala was so great a devotee of Sri Chaitanya that he installed the Image of Sri Chaitanya for daily worship with his own hands.[3] Krishnadas Kaviraj tells us that Rûpa Gosvami with all the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters were guests at the house of Vitthala at Mathura for over a month to offer their devotion to the Image of Giridhari Gopal which was brought to Mathura from its main temple fearing its desecration by the Turks. The Gaudiya ascetics never climbed the mount Govardhan on the top of which stands the temple of the Gopal because the Mount is considered too holy to be trodden. So they used to visit the Deity whenever He was brought down. It is clear that Vitthala owed obedience to the Gaudiyas, otherwise neither Rûpa Gosvami could have lived at his house with his associates, for such a long period, nor could the Gosvamins transferred their Deity and temple to him, nor could Vitthala himself set up the Image of Sri

[1] Premavilas XVIII.p.154 [2] Bh.R.K.V.p.214 [3] ibid.p.218

Chaitanya. When Srinivas visited Vrindavan, Vitthala received him at the temple at Gathuli where the Image of Sri Chaitanya was worshipped.

Now the question is this: when Vitthala separated himself from the Gaudiyas. Krishnadas Kaviraj tells us that Vallabha was initiated by Gadadhar Pandit and Rûpa lived at Vitthala's house but he does not seem to include them in the list of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Yadunandandas in his "Sakhanirnayamrita" includes Vallabha among the disciples of Gadadhar Pandit. Krishnadas does not seem to incline to include them in the list of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas possibly on account of their desertion or for not wholly identifying themselves with the Gaudiyas. Vallabha died in Saka 1452 (1530 A.D.) when Sri Chaitanya was still alive. Vallabha seems to have been the *Guru* of many disciples before got himself initiated by Gadadhar Pandit so he was more or less independent of the Gaudiya sect but he seems to have owed allegiance to Sri Chaitanya and his followers otherwise his son would not have been favoured by Rûpa Gosvami. Vitthala seems to have followed as a disciple in this regard till the death of Rûpa and Sanatana after which he seems to have given up his friendly connection and set up the rival sect.

The two great hereiarchs Harivamsa and Vallabha, or precisely his son Vitthala, asserted their independence of their parent sect, the Gaudiya and founded the Radha-Vallabhi and Vallabhi sects in the later years of Gopal Bhatta's life. They differed from the Gaudiya sect over the question of asceticism which is in its extreme form is the shining quality and the dominating characteristic of the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters, who accepted it as a necessary condition to their spiritual progress. Raghunathdas distinctly states in his Vilapa Kusumanjali (Verse No.3) that Sanatana taught them 'Vairagyayug Bhaktirasam' that is to say, devotion to God combined with asceticism. Vasudeva Sarvabhauma echoes the same in his Chaitanyasatakam that Sri Chaitanya taught the world "Vairagya Yuga Bhakti". Asceticism is the quality which Sri Chaitanya and his six disciples of Vraja practised in its extreme severity.

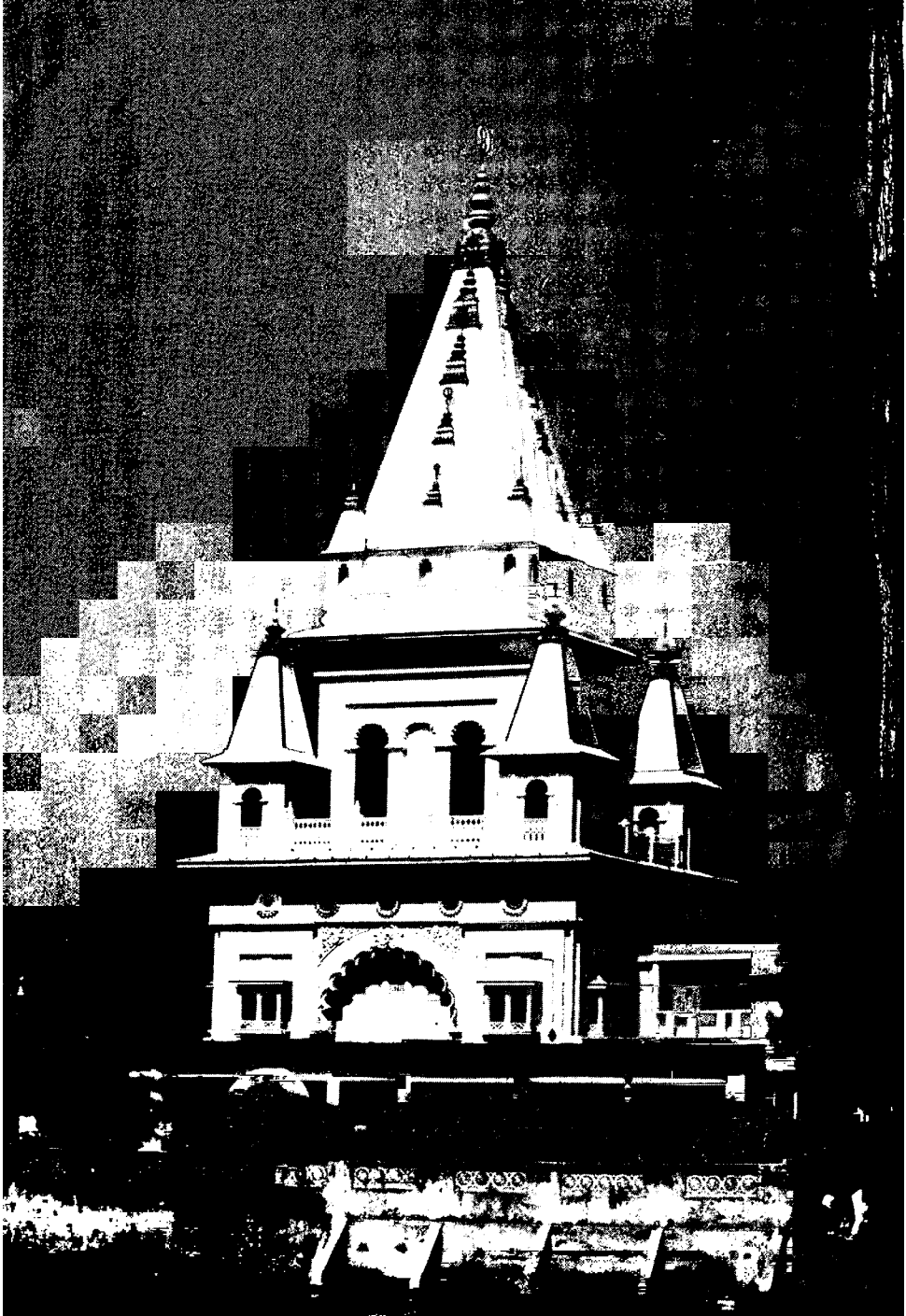
Asceticism is conspicuous by its absence and gave way to material enjoyment in the two new sects of Harivamsa and Vallabha. Mr. F. S. Growse remarks that "Unlike other Hindu sects in which the religious teachers are ordinarily unmarried, all the Gosvamins among the Vallabhacharyas are invariably familymen and engage freely in secular pursuits. They are the Epicurians of the East and are not ashamed to avow their belief that the ideal life consists rather in social enjoyment than in solitude and mortification. Such a creed is naturally destructive of all self-respect even in matters where indulgence is by common consent held criminal and the profligacy, to which it has given rise so notorious that the late Maharaja of Jaypur was moved to expel from his capital the ancient Image of Gokula Chandra for which the sect entertained a special veneration.[1] Both the Vallabhi and Radha-Vallabhi sects introduced a curious theory that *Guru* and Krishna are identical in all respects, and so the former is to be served in the way in which Krishna was served by His mistresses' in Vraja. Dr. Farquhar in his outline of the religious literature of the Hindus thus observes. "In worshipping the Maharaja (Vallabhi *gurus* are so called) women shower their devotion upon him as being actually Krishna, the Darling of the Gopis. Since *Guru* is Krishna, he must be worshipped as Krishna. Hence when the Maharaja is a vicious man, they are in the utmost danger." (p.315). Mohsan Feni (16-15-1670 A.D.) in his Devistan or school of manners, observes the scandalous theory and its inevitable immoral consequence in the Radha-Vallabhi sect. He says the following in short, " They are bound by nothing. They observe no fast on the 11th day of the month (Ekadasi). They deliver their wives to the disposition of the preceptors and masters and hold this praiseworthy."[2]

This theory that *Guru* is Krishna himself and that he ought to be worshipped as such with the love of a mistress, has brought about gross sensuality in the two heretical sects of Vallabha and Harivamsa. The *Guru* theory of the

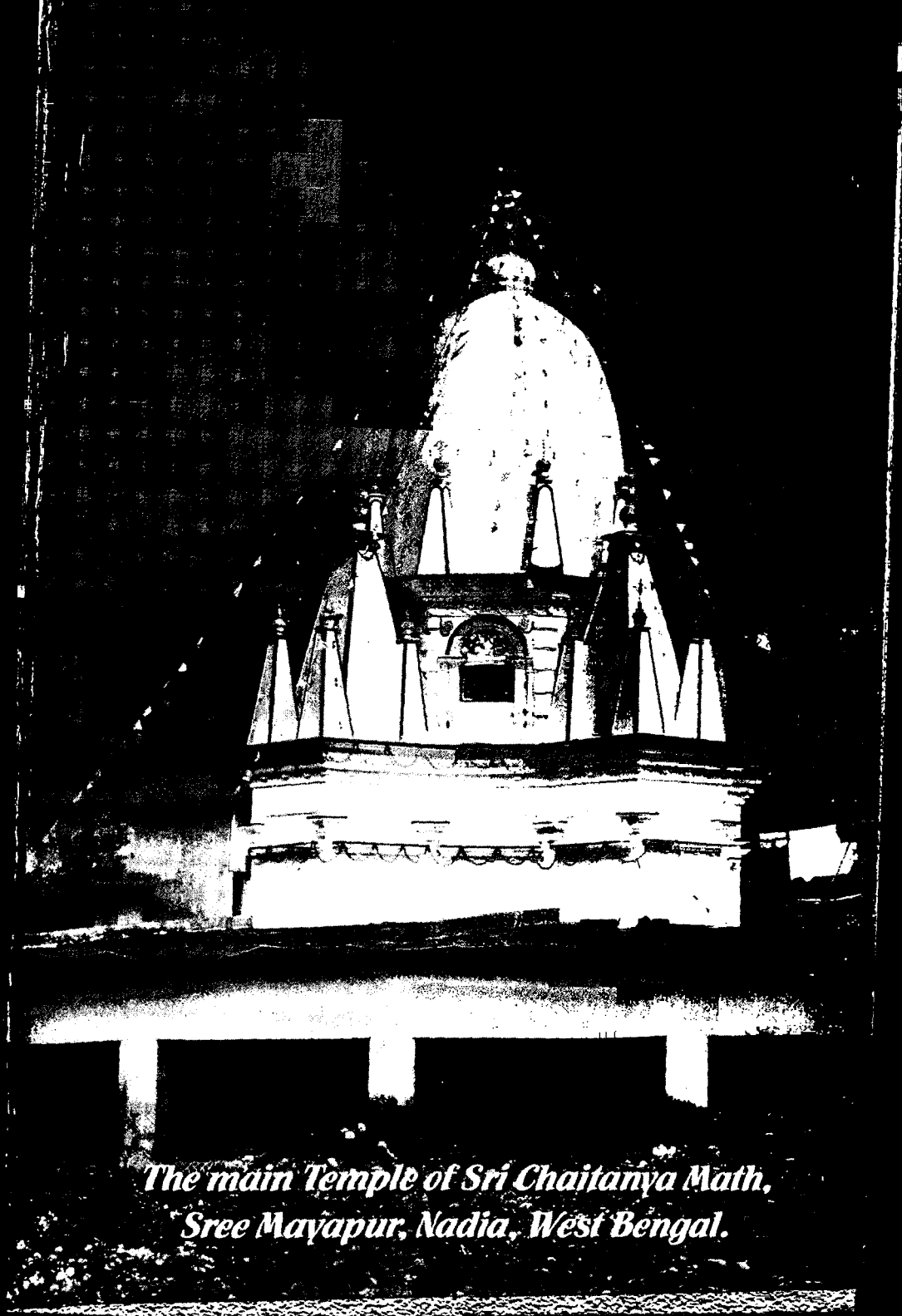
[1] Mathura p.284
[2] Translated by Shea and Toyler in Orient Translation fund. Old series. Vol.ii.p.184

Gaudiya Vaishnavas is different from those of the above sects. Raghunathdas Gosvami in his Manohsiksa teaches that *Guru* is to be identified with the most beloved devotee of Krishna Who is the only enjoyer.[1] Visvanath Chakravarty, another Gaudiya Acharya of the latter part of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, echoes this idea. This conception of *Guru* is quite consistent with the personal asceticism of the Gaudiya Vaishnava masters in contradistinction to the Guru-Krishna idea of the Vallabhi and Harivamsiya Gurus who claim gratification with the persons of their disciples.

[1] Verse 3. Guru varam mukunda preasthatve smara paramajasram nanu manah



Sri Yogapith Sri Mandir at the Birth site of Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nadia, West Bengal, India.



The main Temple of Sri Chaitanya Math,
Sree Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Sambidananda Das was born in a prosperous Vaishnava family in a small village called Chachuri, Puruiia in the District of Jessore, now in Bangladesh, in the year 1904. His parents named him Ganapati and later his Gurudeva His Divine Grace Prabhupada Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakura renamed him as "Sambidananda" after obtaining Pancharatric Diksha Mantra in his early twenties.

During his childhood he was brought up and looked after by his elder brother Umapati who was named Kunja Bihari Vidyabhushan by Srila Prabhupada after Diksha Mantra. After taking his Tridanda Sannyas Kunja Bihari was known as Tridandiswami Srimad Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Goswami Maharaj, the former President-Acharya of Sri Chaitanya Math and its branches Sri Gaudiya Maths all over India, and the illustrious founder of Sri Chaitanya Research Institute, Kolkata.

Dr. Das was a very affectionate and loyal disciple of his Gurudeva Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada was pleased to allow him to cook and serve food for the deities and other disciples of the Math beside Srila Prabhupada. Both Dr. Das and his brother used to be with Srila Prabhupada as inmates of the Math leading pure ascetic life. His Gurudeva gave him learning at Town School, Calcutta St. Xaviers' College at Calcutta and later admitted him in Calcutta University for his M.A. degree in Ancient History. Gurudeva Srila Prabhupada had extreme confidence in his disciple "Sambid" about his learning and vast concept over Vaishnava Philosophy.

In order to preach the Gaudiya Vaishnava Movement and Philosophy to Western countries the author was sent to London in the year 1934 by his Gurudeva along with other two Swamijis where at the instance and inspiration of his Gurudeva he extensively worked on the Life of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His teachings and made comparative research with other Vaishnava Schools. While in London he worked on the thesis entitled "**The History and Literature of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas and their relation to other Medieval Vaishnava Schools**" under the guidance and supervision of eminent Sanskrit Scholar Dr. L.D. Barnett, M.A. D.Litt, keeper of the oriental section of the British Museum. He got valuable materials for studying at two famous Libraries of London namely, India Office Library and the British Museum Library. He obtained his doctorate degree from the London University and simultaneously he studied law and was called to the Bar from the prestigious Lincons Inn, London and became an utter Barrister.

During his stay in London Dr. Das religiously followed Vaishnava practice in accordance with Vaishnava *Panjika* sent by his Gurudeva Srila Prabhupada from Calcutta, observing strictly *"Ekadashi"* and all other *"Vratas"*. He was a true Vaishnavite in the real sense of the word. While in London Dr. Das lost the most precious thing in his life being the demise of his Gurudeva His Divine Grace Prabhupada Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakura who passed away on 1st January, 1937. Demise of his Gurudeva created vacuum in his life and brought about certain changes in his life style.

He returned to India in 1939 and joined Calcutta High Court as Barrister (Bar-at-Law). He was also very much involved and associated with Sri Chaitanya Math and Sri Gaudiya Maths all over India having contributed for the welfare of the Maths in many ways. Dr. Das attained the abode of Transcendence on 11th February 1983.