

MEDIEVAL INCARNATION OF GOD

DR. DULAL CHANDRA BISWAS

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Dr. Dulal Chandra Biswas

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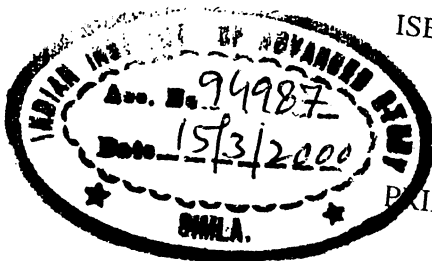
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I revently dedicate this book
to the loving memory of my mother
Srimati Nandarani Biswas
who enables me
to become what I am !

Preface

The subject matter of my book is the discussion about Lord Sri Chaitanya from the standpoint of Philosophy, religion, history and devotees' of Lord Sri Chaitanya. After analysing all these said facts I have come to the conclusion that Lord Sri Chaitanya is both historical and spiritual person. He is historical in the sense that he was born in Bengal (Nabadwip) in the medieval age. He was a social reformer. He has brought renaissance in Society. Again from the standpoint of spiritualism Lord Sri Chaitanya Himself is an Incarnation of God (Sri Krishna) who has come to serve certain inner purposes which are mystical and spiritual. These are said by scriptures and devotees'.

This book is the collection of both historical and spiritual data about Lord Sri Chaitanya and other fact finding all these it evidently leads to the conclusion that Lord Sri Chaitanya is an Incarnation of God. For this reference may lead different scriptures' opinion, different devotees' opinion and their realisation about Lord Sri Chaitanya and it can easily be claimed that Lord Sri Chaitanya is the subject matter of scriptures and devotees.

I have to give thank Mr. Suprakash Basu of Progressive Publisher. He has kindly published my the above said book. I pray to God for his goodness.

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Chapter I

THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF VAISHNAVA RELIGION

This humble treatise purports to bring into focus the revised religions tenets of the rejuvenated Vaishnava Faith, so initiated, propounded, reclaimed and resurrected from the deep of oblivion by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Prime Force behind it in the Middle ages—a Faith later on Christened Gauriya Vaishnava Faith. The essence of the Super-structure experience is embodied in Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita composed by Srmat Krishnadas Goswami of hallowed memory, a Scer-poet. Although to trace the historical development of a district religions experience such as Vaishnavism level by level is not the main objective of the present discussion, it seems impossible altogether to breach the subject of Godhead without essaying a brief survey of the origin and development of Vaishnava Religion from the remote past down to the pulstating Middle Ages signalling the advent of Mahaprabhu Chaitanyadev. It is a proven fact that the rises of the Vedic Age used to worship Vishnu even through they were not Vaishnavities in terms of accepted connotation (Vide Rk Veda, Mondal I, Sukta 22, Rk 14-21). Therein it is mentioned that Vishnu made a round of this earth with Seven rays. Let the god save us from that earth.

1. Vishnu travelled around this world bestriding in a triple manner, and the world was arounded with his feet besmeared with dust.
2. Vishnu is the Saviour, nobody can strike Him, he bestrode the three worlds holding into Himself all the religions.
3. The rites performed by the priests by the grace of Vishnu are observed by Him. Vishnu is the worthy mate of Indra.
4. The sophists always see the sacred feet of Vishnu in everything that roams about in the sky. Always meditate on Narayana who resides within the solar arch.
5. The devoted and the ever-awake meritorious persons relume the holy feet of Vishnu.
6. Vishnu is the greatest of all gods mentioned, in the Rk. Veda, in many respects. It was imagined that all other gods had emanated

from Vishnu. It has been said in the Sruti vide Rk. 7/992 that there is nobody evolving and evolved, who can fathom the depth concerning the greatness of Vishnu past everything. Vishnu has created this vast world for His own rites. He has begotten the Sun, Usha and Agni. Thus it can be established by quoting various Sutras from the Rk. Veda that the rishis worshipped Vishnu during the Vedic Age, and that Vishnu was taken to be greatest of all gods in many fields, even though they find reverentist mention in the Vedas.

In various Upanishads, as in the Veda and the Brahmanas, Vishnu is imagined as fountains spring of the world and its saviour and as the chief of the gods as well. For example, Vishnu is taken to be the Vaginal Cause of the world in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. It is also described in the Taithiriya Upanishad that the Almighty Vishnu does good to all of us. The sanctimonious feet of Vishnu are mentioned in Katha Upanishad and in Matri Upanishad. Vishnu of Mahanara Upanishad imbues us in our deeds.

As in the Vedic Age, so in the Puranic Age, do we get glimpses of the worship of Vishnu. In the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata vide 17-19 slokas of chapter 335, king Uparichar paid obeisance to Narayana first and then to Bramha in the celebration of Sattwati rituals. The seven rishis, viz, Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Bashistha are famous as Chitrasikhandi and the introducer of Sattwati rituals. King Uparichar learned these rituals under the tutelage of Brishapati and followed Him in their celebration. Again in chapter 349 of the Maha bharata there is mention of Narada Pancharatra for worship of Vishnu. In the Srimadbhagabata vide sloka 1.3.8. the cursed king Parikshita hearkened the Bhagabata of Vaishnava ideas to Sukdeva, Sukdeva heard them from the lips of Vyasdeva, Vyasdeva from Narada, Narada from Bramha, Brahma from God Himself. The ideas of this Sattwata and Narada Pancharatra are detailed in chapter 99 of Uttar Khanda in Padmapurana and in Jadubamsha Kirtan of the first section of Kurma Purana. There is of course marked difference between the character of Upanisadic Krsna and of the epic Krsna Vasudeva. In spite of such difference the same person can probably be traced in two figures. In the Chandogya Upanisad Krsna appears in a passage where tapas, dana, arjava, ahimsa and Satya-Vacana and extolled (111.17.4) ; the same virtues are inculcated by the epic Krsna

in the Geeta (xvi, 1-2) as well as in several other passages of the Mahabharata. The Bhagavata religion, propounded by Vasudeva, which incorporated the earlier cult of Narayana was development of an original Sun-cult. The Geeta (iv-1) says that the Bhagavata doctrine was first taught by the Lord to the Sun then by the Sun to Manu and ultimately by Manu to IKSVAKU. According to Barth of Hopkins Krsna was not a human being but a popular divinity. His identification with Vishnu resulted in the origin of sectarian Vaishnavism. Some scholars believe that Narayana has a cosmic character. He is not an historical or mythological individual. They take the word Narayana in the sense of resting place or goal of nara, i.e. the multitude of naras (men). According to another theory Narayana was an ancient leader of thought. He was born in the family of another sage called Nara. Both of them probably advocated solar worship and this in course of time, led to the identification, especially of the former with solar diety Vishnu. It is not impossible that the followers of Narayana were originally called Pancharatrika and were later merged into worshippers of Vasudeva Krsna.

The Mahabharata and the Puranas usually explain the name Vasudeva as the son of Vasudeva. Sometimes philosophical interpretations are also offered (Mbh., V. 70.3 ; XII. 341.41). Names like Janardan, Kesava etc., later applied to Vasudeva-Krsna were supposed by some scholars to have derived in some cases his identification with Vishnu and Narayana.

At a late date a pastoral character was attributed to Krsna. In Harivamsa and the Puranas (e.g., Vayu, Bhagavata, etc.) are to be found stories about his tender boyhood and wanton childhood as well as—in some later works—about the dalliances of his youth. The stories regarding the early life of pastoral Krsna developed partly out of the vedic legends about Vishnu, called gopa in the RK Veda and govinda and damodara in the Bandhayana Dharmasutra.

The Puranic period having come to a close, the so-called Vaisnavities were segregated into four sects, viz, SRI, HAMSA, BRAHMA and RUDRA, the principal acharjas of these sects were Acharya Ranauja, Acharya Madhura, Acharya Nimbarka and Acharya Ballava. Each sect or community would recognise the Narada Pancharatra, Sattawta Bidhi and the Bhagavata as recounted in the Mahabharata. A brief description of each is given hereunder.

Sri Sect or community

Ramanuja, the chief personality and the founder of this sect and his devoted followers are celebrated as Sri Vaisnavas. According to Ramanuja, Brahma is neither Nirgama nor Nirbishesa. He is particularly second to none. This Brahma is Sacchinanda. Accordingly he is conscient and inconscient, but Purana Himself conscience and Delight are His real forms. Conscience is creature and inconscience is the universe creatures and universe are related to Brahma in terms of the things and its attributes. Brahma is the Diety of the Sri sect Ramanuja replaced Jnana by Bhakti as the means to the realization of Brahma or Narayana. By referring to the Sutra ‘‘Abrithirasakevdupadesat’’, he meant to convey that the ‘gnana’ or similar words in the Upanishads connote homage. This kind of meditation betrays deep meditation for the realisation of the same Brahma in all beings.

Ramanuja’s Visistadvaita is a philosophy of religion. It gives a synthetic view of the spiritual experience of God or Brahman. It would affirm the Upanisadic truth that realisation of Brahman paves the way for realization of everything. ‘The conclusions reached by theoretical speculation on the nature of Reality are not final philosophy employs Reason as its aid. It leads the philosopher to the border of scepticism. Intuition alone’ can give us an idea of Reality. Spiritual experience by itself is subjective. It wants in definiteness and universality. So, it is felt that critical method of philosophy is a necessity in realisation.

The metaphysical conception of Brahman as real (Satya), conscious (Jnana) and infinite (ananta) brings out the truth that Brahman is and has reality and self consciousness and is infinite. The Universe of the sentient (cit) and non-sentient (acit) has its ultimate source or ground in Brahman and gets its essential nature and function from Brahman. It is known as the indwelling self (antaryamin) of all beings and the real Reality within all of them. Cit and acit exist, but their immanent self is in the universal spirit.

Brahman is the Sat without a second, which wills the many. The view does not deny the plurality of existents. What it denies is only the sense of plurality. Brahman is the ground of all changes. It in itself does not change. Acit is devoid of consciousness, but its existence is for a conscious subject. Cit is and has consciousness, but is not independent of acit. Brahman, in fact, is the super-subject of all experience. It is distinguishable from the finite self and the world of

matter, but cannot be divided from them. The attribution of infinitude (anantata) to Brahman, does not deny the reality of finite beings. The true infinite is infinite of its own kind and is therefore abodhute. The Absolute is self-related. It is in no way unrelated to finite. The infinite enters into the finite without losing its purity. The Upanishad employs the term 'not this' not to deny the world. The limited nature of Brahman is its subject of denial. Thus the conception of the Absolute as the all-inclusive reality satisfies quest for unity. The entire creative process is the self-expression of the Absolute. God reveals Himself in creation. The purpose of the cosmic process is to provide a scope for the Jiva or finite self to realize its divine destiny.

Hamsa Sect or Community

Madhwa is the principal Acarya of this sect. His theory is two-fold—the particular Brahman and the External World. This Brahman is worshipped as Vishnu in Hamsa sect. He is unending Good, Sachchidananda. His attributes and lilas are inseparable from Himself. He is Cause of creation, existence, destruction, the bondage and the salvation of the creature. The created being is consciousness itself, innumerable and worldly real, but impromanent. There exists a gulf between the world and the Brahman. This gulf is real. According to Madhwa, the created being can never realise himself as Brahman who is Omniscient, Blissful and Infallible. Madhwa has identified five sorts of distinction—(a) between God and created being, (b) between one created being and other, (c) between God and matter, (d) between created being and matter and (e) between one matter and another. Madhwa has propounded Bhakti as the means to realise Brahman or Vishnu. For this purpose, contemplation, Kirtan and worship are essential. He has taken cognizance of the rites and rituals as the means to generate bhakti in 'Tantrasarsamgraha'.

According to Madhwa Brahman is Sarvottama. It is therefore not one among many truths. It is the Truth that includes all and transcends all. The world is its creation and its expression. He points out to different levels of reality having the single purpose of showing that all these levels point to one absolute Reality which the Sruti characterizes as Brahman and defines as Sarvottama, the Supreme, Madhwa defines Sarvottama as 'Ekah Sarvottama Jheyah eka eva Karoti yat' (the Supreme is to be known as the independent deer and

independent maker of the deer), because it does and makes other do without depending upon anything else.

Madhva shows that of bheda and abheda, to concentrate on one alone is the cause of bandha (misery). Not only that, it amounts to negating Brahman, the all deer and the independent. Still Brahman is ever transcendent. It is not lost in creation. It is in-exhaustible. Bheda does not signify the independent character of the world. It only signifies the transcendent character of Brahman. Sarvottama is the principle of the world. It is the very source of the very reality of the world. This accounts for the independent nature of Brahman and the dependent nature of the world. Sruti does not stress on Bheda and abheda alone. For the Sruti bheda and abheda have no importance ; Brahman is the only important thing. He notes the absence of deeriship on the part of an individual self. Every item of doing affects the whole world. So every care of any doing is a case for all-doing. With each act of doing there is a new change. The Sruti defines Brahman as *eka* (one) with the implication that it is *advitiya*, i.e., without a second. Again, according to Madhava there are two things to find out the one is the Sruti and the second is Brahman. The Sruti is the source of knowledge (*pramana*), Brahman is the object of this knowledge(*prameya*). So to find out the highest truth both *Pramana* and *Prameya* are to be taken note of. It is the idle to abstract one, from the other. For, in that case it is the negate both. The process of finding them out is *jijnasa*.

According to Madhava knowledge is the *jijnasa* itself. At every stage of the process of knowledge the conclusion ought to be lead to further *jijnasa*. Madhava thus insists on an ever-growing process of *jijnasa*. Karma and Bhakti according to him are different aspects of *jijnasa* itself. Bhakti is the devotion to the subject matter of *jijnasa*, both as its proposition and as its result. He considers therefore that *jijnasa* is the only kind of *tapas*, spiritual discipline.

Madhava concludes that knowledge implies knower and the known. Knowledge is impossible without them. Attributeless knowledge is a contradiction in terms. Hence the knower and the knowledge are non-different. Knower and knowledge are distinct expressions with regard to an identical identity. Without being different it admits of usages of distinctions—knower, knowledge, substance, attribute and so on.

To enable an individual to have knowledge, Vishnu has made it

an organism consisting to manas, buddhi, ohankara, five tanmatras, five organs of knowledge (eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin) and five organs of action (speech, hand, foot, organ of excretion and organ of generation) with Cetana (consciousness) added to the rest. Vishnu gives it a gross body made of five bhutas. This is called an individual knower. In this Madhva distinguishes three aspects—gross body, linga body and Svarupa body, consciousness itself. The gross body perishes ; linga survives death and helps the next birth. Process in time and space through endless has a beginning in Vishnu in accordance with His desire. A beginningless thing has its origin or beginning in Hari or Vishnu.

Madhva showed that highest truth must necessarily be absolutely complete with reference to every respect of it (ganapurana). He calls this truth Narayana. He concludes that an individual can have peace only when he has realised this truth. And inability to realise this is to confuse it with the world and as a result to suffer from misery (soka) and delusion (Moha). He opined that the very contemplation of this truth is a source of joy unbound (ananda). As one who expounded this Sastra leading straight to ananda, he is called Ananda Thirtha.

Nimbarka Sect or Community

Nimbarka is the principal rotary of this sect. Brahma is consciousness Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, and Fountain head of creation, existence and destruction. The created beings and the world are part and parcel of yet different from Himself. The created being is not Brahma since he has a separate entity in his state of freedom. Again, though distinguished from Brahma, he is identical with Him since he has no different essence from Himself. Srikrishna is the Deity of this sect. He is infinitely sweet Sachchidananda manifest. Acharya Nimbarka has also recognised Bhakti as the sole medium of realising Srikrishna. Salvation or oneness with God is possible virtue of karma, jnana, bhakti, service and sacrifice.

According to Nimbarka Brahman is eternal independent, Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient. He is the sole cause of the entire universe, but Himself is without cause. Brahman is personal God, and not the impersonal absolute. Nimbarka calls Him Krasha or Hari while to other Vaisnava Vedantins, like Ramanuja and Madhva,

Brahman is Narayan or Vishnu, to Nimbarka He is Gopal Kṛṣṇa (Cowherd Kṛṣṇa), accompanied by Rādhā.

Brahman is both transcendent and immanent. He is the inner soul and essence of the world. On the one hand Brahman is the greatest of the great, high above the individual soul. On the other hand He is the above of infinite beauty, bliss and tenderness. He is in sweet intimate personal relation with the individual soul. He helps the deserving ones to attain salvation. This He does by enabling them to have a direct vision of Himself (Sakṣatkāra). For their guidance He also incarnates Himself. Hence Brahman has two aspects—the Majestic and the sweet. He is all-powerful, yet all—merciful, transcendent, yet immanent, a storm judge, yet gracious friend.

Brahmin is thus possessed of attributes (Saguna). Brahman possesses the infinity bad qualities of the world besides His supremely excellent ones. The fundamental problem of the relation between all-good God and the undeniable evils of the world has not been tackled separately. According to Nimbarka evils are relative—they are not unreal, they are not absolutely real. While evils is only relatively real, good is absolutely so. Evil is dissolved in the absolute while good persists.

The individual soul is both essence and the attribute of the soul. All the spiritual injunctions presuppose that the soul is an agent. It is agent not only in a state of bondage, but also when it is free. The individual soul is an enjoyer (bhokta) too. For if the soul be an active agent, a doer of karmas, it must also be an enjoyer, the reaper of the fruits thereof, good or bad.

In explaining the relation between God and the World, Nimbarka brings in the analogy of the cause and effect relation. This is to 'him', a relation of identity-in-difference. The effect is different from the cause for its having an individuality. It is non-different from the cause because it is only a transformation. Brahman is different from the Universe, because He is transcendent to it ; He is non-different from the Universe, because he is immanent in it.

From the point of view of religion, Nimbarka emphasises a personal relation of love and friendship between God and man. Ramanuja emphasises *aiśvarya-Pradhana bhakti*. Nimbarka on the other hand extols *Madhurya Pradhana Bhakti*. Religion may begin in awe and reverence, it ends in love and ends in love and most intimate fellowship.

Thus Nimbarka has given us the very last word, the real essence of religion. The doctrine of Nimbarka strikes a happy balance between the rigid intellectualism of Samkara effusive emotionalism of later dualistic schools. Nimbarka is a prominent propounder of Radha-Krsna cult-one of the most popular cults in India. Nimbarka does the greatest service to mankind by pointing to a path satisfying both intellect and feeling without the one at the expense of the other.

Rudra Sect or Community

Acharya Vishnuswami and Acharya Vallabhachariya are the two exponents of the sect. Brahma and His creatures are one and the same, according to the accepted precept of the sect. Brahma is all-pervading. His creatures are unserverable from Himself. Just as sparks of Agni are inseparable from Agni Himself. Visnuswami has worshipped Brahma as Narasimha and Vallabacharya worshipped Him as Srikrishna. In either cause Bhakti is the only avenue through which Brahma can be realized. The upholders of this Sect take cognizance of oneness with Brahma Himself instead of emancipation.

The abstract philosophical speculations of Sankara failed to make much appeal to masses. They found sufficient spiritual food in the Bhakti (devotion) Schools of Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarka and Vallabha. In other words Jnana (knowledge) lost its hold and made room for Bhakti which had been progressively gaining in strength.

Vallabha accepted for basic works as authority : (1) the vedas (2) the Bhagavad Gita, (3) the Brahma Sutra and (4) the Bhagabats. Just as the Brahma Sutra is, in a way a commentary on the Upanishads, the Bhagabata is to be considered a commentary of the Gita. The Bhagabata is considered the language of meditation (Samadhi-bhasa).

Vallaba evolved his philosophy on the authority of the apta and has showed that dry logic has no independent place in the discussion of philosophical problems.

The highest entity, according to Vallaba is Brahman. He is Sat (existence), Cit (knowledge), Ananda (bliss), and Rasa (sentiment). He is Purna (Perfect), Purusottama (the best of beings) and is therefore personal in nature. He possesses a number of devine qualities. Jnana (experience) and Kriya (activity) are the most prominent of them. He is devoid of material qualities. He possesses a sort of body totally made up of ananda. His ananda is infinite. He is eternal. He is both

Karta (agent) and bhokta (enjoyer). He has created this world for Lila (sport). It is so created out of Himself. He is thus both efficient and material cause of the Universe. It is sustained by Him and absorbed in Him at the end. He does not undergo any change even when he transforms Himself into the world—a doctrine known as avikrtaparinama (unchanged transformation).

The Universe is the effect of Brahman and is real and non-different from Him. It represents the adhibhantika form of Brahman. The element of Sat is manifest in it. The other elements of Cit and ananda are latent in it. The origination, existence and destruction of the world are entirely due to Brahman. The Universe (jagat) is entirely different from unreal world (Samsara) caused by avidya (nescience) of souls. For the sake of diversity the Lord make the souls subject to His power of Avidya. This is the root cause of the ideas of 'mine' and 'thine'. Samsara is solely made up to ananta (I-ness or egoism) and mamata (my-ness on the idea of possession), knowledge, devotion, etc can only destroy them.

Three paths have been generally recognised as leading to Moksa viz., Karma-margo, Jnana-margo and bhakti margo. The several schools of vedanta differ from one another. They lay differential emphasis on the elements of Karma, Jnana and Bhakti. It should be noted that he who attains the knowledge of Brahman and realizes that everything in the world is Brahma is a real knower of Brahman. If this knowledge of Brahman is associated with devotion, the knowing devotee is absorbed in Purna Purusottama Divine bliss is purely a gift of the Lord and cannot be obtained by any human effort. The experience of Svarupananda which is decidedly superior to Brahmananda, is according to Vallaba, the highest conception of Moksa. The Lord is full of rasa (sentiment) and out of the eight rasas sringara (love) is the most prominent. Sringara has two aspects, Samyoga (union) and Viprayaga (separation). According to some the stage of separation is superior to that of union.

According to Vallaba, next to and lower than Parabrahman is Aksara (immutable) Brahman. He possesses Sat, Cit and limited ananda. He is the abode of Parabrahman. Aksara appears in the forms of Prakriti (primal matter) and Purusa (soul). Prakriti is called the cause of all causes. Kala, Karma and Swabhava are different forms of the Lord inseparable from Him. They serve some purpose in the creation of the

world. There are again twenty-eight Tattras (principles) which in the process of creation. The Lord as the cause of the whole universe, expresses His casual capacity in the form of these twenty-eight categories.

Vallabha has made a special contribution to the Vedantic thought. The conception of Parabrahman as full of rasa, received systematic attention from the Acharya. The attitude of Acharya towards the Vedas is remarkable. He has proved beyond doubt that logic can never get better of faith.

Gauriya Sect

The Vaishnava followers of Chaitanya are known as Gauriya Vaishnavas. The Bhakti cult reached its zenith in Gauriya Vaishnava religion and philosophy.

According to Sri Chaitanya school Brahman is eternal, without a beginning and without an end. He is infinite and all-pervading. He possesses supernatural powers and attributes infinite in number and in magnitude. The powers and attributes are eternally developed in Him in the highest degree, as implied by the word 'Brahman'. Brahman means absolute greatness. He is Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Śiva, and other deities who are only so many manifestations of Kṛṣṇa. Every one of them is eternal, infinite and all-pervading like Kṛṣṇa, but less perfect.

Kṛṣṇa has a human form. It is apparently limited like an ordinary human body, but is really infinite and all-pervading. It is perfect eternal, non-material, perpetually in the prime of youth and enchantingly beautiful (Chaitanya Charitamrita 1.5.15). He is Sat (absolute Existence), Cit (absolute intelligence and Non-materiality) and Ananda (absolute Bliss) of Sat, Cit and Ananda, the last seems to be the substance of Brahman or Kṛṣṇa, and the other two his attributes. He contains in him all possible varieties of bliss with all the shades of sweetness. The Upanishads call Him Rasa, the most relishable thing (Tai 4.11.7). He relishes the sweetness of his līlās with his eternal associates. He is called Kṛṣṇa (one who attracts), as He attracts every individual soul, human or otherwise.

The goal of a Vaishnava of the Chaitanya school is to serve Kṛṣṇa at Vrindāvana on attaining salvation. But it is not an easy task to concentrate one's mind. To help the process some external practices

are prescribed. Of these some are preliminary, some precautionary and others directly promotive to and love for Kṛṣṇa under the last category of the following nine principles have been enumerated in the Bhagabata : 1) Hearing the names of God chanted or sung by others (2) Chanting or singing His names, narrating or singing His charma (3) Remembering or thinking of his names or charms (4) Showing respect to Kṛṣṇa by visiting the sacred places associated with his pastimes. Looking at His pictures or images depicting His pastimes (5) Worship of Kṛṣṇa in images by offering flowers, sandal paste etc. (6) Bowing down before Kṛṣṇa or His images at the place of worship (7) serving Kṛṣṇa as a devoted servant (8) to think that one is His loving and inmate friend and he too is such (9) Resignation to Kṛṣṇa—devoting Oneself entirely to His service Sri Chaitanya attaches the greatest importance to that chanting of the Lord's name, which alone may take one to the highest goal (Ch. Charitamrita 111.4. 65-66). It is perhaps for this reason that the scriptures of the Bhakti cult admits of no difference between Him and His name. (Bhaktirasam-rta-Sindhu 1.2.108)

Pre-Chaitanya literature of India abounds in statements regarding the mercy of God. It may be said to be the connecting link between God and his creatures. In Sri Chaitanya Caritamṛta, Krishnadas Kaviraj is probably the first to declare His mercy goes so far as to make him eager for the salvation of the distressed and that such an eagerness is part of His nature (Ch. Caritamrita 111.2.5)

There are five principal rasas, viz, Santa, dasaya, Sakhya, vatsalya and Madhura. Etymologically rasas means anything that may be tested or enjoyed. Technically speaking the taste is attended with delicious astonishment. This realization practically consists in the relish of Bhakti or Love when it comes in contact with its object Kṛṣṇa. The love then is said to have been transformed into bhakti-rasa. Sri Kṛṣṇa relishes it when manifested through the loving services of His associates in lilas.

In the words of Sri Chaitanya-based on the Srutis that all Bramhan Ananda, Rasa, Siva (the good), and Sundara (the beautiful) that it is madhurya and not aisvarya that constitutes the essence of Godhead (Ch. Charitamrita—11.21.92).

According to the degree of predominance the Gauriya Vaishnava school traces three main aspects of Kṛṣṇa and three corresponding

abodes too viz, Vrndavana, Dvaraka and Vaikuntha. At Vrndavana the Madhurya is predominant. It completely subjugates the aisvarya. At Vaikuntha aisvarya predominates. Here Krsna is known as Narayana. The Vaisnavas of Gauriya school are worshippers of the madhurya of Vrndavana. Their principal aim is to attain the loving and disinterested service of Sri Krsna.

Vaisnavas of the Chaitanya school believe in the conception of a personal God ; they also believe in the conception of avatars (incarnations) and of the manifest lila. It may be said to be an amplification of the conception of avatara.

Krsna is all-good, all-merciful, all-loving and all-lovable Extraterrestrial is his sweetness, beauty and love. There is no bar to His descending as Avatara for our good.

To the Gauriya Vaisnavas Mahabhava (supreme love) is a grand concept. The highest aspect of mahabhava, known as madana (maddening delight) is possessed only by Radha and nobody else, not even by Krsna Himself. (Ujjvala-nilamoni, Staayibhava, 155). The delight Radha derives is immensely superior to what Krsna enjoy as the object of her love. It is so tempting to Krsna that He cannot suppress his eagerness to taste His own charms and sweetness like Radha-herself (Chaitanya Charitamrta, 1.4.109, 115-16). Accordingly, there is an aspect of Krsna in which all the notable attributes of the Krsna of Vrndavana as well as those of Radha co-exist (Chaitanya Charitamrta, 11.8.239).

Krsna (or Brahman) has an infinite number of powers (saktis). The Principal ones are Svarupa-Sakti, Maya-Sakti, and Jiva-Sakti. The lilas of Krsna are possible only through the agency of Svarupa-Sakti. The realm of cit is its only sphere of action. His Svarupa-Sakti has three other aspects viz, Sandhini, Sainvit and Ahladini. They correspond respectively to Sat, Cit and Ananda, the three aspects of Krsna. Maya-Sakti is constituted of three gunas-Sattva, rajas and tamas. All the jivas, human or otherwise are in essence His jiva-sakti or marginal power. Sri Krsna with his saktis manifests Himself as His Svainsa (own part) and vibhianansa (separated part). Narayana, Rama and the like are His own part, while the Jivas are His separated part.

In attempting a comparative study with Sri community, it is to be that there is wide area of agreement between Sri community and Chaitanya school. Narayana of the former and Sri Krsna of the latter

are one and the same. Sri Jiva Goswami the celebrated philosopher explaining the tenets of Chaitanya school was evidently influenced by Ramanuja and his close associates Gopal Bhatta in composing his *Satsandarbhā*, an extra-ordinary treatise relating to a thorough examination and explanation thereon the excellences of Gauriya school of thought. Krishnadas Goswami has referred to a number of slokas composed by Yamunacharya a noted adherent to Sri community, Mahāprabhu Sri Chaitanya a cultivated a very intimate relations with the principal acharyas and votaries of Sri Community. It is known in particular that he, while staying at Srirangam as a guest of Sri Venkat Bhatta, father of Gopal Bhatta, carried on an expensive discussion on Vaisnavism and its philosophy. From the point of view of Tattwa as contained in the philosophy of Ramanuja, Sābisesh Bramhan or Narayana is Sri Kṛṣṇa according to Chaitanya. They are admittedly one, only with the difference that Madhurya is more dominant as a quality in Kṛṣṇa than it is in Narayana. Both Ramanuja and Sri Chaitanya have registered their unqualified support to and unquestionable acceptance of the world peopled by Jivas, human and otherwise. The most important of all is that both have identified Bhakti as the surest means to salvation. But there is a apparently slight but significant difference in their approach. Ramanuja outlined such Bhakti as *Dāshya* (master-servant relation), whereas Sri Chaitanya laid emphasis on *Kānta Bhakti*. Both of them accepted the authority of the Vedas as something unchallengable. As believers in the existence of a Supreme Being they got the tenets formulated and propounded by them ratified in letter and spirit with the wise sayings contained in the Vedas, Bhagabat and other undeniable religious scriptures.

From the historical standpoint Gauriya Vaishnab school show intimate link with Hamsa alias Madva School. The noted Vaishnab philosopher Sri Jib Goswami followed Madva very closely. Achintya Vedaved Tattwa of the Chaitanya School is patterned on the significance of Sloka 11.7.51 of Sri Mat Bhagavat, as explained and enunciated by Madhvacharya. Another philosopher of distinction adhering to Gauriya Vaisnabism Sri Baladev Vidyābhusan in his *Prameya Rantabati* has given copious quotations from Tattwa Pradeepa written by Trvikramacharya, a disciple of Madhwacharya. Both schools have acknowledged the importance of preceptorship in order to lift oneself upto the height of spiritual consciousness. It is not out of place

to mention in this context that Sri Chaitanya himself had as his preceptor Sri Madhabendra Puri, a strict adherent to Madhva alias Hamsa school. Of course on certain points concerning some philosophical doctrines and Bhajan as means of Upasana, they differed from each other a large measure. Both the school are founded on the basic tenets of Achintya Vedavedabad. Salvation is expressive of the utmost desire of the adherens to Hamsa school, whereas it is love and love alone which constitutes the ultimate goal of the Gauriya Vaishnavites. According to Madhava Vishnu alone is the Saguna Brahman or Supreme Tattwa. To Sri Caitanya Sri Krsna and Vishnu are one and the same, without reflecting and shade of difference, yet upasana is to be offered to Radha and Krsna conjointly and in the same breath which is the highest form of adoration. In later times Chaitanya would be considered the conjoined personage of Radha and Krsna.

Both Schools Brahman and Gauriya share many ideas in common. Both have accepted Brahma Sutra and Bhagabat Gita as texts of supreme value, but differ widely in respect of philosophical and religious experience. Both have accepted the supremacy of Brahman and the world peopled by Jivas, human and otherwise. Although consequent on difference of outlook in ascertaining relationship between the Brahman and the world emerged Vedavedbad and Achintya Vedavedbed Tattwa, both sects by Brahman referred to Krsna and lent unequivocal support to Bhakti as a sure means to attain Purushartha. By Purushartha Gauriya Sect would mean love (Prema) and the Brahma School Salvation (Moksa).

Many things are found to exist in common between Gauriya School and Rudra Sect. Both Sects regard Sri Krsna as the supreme Principle (Param Tattwa). Narasimha is the supreme one of the Rudras. Both sects have acknowledged the supreme excellence of Bhakti as a means to reach the Supreme being. But in philosophical polemics they stand apart. The Gauriya School developed Achintya Vedaveda tattwa, whereas it was Sudha-Advaitabad with the Rudra Sect. The Gauriya Vaishnavs extolled for ever love as the sacred creed to reach the Highest consciousness whereas it was Moksa that interested the Rudras most, it being freedom from transmigratory existence. So it can be fairly concluded that Gauriya Vaisnavism added a new trend by philosophical thought by way of absorption, assimilation, adjustment and last though not the least by modification of all the excellent principles of Vaisnava

spiritual culture, professed and subsequently propounded by Ramanuj, Madhwa, Nimbarka and Bishnu Swami, upholding the Supremacy of Lord Vishnu, the glimpses of which are discernible in the Vedas, Upanishada and Bhagabata. It was not an amalgamation pure and simple, but emerged as a revised version of all that was dominant and lying latent some way or other in ages prior to the advent of Sri Chaitanyadeva.

That Vaishnavism was extremely popular with thousands of its devotees and would hold its sway over a fair length of the time can be attributed to the existence of historical relics scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country. From the inscriptions carved on Susnia hill in Bankura, West Bengal, it can be determined that Cakravarma and Cakraswami were devotees to Vishnu in the 4th century A.D. In the 5th century A.D. the temple of Govinda Swami was set up in Bogra now in Bangladesh. In the same century at the foot of the Himalayas in North Bengal were established two temples—Svetbaraha Swami and Kokamukha Swami. In the century that followed the temple of Prodyumneswar was erected in Tripura. A temple in the name of Anantanarayan was established in the 7th century A.D. in a dense jungle area to the eastern side of undivided Bengal. Sri Krsna is mentioned in the stone inscription of Bhoj Burman in the 11th century. In the next century i.e. in the 12th century Vaishnav Faith spread extensively in Bengal during the reign of the Sens. In different parts of India, not to speak of Bengal, the sacred relics of this Faith are discernible. From the stone inscription of Besnagar at Gwalior it is inferred that a Greek ambassador Heliodora was a Vaishnav and he himself a Garud-Pillar in the honour of Lord Vasudeva (vide No. 669 in the list of Brahmi stone inscription made by Deuvar). According to an historian it was so constructed in 2nd century B.C. In the Khumunti stone inscription of the same century it is described that a stone wall was erected to facilitate worship of Samkarshan and Vasudeva. A Brahmi Stone inscription has been unearthed at a village Nagbi eight miles away from Chitergarh in Udaipur, Rajasthan. It is learnt from the inscription that in Pre-Christian era king Sarbavat was the worshipper of Samkarshan and Vasudeva and that he had a temple built for them, encircling it with a high wall. During the reigns of the Gupta emperors in the 4th century A.D. Vaishnava religions Faith had its hey-day. The relics that could be unearthed in regions extending from Punjab (undivided), Rajasthan (Rajputana), Madhya Bharat to

Magdh and other adjoining areas, testifying to the fact that Vishnu and Krsna would be worshipped covering a large area. The images of these deities have been discovered in a large number. It is a proven fact that the Alavars of the Decan were votaries of Vishnu and Krsna. An extensive account of it can be had through a perusal of their works on the specific subject.

During the life time of Sri Chaitanya the only books besides the Bhagabata the Vaisnavas seem to have valued were Sri-Krsna-Karnamrita and a part of Brahma Samhita, both written in Sanskrit.

Of the manuscripts sent from Vrndavana, with Sri-nivasa and afterwards the following deserve mention. They form the foundation of the Sect and help the exponents of the Sects of that time in serving the cause the Sect stands for.

1. Bhaktirasamrita—Sindhu
2. Ujjvala—nilamani

both written by Rupa Goswami with copious annotations by Jiva Goswami, nephew of Rupa Goswami.

3. Gopala—Campu and
4. Sat-Sandarbha—both written by Jiva Goswami.
5. Annotations on the 10th Skandha of the Bhagavata by Sanatan Goswami and annotations on the whole of the work by Jiva.
6. Sri Sri Haribhakti-Vilasa by Gopal Bhatta Goswami with commentations by Sanatana Goswami and
7. Sri Sri Gobinda-lilamrita and
8. Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita

both by Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami. The books by Krsnadasa Kaviraja and of others mentioned above placed Chaitanya Cult on a sound philosophical basis. They also acquaint the interested readers with systematized process of Sadhana and well defined goal.

In the Pre-Chaitanya period Geeta Gobinda composed by Joydeva in Sanskrit deserves special mention in as much as it paved the way for having an understanding of Madhurya Rasa emanating in the Lila of Radhakrsna. The exquisitely beautiful lyrical pada's of Vidyapati and Chandidas largely account for the popularity of Radhakrsna Lila. It is known for certain that Mahaprabhu Chaitanya Himself would like the Padas. Chaitanya would recite them times without number, a mention of which we find in Chaitanya Charitamrita by Krsnadas Kaviraja.

In the first quarter of the 18th century, Baladeva Vidyabhusana an eminent scholar and devotee, wrote a large number of books, the most important of which is the Govinda-bhasya, a commentary on the Brahma-Sutra. This unique book placed the Chaitanya cult on the basis of the Vedanta.

In the Post-Chaitanya period it became the custom of the Chaitanya school to worship Gauranga (Krsna and Radha combined) with his companions before worshipping Krsna and to thinking of those Krsna. The devotees of this school would believe that Gauranga is Krsna Himself in a double aspect. This led a group of inspired poets of Viasnava lineage to compose mervellous padas (short noems) depicting different phases of the illustrious all-blissful life intoxicated with devine grace.

Chapter II

TATTWA, AVATAR TATTWA AND SRI KRSNACHAITANYA TATTWA

Tattwa

The theme-substantive of the Sastra and the effortive response of the Sadhaka towards its realisation are known as the Tattwa which is absolutely incomprehensible inexplicable as well as in terms of logic and argument. In other words the Sastra is the authority of the tattwa. It has already been discussed in the previous chapter that Vishnu is the prime Tattwa which stands devastated with numerous appellations in the Vedas.

In various Upanishads the Tattwa has been called either the soul or Brahman who is Existence-Absolute, Knowledge-absolute and Bliss-absolute. He is beyond knowledge and unthinkable. The Mundaka Sruti proclaims that He shines vast and yet more delicate than the delicatest and He is further than the Far and yet very near. He inheres everything. The unthinkable Soul is the subject of knowledge which is ever to be pursued. He is the Fountain—Spring of all good, He is Infinite Pure and immune from all anger and grief. He can be thought of residing in the lotus-bosom of human kind. The Kaibalya Upanishad says : No hand, no leg have I, no eyes to see, yet do I see, no ears to hear, yet do I hear. I know everything, and have no saviour, I am knowledge and existence. In Subala Upanishad, it is said that the learned ones can discover Him. He is self-effulgent, the God of all beings. Nobody can conceive of his body. He dwells in the cave of amrita, mysterious and blissful. The Geeta declares He is the poet of Oldest Person unutterable and yet the Saviour of all. He is the Sun beyond darkness. Again he is inexpressible, but manifests the world. He is not in creation, creation is in Him.

This unfathomable Bramhan who is Sri Krsna in Gauriya Vaishnava faith is represented as Vishnu in the Vedas and the Upanishads. Vishnu is Sri Krsna according to the Geeta and the Bhagabata. In the Geeta Sri Krsna says to Arjuna that He descends into the world for salvation of the sadhus, demolition of the crooked

and reinstatement of dharma. The sage Garga is of opinion that He assumes a corporeal frame in every age. In three Yugas He assumed canescent, refuecent and primrose forms. In Dwapara Yuga He assumed the murky form.

Like Vishnutattwa, Sri Krsnatattwa has been incorporated and discussed in various Sashtras. He is without beginning, yet He is the beginning. In the Geeta He says to Arjuna, "I am the Prime Parents of this world, I am the knowable, the Sacred Doer, I am Pranab Om". He possesses infinite powers—thought or consciousness power, life power and maya power. In the Vishnupurana Vishnu is in possession of three energies—Capulatory Energy, Conscious Energy and Delight Energy—the container, the content and Delight born out of the content, Sri Radha is the manifested form of this Delight energy. After creating He has entered the created object.

The relation between Sri Krsna and His created objects is deemed as the relation between cause and effect. It is the Supramundance glory of the Lord that even though He inheres every object created by Him. He is not rolled into its attributes. He descent into this attributive world notwithstanding, He is without any attribute. He affirms He was even before creation itself, that he stays in destruction and in existence itself, that He is eternally true and constant. Just as the five elements instil themselves creatures and yet remain outside their keen likewise He can remain in this world and beyond this world at one and the same time. But logical reasoning fails to help one realise this truth or fact.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has discussed the Vedantic conclusions of the Tattwa with Sripada Prakasananda Saraswati, Sri Sarbabhauma Bhattacharya, Srirupa and Sri Sanatan Goswami. Sri Jiva Goswami has outlined in Sri Sandarbha these views as he heard them from Sri Rup and Sanatan Goswami. Chaitanya Charitamrita holds within itself the kernel of the realised wisdom of the Gaurya Vaishnava Bhaktas of Sri Jiva Goswami in particular. It is not justifiable, therefore, to discuss Chaitanya Charitamrita without discussing Shatsandarbha, in as much as it constitutes the philosophical ingredients of Chaitanya Charitamrita.

According to Sri Jiva Goswami Sri Krsna is Brahman to the wise, Absolute to the Yogi and God to the devotee. The full manifested form of the Absolute is God Himself, the imperfect form being Brahma.

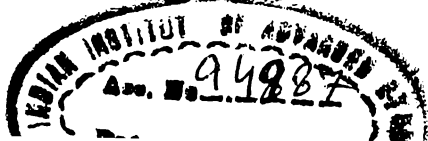
The indwelling form of the Absolute Brahman is the Eternal Soul who works within the fold of Maya. His appearance and appellation differ according as the realisation of the devotee paying obeisance to Him. He is the fountain—Spring of all manifested objects. In order to make His devotees have a taste of the ambrosial chalice than which nothing can be sweeter, He descend as Sri Krsna dallying with His delightful creation, finding Sri Radha as His Delight-Energy, making their Dual Forms absolutely and perfectly.

In Chaitanya Charitamrita, then God's power devolves variously upon Conscious-Energy, Existance-Energy and Maya-Energy. But He is indistinguishable from His energy, yet He and His energy are not the same.

It can be said in support of the above discussion even if the Tattwa is not intelligible in terms of ordinary experience and common intelligence, the way in which it stands focussed in Chaitanya Charitamrita by references to chequered Sashttras be speaks itself of its very important place in the history of humanist philosophy. For the Tattwa can be after all perceived by the Percipient visionary. But the question is whether He is In-Form or without Form. This is the crux of the vedantaphilosophy. According to Gauriya Vaisnava opinion He is Universal, yet particular, Formless yet In-Form, Attributive, yet without Attribute. Sri Krsnachaitanya as described in Chaitanya Charitamrita is the source of all rasas, all delights, all love and yet he sips the rasa, takes delight and plays love in every thing. He is love incarnate according to Chaitanya Charitamrita.

Etymologically Brahman means 'One who is great and One who can make grate. (Vishnu Puran 1. 12. 57) The second part of the meaning implies existence of powers or energies (Saktis) in Brahman Upanishada support His possession of an infinite number of active Saktis Para (natural) and Svabhaviki (inseparable) from him (Svetasvetara U, vi. S)

Of the three main Saktis of Brahman Swarupa Sakti is superior to the two others viz, Maya Sakti and Jiva Sakti in every respect. Jiva-Sakti which is also known as tatastha Sakti (marginal or intermediate power) as it is included in neither maya-sakti, nor Svarup-Sakti. The Saktis of Brahman are inseparable and eternally associated with Him. So He cannot but be eternally qualified (Savisesa and Saguna). His attributes are endless and supernatural. All such



attributes are derived from His Svarupa Sakti. But none is so derived from his Maya-Sakti. The Texts that describes Him as nirguna mean to suggest that He possess no Guna from Maya (Vishnu Purana 1.12. 69). Thus he is both saguna and nirguna. In the different Upanishads and even in the same upanishad He is described as both (Gopalatapani U., 11. 97). Besides being Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient, He is beyond the influence of time, space and reality.

He is Satya (the real), Siva (the good) and Sundara (the beautiful). Brahman being ananda (bliss), which is essentially sweet and captivating, is the embodiment of Sweetness and beauty and relishableness and is attractiveness itself. It is for this reason that he is called Krsna, the Supreme attractor. Krsna seems to carry with it much more vividly the idea of Supreme Attractiveness than Brahman. Brahman appears His best in Krsna. Krsna embodies in Him all the features of Brahman—His Saktis, attributes etc. It is for this reason that Krsna is called Parama Brahman or the highest Brahman. Sri Krsna is the most fascinating and hence the most appealing aspect of Brahman (Chaitanya Charitamrita 11.8.110).

Sri Krsna has a form, His Self is a form, a human form, it should be noted, being a poor resemblance of His. Though apparently limited like an ordinary human body it is really infinite and all pervading (Chaitanya Charitamrita 1.5.11 ; 1.5.15). His form is bliss and consciousness solidified (Bhakti rasamrita-Sindhu, 11.1.15). It is perfect, eternal, non-material, perpetually in the prime of youth and enchantingly beautiful (Chai, Cha 11. 21. 83-128).

Brahman or Krsna performs His Lilas with His eternal parikaras (playmates or associates) in His own dhaman, known as Goloka, Vrndavana. According to the Upanishads, Brahman or Sri Krsna is Rasa (Tai 11.11.7). He is astonishingly relishable and the best relishar (Rasika) too, the transcendental Rasika. His infinite varieties of rasahood find their eternal expressions in His infinite manifestations known as His different Svarupas, such as Narayana, Rama, Nrsimha, Sadassiva and others. They have separate existence, but they exist in Him. Not only that, they owe their existence and status to Him. He in His one and same vigraha (self) appears as so many (Chai. Cha. 11.9.141). Sri Krsna is also known as Parama Isvara, Purna Bhagavat or Svayam Bhagabat. The manifestation in which Svarupasakti and rasahood find the minimum expression is known as Nirvisesa

(Unqualified). Brahman, generally, Brahman as referred to in the Scripturas. (B. G., XIV. 12 ; Mu, U., 111.1.3) Svarupasakti being inseparable from Brahman, it exists in His nirvisesa manifestations also. But it remains in a perpetual state of inaction. One nearest Nirvisesa Brahman is Paramatman. The antaryamin or inmost aspect of Sri Krsna in whom Svarupasakti and rasahood find an expression higher than in Nirvisesa Brahman. So as to give the aspect a form (Ka. U. VI. 17). The other innumerable aspects lying between Paramatman and Sri Krsna possess higher expressions of Svarupa-Sakti and rasahood. They are all Isvara, or Bhagabats Sri Krsna being the Isvara of Isvaras. It is now evident that Sri Krsna, the ultimately Reality, appears in three distinct aspect viz, Brahman, Paramatman and Bhagavat, as referred to in the Bhagavata.

The rasahood of Sri Krsna possesses two main aspects-relishable rasa and relishing rasa or Rasika. The relishing rasa is Sri Krsna Himself. He is the supreme Rasika. He is ananda and nothing but ananda is supremely delightful. He enjoys Himself with the aid of His hladini-sakti or rather Svarupa-Sakti in which hladini preponderates the hladini is a sakti which appeartains to His ananda. It is relishable when thrown by Him into the hearts of His devotees, perikaras and others. It is therefore transformed into Bhakti and Preman in course of their living services in His lilas. It is enjoyed by Him in fullest degree and delight. Preman is delightful in His devotees too. They relish His all round sweetness with the help of preman. Such sweetness is so charming and attractive as to madden, with intense and anxious longing for relish, everybody including His different Svarupas and even Himself (Chai. Cha. 1. 1. 21)

The enjoyment of rasa may attain its fullest degree of perfection only when it is realised not only as an object but as a subject of love as well. Sri Krsna is the transcendal Rasika. In Vrndavana He is the object of His associates' love and certain cases, subject too. But as regards Kanta Preman He is only the object of Sri Radha's love and not at all a subject. Sri Radha is Purna-Sakti. She is not essentially, different from Krsna, the Purna-Saktimat though the two exist separately from eternity for enjoyment of the bliss of lilas (Chai. Cha., 1. 4. 83-85). Just as the other Bhagabat—Svarupas are the manifestations of Krsna, so are their Kantas the corresponding manifestation of Sri Radha. (Chai. Cha. 1. 4. 63-68)

The Jiva is an eternal servant of Brahman, a loving servant, of course. Brahman or Sri Krsna, the object of Jiva's loving service is always eager to offer bliss to His associates. The Jivas, in their turn are even eager to minister to His pleasures by loving services in His lilas.

There are two classes of Souls *nitya-mukta* (eternally liberated) and *baddha* (under the bondage of *Maya*). The former serve Him as His eternal associates enjoying the bliss of loving services and the latter though suffering under the spell of *Maya* may be liberated and become His associates by proper devotion (Chai. Cha. 11.22.8-11).

However, there are mainly two classes of His associates—those who are the expression of His *Svarupa-Sakti* and those who are liberated Jivas.

But how to get rid of *Maya* and realize one's essential servanthood and have one's *Seva-Vasana* evolved ?

Non-remembrance of Brahman, it is admitted, is the cause of soul's bondage. So the bondage may be removed only by removing non-remembrance. This may be done only by remembering Him, by knowing Him and ultimately by realizing Him. Hence, remembrance of Brahman is the essence of all forms of *Sadhana* (*Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu*, 1.2.5). He can be realized only in His *Svarupa Sakti* or rather, in that aspect of His *Svarupa-Sakti* which is known as *adhara sakti*, technically *Vasudeva* (*Bha.* iv 3.23). So the only effective means of liberation and realization of Brahman is *bhakti* (*Bhagavat Geeta*, xviii. 55).

According to the Upanishads, Brahman is the Universe. He exists beyond it too. It means He is the cause of this Universe or that He transforms Himself into the Universe, Himself remaining unaffected by transformation (Chai. Cha., 1.7.117, 118).

Brahman creates the Universe with the help of His *Maya-Sakti*. *Maya-Sakti* is inert having no power of its own and exists in a state of equilibrium before the beginning of creation. When Brahman desires creation, He transmits His creative power to it, causing disturbance in the state of equilibrium and ensuring the creative process.

Maya has two aspects—*Guna-maya* and *Jiva-maya*. The *Guna-maya* aided by the power transmitted by Brahman, transforms itself into the constituents of the infinite varieties of things in the Universe. It is thus becomes the 'constituent' cause of the universe.

The Jiva-maya with the help of the power transmitted, helps the creation by making the bonded souls forgetful of their selves, even their relationship with Brahman, by instilling in them an attachment for the worldly things. It thus becomes manifest as the 'efficient' cause of the universe. Brahman is the principal cause and Maya only the secondary cause of the Universe. So neither the Guna-maya nor the Jiva-maya can help the creation unless and until Brahman's power is transmitted.

Beside Maya, Jiva, Kala (time) and Karma (destiny), being Saktis of Brahman also play important roles in creation. Kala helps the transformation of Maya. Karma determines the nature of the Jiva's material body. This theory of creation is known as Parinamavada. (Chai. Cha.11. 6.154, 157)

The relation between Brahman and His Saktis may be considered in a different way. Brahman is ananda. He is inseparably connected with His Saktis. Ananda and Saktis of Brahman constitute one and the same thing (Brahma Samhita, 11, 3.43. Govinda-Bhaasya). The Vishnu Purana regards the Saktis of things as achintyan Jnanagocara. Achintya-jnana refers to the knowledge that cannot be accounted for.

According to the Upanishads Brahman is advaya tattwa, Akamavedvitiya (One without a second). This implies that He is without any of the bhedas (difference). The bhedas are of three kinds viz., Sajatiya-bheda (bheda within the same species), Vijatiya-bheda (bheda, between alien species) and Svagata-bheda (bheda within self i.e., Both Sankhracharya and Jiva Goswami are in full agreement with the fact that Brahman is without these three kinds of bhedas. But it should be noted in this context that the ways of their thinking is different. Sankara does not recognise the Saktis. According to him the text, which speaks of Brahman's bhedas or Saktis have no paramarthika and possess only Vyvaharika value. He asserts that the Jiva has no real existence. It is nothing but Brahman under the influence of Maya or nescience and will become one with Him on its removal. The Universe, then, only on illusory existence. It appears real only under the influence of Maya. The bhagavat-svarupas also are only Brahman under the influence of an aspect of Maya, and only Brahman and nothing else has real existence. Jiva Goswami, on the other hand admits the existence of Brahman's Saktis and also the real existence of the Jiva as such. He holds that all the texts of the Upanishads have Paramarthika value.

According to him since the Upanishads speak of *bhedas*, they cannot but be recognised. These *bhedas* are only apparent, not real. Otherwise the Upanishads would not have spoken of Brahman as being one without a second. The Gauriya Vaisnava School, it is evident, bases its arguments and conclusions on the *mukhyartha* of the *Srutis* and ignores no texts as *Vyavaharika*, and tries to reconcile the different texts. The most outstanding contribution of this school is its *Rasa*-cult, apart from its philosophical aspects. It is the most attractive phase of the *rasahood* of Brahman, pointing out ways and means for its realisation. This in course of time gives rise to the cult of *bhakti* through which alone Brahman or Sri Kṛṣṇa can be apprehended.

The germs of *Bhakticult* are found in the Vedic hymns and the Upanishads. The vedic hymns, *Varana Savitr* and *Usas* are replete with sentiments of piety and devotion. The doctrine of *Bhakti* or single-minded devotion to God is clearly evident in the later Upanishads. The self can not be realised by the study of the *Vedas*, nor by intelligence, nor by deep learning ; It can be realized by him only whom it chooses or favours ; to him the self reveals Its own nature. (Ka. U. 11.23 ; Mu. U. 111. 2.3) *Bhakti* in fact, converts Brahman into a personal God or *Isvara*.

God is always fond of those who devoted to Him. (Moh., XII. 343.54, 55). No one is dearer to Him in three worlds than those who are enlightened with wisdom (*Pratibuddha*) and possessed of high souls. More dear than these persons is one who is entirely devoted to Him. (Ibid XII. 343.65).

The gist of the teachings of the *Gita* may be noticed in the following verse : Relinquishing all religious rites and actions take refuge in me alone. I shall deliver thee from all sins. Sorrow not. (XVIII. 66) All persons are subject to *Maya*. They alone can cross it (*Maya*) who take refuge in Me. (B. G., VII. 14)

In the *Bhagavata* religion much stress is laid on the grace of God. God can be attained only by His grace. No attainments physical, intellectual, moral or spiritual are considered adequate for the attainment of God. The *Mahabharata* declares-liberation depends entirely upon the grace of God. (XII. 349. 73)

Devotion is not identical with faith (*Śraddha*). Faith occurs when belief is depended and faith is depended into devotion. (*Narada Sutra*, 84). *Bhakti* is the burning faith in God. The grace of God is followed

by the response of the devotees, since there is no distinction between God and His men. (Ibid 40, 41) The Gita says, 'I dwell in them, they dwell in Me'. (ix. 29). By attaining devotion, I love a person becomes fulfilled, immortal and contended. (Narada Sutra, 4).

Sri Krsna declares, 'Even if a person of the vilest conduct worships Me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as a saint, for he has made the choice that is as irrevocable as it is rightsous. He quickly becomes a virtuous soul and attains lasting peace. O Arjuna, this is my word of promise that he who, loves Me with all his heart never perishes. Even person of sinful origin attain the goal which is considered supreme by taking refuge in Me alone'. (Bhagavat Gceta, IX. 30-32). The Bhagavata also throws open the path of devotion to all. Even a candal is purges of the impurity of his caste by firm devotion of God. (IX. 14.21). Sincere faith and devotion alone can uplift the soul of eternal communion with God. Even a person of low birth is liberated from bondage, if he utters the name of God only once. (V.1.35). There is no restriction in the case of devotion. All are equally entitled to it. The cult of Bhakti is open to all. It is catholic and universal.

The Radha-Krsna cult seems to have originated with Madhabendra Puri Gosvamin. His disciple Isvara Puri Gosvamin inherited it. He transmitted it to his disciple Sri Chaitanya. His followers developed it into a system with a theology and philosophy of its owns. Thus Madhavendra is described as the seed, Isvara Puri as the sprout, Sri Chaitanya as the trunk, Advaita and Nityananda, his most prominent followers as the two main branches and their followers as minor branches, etc., of the great tree of loving devotion (Chaitanya Ch., 1.9)

Historically speaking Chaitanya took the detailed idea from Raya Ramananda. He then transmitted it to Rupa Gosvamin at Prayaga and to Sanatana Gosvamin at Kasi. These two Gosvamins and their nephew Jiva Gosvamin elaborated this idea and placed it on a philosophical basis. These three lived at Vradavana which, since then has become a noted place of pilgrimage and the great centre of Gauriya Vaisnavism in North India. Puri was the centre in the South, when Sri Chaitanya lived after embracing monasticism.

Sri Krsna and His manifestations have all their heavens or abodes too wherein they perform their Lilas : According to the degree of intensity of love, His Vrndavana associated are divided in four classes

(1) Dasaya-bhaktis or loving servants (2) Sakhya-bhaktis or comrades who consider themselves equal to Him in every respect (3) Vatsalya-bhaktas or parents (4) Kanta-bhaktas or beloved youthful maids known as Gopis, the chief of whom is Radha, others being her companions or attendants. In the Gopis divine love is developed in its fullest degree known as mahabhava or supreme love. Their loving services for Kṛṣṇa are actuated by love alone. It cares for nothing but His pleasures—.

Vṛndavana lila of Sri Kṛṣṇa has two aspects—manifest and unmanifest. Usually His lila is not and cannot be visible to the worldly-minded as such it is known as unmanifest lila. But if He pleases, He and His associates come down among those people as human beings and pass through almost all the stages of human life. In such cases the lila is said to be manifest.

The highest aspect of mahabhava, known as madana or maddening delight is possessed only by Radha and nobody else, even by Kṛṣṇa Himself (Ujjvala-nilamoni, Sthayibhava, 155). The delight Radha derives is immensely superior to what Kṛṣṇa enjoys as the object of her love. It is also tempting to Him so much so that He cannot suppress His eagerness to taste His own charma and sweetness like Radha herself. (Chaitanya c.1.4.100, 115-116), Accordingly there is an aspect of Kṛṣṇa in which all the attributes of the Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndavana as well as those of Radha co-exist. (ca.c.11.8.239). In this respect He, as the subject of madana relishes His own charms and sweetness. This is known as Sri Gaurāṅga, who is thus Kṛṣṇa and Radha combined. It has become the custom with the Gauriya School to worship Gourāṅga with his companions before worshipping Kṛṣṇa and to think of lilas of Gourāṅga before thinking those of Kṛṣṇa, because the devotees of this school believe that Gaurāṅga is Kṛṣṇa Himself in a double aspect. He is thus an apt representation of self-delightedness. (atmaramata).

The Chaitanya school enjoys that if a person wishes to serve Kṛṣṇa at Vṛndavana with madhura rati, he should always think that he is a young gopi, beautifully dressed, attending on Radha in her love pastimes with Kṛṣṇa (Ca.c.11.22.91). Sri Chaitanya attaches importance to five principal items of which the fifth one deserves special mention. It is to worship His image, firmly believing that it is He Himself. One should think that one is going through it in the presence of Kṛṣṇa and for His pleasure only. Mere mechanical process

cannot produce any salutary effect on the mind—can hardly purify it ; even a simple item properly practised may produce the desired effect, love and devotion to Krsna (Bhaktirasamritasindhu 1.2.128). Sri Chaitanya attaches the greatest importance to the chanting of the Lord's name which, according to him, can alone take one to the highest goal. (Chaitanya Charitamrita 111.4 65-66) and it is perhaps for this reason that the scriptures of the Bhakti cult would admit of no difference between Him and His name. (Cha.c.111 20. 17-20)

A person having rati has nothing to gain or lose in this world, his mind is content entirely with matters concerning Krsna, Rati ripens into preman which completely softens the heart. It is marked with an attitude of 'mineness' i.e. a feeling that Krsna belongs to the devotee and to no one else. Preman ripens into sneha, sneha into mana. Mana deepens into pranaya, pranayas into raga. Raga develops into anuraga. Finally anuraga culminates in mahabhawa (Chaitanya Charitamrita 11. 23. 34).

Avatara Tattwa

An important aspect of the Bhagavata religion was the popularity of the worship of the Avataras i.e., descends or incarnations of Vishnu. The origin of the avatara conception may be traced in the later vedic literature. Even in the Rk. Veda (vi. 49. 13) we have reference to Vishnu's three steps being taken from man in distress. In the Satapatha and other Brahmanas we have the mention of Vamana (dwarf), Matsya (fish) and Kurma (Tortoise). Traditions as to the number of Avataras varied and the lists of the avataras (the usual number ten is generally adhered to) very often different names.

The word avatara has been used in a number of senses, the most widely accepted being the sense of decent. The avatara is one who brings down the kingdom of heaven on earth. According to Bhagabata, there is a difference between an ordinary man of realization and an avatara. The former is only Jiva, whereas the latter is God Himself. The former represents the ascent of man to Godhead while the latter the direct descent of God to humanity. The birth of the former is the inevitable result of his karma, while the birth of the latter is the result of free choice. The Jiva takes up the body only for his own sake, the avatara incarnates only for the sake of saving others. The former's

body is still under the sway of his prarabdha karma, the latter has no such prarabdha at all. The real object of an avatara is only to protect all by placing before than an adorable object wherein the glories of God are fully manifested. The avatara sees both the Absolute and the manifested world and can teach the world about the Absolute. Some of these avataras are called Kalas or delight, some ainsas or smaller parts and other ainsamsas or fractions of parts. It is also determined according to the degree of divine manifestation. Some are regarded to be the actual birth of God, others as having only the divine avesa temporarily. Krsna is considered to be the most perfect of all the avataras, and all the others manifestations of Krsna Himself.

Maya has three ingredients or strands—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The whole Universe is a product of the permutation and combination of these three. When their equilibrium is disturbed by the will of God inducing movement. This evolution is set in motion sometimes by avidya sakti of Maya, and sometimes by Lord's power as Kala or time, Svabhava or nature, kala is the cause of agitation of the gunas, Svabhava of changes of form and karma of birth. These are not really different from God, but they manifest themselves directed by His wish. It is His wish, again which makes possible the advent of avataras when equilibrium referred to above seems to be titting on a wrong side in the world veiled by Maya. The discent of avatara is not accidental, it reveals a plan behind, it being to save the world. The avataras are beyond the spell of Maya far above the Gunas.

Hari or Sri Krsna lords it over Prakiti, so He is not under the dominant influence of Prakiti. He sees everything. He controls the process of evolution. So, any point of departure from the organised system needs to be re-asserted and an avatar is the reliable agent. So to say in effecting a perpetuation of the system ordained through eternity. By propitiating to Sri Krsna with all his heart—a devotee can boldly defy the influence of the gunas likewise Jamalarjuna told Krsna in his effort to point out the aspect of an avatara. "Even when thou art in the midst of Jivas having a corpored frame, thou are without Prakita Sarira (worldly fame). Those that are your descent as avataras possess such powers which are denied to ordinary beings. He process and physical power the avataras exhibit are superior to that of the bodied existence so much so that theirs cannot compare the avataras

any way''. By realizing the ephemeral nature of the world and finally turning to God as the sole refuge, they gradually work out their salvation. It may seem to imply that all creation will come to a stop if and when all souls attain mukti. Such a possibility is ruled out by Bhagavata, as the souls are infinite in number and are inexhaustible. The world process is only an expression of the inherent playful nature of God and hence cannot cease altogether. So, the sentient being who has his refuge in his Svarupa, he is liberated. He is blessed with Swadharma of God and moves beyond so called life and death. From God or ever-enlightened ones come to existence innumerable Purusha. Bhagavata is quite assertive on this point as follows : O Brahmins, as a wide pool of water issues forth thousands of small streams of water. So from Hari, the upholder of Truth and dispenses of grace come to life thousands of avatars. (Bh. 1.3.24). In the twentieth chapter contained in the Madhyalila as depicted in the Chaitanya Charitamrita, Mahaprabhu in the context of a discourse on eternal form of teaching, gives an account of the manifold manifestation and various appellations of Sri Krsna. He refers to the number of times the Lord descended on earth assuming the shape of avatars. In terms of language text Krsna as avatars defies all count and his avatarhood is six of types. viz., Purushavatar, Lila-avatars, Guna-avatars, Manyantar-avatars, Yugavatars and Saktavesavatars. When as a Doer God Himself or as a part so employed by Him deals with the Prakriti, he is known as Purusha-avatars. Krsna again is the Fountain Spring of three types of will power. Basudeva implies Jnan-Sakti while Samkarshan and Balarama represent action. For nothing but youthful alliance Isvaravatars is christened Lila-avatars. Endless in numbers they appeared. Some of them are Matsya, Kurma, Raghunath, Nrisimha, Vamana, Baraha and so on. Gunavatars are concerned with the Gunas of Prakriti. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva rank as Gunavatars. In the Bhagavatamaya or Prakriti is described as the aggregate of trigunas viz, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. (Geeta 7.14) Brahma, Vishnu and Siva when charged with respective gunas of Maya are involved in creating, stabilizing and destroying this world. (Bha. 2.6.32). The avatars who appear in course of each manvantara is called manvantaravatar. According to the Text their number is five lacs and forty thousand. Fourteen manvantara would appear in a single day attributed to Brahman. Yugavatars are one who come down this earth each Yuga—Satya, Teta,

Dwapor and Kali. Again when a high souled being is charged with the benign and graceful Avesa of the Lord he turns into the Saktabesavatar. Sanak, Narada, Prtha and Parasuram are such avataras (Geeta 10.41)

In an effort to answer the question why God or an unfettered high souled Purusha would so come down, we may refer the matter the Gita, Bhagavata, etc. One of the principal reasons is he descends with a view to supressing the evil-doers and protecting ones following the God-ordained course of action (Geeta 4.8). Secondly, to bring into play through His avataras such blissful actions as will unmistakably Prove to be the most ideal course to Jivas (Bha. 6.2.4). Thirdly God also appears before His devotee in the guise of an avatara in kind response to the ardent prayer of His devotees. (Bha 10.33.36) Fourthly, such coming down abundantly exposes His Lila (Bh. S. 1.1.20). He may again descend some times to protect the creation (Geeta 3. 24). In answer to an apparently perplexing question as to how would the Supreme Consciousness or Krsna makes possible His descent in a world (Prapancha) dominated by the irritating spell of Maya and Yogmaya, it may be understood in terms of the expressed sayings contained in the Gita, Bhagavata etc., it is so done with the help of Maya and Yogamaya, Lord's two saktis. He employs them to regulate the creative process and Govern on the whole, His creation. Yogamaya lends her unqualified assistance to a high-souled sentient being whose role it is to act as an avatara.

To prove such descent aided by Maya or Yogomaya is beyond the scope of discussions based on logic. Like Isvar Tattwa, we have to depend on Sruti which offers the proof absolute. Sruteshu Savda Mulatvat—Sruti can only lead us to have an understanding of the workings of the Supreme self. Again, it is admitted on all hands that the days of the sun are chiefly responsible for the existence of life. It is also to be admitted that too much of solar heat causes extinction of life. So, in the Gita and Bhagabata we find a number of examples to show that God himself concealed or contracted a large portion of his process in order to make his bibhutis bearable to ordinary beings. Sri Krsna endowed Arjuna with eyes divinised, so as to enable him have an understanding of His Viswarupa. Yet awe-struck Arjuna had to leave the attempt (Geeta 11.45)

It ought to be borne in mind that a person optivated by Maya

cannot represent God as an avatara, only a high souled liberated being would have the strength to play the role of an avatara. A man in bondage suffers from the sinister influences of Maya. God alone is the controller of Maya and He guides man in that capacity (Geeta 18.68). The holder of enlightened mental power freed from the bondage of Maya are allowed to enjoy the quantities pertaining to an Avatara which again are denied to men of ordinary intelligence (Bha 1.11.39).

It is a common experience that an avatara enjoying the graceful excellences of God are subjected to ill-treatment have in the world. Here arises a puzzling question and that is, God is All-powerful and He has bestowed as an avatara a part or whole of the best in Him, then why is it that the Avatara has to bear such ignoble treatment meted out to Him ? Sri Krsna has Himself explained that it is due to the fact that ordinary beings stand ignorant of His Parama-Bhava (Supreme Grace) and take Him for One in a human form, body and mind and soul. Their total ignorance about His real self accounts for their cultivation of disregard (Geeta 9.11). On the other hand Vyasa, Vidura, Bhishma, Arjuna and a hand-picked few, did not fail to pay homage to Him, as they were not ignorant of the real nature of Sri Krsna. (Bha 1.9.42).

In the Yamuna Stotra as quoted in Chaitanya Charitamrita it is expressly indicated that men of asuric dispositions do fail beyond doubt to have an idea of Him, even when they chance to enjoy the glimpses of God's unfathomable power, supremely graceful form and characteristics, even going through the crystal clear Sastras pregnant with deep thought or having the golden opportunity to listen to the authoritative versions of religio-philosophical discourses handed down through ages (Chai.Cha.1A). Thus it can be established in respect of avatarhood the Sastras and seers conversant with the tenets contained therein can only have the requisite realisation and interpretation of it and in terms of their conclusive evidence Sri Chaitanya is imagined to be the Sri Krsna-avatar. (Chai.Cha.1.2)

In the Mahabharata Sri Krsna is proclaimed the avatara of Vishnu. Likewise in the Ramayana Ramchandra is imagined to be Vishnu's avatara. A passage of late Naradiya section of the Mahabharata (XII. 3/c4 9. 37) mentions only four avataras viz, Bear, Dwarf, Man-lion and Man (i.e. Vasudeva-Krsna). Another passage of the same section (339.77.99) adds the deified heroes Rama-Bhargava and

Rama-Dasaratha to the list making a total of six avatars while in a third passage (Loc. cit., 104) a list of ten incarnations is afforded by adding to the above six Hamsa, Kurma, Matsya and Kalki. The Matsya Purana (XLVII. 237-46) gives a list of ten incarnations of which three divine Avatars viz, Narayana, Narasimha, and Vamana and seven human Avatars viz, Rama-Dasarathi, Veda-Vyasa, Dattatreya, Mandhatr, Rama-Janadagnya. In the Vayn-Purana (XCVIII-71-104) these avatars are mentioned excepting one that of Buddha, replaced by Krsna. There are no less than four lists of avatars in the Bhagavata Purana, but they are different from one another. One of these lists admits that the incarnations are really innumerable. It mentions Brahma, Varaha, Narada, Nara and Narayana, Kapila, Dattatreya, Yajna, the Jaina Tirthankar Rsabha, the ancient king Prthu, Matsya, Kurma, the physician Dhanvantari, Mohini, Rama, Haladhara, Krsna, Buddha and Kalki. According to Agni Purana (11-xvi) the incarnations including the past and future ones are really innumerable, but describes only ten avatars including Buddha and Kalki. Garnda Purana (1.202) mentions no less than nineteen avatars including Vyasa, Buddha and Kalki. Ahirbudhnya Samhita, the Pancharatra work mentions thirty-nine manifestations of the Supreme Being, which includes almost all the well known avatars including Kalki and Krsna. Buddha is mentioned as one of the ten avatars in the Dasavatara-Charita of Ksemendra (C.A.D. 1050) of Kashmir and in the Gita Govinda of Jayadeva (C.A.D. 1200) of eastern India. Jayadeva enlogizes Krsna as Vishnu himself and sings in praise of his ten avatars viz, Fish, Tortoise, Bear, Man-lion, Dwarf, Rama, Bhargava, Rama-Dasarathi, Rama-Haladhara, Buddha and Kalki. This list came to be regarded as the most authentic since the early medieval period. But there was still some difference of opinion as to the position of Krsna. In the Belva (Dacca District Banglades) inscription of (C.A.D. 1125), Krsna is shown as a partial avatara. But an Ajmer inscription of about the same age seems to include Krsna among the ten avatars of Vishnu.

Rama and Buddha are represented as avatars in a vaishnava temple of about the seventh century at Sripur in the Raipur District. In the Dasavatara temple at Ellora figures of Nara Simha, Vamana, Varaha and Krsna (holding the Govardhana) are inscribed. It is attributed to the eight century.

The idea of the Geeta (IV. 7-8) that God manifests Himself for

the protection of the pious, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of the religion order has a universal appeal. The avatara theory have undergone several stages of evolution. Some of them, however had little to do with Vishnu. The Buddhist conception of the former Buddhas may be taken to be a positive influence for the development of such conception.

In the Geeta and some other sections of the Mahabharata, Vishnu is represented as an ideal divinity and an almighty saviour of mankind. He delights in both moral goodness and ritualistic purity. He incarnates Himself from time to time in human or animal form. This aims at maintaining the standard of righteousness in the world. The theory of avatara presents only a stage of development in the Mahabharata, as the earlier sections of the epic contain no list of incarnations.

The popularity of the worship of several avataras is attested by the Indian epigraphic records of the period between the fourth and the eighth century A.D. Kalidasa's Raghuvansa (C.A.D. 400) speaks of Rama, son of Dasaratha, as an incarnation of Hari (Vishnu). The identification of Krsna and Vishnu is attended to the name of Visnugopa (Cf. Kalidasa's Meghduta). The legend of the avatara of vishnu seems to have been originally associated with that of the Great Deluge. The most popular avatara appears to have been the Bear, who was widely worshipped in different parts of India in the Gupta age. It is clear that while the Vyuha-Vadins were very much influenced by the avatara theory as early as the days of the early Pancharatra Samhitas Krsna and Balarama were recognised as avataras in the Vaisnava literature for practically the same age.

An interesting feature of Vaisnavism in the Gupta age is the conception of Laksmi or Sri as consort of Visnu. The Junagadh inscription of Skandagupta mentions Visnu as a perpetual resort of Lakshmi. The Samkhya doctrine of Purusa and Prakiti also appears to have considerably influenced the conception of Lakshmi as the consort of Vishnu, as well as of Devi as the consort of Siva.

If God's manifestation as the Universe and His omnipotence and grace are one admitted, there is nothing unreasonable to suppose that He can assume a special and unique form, as an avatara, fully retaining consciousness of divinity from His very birth. It is generally held that the purpose of the avatara is the annihilation of the evil-doers. But

the so-called destruction is allegorical description of the destruction of their wickedness by effecting purification of their minds for their ultimate redemption.

Brahman is without form. Then how can He come down this world in human form to play the role of self-assigned avatara ? His in-form appearance, to some may prove to be illusory. In the Vedas and the Vedanta Brahman is described as One without form and with form as well. He is simply incomprehensible and He as an Infinite Existence stands out surpassing absolutely finite human intelligence. To say the least He is beyond the incongruously drawn boundary of human knowledge. Human intelligence and varied mental excellence however sharp or majestic be, they prove to be completely insignificant to fathom the depth of divine Wisdom. Man's microscopic entity appears somewhat magnified to aid the vision, when he is allowed to enjoy companionship with His avatara. God is in and beyond the world and every human heart is His abode. Avatar Tattwa as described in Chaitanya Charitamṛta is no fantastic flight of imagination.

Sri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyavatara Tattwa

We have upto this time tried to establish in reference to a number of a Sastras and Purāṇas the fact that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is advaya tattva. According to Sri Chaitanya School Brahman is eternal i.e. He is without a beginning and without an end. He is infinite and all-pervading. He is in possession of Supernatural powers and attributes which also are infinite in number and in magnitude. Brahman means absolute greatness. Hence all these powers and attributes are eternally developed in Him in the highest degree. He is called Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Śiva and other deities are only so many manifestations of Kṛṣṇa. They are less perfect than Kṛṣṇa in respect of powers and attributes.

However, Kṛṣṇa has a human form. (Viṣṇu Purana, IV.11.2). It is in all appearances limited like a human body. But it is really infinite and all-pervading. (Chai. Cha. 1.5.15).

It is perfect, eternal non-material perpetually in the prime of youth and enchantingly beautiful (ibid. 11.21.83). He is Sat. (absolute existence), Cit (absolute intelligence) and Ananda (bliss absolute). The last one seems to be substance of Brahman or Kṛṣṇa and the other two His attributes. He comprises in Him all the possible varieties of

bliss with different shades of sweetness. He is therefore relishable ; the Upanisads call Him Rasa, the most relishable thing. (Tai. U., 11.7). He is called Kṛṣṇa as He attracts every individual soul.

The Vaisnavas of the Chaitanya school believe in the conception of a personal God. They also believe in the conception of avātaras (incarnations). They would believe His coming down to us as Avatara is for our good, for liberation from the bondage of Māyā.

According to the Chaitanya School Śrī Rādhā is the highest aspect of the Mahābhāba known as madana which is the exclusive possession of Sri Radha and not of Kṛṣṇa even (Ujjvala-nīlmoni, Sthāyibhāva, 155). The delight Rādhā derives thereby is so tempting to Kṛṣṇa that He cannot suppress His eagerness to have a taste of His charms and sweetness like Rādhā herself 'Chaitanya Charitamrita 1.4.109,115-16) There is an aspect of Kṛṣṇa in which all the attributes of the Kṛṣṇa of Vrndavana as well as those of Rādhā co-exist (Ibid., 11.8.239). In this respect, He as the subject of Madana, relishes His charms and sweetness ; and this is known as Sri Gaurāṅga who is thus Kṛṣṇa and Radha combined.

It is custom of the Chaitanya School to worship Gaurāṅga with his associates before worshipping Kṛṣṇa and to think of his lilas before thinking of those of Kṛṣṇa, because the followers of this school believe that Gaurāṅga is Kṛṣṇa Himself in a double aspect.

Chaitanya Charitamrita declares Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Chaitanya to be one and the same and describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya the advaya (undifferentiated). In the third and fourth chapters of Chaitanya Charitamrita (Adilila) Sri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyavatar tattwa has been delineated. In the third chapter under reference the descent of Sri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya as avatāra is stated to be due to chanting of the name of God in the Kaliyuga and thus ensuring the liberation of the Jīvas remaining detached from the Supreme self. In Sruti Brahman is christened as All-rasa. This rasa-Svarūpa Paramātmā Brahman the devotees hold dearest to their hearts. Jīvas can justify their existence for being able to avail themselves of the opportunity to adore Him as the embodiment of Love Supreme. In the Gīta Sri Kṛṣṇa has advised Arjuna to follow the path of Preman and Bhakti which will doubtless prove to be a sure step to reach Him. (The Gita 18.65). It is explicitly said in the same chapter of Chaitanya Charitāmrita that Brahman or Śrī Kṛṣṇa with a view to enlightening the Jīvas about the inexhaustibility

most enchanting resourcefulness of Prem-Bhakti Himself as the Prime Actor descended on this world as Sri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya. The reason for such descent is also discernible in the Upa Purāṇa by Vyāsa-deva. There Sṛī Kṛṣṇa has made it abundantly clear that He Himself as an ascetic shall sow the seeds of Haribhakti for the emancipation of the individuals to allowing in sin in Kaliyuga.

It is asserted in the Mahabharata that he who is deeply absorbed and of ten times lost in the regeneration of Kṛṣṇa, whose residence looks golden, whose body is graceful, anointed with aromatic sandalpaste, who again is endowed with unwavering mental calm and resolute determination and last but not the least, who is an ascetic and an advocate of peace all time, is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Sruti describes Him as Hiranmoya Puruṣa, Ananda Svarupa Brahman. (Mahabharata Jnandharma Visnustotra). He who ceaseless in uttering the name of Kṛṣṇa, whose complexion is golden, whose angas and upangas are heraloric arms, who is even surrounded by his companions acting as his Lila-Sahachars will be worshipped by the learned with the offer of Kṛṣṇa nam. (Bha. 11.5.32)

On strength of these evidence-laden, explicit references Sri Chaitanya is imagined the Sri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya. Chaitanya Charitamrita we find, is replete with presages, characteristic of an avatara. Chaitanya renounced the world when he was twenty-four and turned an ascetic. To assist man in relishing love devine was his pious objective. He was observant of scriptural rules, rites and prescriptions. He propagated in all seriousness Prema-Bhakti, which he considered a sure means to reach Sri Kṛṣṇa. With this end in view he journeyed ever many lands accompanied by Nityananda and Advaita, his most trusted comrades-in-arm. Mention may be made in this context that unlike other celebrity of the previous yugas, Sri Chaitanya resorted to means revolutionary in character to purify the hearts of people by purging them of the so-called preconcieved notions by way of preaching and uttering and chanting God's name. A quotation from Vidagdhamadava adopted in Chaitanya Charitamrita reveals that what was never given any one given to men of the kaliyuga the giver being Sri Kṛṣṇa Himself and that being the Madhurya rasa. Out of pity He had this decision. Golden was His physical appearance, a devine embodiment of purity and exquisite brightness. May that Hari

son unto Sachi, blessye. (Vidagdha-madhawa 1.2. as quoted in Chaitanya Charitamrita).

A question may arise and that needs an justifiably acceptable explanation. The question is concerned with the mention of Prema-Bhakti in the Veda, Upanisads and Bhagabat. If so, why was it deemed necessary that Chaitanya should have been in the vanguard to preach once again, the doctrines of Prema-Bhakti ? Although to all appearances the question may bafflens. The significant role of Sri Chaitanya in this respect cannot be underestimated. Not only a necessary but absolutely it was for Chaitanya to systematize in a simplified form Sri Krsna's Vrindaban Lila with Gopis, the inner significance of which men of ordinary intellect and superficial thinking could fathom by no means. To be favoured with the slightest glimpse of it, would imply sealing the highest point in course of Sadhana—which to all intents and purposes, was beyond man's reach. In an effort to explain the significance it may be said that the purpot of the līlā that Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed in the Vrindaban with Gopis, as delineated in the Bhāgavat surpasses all understanding. This realisation is possible only for those devotees who qualify themselves in the Sadhana, saturated in Pancharasa, viz., Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Batsalya and Madhur—those who are rasikas in the unequivocal sense of the term. Therefore an ordinary individual with dimmed vision and hypochondria is faced with a host of unsurroundable obstacles in course of his obtrusive quest for rasa qualified by celestial import. Himself Isvara, Sri Krsna Chitanya in his unalloyed anxiety to rid men of ignorance took upon himself the charge of implanting the seeds of love in the hearts of indifferent multitude. Bhakti-Tattwa expounded in the Veda and Upanisada is principally Vaidha-Bhakti. It refers to adoring or worshipping God through the inviolate practices enshrined in the Sāstras. Chaitanyadeva introduced 'Rāgātmika Bhakti' illustrated in the Bhagavata and remaining exclusively treasured in the hands of a limited number of devotees practising Pancharasa. He wanted to make it a common inheritance as a means to inspire common run of people. Before the advent of Sri Krsna Chaitanya this type of Bhakti the multitude was not conscious of.

Vaidha-Bhakti would doubtless ensure emancipation it did never uphold a close relation between God and the devotee based on love and love alone. The Sadhakas of Vaidha-Bhakti would not take God to be an object of love. Instead they would worship Him as devotees

stationed wilfully in the humbless position, maintaining cautiously a great distance from Him. But a Sadhaka saturated with Rāgātmika-Bhakti looks upon God as an object of love according to Chaitanya Charitāmṛita only the Gopis of Vrindaban are entitled to love Kṛṣṇa and serve Him accordingly.

Srī Chaitanya freed Bhakti-Tattwa from lucubration and much-vaunted subtlety processed it in a way intelligible to commoners and the ignorant and prescribed a method well-within the capacity of such people as are denied an iota of consciousness.

Here we have to take note of the efficiency of Paraki-ya-prema. Srī Kṛṣṇa is the object and Srī Rādhā the subject of this type of love. Srī Kṛṣṇa is Anandamaya (blissful) and Srī Rādhā is His hladini sakti, encircling both evolves the cycle of Nityalīlā. It is stated before that Srī Chaitanya is a celestial combination of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, two in one. But such combined self is not without a purpose, it being unfettered enjoyment of bliss through Līlā. This is superbly illustrated by Svarūpa Gosvamin in his Karcā quoted in Chaitanya Charitāmṛita. Therein it is stated Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are not separate entities, they are basically one and the same. They become two for the sake of līlā, to dive deep into the ocean of Bliss Eternal. This time both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa become one and assume form of Srī Chaitanya, salutation to Sri Chaitanya with exterior complexioned golden and the interior flooded with Kṛṣṇa prema. In another portion of the same Karcā, quoted in Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, it is stated that the moon manifested herself from the deep of the ocean to make her presence felt likewise Srī Chaitanya Candra would ensure his advent as the son to Sacidevi. It is Srī Kṛṣṇa who imbued with the mahābhāva of Srī Rādhā, was begotten of Sacidevi in the form of Srī Chaitanya. He was so born to realise three distinct objectives, those (i) being to feel and fathom the depth of Srī Rādhā's love supreme (ii) to relish the exquisite sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's love in light of experience gathered in course of his dalliance with Sri Rādhā and (iii) lastly to have an full-proof expedient understanding of the inexplicable Ānanda Rādhā would derive from His wanton association with Him. Wherein lies the uniqueness concerning such love gave assigned to Rādhā? A close scrutiny on strength of the prolegomena on this aspect makes abundantly clear that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are not separate entities as they are imagined to be, but indivisibly the one so united since infinity. (Chai. Cha. 1.4). In Rādhā we can trace manifest

to the fullest degree *Sānta*, *Dāśya*, *Sakhya* *Vatsalya* and *Madhur bhāvas* (Chai.Cha. 2.8). Of all the *Rasas*, found thoroughly expounded in the *Bhagavata*, *Maharasa* is declared of supreme excellence and *Radha* it is asserted, is its sole custodian (Chai. ch. 2.8).

The *Bhāgavata* says *Srī Kṛṣṇa* Himself is unaware of this charming aspect of such *mahārasa*. *Srī Kṛṣṇa* Himself confesses His indebtedness to *Rādhā-Prema*. The objective behind this *Rādhā Līlā* is to augment the *sukha* of *Srī Kṛṣṇa*. The very endeavour to realise this objective is termed *Viśiṣṭa Prema* according to *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*. This *prema* is beyond the reach of *Lakṣmi*, *Brahma* and others. *Srī Kṛṣṇa* loses Himself completely in His boundless ecstasy to be responsive to *Rādhā's* love dalliance. The delight *Rādhā* derives is so immensely superior to what *Kṛṣṇa* enjoys as the object of her love and is so irresistibly tempting to Him that he cannot suppress His eagerness to taste his own charms and sweetness like *Rādhā* herself (Chai. Cha. 1.4.109). Accordingly, there is an aspect of *Kṛṣṇa* in which all the aspect of the *Kṛṣṇa* of *Vṛndāvana* as well as those of *Rādhā* co-exist. (Chai.Cha. 11.8.239). In this respect He, as the subject of *mādana* (maddening delight) relishes His own charms and sweetness. This is known as *Srī Gaurāṅga*, who is thus *Kṛṣṇa* and *Rādhā* combined, as hinted before.

Gaurāṅga is *Kṛṣṇa* Himself in a double aspect, an apt representation of *ātma-mānasa*. (Self-delightedness). It is so penned in the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* that of the manifold objectives with which *Srī Kṛṣṇa* assuming the *avatāra*hood of *Srī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya* mention may be made of (i) preaching the name of the Lord on a well planned grand scale in the *Kaliyuga* in an attempt to lessen the tension culminating in a grave crisis (ii) relishing, on assuming all the aspects of *Radha*, His charms and sweetness and red Himself of the burden of indebtedness to the *Gopis* in general and *Rādhā* in particular by way of arranging another *Līlā*, this time on the sordid earth and the principal actor being *Srī Chaitanya* who is *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* combined. *Srī Chaitanya* would exhibit unmistakably signs relating to the *mahābhāva* of *Srī Rādhā*—a fact found squarely corroborated on the pages of *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*. To his blest devotees *Chaitanya* would manifest himself as *Srī Kṛṣṇa-avatāra* times without number. In the language of *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* he besmeared his body with the golden grace of *Advaya Brahman* as understood in the *Upanishads*.

He is again the partial Bibhūti of the all—perceiving ātman depited as antarjyami in Yogasāstra. He is even the holder of the attributes of God from whom emanate the dazzling aisvaryas testifying His supremacy infinite. So is Chaitanya the paramatva, such ascertain stands beyond further idle introspection. (Mangalacharan in Chai. Cha.).

It may be interrogated at this stage. Is Chaitanya God Himself ? Is he the combined Svarūpa of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa or simply a devotee as implied by the real sense of the term. From the self-confessional words of Sri Chaitanya, a graphic account of which is available in Roy Ramananda Sambad contained in Chaitanya Charitāmṛita it is apparent that futile will prove all attempts to contradict the established propositions—Chaitanya is God Himself, a combined Svarūpa of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. His coming down was conditioned for the performance of lila and himself God, he imbibed Bhakti-Bhāva with the avowed objective to help Jīvas realise the superb aspiration of bhakti. The devotee is destined to feel the pangs of separation. When far away from God likewise in it is felt the same fervidity 'it' referring to the bhaktiyoga as stands propounded by Sri Chaitanya in a style exclusively his own. It is to say the best a mixture of the opposites union and separation, Milan and Biraha, both felt intensely in turn.

It may be very likely, questioned : If Chaitanya is reasonably understood as the combined Svarūpa of Sri Rādhā and Sṛī Kṛṣṇa, then why would he feel the inestimable pangs born of separation from Kṛṣṇa ? Chaitanya Charitāmṛita offers a plausible clarification as follows.

When according to the Bhāgabata, Sṛī Kṛṣṇa determined to leave for Mathura abandoned Brojopuri, the dump founded inhabitants of Brojodhām passed every moment of their life stricken with boundless grief, their most-beloved remaining out of sight for a pretty long time.

“It acts as venom without, but unceasing flow a bliss within,

O, how unscrutable are the ways of Ānandamaya Kṛṣṇa.

(Chaitanya Charitamṛita 2.2.44)

As waves roll on the open of the sea, so are interrogations after interrogations. It seems there is no end to it. One such interrogation is : If Chaitanya, as depicted in the Chaitanya Charitamṛita would have his descent as Kṛṣṇa-avatara with a view to relishing blissful charms felt by Radha, technically summed up as Mahabhava, then why is his desire to expose himself grief-afflicted ? In all probability

it is due to the fact that such grief not mundane in character, but celestial in substance gives vent to an exclusive type of Radha-prema, the mention of which is discernible in the sastras and which again is perceptible to and attainable by only a Sadhaka having in possession requisite qualifications for practising it. (Chai.Cha. 3.2) So it is enjoyed, nothing short of prescribed Sadhana can pave the way for its complete realisation. The adherents to Gauriya Vaisnava School and the philosophers explaining the principal tenets of the school have all agreed without disension to accept Chaitanya of an incarnation of Sri Krsna after having completed a close and comperative scrutiny in reference to the Laksnas. It is Prabhu Nityananda who for the first time introduced the Chaitanya image worship, acting on the whole-hearted belief that Sri Krsna and Sri Chaitanya here in essence the one and the same. The celebrated devotee of Nabadvip of that period Pandit Adaita Prabhu has described Him as Brojendranandan. Besides a host of leaned philosophers of undying fame, such as Basudeva Sarbabhauma, Sri Rupa Gosvamin, Sri Sanatan Gosvamin and others thought Chaitanya to be inseparable from Sri Krsna. They have recorded their impression in different texts, all having looked upon Chaitanya as an incarnation of Sri Krsna. Sri Krsnadas Kaviraj has incorporated the basic approaches culminated in a developed into a systematized coherent tattva in his magnum opus, Chaitanya Charitamrita. Chaitanya's way of life not fully tempered by mundane exigencies, but revealing exegesis considerably, establishes beyond a shade of doubt the fact that he was the most uncommon amidst the commoners surrounding him. Who dares deny that the religio-philosophical Tattwa s surpasses ordinary human intelligence for their utter failure to scale the Himalayan height and also for very low-comprehending faculty. Hence the SriKrsna—Chaitanya Tattwa would be grasped only by the initiated, thanks of course, to God's infinite grace. This particular injunction as above is enshrined in the Upanisad, Mahabharata and Vagabata.

The essence of Chaitanya's Sadhana is love and nothing but love and this love is not earth-born, but devine in substance. Here God comes very close to His devotee through the bond of love. A devotee according to the Bhagavata is one who breathes love, whose sadhana is embedded on the lotus of his heart and whose be-all and end-all of life is love. To get the Premamaya with the offering of Prema or love

is the noblest aspiration of a Gauriya Vaisnava. Chaitanya followed in all sincerity the sacred injunctions embodied in the Bhagabata and never did the deviated from the path chalked out with utmost care in the Holy Text. Rasamaya Sri Krsna and Rasamayee Sri Radha conjointly confer on Sri Caitanya every ounce of eternally divinised nector, Madhurarasa that the chosen once may effectively play the grand role of an avatara, representing both (Radha and Krsna) in one person and show the hapless mortals the path of Bhakti that leads straight to Sri Krsna.

Sri Chaitanya realized God and His Sweetness. He realized his own-self and its relation to God. He felt a strong desire for giving to all the heavenly bliss of loving God. He organized Sankirtana (singing the names of God in chorus with the accompaniment of musical instrument) and plunged into it. This novel way caught the fancy of the people. They started shaking off indifference to spritual matters and began to gather round him in thousands.

He spent the first six years of his asceticism in proselytizing tours through some parts of India. In the south he went upto Ramesvara, in the West upto Vrndavana through Kasi and Prayaga and in Bengal upto Ramkali near Gaura, the then capital of Bengal. He was able to convert to his cruel Prakasananda Saravati and Vasudeva Sarvabhauma, the two great Sankara Vedantins of his time. The two brothers Rupa and Sanatana, high officials under Hussain Shah, the then ruler of Bengal met Caitanya at Prayaga and Kasi respectively and took their lessons in Bhakti cult. These two brothers and their nephew Jiva settled at Vrndavana under his directions and wrote large number of books in Sanskrit on the tenets of the creed of Sri Chaitanya and on the theology and philosophy of his school and the lilas of Sri Krsna. During the last eighteen years of his life Sri Chaitanya remained at Puri. He passed the last twelve years of his life in spritual trances, sometimes in rapturous joy of union with Sri Krsna, but often in unbearable pangs of separation from Him—always indentifying himself with Sri Radha the most beloved of Sri Krsna. This last phase of comprising a full 'Yuga' of his life leaves the unmistakable impression that he was an avatara.

Pre-Chaitanya literature of India abounds in statements regarding the mercy of God, which of all intents and purposes is the connecting link between God and His creatures. Krsnadasa Kaviraja announces in his Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita that His mercy goes so far as to

make His eager for the salvation of the distressed and such an eagerness is part of His nature (Chai. Cha. 111. 2.5). Kaviraja Goswamin announces in the word of Sri Chaitanya based on the Srutis that call Brahman Ananda (the bliss), Rasa (the fascinating Ralish), Siva (The good), and Sundara (the Beautiful), that it is Madhurya and not aisvarya that constitutes the essence of Godhead (Ibid 11.21.92).

So, if He is all merciful and all good, there is no bar to His coming down to us as avatara for salvation of the people. It can be assertively established that Chaitanya is Brahman or Krsna and He came down as avatara in human form to capture the imagination of people by the message of universal love, rasa cult and the most attractive aspect of the ultimate reality.

Chaitanya, in fact, as an avatara paved the way for realisation of Godhead in a novel way. His teaching was unique in many ways. He attaches the greatest importance to the chanting of the Lord's name which alone may take one to the highest goal. (Chai. Cha. 111.4.65-66). The scriptures of Bhakti cult admit no difference between Him and His name (Bhaktirasamrta-Sindhu, 1.2.108) in order that he may attain love for Krsna, a devotee must feel that he is humbler than even a piece of straw, and without expecting any return, he must respect every person, believing that Krsna lives in him. (Chai. Cha. 111.20.17-20). As an avatara Sri Chaitanya exhibited the qualities all his life—honesty, simplicity, sincerity, straight-forwardness contentment, total reliance of God, humility, tolerance and respectfulness to others, thereby showing his divine nature in human form. Love did he seek all his life and it is love to inculcate which in the hearts of people he descended on this earth as a message of Him who is ALL-LOVE.

Chapter III

MAHAPRABHU ON SANKARA VEDANTA

Introduction

What is philosophy ? We are faced with insurmountable difficulties in defining it. For exactly of which time the connotation philosophy would have its origin is a matter which it is prudent to leave to the scholars and others well-adopt in investigation. In our humble capacity we can suggest that Indian philosophy in particular have sprung from two or rather more original source of traditions. The Brahamical system based their speculations on the doctrine of Atman contained in the Upanisads. In the vedic period by philosophy it meant the philosophy of Atman, as is discernible in the Brhadaranyaka upanisad (Br. U.2.4.). It is found in the Svetasvatara upanisad that the Brahnavadins are engaged in serious discussion on Brahman. (Sveta. U.1.1). What is the root cause ? Brahman, enlighten us on the secrets relating to our being born ? We exist, but for ? How can we remain Brahnavadin even when we are steeped in boundless misery, born of sorrow, still the dates of the systems are very largely conjectured.

In fact the Upanisads and the systems drawing their inspirations from them conceive reality on the pattern of an inner core or soul. It is immutable and identical amidst an outer region impermanence and change to which it is unrelated or but loosely related. This may be termed Atmavada. Its radical form is the Advaita Vedanta. It denies the reality of the apparent the impermanent and the many and equates them with the false. On the other hand Atman is the very pivot of its metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. Bondage is ignorance of the self. It may also be wrong identification of the self with non-self.

From the Samkhya dualism we have first the establishment of the monism of the older vedanta and then of the Advaita of Sankara. Thus several stages we notice in the attachment of final form in the Vedanta.

Gaudapada and his illustrious successors Sankar revolutionized the Vedanta by introducing the theory of Vivarta (appearance). They asserted Advaitism as the true teaching of the Upanishads. This development was a turning point in the history of Indian philosophy.

It was brought about by two sets of influences : One, the drive towards self-consistency. This was at work in the older Vedanta too, and the other, the adoption of the dialectical method borrowed from the Madhyamika dialecting, borrowing of course does not signify acceptance and in corporation of its Tenets. Two distinct religio-philosophical school were sstematized in the post-Sankara period. They are the Saiva inclusive of the Sakta and the Vaisnava school. These two systems are noted for great antiquity and wide-spread character. They are supposed to have derived insperation and sustenance from the religious strain found not only in the Rg. Veda, the Upanisads and the Bhagavad Geeta, but also from the canonical sources, variously called the Agamas (Saiva) and the Samhitas (Vaisnava). They emphasize devotion and self-surrender to God as necessary means to salvation. This is doubtless opposited to the doctrine of knowledge, enshrined in the Advaita and elsewhere as the sole means of liberation (mukti). All of them register their protest against absolutism the impersonality of the Highest ; They of the finite selves (Jivas).

In the post Sankara period Ramanuja, establishes through Visista-dvaita a philosophy of religion, culminating in a synthetic view of the spiritual experience of God or Brahman. Its positive affirmation is that by realizing Brahman everything is realized. More philosophy is a theoretical speculation and its conclusions are not final. Reason is the instrument that philosophy employs. But Brahman can only be intuited and not inferred by reason. Spiritual experience is subjective and lacks definiteness and universality. So a faith needs to have passed the test of reason, as inadequency of reason leaves spectaculative philosophy barren. Ramanuja, to put it very briefly, harmonizes the claims of revelation, intuition and reason. Hence the proof of the being of God is the being of God. According to Madhvacharya Brahman is that which is the complete and independent ground of all that is other than Brahman. His view is ontological ideas are only the implication of the epistemological positions. Herein lies the significance of his definition of reality.

The Bhedabheda school of Vedanta, the philosophy of Nimbarka is intermediary between Sankara and Ramanuja. The School avoids the one-sidedness of monism and pluralism. The ethics of Bhedabheda describes the means by which Brahman is attained and it includes

both jnana and karma. It refers to the attainment of Brahmajnana and the nature of intuitive consciousness.

Sankara is both the solid base and the highest peak of the range of the Advaita vedantic thought. The post-Sankara Advaitins like Suresvara, Vacaspati, Prakasatman, Citsukha, Madhusudana and others are undoubtedly the other massive peaks. It may not be out of place to mention that Mandana Misra (about A. D. 800) a powerful vedantin and probably a contemporary of Acarya Sankara has given an independent interpretation of the Advaita Vedanta. It does not tally in many points with the interpretation of Sankara.

As our objective is limited, it being to show the linear development from Advaita Tattva from Sankara's Absolutism (monism) to the Acintya Bhedabheda as propounded and practised in religious observance of the Chaitanya School of Vaisnavites. We cut short our discussion content with the bird's eye observation of the philosophical and religio-philosophical aspects of the vedanta through ages. The Bengal School of Vaisnavites based their religious practices on the expressed tenets of the Bhagavata without ignoring the eternal relation between God and the individual Jiva as enshrined in the Srutis. They did not discard Advaita vedanta either, but effected a harmony between Jiva Jnana and Bhakti which they accepted as their principal creed, way article of faith.

We have attempted a discussion on the philosophy of Sankara and the Acintya Bhedabheda, Chaitanya's discourses on Sankara's philosophical thoughts etc. in chapters to follow. What is written so far is simply an introduction and nothing more. We believe the readers have followed why philosophical discourses of Indian origin other than the Advaita vedanta are left undiscussed.

I

Acintya Bhedabheda Bada

Sri Chaitanya School of Vaisnavas are worshippers, mainly of Radha-Krsna. According to this School Brahman is eternal without a beginning and without end. He is infinite and all pervading. He is in possession of supernatural powers and attributes in number and in magnitude. All these powers and attributes are eternally developed in Him in the highest degree. It is implied by the word 'Brahman' meaning

absolute greatness. He is called Krsna Vasudeva, who has a number of manifestations.

According to the Upanisads Pranava is Brahman (Pra.U.V.2) and according to the Geeta Krsna is both Pranava and Parava Brahman (B.G.IX, 1712). Brahman is sat (absolute existence) Cit (absolute intelligence or consciousness that implies non-materiality) and Ananda (absolute bliss) (Chai. Cha. 1.4.54 ; 11.20.132) ; Bhakti Sandarbha, 51. of His Saktis three are main, viz., Svarupa-Sakti, Maya-Sakti and Jiva-Sakti (Chai. Cha 11.8.116).

The Saktis of Brahman are inseparably and eternally associated with Him. He cannot but be eternally qualified (Savisesa and Saguna). Again He has endless supernatural attributes (gunas), all derived from His Svarupa-Sakti, but none from His maya-sakti. He is described as nirguna (without attributes) implying that He possesses no guna from Maya (Visnu Purana 1.12.69). Thus He is both saguna and nirguna. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient and is beyond the influence of time, space and relativity. Brahma Smhita asserts that the universe evolves out of Nirvisesa Brahman regarded as a halo (prabha) of Sri Krsna (B.S.V.40)

There is a good deal of difference of opinion among the philosophers regarding the relation between the Jiva and Brahman. In one view there is no difference (bheda) whatsoever ; in another view there is, yet there is a third view which says there is both difference (bheda) and non-difference (abheda). The Upanisads contain text in support of both (Cha.U. 11.14.1.VI.8.7, Br.U.1-4.10 ; 11.1.20). This fact is suggestive of a reconciliation between the two sets of text with equal importance attached to both such a reconciliation has always been the avowed aim of Chaitanya School.

The Chaitanya School made a very serious attempt to uphold a peculiar type of Bhedabhedavada known as Acintya-bhedavedavada. Jiva is an ainsa of Brahman transfused with His Jiva-sakti and that the universe also in Brahman transfused with His maya-sakti. The Jiva, the universe, the dhamans, are all essentially His saktis.

Then the other question about difference and non-difference. The answer is not an easy one. One cannot think of musk bereft of its odour. Accordingly one may be induced to think that there is no difference between the two. But as odour cannot be separated from

the musk, as heat cannot be separated from fire, so Sakti cannot be separated from Saktimat. If the substance of musk and its odour be supposed to be different, both are to be regarded as constituents of musk. The musk will lose its weight on omission of its odour. But one's experience does not corroborate it. Hence the substance of musk cannot be said to be different from its odour. This particular example helps us determine the relation between Brahman and His Saktis. Brahman being Ananda is inseparably linked with his Saktis. Ananda and Saktis of Brahman constitute one and the same thing. (B.S.11.3.43/ Gobinda-bhasya). If these two be supposed to be different internal difference in Brahman becomes unavoidable, which cannot be admitted nor can it be supposed that there is absolute non-difference between the two, as His attributes, such as grace, may be felt even without realization of His self.

It has been found that recognition of mere difference between Sakti and Saktimat, apart from non-difference presents enormous difficulties and vice-versa. The important point to be noted is that the existence of either be ignored altogether. So it is admissible on all counts that the relation is one of the simultaneous difference and non-difference is Acintya. (cannot be explained or defies all explanations). Jiva Goswami after elaborate discussion in his Sandarbhas and Sarvasmavadini concludes that the relation is one of the acintyabhedabheda (inexplicable difference and non-difference). By Acintya he means to suggest incapable of being considered either of the categories of absolute difference and absolute non-difference as in the case of fire and its heat.

According to the Upanisads, Brahman is advatar Tattwa, ekameva-dvitya (one without a second). It implies further that He is without any of the three Bhedas (difference) viz ; Sajatiya-bheda, Vijatiya-bheda and Svagata-bheda. Both Sankaracarya and Jiva Goswamin agree that Brahman is without three kinds of Bhedas. Unlike Sankara, Jiva Goswamin recognizes the existence of Brahman's Saktis. According to him all the texts of the Upanisada have paramarthika value and none need be ignored as Vyavaharika. He Admits generally mukhya meaning of the texts.

According to Jiva Goswamin, since the Upanisads speak of bhedas, they have got to be admitted as such. These bhedas are only apparent and not real. Had they been real, the Upanisads would not have

described Brahman as one without a second, notwithstanding the bhedas.

What is bheda ? According to Jiva Gosvamin bheda is predicted of two things, each of them being Svayamsiddha. As to Sajatiya Bheda both Brahman and the Jiva are essentially cit and hence they belong to the same species Cit. The Jiva of course, appears to be a case of Sajatiya bheda in relation to Brahman. It is not really so, for the Jiva owes its existence and status to Brahman. So Jiva is not Svayamsiddha.

As to Vijatiyabheda, the material universe being in essence unconscious matter, belongs to a certain species other than Brahman who is absolute consciousness. Thus it may appear to be an instance of Vijatiyabheda. But it is not really so, it has to depend for its existence and status on Brahman and in that respect it is not Svayamsiddha.

As to Svagata-bheda, it is of two varieties, viz ; of different ingredients and of different phases. There are Svagata-bhedas in individual beings as the material bodies of beings are composed of five distinct elements-Ksiti (earth), ap (water), tejas (light), marut (air) and Vyoman (void), and also there is the conscious soul. In Brahman on the other hand there is nothing but Cit or ananda. There is no soul apart from his self. Hence he is without Svagata-bheda. The different bhagavat-Svarupas existing in Him are different phases of His rasahood which do not constitute Svagata-bheda as they are not Svayamsiddha or independent of Him. It has to be borne in mind that the attributes of Brahman do not constitute Svagata-bheda, as they owe their existence to Him or to His Svarupa-sakti.

Jiva Gosvamin considers in his Sarvasamvadim, a text of the Upanisad—'Vijnanamanandam Brahman.' Here if Vijnana (consciousness) and ananda (bliss) denote the same thing there will be redundancy. It is clearly inadmissible in the same Text. Again, if they appear as different they will approximate Svagata-bhedas. But they are not actually so. As dhamans and parikaras of Brahman owe their existence to Him or His Svarupa Sakti they are not also bhedas. Thus, Brahman is advaya in spite of the bhedas, which are only apparent, and not real.

The Chaitanya School bases its arguments and conclusions there on the Mukhyartha of the Srutis. They attach equal importance to all the texts and excludes none. They try to reconcile the different texts and the most striking feature is Acintyabheda-bheda. The most

outstanding feature is establishment of Brahman's advayatva in spite of His saktis which are inseparable from Him.

The Rasacult of the Chaitanya School brings into forms the most attractive phase of rasahood of Brahman, not only that, it points out of ways and means for its realization. This fascinating phase of Brahman would remain undisclosed or at best, hinted at the Scriptures. The phase of rasahood, it may be asserted, surpasses even the charm of Brahmananda.

According to the Chaitanya School, Jivatman is a sakti of Brahman. It is superior to Maya-sakti and is cit (consciousness) by nature. It is an amsa (part) of Brahman on account of its being His sakti, as a sakti forms a part of saktimat (possessor of Saktis). Jiva Gosvamin holds that the Jivatman is the amsa (part) of *Kṛṣṇa*. It is transformed with Jiva sakti, but not associated with Svarupa Sakti (Paramatma-Sandarbhā-31). It is also not separated from Him by Maya as Maya as His bahiranga-Sakti cannot touch Him, nor is it a part separated from Him, as He is not divisible. Jivatman does not possess Svarupa-Sakti (Visnu Purana 1.12.69) and hence is called His Vibhinna *rūpa* (Paramatma-Sandarbhā 45), as distinguished from His Svamsa possessing Svarupa-Sakti.

Jivatman being Cit by nature, is a knower (jñātṛ) and a doer (kartṛ), though its power of doing is derived from Brahman Jivatman has a separate but eternal entity. The separate existence of the soul continues even after its liberation (Tai. U. 11.7.). Jiva realized Rasa becomes anandin (blissful possessor of ananda or bliss). A sutra of the Brahma-Sutra implies that even the liberated souls (muktas) serve God or Brahman. Jivatmans are, in fact infinite in number (Paramatma-Sandarbhā, 44).

Chaitanya School holds that since Jivatman is a sakti and an amsa (part) of Brahman, it is its intrinsic nature and duty to serve Him (Chai. Cha., 11.20.101) as a sakti is always found to serve its possessor. The Jiva is an eternal servant of Brahman, a loving servant of course. Brahman or Sri Kṛṣṇa is the object of the Jiva's loving service. He is always eager to give bliss to His associates. The Jivas, on the other hand, as His associates are even eager to minister to His pleasure by loving services in His lilas. The Jiva's loving service is a constant source of ever-expanding joy to both the subject and the object of love. (Chai. Cha., 11.22.8.11)

There are two classes of souls, eternally liberated (nitya-mukta) and under the bondage of Maya from eternity (baddha). The former serves Him as His eternal associates and enjoys bliss of loving services. The latter forget *Kṛṣṇa* and their relationship with Him under the bondage of Maya. They may also be liberated and become His associates by proper devotion. One has to get rid of Maya to realize one's essential servanthood and thus to have one's Seva-vasana evolved. As has been discussed earlier the bondage of Maya can be removed only by remembering Him, by knowing Him and ultimately by realizing Him, just as darkness may be removed only by bringing light. He can be realized only in His Svarupa Sakti or rather in that aspect of His Svarupa Sakti which is known as His adhara sakti, technically Vasudeva (Bha, IV., 3.23.). Caitanya school holds that the only effective means of liberation and realization of Brahma is Bhakti (B.Gita XVIII. 55 Bha XI. 14.21). It is for this reason this school holds that even Jnana and Yoga, unaided by Bhakti fails to produce the desired effect. (Chai. Cha., 11.22.14). Mahanara Sruti says : It is only bhakti that leads the Jiva to brahman. It is only bhakti that shows Brahman to the Jiva. Purusa or Brahman is subject to bhakti. Only is great. It is called Suddha bhakti when it aims exclusively at the loving service of *Kṛṣṇa*, as the dearest and nearest one, for His happiness only and not at anything else, not even at liberation from Maya. This constitutes as it were, the fifth purusartha.

Etymologically rasa refers to anything that will be tasted or enjoyed. Technically it means a thing that taste of which is attended with delicious sweetness. The realization consists in the Bhakti or love when it comes in contact with its object *Kṛṣṇa*. At this stage the love is said to have been transformed into Bhakti-rasa. As Rasika, Sri *Kṛṣṇa* relishes it when manifested through the loving services of his associates. According to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Sri *Kṛṣṇa* manifested Himself primarily for relishing the sweetness of His associates love for Him, and making them relish His own sweetness which for reasons not known He could not taste in His manifest lila.

Vaisnavas of the Chaitanya School believe in the conception of a personal God. They are firm believers in the conception of incarnations (avatars) and of manifest lila which amplifies the conception of avatara.

Granting that He is all merciful and all-good, there is no bar to

His coming down to us for good. Granting further that He is all-loving and all-loveable, there must be some to enjoy His sweetness, beauty, and love and some to be loved and enjoyed by Him.

It is finally concluded that in the case of Jiva and the Universe, Svarupa-sakti no doubt exists in Brahman, but if so exists in a state of perpetual inaction as is peculiar in the case of Nirvisesa Brahman. It is for this reason that the Brahman samhita is assertive of the fact that the Universe evolves out of Nirvisesa Brahman regarded as a halo (Prabha) of Sri *Kṛṣṇa*.

To sum up : I. The Chaitanya School bases its arguments and conclusions on the mukhyartha of the srutis.

II. It attaches equal importance to all the texts and ignores none as Vyavaharika and tries to effect a reconciliation the different texts, the most striking feature being its Acintya bhedabheda-veda.

III. To establish Brahman is advayatva in spite of His Saktis which cannot be separated.

IV. To bring into focus the rashood of Brahman hitherto undisclosed more or less.

Brahman is Vibhu cit (all-pervading consciousness). Jiva is Brahman is anu cit (consciousness-atom). One is all-knowing, the other is too-little knowing. One is all-powerful, the other has very little power. One is the creator of the universe, the other has his body created by Him.

The Jiva being amsa (part) of Brahman, the relation between them must be one of simultaneous bheda and abheda, for such is the relation between (part) amsa and amsin (whole)

Chaitanya School accepts these views but only as a corollary to its wider view regarding the relation between Sakti and Saktimat in general.

II

Sri Chaitanya and Philosophy of Sankara

Sankara is regarded as the greatest exponent of Advaita. He has systematized the teachings of the Upanisads in his comments on the Brahman Sutra. In his comments on the Brahma Sutra, the Upanisads and the Bhagavat Geeta, we find a rational, consistent and exhaustive treatment of all the problems of truth and reality as they arise in the course of his exposition of vedic monism.

Acarya Sankara is noted for profundity of thought and charity of expression. In a philosophical writing it is a rare combination though, His logic is unflinching and it led him to the supra-rational and not to the irrational. According to Sankara the essence of reality must be its absoluteness ; it must remain ever the same, unconditioned by time, space and causality. (Adhyasa-bhasya, Brahman-Sutra). The human intellect for its being conditioned and of varied nature it can never comprehend it in its entirety. Hence revelation is the only source of knowledge as regards the intimate reality of the Universe. Nevertheless Sankara fully appreciated the value of reasoning in an enquiry into the nature of reality.

In the introduction to the Brahma Sutra Sankara imbued with a truly scientific spirit discusses the foundation of empirical life. "Subject and object—the self and non-self—are so radically opposed to each other in notion and in practical life that it is impossible to mistake the one for the other. After this beginning he continues". Yet we find that the mistake is universal and we can never trace it to its source ; for in one common life, we cannot do without this initial error. Sankara is not alone in drawing our attention to the illusory nature of empirical life. Plato, Kant and Hegel adopt the same view and in recent times, Bergson arrives at the same conclusion. According to both Sankara and Bergson, the illusion is necessary to practical life, though none the less it is an illusion. Sankara does not favour the idea as against that of the object. The fundamental principle of Sankara is that practical life is made possible only by the spontaneous ascription of the qualities of the subject to the object and vice-versa. Waking or dreaming is not a state in the strict sense of the term. When we compare waking with dreaming , the soul assumes the position of a witness of the two, and no change can be permitted in the witness. Just as we cannot know when waking begins so we cannot know when dreaming begins, for both seem to be uncaused. From the waking point of view, a dream is typical case of illusion. No impression apparently ever dies and when it is denied sufficient scope in waking, it gets it in dreaming which is a phase of life for the latent impressions. The soul is proved to be an entity at the back of the mind, taking its stand as the metaphysical basis of life. The soul thus seeds its individuality and becomes universal spirit.

What is then reality ? It is that which invariably accompanies the three states viz., waking, sleeping and dreaming and persists in the midst of and in spite of the varying contexts. It is thus seen to be pure consciousness pervading all life whose nature is such as to make even an idea of its non-existence unthinkable. Pure unconsciousness is not merely the reality but all. It includes its manifestations ; it is all-inclusive. It is the absolute truth relating as it does to the all inclusive reality. Again reality does not develop by a process in time. There is no intermediary stages. It is our self that co-ordinates the states. The contents of the states when viewed separate from pure consciousness fade into nothing. The pure consciousness of the Vedanta is neither an idea, nor an object and nothing can precede consciousness which it pre-supposes placed beyond time and generating the time flow of each state it leads us to the highest being which the Upanisads call Brahman.

According to Sankara Atman is immutable. It is declared by the vedanta to be a self-evident truth. It is also evident that Atman is neither the body nor the senses, nor the mind, inasmuch as all these are in a state of flux. Atman is the reality, the everlasting and unchanging essence of the individual. It forms the noumenon of which all mental and bodily changes are phenomena. The mind is phenomenal, it has inherent limitations, so it can have no claim to comprehend the Atman.

Sankara shows that the subject can never be the object. The 'I' can never be anything other than 'I'. The Atman ever remains the subject and cannot become the object. So, an individual is in essence the Atman, remaining unaffected by mental and bodily changes which are all extraneous. This is the true nature of the nature of the Atman, which is neither the *Kartr*, nor the *bhoktr* and is in reality ever free. To think that Atman is bondage is wrong. The Atman is falsely identified with anatan (non-self) and hence the bondge. Bondage is therefore not real. So says Sruti ; 'All knots of the heart are cut asunder all doubts are dissolved and all karman are ended, when the highest Brahman is realized as one's self.' (Mu. U., 11.2.8). So salvation is not a new state of existence, it is no acquisition.

Having once accepted the authority of the Sruti as unquestionable and final, Sankara did not finish from its inevitable consequences, His

adherence to Vedic authority was complete. He would not tolerate any compromise. He was ever ready to explain away any contradiction when his interpretation of Sruti came in conflict with compromise. One such bold declaration : 'Brahman alone is real ; the world is false, the individual is Brahman and nothing else : This at least really sums up the fundamental doctrine of his philosophy. The individual (Jiva) is to be regarded perfectly identical with the absolute Brahman. Sankara takes Brahman to be essentially nirguna (without any attribute), niskriya (without any activity or movement), niravayava (without any parts), nirupadhika (unconditioned and absolute) and nirvisesa (without any distinguishing element in it, a simple homogeneous entity). To him, even the words sat, cit and ananda do not imply any quantity or differentiation in the being of Brahman, but what they simply mean is pure being pure consciousness and pure blessedness, each implying the others. Now the Jiva is evidently just the reverse of all this. How could it then be identified with Brahman ?

The world is always in a state of flux. It is said to have the self-same Brahman as its cause (Karana), both material (upadana) and efficient-(nimitta). In what sense could this phenomenal world be spoken of as emanating from, subsisting in, and finally merging in the absolute Brahman ? Brahman is non-relational. How could the non-relational Brahman be linked with the relational world, a world that contains individual Jivas as well ? According to Sankara this impossibility can be made possible in no way. The only truly existing thing is Brahman and all else is naught. "There is neither dissolution, nor creation, neither a person in bondage, nor any spiritual aspirant, neither any seeker after liberation, nor one that is liberated—this realisation is the highest truth" (Manlukya Karika 11.32). Now this negation of the world of time, space and causality in being of Brahman, the ultimate Truth is itself an attempt to reconcile the apparent contradiction between the Sruti and experience. Such an attempt of reconciliation would go against the very spirit of Sruti.

Sankara explains it by what is known as Maya (illusion) or adhyasa : Maya is the principle that unifies the contradictions in a mysterious way. It is as such inexplicable and indefinable. In other words it is the principle of identification of contradiction or the principle that makes a thing appear as what it is not (Manduhya-Karika-bhasya

1.9). The principle of adhyasa is most indispensable for all human affairs. It is, in fact no obstruction and has a most concrete existence so far as the phenomenal world is concerned.

Jiva can be said to be identical with nirvisesa Brahman only if his Jivahood be held to be a mere appearance, if Jivahood is taken to be a mere superimposition upon Brahman and as such, false. Sankara holds this view and is of opinion that it is Brahman that appears as the Jiva through ignorance or superimposition.

The world is then is a figment of Maya, a mere appearance. The world has no absolute reality (parāmarthika Satyatva). It has an apparent and relative reality. The world we see before us is neither real nor unreal nor both real and unreal. This is Sankara's theory of illusory appearance. Sankara's views based on the vedānta may be summed up as follows :

1. Brahman is nirguna, nirvisesa, absolute consciousness. It is one, indivisible without a second. Knowledge or consciousness absolute is the reality that is Brahman. It has itself no bheda (difference).
2. The Jiva is self-illuminated, unlimited and ever free, its limitedness are due to upadhis or conditions and as such are unreal. The upadhis being eliminated, the apparent duality ceases.
3. Avidya is the cause behind Brahman's appearing as the world.
4. The world has no reality of its own. What it has only is phenomenal reality.
5. Avidya, as an entity not separate from Brahman. It is simply indefinable.
6. Knowledge of the absolute identity of Jiva and Brahman helps one realize Brahmanhood. Tattwamasi—this dictum reveals the identity.
7. Permanent bliss is attainable only by knowledge (Jnana).
8. Mukti is nothing but the realization of the relation between the Jiva and Brahman.
9. Maya is negligible from the standpoint of Brahman. It is inexplicable from the standpoint of logic, while from the standpoint of common experience Maya is real, the very life of the world.

Sankara maintains that Brahman is the ultimate reality and so long

as Brahman is not realized, both the external and the internal world are to be perceived as facts, neither more, nor less : Hence the world has a reality of its own which may be termed Vyavaharika Satyatva i.e. reality as far as it is necessary for practical purposes.

The world is also relatively real and is said to be false only when knowledge dawn. Yet it is not altogether non-existent or alika, like the son of a barren woman. He is even prepared to grant some reality to the rajju-sarpa (the snake of the rope) which he designates pratibhasika Satyctva (seeming reality).

Sankara stands for the theory of vivarta as against the theory of Arambha of the Nyaya and the theory of parinama of the Samkhya. He however, does not accept or reject either of the views. He means to say that the effect has no existence independent of the cause and that which does not exist by itself cannot be said to have any reality in the true sense of the term. So the effect neither is nor is not.

The world abounds in evil and suffering is the lot of every individual. But every body desires to attain happiness and avoid misery. Therefore salvation is a desire to get past all kinds of miseries. But how to attain a perfect state of happiness ? In order to rootout misery it is proper to investigate its cause. Every individual works and by the law of necessity has to reap the consequences of his actions. If an individual is a kartr he will ever remain so, for he cannot go against his nature. If it can be proved that the individual is not necessary a kartr and hence not a bhoktr, then and then only would salvation be possible. It is evident that the Atman is neither the body nor the sense nor the mind. Atman is the everlasting and unchanging essence of the individual. It is unaffected by psychic or physical changes. It forms the noumenon of which all mental and physical changes are phenomena. Mind is itself phenomenal and has inherent limitations. So it can have no claim to comprehend the Atman. It is impossible to comprehend anything unaffected by the psychic process.

To Sankara the thought of individual doership and individual doing is a cause of illusion, for Brahman is the all-doer. Its world is an absolute system and it requires no addition, no improvement and no correction. To know this truth is to dedicate the whole life in all its aspects to Brahman freed from phantasmagoria.

Brahman is the truth which includes all and transcends all. The world is its creation and its expression. Brahman is the giver of reality

in all aspects, which does not therefore exist apart from Brahman. Brahman is ever transcendent. It is not lost in creation nor is it exhausted by it. Therefore the Sruti speaks of bheda between the two. Bheda in this context is not significant of the independent character of the world, but only signifies the transcendent character of Brahman. The supreme is to be known as independent door, because it does and makes others do without depending upon anything else.

The goal of a Vaisnava of the Chaitanya School is to serve *Kṛṣṇa* at Vrndavana with madhura rati. The devotee should always think that he is a young gopi, beautifully dressed, attending on Radha in her love-pastimes with *Kṛṣṇa*, being principally subordinate to Rupamanjari. Similar is the mode of meditation for devotees with other ratis. (Chai. Cha. II.22.91) If a vaishnava likes to serve *Kṛṣṇa* along with His saktis (comrades), he will assume the spiritual form of a sakha. By thought, modulation, or remembrance of *Kṛṣṇa* in His lila with the associates of one's group and by meeting oneself in imagination in suitable services in their midst.

But it is not an easy task to concentrate one's mind on such things. Some sort of preliminary, some precautionary and others directly promotive of devotion or love for *Kṛṣṇa*, that is some external practices have to be resorted to, for its attainment.

Kṛṣṇa is paramtattva in Chaitanya philosophy. According to Sri Chaitanya this world is full of miseries. This is due to an individual's staying away from God (*Kṛṣṇa*). Sri-*Kṛṣṇa* is All-Bliss, Anandamaya is HE. All Jivas are subjected to miseries. So, to come to God (*Kṛṣṇa*) and to enjoy His love unbound should be the singular goal in life. According to Chaitanya Charitamṛta Paramatattwa is Brojendranandan Sri *Kṛṣṇa* as described in the Bhagavata. He is purusottama. In the Bhagavata we find nine principal item enumerated which if followed shall pave the way for the realization of the all-blissful Purusattama. They are :

1. Hearing the names of God chanted or sung by others or songs is praise of or the narration of *Kṛṣṇa's* charms, pastimes, attributes etc.
2. Chanting or singing His names, charms etc.
3. Remembering or thinking of His names, charms etc.
4. Showing respects to *Kṛṣṇa* by paying occasional visits to places

associated with His pastimes, looking at His images or pictures, showing respects to things connected with His memory.

5. Worship of *Kṛṣṇa* images by offering flowers, sandal paste, food etc.
6. Bowing down before *Kṛṣṇa* or His images at the place of worship.
7. Serving *Kṛṣṇa* in the attitude of a devoted servant.
8. To think that one is His loving and intimate friend.
9. To resign oneself entirely to His services.

Gauriya Vaishnavas believe firmly that mere mechanical process cannot produce any salutary effect on the mind. Even a single item noted above properly practised may produce the desired effect, love and devotion to *Kṛṣṇa*. Chaitanya attaches the greatest importance to the chanting of Lord's name which alone may take one to the highest goal (Chai. Cha. iii. 4. 65-65). A devotee has to respect all persons believing that *Kṛṣṇa* lives in Him. (Chai. Cha. III. 20.17-20)

Sankara in expounding his theory lays too much emphasis on knowledge. Logical introspection and subtle analytical process based on theoretical speculation not intelligible and comprehensible to people in general. Chaitanya is a novel path-finder. He avoids interpretations awaiting approved of reasons for their acceptance finally ; he showed instead the road of Bhakti allowing maximum participation of Jivas to wallowing to sin.

III

Sri Chaitanya on Sankara Darsan

In his bid to rescind Advaitabad, so manipulated by Sankara to serve his end and establish instead Acintyabhedabhedbad. Sri Chaitanya held a number of discourses with, the prominent-Advaitins. Such meaningful deliberations and the conclusions reached thereof are found embodied in the Chaitanya Charitamṛta. In course of his discussions with celebrated Prakasananda Sarasvati. Sankaracarya is described an incarnation of Lord Siva. It is noticeable in the Padma Purana that Mahadeva in obedience to the expressed injunction of Vishnu came down on this earth as Sankara with the avowed objective to turn people away from the path of Bhakti. Sankara adhered to the Gaunārtha of the Sastras, leaving aside the mukhyārtha with a view to substantiating his own theory even going to the length of defiling the real purpot

contained there in. He established that Brahma was Nirvisesa, Abheda (indifferentiated. Jiva and Brahman are inseparable ; They are not separate but one and the same), and without a parinama (the evolutionary aspect of the Supreme is thus ignored), but vivarta and finally Attributeless. Thus to see the one devoid of His attributes is tantamount to view Him in a curtailed form, His cosmic compactness reprimended. Sri Chaitanya depicts the relationship between Jiva and Brahmanas. Jiva tattva is Sakti and Kṛṣṇa tattva in Saktiman. Sri Kṛṣṇa said to Arjuna, “O Arjuna I am in possession of Aparā Sakti. I am the possessor of another sakti besides—para that holds together the Jivas (Geeta 7.5). In the Vishnu Purana we find three distinct saktis of Lord Vishnu attributed viz., Para, Aparā and Avidyā. It is Aparā that is termed kṣhotrajña sakti and Avidyā denoted Karmasamttva as a third force. So the relationship between the All-High and the Jivas is different on the surface but not so separated when viewed in-depth. As a spark born a fire when detached from the Agni loses its close and intimate relationship with Agni it is simply loosening of ties and it is not so when the superficialities stand ignored. The Jiva Chaitanya, it seems on all counts, bears on direct link with the Supreme, consciousness, but in point of consciousness the Anu Jiva is not separable from the cosmic consciousness. Jiva a part of Brahman stands appropriated as undifferentiated from the Supreme according to Sankara. This amounts to for all intents and purposes a negation of the true nature of the Supreme Reality. To Vedābyāsa, the world is in a flux subjected to the process of evolution. Admittedly the Reality is veiled by Maya, but Maya, then is the sakti of the Brahman. God endows Himself with inestimable sakti. He remains unchanged and is subject to no changes what so ever. It is also not untrue that although He remains so in His ownself, He undergoes transformations at times of His will to oblige Maya. Brahman’s remaining unchanged is due to Acintya-Sakti. As milk is transformed into curd and earth into earthenpots. According to Sri Chaitanya Pranab is the Summum bonum in all Vedas. Sankara has taken refuge in ‘Tat Tam Asi’ as the principal and acceptable assertive of the Vedas for his inference of no differentiation between the Jiva and the Brahman. Chaitanya’s emphatic declaration : Part and the whole are encompassed by Bheda-bhed. So, the Jiva according to Sruti is ‘abheda’ on one hand and ‘bheda’ on the other.

When a particular upadesa of Sruti is taken to be Paramarthika and another Babhyarika it weakens the force of the real implication and distorts by and large the import appertaining to the particular saying Jiva and Brahman are abheda (undifferentiated) and bheda (differentiated)—both contain truth. Brahman is Bibhu while Jiva is anu. Agni and its spark are both Agni. Hence undifferentiated. But Agni and Agni-sperk are different and not squarely the same ; hence they are differentiated bheda. This bhedabhed surpasses thought-cycle, so extremely non-ideative. And for this reason the really significant relation between Jiva and Brahman is founded on Acintyabhedabhed. Brahman is Pranab which is omnipresent, intimately linked with creative process. In different Upanisads it is aptly hailed as Parama Brahman.

Acarya Sankara, it seems probable, manipulated those tenets contained in the Srutis in a way that would facilitate explaining his tattvas derived there of in his own way, as he founded all his arguments, discourses, dissertations and conclusions on them as the edifice, so as to establish the unchallengable validity of the theories born of them. In his attempt to expound the inner significance of the Srutis he resorted to the lakshanas in lieu of the mukhyartha. Chaitanya raises unequivocal objection to such mode of exposition and subsequent presentation. To him Sruti needs no further explanation whatsoever. It is self-revealing, self-expository, all-inclusive and all-encompassing. Calculated adherence to lakshanas in lieu of Mukhyartha over clouds the shining face of the Reality, stamped as it is by no-explanation so say the least. According to the Geeta Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is Pranaba in several chapters of the Geeta to worship Pranaba is categorically enjoined. Jiva is Brahman's Para-Sakti and the world is apara-sakti. Both Jiva and the world are related to Brahman in terms of Bhedabheda. It is so established in the Bhagavata. For this reason Pranaba that is all pervasive on ground of bhedabheda is the Mahabakya (Supreme expositive of Supreme Reality).

According to Chaitanya Charitamrita Sri Chaitanya made it quite clear to no other than Sarbabhauma Bhattacharya that the mystery surrounding the Godhead can be penetrated and the veil covering it torn off only by Bhakti (Chai. Cha. 2.6). God is all-love. Bhagavata declares : one devoid of Bhakti can have no idea of God who is all-love. on the other hand one who is blessed with the minimum dose

of the nectar contained in His lotus-feet, can have a sight wide and succinctly clear enabling one to see Him and learn a lot about the tattva born of Him. (Bhagavata 10.14.29). In fact quest for knowledge leads us no where. We are forced a retreat if we have the desire to have an idea of God only through knowledge. Employment of the dilectical tactics is of no avail in such case. What is supremely needed is Bhakti and Bhakti alone. The Vedas abound in absolute proofs of His Existence, no other proof based on logical prattlings will bring Him within the worldly consciousness. That God or the Supreme Being is not only Nirbishesha, but Sabishesa as well is sealed with Reality absolute in the Vedas and the Upanisads. In the Puranas we can view Him in person. He is the source of bliss-infinite. He is Purna, He is Brahma and He is Sanatana or Eternal. (Bhagavata 10.14.3). According to Sri Chaitanya Bhakti is the Param Purusartha : (Beatitude absolute). Even these sages who are devoid of worldly cares, crafts and desire, passing their days lost in blissful enjoyment-wholly celestial in origin adore Sri *Kṛṣṇa* with the warmth of bhakti not actuated by any gainful motive poured out of the deep of their heart (Bhagavata 2.7.41). Chaitanyadev ascended on this earth to initiate humanity into the doctrine of Bhakti. Bhakti is obtainable not so easily and a real devotee desires to serve God, to remain in His service so long as he breathes. He does not feel tempted for salvation which to him is co-existent with his service to God. Vedanta-Sutras after unquestionable proof of Eternal in manifold manifestations. Brahma is all-powerful in the Vedas and the Upanisads. Jivas are but the Absolute expressed in a miniature form. The Gita and Vishnu Purana testify to such assertion. Chaitanya Charitamṛta offers a detailed account in support of what is said above.

Sri *Kṛṣṇa* as depicted in the Bhagavata is upheld as the tattva in Chaitanya Charitamṛta. This tattva is non-dual on one hand, again on the other it finds its fullest expositions in multi-faceted expressions of Svarupa-Sakti, hladini, Samdhini, Sambit, Jiva Sakti and Maya Sakti each one closely weaved to the other. Bhakti or Preman as dwelt on in the Upanisads and elaborately expounded in the Bhagavata as Ragatmika is considered on indispensable possession of the Jiva. Such declination evertips human intelligence, pure and simple and the philosophers' hard-earned dialectic. Again the love-bond between God and Jiva, the devotee of course is a matter to be intensely felt which again is attainable to a Sadhaka in course of his Sadhana. In Chaitanya

Charitamrita, in the fourth chapter of the Adilila Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is imagined to be Sri *Kṛṣṇa* Chaitanya. The Advaya-Tattva Svarupa finds its confirmation through Sri *Kṛṣṇa* Himself. Which is recorded in the Bhagavata as discussed in the preceeding chapter. Sri *Kṛṣṇa* has asserted that the knowledge of the Absolute is ever surrounded in mystery and it is unrevealed. God alone through His grace unbound manifests His Svarupa and the aporaksha jñan comes to one's aid in this matter (Bh. 2. 9. 30). According to Sri Chaitanya, Bhagavata, the Geeta and others come to one's rescue to know Brahma-Svarupa. There is no death of certitude in the texts referred to. Bhedabhedvad as well as acintya bhedabhedvad would remain implicitly incorporated there in.

In the seven chapters of Adilila and sixth chapters of Madhyalila of the Chaitanya Charitamrita, we notice a graphic description of the Discourses that Chaitanya Prabhu held with two celebrated Sankarites-Prakasananda Sarasvati and Sarabhouma Bhattacharya. The significant points which are noted in such dissertations may be summed up as follows :

1. Replacement of Brahman's Savisesattva in place of Nirvisesatta. Saraisaraya (excellences), Purnatva (absoluteness) and Himself Bhagavatsattva.
2. In place of abheda between Jiva and Brahman, the anutva of Jiva. Brahman Sakutattva and Nitya Kṛṣṇa dasattva.
3. In place of maya-veiled concept of Bhagavat bigraha, Sacchidanandatva.
4. Elimination of the concept of Vivarta and establishment of Parinavada instead.
5. To curb the supremacy of Tattam asi and establish the univocal.
6. Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is Parama Brahman (Brahman Absolute)
7. It is Sri *Kṛṣṇa* who is beyond all shade of doubt the Sambandha Tattva of the Vedes.
8. Love-bond is the only binding force between the devotee of God.
9. The devotee is the abhidheya Tattva.
10. Sevyā-Sevakatva is the idealised relation between God and the devotee and Sajujya mukti as such is out of question.

A somewhat elaborate studies of the points enumerated above is considered essential to have a full grasp of the dissertations noted above.

1. Both Sri Chaitanya and Acarya Sankara are of opinion that Brahman alone is the advayatattva. This Brahman admits of bhedas viz., Svajatiya, Bijatiya and Svagata. But while according to Sankara Brahman is Nirvisesa, to Mahaprabhu. He is Savisesa, adorned with Saraisaryas and Himself God. In the Sastras Brahman is described as Nirvisesa. He is Savisesa as well according to the same set of Sastras (changlogya p. 6.3.2.). Sankara would acknowledge Brahman's sakti, Jnan, kry, and so on in his bid to establish God's Advayattva and Nirvisesattva conclusively. In his opinion in such case Brahman's Bhedattva has to be admitted. But to Chaitanya Brahma means All-Great without an equal or having one greater than Him (Sve. Up. 6.8). Manifold are Brahman's Saktis surpassing all conceivable knowledge and thought (Acintya Jnana go-chara : (Bh. 2.9.32). So according to Sri Chaitanya Brahman is attended with Saktis, He is Sabisesa and Advayatattva. He unfolds Himself Brahman to the knowledge-seeker, to a Yogi. He is Paramatma (self absolute) and to the devotee He appears as the Bhagavan (Bh. 2. 9.32, 33, 34). This Sabises Brahman is ever-present behind the existent Jivas and Nirbises Brahman is a part of Sabises Brahman (Geeta 10.42. Bha 4. 9. 42). The created world forms a part of Sabises, Saraisarya Purna Brahman who resides in every Jiva as atman (Bh. 6. 5. 40). According to Sri Chaitanya Brahman is *Krsna* Himself and Saimad Bhagavat by Vedabyasa is the reserver of the self-evident commentary of Brahma Sutra.

2. Sri Chaitanya refuted Sankara's abhedatva in regard to Jiva and Brahma with the help of sastric injunctions. He has spoken of Jiva's anutva, Brahma Saktittva and nitya Krsnadasttva. According to Sankara Brahman is the only Reality and the Jiva is but the image or shadow of Brahma. So Jiva is unreal. But according to Sri Chaitanya mention is evidently made in the Upanisads, the Geeta, the Bhagavata and Vishnu purana Jiva exists on its own right that Brahman and Jiva stand differentiated i.e., Jiva is anu and Brahman Bibhu, that Brahman is Saktimat. Whole Jiva is Sakti and last but not the least Jiva is Krsna-dasa, and such inseparable bond eternally co-existent. Those Sastras have not only admitted that Brahman and Jiva are the same (non-differentiated) but also differentiated, this being confirmed in many ways. In the Brahma-Sutra Brahman is described as Anandamoya and not the Jiva for Anandamoya is not expressive of Jivatattva.

According to Sutras, Anandamoya is a Reality quite distinct and having absolute difference from Jiva, for Anandamoya is PRAPYA of Jiva and Jiva on the other hand is His Prapaka. So Prapya and Prapaka cannot enjoy sameness in respect of identity. This is a clear indication of the differentiation between Brahman and Jiva.

3. 'Bibikshetagusunepapatecbha (Brahma 5.12.2) and Tenu nh Sarira (Br. 5. 12. 3.). These couple of Brahma Sutras describe Brahman as the possessor of paramartha much large in quantity than the Jiva. The first Sutra signifies that 'Satya-Sain Kalpatwadi Gunas' are Brahman's absolute possession and not of the Jiva. So Brahman is adorable to Jiva. The second Sutra implies categorically that jiva is denied the access to Brahmanodharma. Thus the relation between the two is not abheda, but bheda instead.

4. In accordance with the Brahma Sutra 1.2.8. which reads as 'Sambhogaprapriti Chhenna 'baisasyat' it stands established that as the Jiva has its abode the body which facts causes enjoyment or suffering as the case may be, so if accordingly Brahman feels inclined to do the same i.e., if He selects His Body as His abode, he would likewise have the feelings of elation or sufferings. But such a state of Brahman is simply untenable as He is Anandasvarupa which fact the Sastra squarely corroborates. Besides, Jiva is subjected to the feelings of weal and woe according as he is a deer. Brahman is on all counts, free from it, He is without any Karma as understood by the term and so, He is no doer. Such non-doingness on Brahman's part establishes conclusively that He and the Jiva stand differentiated.

5. 'Guhainprabistabaprajayutatdarsanat' (Br. S. 1. 2. 12). The Sutra quoted convincingly establishes that in the deep of Jiva's heart are discernible both Jivatma and Paramatma Taittiriya Upanisad lends support to this assertiveness by saying 'tatdrastva tadevanuprabhisat' meaning thereby that Paramatma having created Jivatma forced entrance into it. This action on his part confirms beyond a shade of doubt 'bheda' (differentiation) existing between Himself and the Jiva.

6. 'Sthityadanavyasa' (Br. Sutra 2.2.7).

The Sutra cited above lends ample support to the conviction that Jivatma and Paramatma are two distinctly separate entities. It is Brahman in whom alone abides the world and not in the Jiva. This accounts for the dual aspects of the Supreme Reality.

7. Prakasadvannaibanipara (Br. S. 2. 3. 46) and Smaranticha (Br. S. 2. 3. 47).

These two Sutras are indicative of the 'bheda' between Brahman and the Jiva, for the obvious fact that it is Jiva who is permitted to enjoy the fruits emanating from and accompanied with his karma and not Brahman who is inveterately attachment-free from His exclusive non-doingness.

8. Visesanabheda by a padasabhyam ca netarāṇa (Brah.S.1.2.22)

This Sutra refers to Bhūtagogin as a marked indication of Bhedatva Between Jiva and Brahman.

9. Parabhidanattva tirohitāṇa tato hasyabāṇa viparjāṇa (Brahma.Sutra 3.2.25)

This Sutra refers to the dream—like state of existence, but of whom, the Jiva or the Brahman ? Jiva stands differentiated from Brahman, for salvation or mukti comes only through His grace.

So it is evident that Sastras have enjoyed Brahman's Abhedattva. Sri Chaitanya has accepted Jiva's relation with the Brahman in both categories. Abheda and Bheda, notwithstanding his philosophical doctrine Achintyabhedabheda. Vidyabhusan, Sri Jiva and other and others have backed the theory propounded and established by Sri Chaitanya. Vidyabhusan in his Govindabhasya has established bhedatva of Jivam utter denouncement of Sankara's Abhedatattva. (Govindabhasya 2.3.45) Jiva is an āṇa (part) of Brahman. Jiva cannot be totally separated from Brahman. Brahman admitting of no split it then amounts of perversion of truth and falsification of the tenets of the Sastras, in case it is so deduced. Jiva is the Sakti of Brahman who is Adaitva-tattva enamoured with His Sakti, i.e., Jiva. Jiva being the part, it is the part of the whole who is Brahman Himself and by whom again he is so created. The part and the whole cannot remain in as abheda state. This leads one to take for granted the bhedatva between the Jiva and Brahman. Such bheda comes within the orbit of realisation through their controlled and regularised Bibhutva and Anutva (Gobinda Bhasya 2. 1 13). Dandisa (one holding a staff) is different from the Danda (staff) he holds but appears to be non-differentiated with the staff, it being contemplated to add to his strength, so is Saktiman Brahman appearing non-differentiated, but in reality He stands differentiated. He being not Sakti, but one holding in His Sakti, His attribute (Gobinda Bhasya 2.1.13). Again Jiva and Brahman having

been assumed to be abheda, Bhakti Tattwa (the relation between them founded on the principles of devotion and love), proves untenable (Gobinda Bhasya 3.2.17). According to Sri Jiva Goswamin although Brahma Svarupa is the one and second to none. Yet He exists as Saktimat and Sakti. (Sat Sandarva p.186). Further to him such relation is acintya which barren logic fails to give us an idea of (ibid, p. 63). In this way the followers of Sri Chaitanya have attempted to denounce Abheda and found in its place Bheda. The reason they have adduced to justify this conclusion that in case bheda does not exist the devotee will be denied the scope to offer his adoration to His All-love, the Supreme Reality, his Kṛṣṇa, his Brahman. This will deprive him of his attainment of Panchum Purusartha. As Sri Chaitanya would acknowledge both Bheda and Abheda he has directed Sanatana to conduct his deals in reference to Bhagavata which we find expressly injunctioned in the Madyalila of Chaitanya Charitamrita.

It may be pertinently asked in this context : What is the exact relation between Brahman and Jiva ? Whatever basis be assumed pertaining to the relation between Jiva and Brahman Abheda, Bheda or Acintyabhedabheda as stands delineated with utmost care in the foregoing passages based on the dissertations of Sankara and Sri Chaitanya. It is explicitly undeniable that the much discussed relationship between them exists on its merit. This particular relationship may be likened to that of the sun with a world of planets surrounded by their satellites. The existence of the sun with the planets widely surpassed all doubts. Like it may be that Isvara (Sri Kṛṣṇa) alias Brahman, alias Paramatman is the eternally central force of all creation—the world of Jivas encircling whom they move. The analogy of course, cannot be carried too far, since the objective of Jiva presupposes attainment of Puruṣartha. Acarya Sankara by Puruṣartha has referred to Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. To Sri Chaitanya the highest Puruṣartha the Jiva becomes aspirant for attainment is Bhakti (love) or offering of service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. However be it Moksha or devotion the ultimate objective as pinpointed by both Sankara and Sri Chaitanya is deliverance from bondage, a total extinction of the severest painful experience. It is described in the Vedas and the Upanisads as the Amṛtatva or Svarupprapti etc. and in accordance with the Geeta, it is Jiva's highest longing (Geeta 6.22).

According to Sankara Jiva is Siva or Brahman. It is ignorance which is at the root of differentiation or Bhedatva. To Chaitanya Jiva and Brahman are abheda (non-differentiated) for the fact that Brahman is Sakmat and Jiva is the Sakti. As the existence of Sakti is simply comprehensible without Sakmat, so is the avedatva between them. Brahman is all-consciousness. Jiva is invested with consciousness as well. From this point of view they are differentiated so far as consciousness is concerned. But Jiva is a spark of the illumitable of infinite Sakti of Brahman. Brahman in consciousness Bibhu and Jiva conscious anu. A drop of water is not only abheda but bheda as well when considered in relation to the ocean being taken whole and the sunrays are abheda and bheda in relation to the sun being taken in fullest grandeur, the relation between Brahman and Jiva is acintyabheda even through the concept of abheda leaves a firm hold in the Sruti. Sri Chaitanya's significant delineation of Acintyabheda finds fullest expression in Chaitanyacharitamrita.

Again, if it has to be taken for granted following Sankara that Brahman is the only real Entity and all else unreal, then it has also to be accepted that Bhagavatbighraha is totally unreal. But to Chaitanya Brahman-Bighraha is as real as Brahman Himself. In Chaitanya Charitamrita its significance is defetly established, having recourse to the apt hints collected from Brahman-Samhita, Bhagavat, Vishnupurana etc, and for verification and vindication with quotations from the above mentioned texts. According to Sankara Bhagavatbighraha cannot be Prakṛta vastu. It is simply an illusion. To Chaitanya it is Aprakṛita Satyatattva as real as Brahman Himself. Both stand undifferentiated. Sankara and Chaitanya both accepted Brahman as Paramatattva. But, by way of elucidation Sankaracarya has accepted Nirguna Brahman whereas Sri Chaitanya the Saguna Brahman. To Sri Chaitanya Nirguna Brahman is but the partial manifestation of Saguna Brahman. Brahman and Brahman-Bighraha (Sri *Kṛṣṇa* and Sri *Kṛṣṇa* Bighraha) both are real and undifferentiated. It may be mentioned in this context that Sankara did not hesitate to accept Saguna Brahman and Brahman-Bighraha as 'Byabharika Satya'. But in his opinion Nirguna Brahman is the Paramatattva. Acarya Sankara in his bid to establish what he thinks to be unrefutable cites the instance of a magician who it appears to be so makes a number of things in the process but none real, he himself remaining unaffected likewise, what seem to be apparently

real such as Saguna Brahman, Brahman-Bigraha, different phases of creation are illusive and unreal person, when attempted to be interpreted as a Paramarthic Satya, nor is Nirguna Brahman affected by such illusiveness. Brahman, to Sankara is knowledge, to Chaitanya He is Bhakti, the surest way to reach Him is through knowledge according to Sankara while it is through Bhakti or love according to Sri Chaitanya. Acarya Sankara has made a distinction between Vyabharika Satya and Paramarthika Satya, but Chaitanya admits of no difference between the two.

To Sankara Brahman is the only Reality and the world is all illusion, a phantasmagoria and that it is not Brahman's creation. Under the spell of illusion we taken Brahman to be the cause of the world. Such causes are termed Vivarta. A piece of rope may give us the illusory idea of a snake, though it can never be so. It is an illusion. But Brahman would manifest Himself as Brahman. The Jiva would rid Himself of such illusion. According to Sri Chaitanya the world is not vivarta, it is the Parinam of Brahman'sakti. The world is controlled by Maya Sakti. The Brahman is the upadan and nimitta karan of the world. So the world is not vivarta of Brahman, but its parinam. It may be termed the transformation of elementary objects, as milk get transformed into curd. According to Sri Chaitanya transformation is a distinct phenomenon becoming a resultant of something still in existence. The Vedanta of Sankara stands for the theory of vivarta as against Parinam. To have a full understanding of the terms it is felt necessary to explain them in a bit detail. Vivarta may be defined as the appearance of a higher reality for a lower one. For example the transcendental Reality (Brahman) appears as the empirical (Vyabharika) reality. The world Vivarta is the appearance of Cit (consciousness) as Jara (the non-conscious). Vivarta is the state of the cause, usually known as effect which is neither different from nor identical with the cause and as such is inexplicable. Parinamavadins holds contradictory views—the former taking the effect different from the cause, and the latter taking the effect to be identical with the cause in substance. Sankara says that the effect has no existence independent of the cause and that which has no existence by itself cannot be said to have any reality in the true sense of the term. The world we see before is neither real nor unreal nor both real and unreal. So it is really indefinable (anirvacaniya). This is the fundamental position of the theory of illusory appearance.

According to him Maya is the principle that mysteriously unifies contradictions and is as such inexplicable and indefinable (anirvacaniya).

In other words it is the principle that makes a thing appear as what it is not. This is adhyasa. One takes Brahman to be the world ; this too is adhyasa. To Sri Chaitanya Parinambad is the mukhyartha of Brahmasutra and not vivartabad. Vikar (transformation) according to him, identical with vivarta. Vikar refers to the transformed state of an element as an earthen pot is transformation of earth. An element, in fact, undergoes no change or transformation. So to Chaitanya, the world is the Parinam of Brahman Sakti and it is so described in the Sruti. Vyasa the expounder of Brahma Sutra has described the world as the Parinam of Brahma Sakti and in the Bhagavat Brahman is said to be closely related with Karakas and Bibhaktis. Brahman is the creator of all resides in the midst of His creation, maintaining close relationship with the created beings and substance.

To Chaitanya Sri Kṛṣṇa is the Upadan Karan and Nimittakaran of the world, Maya is Kṛṣṇa's Sakti. This is why Maya is denied freedom. As a piece of iron gets heated by fire, so is Maya's creative process. Sastras have declared the Upadan Karan and Nimitta Karan of a thing to be identical. They being present simultaneously notwithstanding the logical injunctions to the contrary proclaiming a positive hitas between the two. Sastra has declared with emphasis that in the pre-creation there existed Brahma alone in His Sat-Svarupa everything else was non-existent. Sadeva Saumyaidamagra asit ekamevadvittecam. (Chhand. Upanisad).

The world was without Upadan Karanas as there was none else or nothing else than Brahman. Similarly nothing can be recognised as nimitta karan for the same reason. A spider weaves its web illustrating a simultaneous interaction of Upadan Karan and Nimitta Karan. So it can be undeniably asserted that Brahman or Sri Kṛṣṇa is both the Upadan Karan and Nimitta Karan of the world.

Again so do the Gauriya Vaisnava philosophers think that in case the theory of vivarta of Sankara is upheld convincingly, the Jiva, the world, Brahman with His attributes, the relation between the preceptor and the disciple, knowledge of Brahman, the idea of freedom from bondage in a word salvation shall prove to be unreal. To attain knowledge of Brahman and salvation thereby of all become irrelevant.

In the Sruti it is clearly enjoined—"Permanent entity can not be attained through impermanent things." (Katha Upanisad 6.2.10). One having a heart full to the brim with devotion for one's preceptor may serve God best. It is so enjoined in Sveta. Upa. Such an assertion appears void if the preceptor is unreal in terms of Vivarta. The Mohopanisad categorically asserts that Tattwa. Darsan is next to impossible without the grace of a preceptor. (Mohopanisad 4.77). The Mundak Upanisad acknowledges indebtedness to the preceptor for imparting knowledge about Brahman. For knowing that Reality he should go with sacrificial faggots in hand to a teacher, versed in the Vedas and absorbed in Brahman. That man of enlightenment should adequately impart that knowledge of Brahman by which one realises the true and immutable purusa (Mundarka Upanisad 1.2.12-13). Sri *Kṛṣṇa* Himself advises in the Bhagavat to regard Acarya as he is the knower of His Svarupa. He has advised further not to be little the Acarya (Bhagavat 11.18.29). Elsewhere in the Bhagavata it is enjoined that a devout disciple through his preceptor's grace spends time immersed in Supreme bliss. (Bhaga 11.29.6). It may be mentioned in the context that Sankara Acarya declared himself Viswaguru which is suggestive of the fact that he did not denounce Gurutattwa altogether. His tattapodesa, No. 84 and Mathanusasanam No. 25 illustrated the truth of the assertion above.

Quite pertinent at this stage may be the enquiry into Gurutattwa. Who then is the Guru or the preceptor? Guru is one who guides along the path of ritousness towards the realisation of the self and there from the Supreme self, the Reality Infinite. Himself having uncompassed Truth concerning the Absolute Reality lying hidden in the deep of Sastras, he brings it to the fore and makes it comprehensible to an inquisitive soul. Whosoever is the knower of *Kṛṣṇa-tattwa* is a Guru or preceptor to whom one should propitiate. In this way Sri Chaitanya categories in a nut shell the qualifications of a preceptor (Chaitanya Charitamrita 2.8).

To Sankara Tattamasi is a Mahavakya, because aided it is Brahman established as abheda (non-differentiate) (from the Jiva). But according to Sri Chaitanya Pranaba is the mahavakya and Tattomasi is pradesik in character. Sankaracarya collected four differernt mahavakyas from the four Vedas. From the Aitereya Aranyaka of Rg. Veda, he called Prajnanam Brahman, from the Brihaddaranyaka Upanisad of Yajurveda group, Aham Brahmasmi, from the Chhandogya Sruti if

Samaveda group Tattamasi and four from the Atharbaveda he collected Aayamatma Brahman. Of these four Tattamasi is impregnated with supreme import. But all these four Vedavakyas cannot be termed Mahavakyas as each of them suffers from Ek desattva. To Chaitanya and his followers Pranab is the mahavakya as it is all-comprehensive and all embracing characteristics. This Pranab or Om Kar is Brahman in Sruti. Sri *Kṛṣṇa* in the Geeta says He is Pranab of the Vedas (Geeta 7/8) Tattamasi while claiming it to be mahavakya invites contradiction with a host of Srutivakyas that do significantly endorse bhedattva instead of abhedattva. The main characteristics of a mahavakya is that it ought to be all-pervasive. Pranaba satisfies this condition. So it is mahavakya. This Pranaba is in fact responsible for the growth and sustenance of the Vedas and the world inhabited by Jivas. It is well known that the thing that is revealed on the utterance of a word has its significance in the word. The knowledge that reveals itself to the man having a concentrated mind on the utterance of the word 'Om' is also dependant on and signified by 'Om' "I tell you briefly of that goal which all the Vedas propounded with one voice, which all the austerities speak of, and wisting for which people practise Brahmacarya ; it is this viz., 'Om' : (Katha Up. 1.2.15). Again : This mediuon (Om) is the best ; the medium is the supreme in the world of Brahman". (Katha Up. 1.2.17) Om has been indicated both as a medium for meditation and symbol for worship, as is expressly suggested by Kathaupanisad. Om iti Brahman (Taittareya Upanisad 1.8). According to Gita Sri *Kṛṣṇa* or Brahman is Pranaba which is His Svarupa, His name as well. To Caitanya the relation between Brahman and Jiva is based on Acintya-bhedabhed. Such relation is differentiated and non-differentiated as well, as a spark is abheda and bheda at the same time in its relation with Agni, Fire. Likewise anujiva cannot claim to be Isvar, the Bidhu-Chaitanya, the supreme consciousness, but on the consciousness level it is not differentiated.

Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is Parama Brahman. He is both Saguna and Nirguna as is corroborated by the Upanisads. Acarya Sankara declares Nirguna Brahman (Brahman without attributes) As real and Saguna Brahman is unreal in Paramarthik sense. Chaitanya however declares Saguna Brahman as Paramatattwa. In his opinion Sankara's acceptance of Brahman as Nirguna falls short of the total description of the Brahman. For he has acknowledged Brahman as such without His resourcefulness

(aisarya) Pramess (Sakti) which are described in the Sastras. This Saguna Brahman is mentioned in the Gauria Vaisnab Philosophy as Sri *Krsna* Himself. Sri *Krsna* or Saguna Brahman is described in various ways in the Vedas, Puranas, the Geeta, the Mahabharata and elsewhere.

Sri *Krsna* being the principal advaytattwa according to Sri Chaitanya He is the Pratipadya in the Vedas and Upanisads.

In the Sastras mention is made of Tattwa but here they didnot stop—in them we discover the ways to realize the tattwas and the ways referred to are *Karma* yoga. In jna na-yoga and BhaktiYoga Vedas in fact leave definite hints for the attainment of the tattwas along the path prescribed by the trio-yogas. It may be mentioned that according to Sankara Jnana is declared superior to the other two Yogas in respect of attainment of the knowledge concerning Brahman. In the Chaitanya Philosophy Bhakti is proclaimed the supreme status and considered the surest way leading to knowledge concerning Brahman with all His aspects.

Indian Philosophical thoughts evolves round four basic principles attainable our realization in life viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha. Of the four Sankara has accepted the fourth one. Moksha as the Prusartha. Sri Chaitanya has added one more principle to the list and made it five. His addition is Preman or Love. It is extolled in the Chaitanya Charitamrita so much as that it is considered supreme principle helping one to reach and merge into infinite splendor of the reality absolute.

According to Chaitanya Charitamrita the edifice on which the relation between Brahman and Jiva rests is the bond of service. Here the receipient of service is *Krsna* or Brahman Himself and the servant is anujiva. Service to the Absolute is the sole objective and not liberation or moksha. The nature of service implies offering of niskama love to *Krsna* looking upon His as one extremely close to heart (Atmajana). The bond of love between *Krsna* and His bhakta leads the latter to have the relation of his ownself. By way of elucidating the significance of Sankara's accepting Jnana, excluding bhakti Chaitanyadeva would opine that Sankara would take recourse to the path of Jnana. as he was so instructed by God with the specific objective to turn man's mind away from Bhakti or such things as are associated with it. Bhakti is very rare although it is, in Kali the only means to attain the blessings

of the Supreme Being. Not only that all absorbing bhakti acquaints us with the real self or svarupa of God. (Bhagavat 10.14.29). The Atmakama sages to Sri Chaitanya, propiate to God with the offerings of love and love alone. This accounts for the supreme gratification of the bhakta is the real sense of term. (Bha.1.7.10 ; 2.3.20).

A comparative study of Sankara philosophy and Chaitanya darsana reveals :

1. Both admit advayatattwa as paramatattwa. Both point out that such advayatattwa stands without Svajatiya, Bijatiya and Svagatah-these three types of bheda (differentiation). But to Sankara Brahman is without attributes and devoid of power. He is all-knowledge. But Chaitanya regards Him as One qualified with attributes possessing power, peculiar to Him and embellished with Acintya Sakti. He is both knowledge and knower. Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is such Advyatattwa whose other applications are Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagwan.
2. Both Sankara and Chaitanya have described the Brahman as the Supreme Force behind the creation, substance and annihilation of the Universe. To Sankara such Saguna Brahman is real in so far as implies Vyabaharic, but-absolutely unreal when paramarthic. But to Chaitanya Saguna Brahman is Advayatattwa means Apraktra gunas. So it is, to all intents and purposes idle to describe Saguna Brahman in terms of Vyabaharic and Parmarthic distinctiveness.
3. According to Sankara Both Jiva and Brahman are vivarta of the world. To Chaitanya Jiva is Sakti to Brahman and the world is the resultant of Brahmasakti being applied or enforced. The world is thus the Parinama.
4. Both have invested Maya with recognition. To Sankara Maya is incapable (anirvacaniya), from Vyabaharic stand point real but unreal otherwise. To Chaitanya Maya is a Sakti of Saktimat Brahman. Hence Maya cannot be categorised as unreal. Aided by Brahman, Maya acting as a Gauna Sakti is at the root of and casual determinant of the world process.
5. Jiva is unreal according to Sankara. To him the relation between them is abheda (non-differentiated). The Abheda construed between them is due to Pratibimba (image) and upadhi (designation). According to Chaitanya Jiva is a Sakti of Saktimat Brahman. The

relation between Brahman and Jiva is based on acintyabhedabhed which relation is achintyajnanagochara.

6. Both advocated vigorously freedom from the bondage of Maya for the absolute elimination of sorrow. To Sankara it is possible aided by Brahmajñana while to Caitanya it may be achieved through Kṛṣṇabhakti.
7. Both have assigned top-priority to Param Puruṣārtha. To Sankara it is salvation, according to Sri Chaitanya it is Preman or love.
8. Both have opined that Jiva is the appearance (adhīsthana) of Brahma or Kṛṣṇa.
9. In both philosophies (that of Sankara and Chaitanya) Brahman is eulogized as Sat Cit and ananda (Existence, consciousness and bliss).
10. Both Sankara and Chaitanya are Vedantists, attempting to explain the Jiva, the world and Brahman in light of the aphorisms of the Brahma Sūtra. Acārya Sankara has in this regard left commentaries, according as he takes them to be. Himself no rigid commentator of Brahma Sūtra like Sankar. Chaitanya Śrīmatbhagavat as the self-evident commentary of Brahma Sūtra.
11. Both philosophies lead to theism, having abiding faith in the Vedas and Brahman or Sri Kṛṣṇa as beginningless, infinite and Eternal truth.
12. Acārya Sankara is preponderously tattvavid and in that light he has established Brahman, the Tattva and every detail concerning Him.

Chaitanya on the other hand grasps the essence of tattva from religious stand point. To Sankara, his quest is knowledge-centric, while to Chaitanya it is bhakti-centric, love-feeling pure and simple mattering most. The basic difference between of approach them is while Sankara wants to know Brahman even depending heavily on logical niceties, Caitanya longs for having Brahman or Kṛṣṇa moving along the path of Bhakti.

From the discussions above it follows that both Acārya Sankara and Sri Chaitanya have meant as Paramatattva Paramābhraman as described in the Upanisads. To both He is above all matters, but each matter or expression in relation to matter is positively subordinate to Him. This paramatattva is without attributes in Sankara philosophy. Such proposition aims at showing the difference between Brahman

and God having for His upadhi Maya. But Chaitanya philosophy attempts to unfold the essence of Brahman without reference to Nirguna Kṛṣṇaman and God having Maya as His attribute. So it may be asserted that Brahman and Isvatattva are identical. Both have tried to understand it from different angle of vision—The Tattwa being the same and not different as it appears to be. They have tried to grasp the essence of the same Reality, not with standing their distinctively qualified outlook in regard to Jiva, the world, the relationship existing between the Jiva and the Brahman etc. Sankara sticks to knowledge while Chaitanya to devotion and both these are against the views and the Upanisads. Both are the acknowledge pathfinders desite apparently different view-points.

The view point of some of the celebrated Seers and scholars of different times, particularly of the modern period may be discussed in this context.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa has described God as Nirbisesa (without attributes) and Savisesa (with attributes). To him Jiva and the world are not unreal, both enjoying distinct realities God is root cause of creation. Sustenance and annihilation (Sṛati, Sthiti and Pralaya). He is reflected in the mirror help by a pure mind. To Ramakrishna Paramhansa God is the only Bastu (existence) and everything else is Abastu (non-existence). Love is the only essence and everything else is devoid of essence. To Sri Aurobindo, the Seer and Yogi, the Supreme Existence is the Absolute Reality. This Parama Sattwa Isvara has His abode in Man's heart besides being in the world and far beyond and high above it. Religion bridges the gulf between man and God. Such relation is based on the feeling of oneness and not otherwise, the descent of knowledge enkindled by Devine Light the relation of Love and Ananda (bliss), service and surrender.

The celebrated exponent of Gauriya Vaisnava tattva of modern times Srimat Radha Govinda Nath in his different works viz., Gauriya Vaisnava Darsan. Introduction to Chitanya Charitamrita has textable support to Advayatattwa, Acintya bhedabhedbad and the like and has applied his profound wisdom and scholarship in matter of explaining the Tenets propounded by the Vaisnava celebrities and explained in details by a galaxy of Vaisnava Scholars who antedate Sri Chaitanya down to modern period.

Dr. Sudhindra Chandra Chakrabarty the renowned scholar and philosopher in his book entitled ‘‘philosophical foundation of Bengal Vaisnavism’’ has said in reference to acintyabhedabhedbad, His (Sri jibgosvamin’s) doctrine of inexplicable difference in non-difference is an improvement upon earlier forms of Vedanta teaching absolute non-dualism, qualified non-dualism pure non-dualism and dualistic non-dualism. It is at once a criticism of all that is illogical and anti-scriptural in each of them and a synthesis of all that is true in all them. It is not an eclectic work based on elements collected from other books of Vedantic thought but an original system in which the best thoughts of such great thinkers as Sankar, Ramanuja, Madhava and Nimbarka have found their reconciliation and fulfilment (p. 339). Dr. A. C. Das, the great scholar and philosopher has discovered theism in different philosophical thoughts prevalent in India. In his opinion ‘‘If one wants to get to the core of Hinduism as a religion, one must understand the theistic movement which has its roots in the Veda and Upanisads and has had its periodic fruitful chief among the latest being Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo and Sri Rabindranath’’. (vide Christian and Hindu spiritual othica, Visvabharati quaterly 161 XVIII, part IV, 1955). In his work ‘‘A modern incarnation of God’’, Dr. Das has established Ramakrishna of incarnation of God and has ventured to explain Brahman or Isvara Saguna (having attributes), a doctrine he shaped and developed on the message contained in the Upanisads. The distinguished Gauriya vaisnava Sadhaka (Seer) and scholar Tridandi Swami, Sri Bhaktivilas Tirtha Maharaj in number of his discourses and in his book Gauriya Darsanparamarther Alok’, has described Brahman or Isvara as not Nirvisesa but Savisesa (qualified having attributes). In his opinion neither Abhedabad, nor Bhedaved can uphold the infinite mysteries encircling Parama Brahman or the Tattwa emanating from and attributive to Him. Sri Chaitanya, according to him discarded the both doctrines and in its place has offered as the alternative the acintyabhedabhedbad and with its application sought to identify the tenets contained in the Srutis. It is clearly understandable if we take note of His Vedanta discussions with Sarbabhoumo Battacharya at puri and Sri PrakasaNanda at Baranasi.

The basis of Gauriya Vaisnava religion and philosophy is

principally Bhagavata on the one hand and the life and Sadhana of Sri Chaitanya on the other. Several questions cropped up later for the acceptance of Bhagavata as the basis in lieu of Upanisads. Partly in defence it may be mentioned that Holy Koran is the basis of foundation of Islamic religion and philosophy and the Holy Bible is considered the sound basis of Christianity, its preceptes and philosophy. So there is no harm in regarding Bhagavata as the edifice on which the Vaisnava religion and philosophy stand. Bhagavata unmistakably acknowledges Advaya Sri *Kṛṣṇa* as the Parama Purusa. Jiva and the world His *anusattava* is linked with Him by the bond of *acintyabhedabhed*. In the Veda and the Upanisads Advayatattva stands invested with utmost attention. The celebrated philosopher and scholar of the present era Dr. S. N. Das Gupta writes : The Bhedbad interpretation of the Brahma Sutra is in all probability earlier than the monistic interpretation introduced by Sankar. The Bhagavata Geeta which is regarded as the essence of the Upanisad, the other puranas and the Pancharatra are more or less on the line of Bhedabhed'. So if considered impartially the doctrines embodied in the Geeta and Bhagavat in Pauranic Yuga are derived from and nourished by Veda and Upanisad, there being no doubt about it like wise in them we notice a healthy correspondence and finally synthesis between dualism and non-dualism. In the same way if the sacred life and sadhana of Hazarat Mohammad and Jesus Christ would have its following as Islamites and Christians respectively. Then the religious feeling and growth and development of Vaisnava philosophy in adherence to the life and sadhana of Sri Chaitanya does not sound illogical at all. In fact Chaitanya's life and sadhana has wrought the fusion between religion and philosophy as *acintyabhedabhed*. Dr. Chinmoyee Chattopadhyay in her research work "Bhaktirasa Vivartana (Evolution of Bhaktirasa), has remarked". The latest and the healthiest evolution of Bhaktirasa found its expression in Vaisnava philosophy. The Gauriya Vaisnava sect owes its origin to Sri Chaitanya. He himself authored no works. His teaching from time to time would be preserved with utmost care by his followers. The dual aspects of Bhakti—Sadhan marga and Rasarupa both have been treated with detailed discussions in the books they composed from time to time. Caitanya's deep-seated feelings having round Paramatattva qualified and saturated with unfathomable adoptness verily intellectualised, gave rise to a doctrine having no parallel in

world literature (p. 331). The followers of Sri Chaitanya having their advent at a later period would not be satisfied with their adoration of *Kṛṣṇa* as the Lord (Svami). They seemed to enjoy His Lila-rasa, in course of their adoration of Him much like one in human form (personal) whom they invested with qualities peculiar to human beings. In fact the Vaisnavites in the post—Chaitanya period worshipped *Kṛṣṇa* in five distinct ways viz., Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya, Madhura and Kanta. The Gauriya Vaisnavas reintroduced panchabhida, Bhakti (five systems) of adoration, as are found mentioned in the Bhagavata. The Vaisnava Sadhakas synthesised Lord's Isvar Svarupa with Rasa Svarupa, laid special emphasis on the latter and thus did usher in a new era in the process of the historical development of Bhaktivada. (Ibid p. 359). It is unmixed devotion which can only ensure accessibility to God, such profound belief would find expression in the writings of the poet, in the songs of Bauls and last but not the least in the deliberations of the philosophers. From the age onwards, thanks to the influence extracted by different sastras and philosophical discourses Bhakti-centric banal mode of worship, passing through a process of evolution would melt into Priti (amiability) entertained in the cave of heart and eventually culminating in the growth of erotic sentiment (Sringara Rasa) (Ibid p. 342). Such heart—overflowing premain (love) being Bheda is abheda in the same breath ; in other words the relation between Atman and paramatman is bhedabhed and the vindication of the same Advaya Sakti being expressed as Sakti and Saktiman and this finds a secure ground level on the edifice of Acintyabhedabhedvad Tattwa, no amount of knowledges however sound or otherwise explain it. Sri Radhagobinda Nath in course of his discourse on Prem-Vilas-Vivarta has written in his Introduction to Chaitanya Charitamrita that Sri Radhagobinda despite His imperishable Oneness qualified by infinitude reserved in His deep of heart an assured settlement for Brojnandini Radha. Like wise in Sri Gauranga the conjoined image of Sri Sri Radha-Kṛṣṇa, Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is settled in the form of Lord devine. It is to say the least a unique demonstration of love-sickness implanted in the heart of a divided moral frame.

Generally speaking it is the lover (Nayak) enamoured with love rushes forward to embrace the beloved (Nayika). As per the sayings of Gopal Campu, it becomes known that it is exactly reverse-ease ; in the evolutionary process of Prema-Vilas it is explicitly mentioned

that under such circumstances the Nayak turns into a plaything in the hands of Nayika, It is discernible that in his Gour-Svarupa as well, He lets Sri Radha, the Nayika to embrace Him unrestrained, and this she does so earnestly that she is seen in a never Satiating dancing posture and expediting her Bhava-Abesa. She makes *Kṛṣṇa* forget His self and get to esoteric dancing feats exhibiting varied styles. So one discovers *Kṛṣṇa*'s contrariety in conduct, self-forgetfulness and delusion to the maximum as and when He is in "Gaur-Svarupa". Svarup Gosvami opines that "the unique characteristic of Prem-Vilas-Vivarta consists in an exhaustible anxiety for union and grave pangs born of separation even after achievement of union. It is exhibited in an absolute measure in Gour Sundar. Chaitanya's Gombhira Lila etc. unmistakably discloses such extreme sorrowful state caused by separation, as it were, even in the think of timeless and uninterrupted union with the Supreme Being. So it is rightly said that Sri Gour Sundar is the personized image of Prema-Vilas-Vivarta". (Chai. Charitamrita p. 210, based on the Kadca of Sri Svarup Gosvamin).

Chapter IV

IDEA OF *BHAKTI*

I

Bhaktivad (The Cult of Devotion)

To ascertain the nature of devotion as found delicately substantiated in Chaitanya Charitamrita, it is felt prudent that a discussion on the evolution of the cult of devotion through ages before the advent of Sri Chaitanya should be earnestly pursued, it being so far the obvious reason that without it being taken note of, it is next to impossible for one to develop a comprehensive view of Bhakti or devotion.

The germs of the cult of Bhakti or single-minded devotion to God are found in vedic hymns and the Upanisads. The vedic hymns to Vishnu, Varona, Savitr and Usas are replete with the sentiments of piety or devotion. The doctrine of Bhakti is clearly evident in the later Upanisads. The self cannot be realised by the study of the vedas nor by intelligencce, nor by deep learning. It can be realized by him only whom it chooses or favours ; to him the self reveals its own nature. (Ka. U. 11. 23 ; Mu. U. 111.2.3.). It may be noted that the word bhakti occurs for the first time in the Upanisads. In the Svetasvatara Upanisad, the doctrine of grace is emphasized. The Taittiriya Upanisad and the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad (IV. 3. 32) describe Brahman as being of the nature of bliss and the source of all human joys. Thus the cult of Bhakti is developed and nourished in the Vedic hymns and partly developed in the Upanisads. It is also mentioned in the epics and later devotional literature. One who is devoted to God and has his being in Him attains to Him. So says Lord Krsna : Fix thy mind on me alone, concentrate thy intelligence on me ; hereafter thou shalt undoubtedly dwell in me alone (B. G. XII 8). In the Mahabharata it stands : enjoined : God is always fond of those who are devoted to Him. (Mbh. Xii. 343. 54, 55). No one is dearer to Him in the Three worlds than thou who are enlightened with wisdom and possessors of high souls. More dear even than these persons is one who is entirely devoted to Him (Ibid. XII 343. 365).

Narada defines Bhakti as the intense love for God. The object of all worldly attachment is finite and subject to decay while the object of devotion which stands quite different from the nature of attachment is infinite and imperishable. According to Sandilya Bhakti is attachment to God. Prahlada offers his prayer in the following words : May not that uninterrupted attachment desert me, while I am constantly meditating upon Thee (Vishnu Purana 20.1). Here it is to be noted that Love for God is not entirely different from love for earthly objects, although the nature of the both is not the same. Sandilya says, Bhakti though of the nature of attachment has for its object the highest and the best, and so ought not to be avoided. (Sandilya Sutra, 21).

The Bhagavata preaches the cult of *ahituki bhakti* (unmotivated devotion) to God. From it springs unmotivated and uninterrupted devotion to God which fills the soul with bliss divine (1.2.6). In later devotional literature we find a distinction drawn between *preman* and *Bhakti*, *Bhakti* is the spontaneous attachment for the desired object. *Preman* is the most concentrated love for God. It is Divine Love which is the completion and perfection of devotion (*Bhakti*). Again Devotion is not faith (*Sraddha*). First there must be belief in God ; Then such belief is, deepened into faith ; finally faith is deepened into devotion (Narada-Sutra, 84). *Bhakti* is in fact, the burning faith in God and the whole being of the devotee is entirely dedicated to God. The Narada Pancaratra defines *Bhakti* as the positive means to realize God accompanied by *Preman* (deep love) and without any attachment for any other object in the world.

According to the Bhagavata devotion has nine marks, listening to the name of God, Chanting His name, recollection of Him, serving Him, worshipping Him, saluting Him, servitude, friendship and self-dedication to Him (VII. 5. 22. 23). These are aspects of secondary devotion. Primary devotion consists of disinterested and unobstructed devotion to God. This devotion alone leads to the realisation of God (1. 2. 6.).

Narada also divides devotion into two kinds, secondary and primary. Secondary devotion is born of desire and is three fold according to *Sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas* is predominant in the character of the devotee. The Narada Pancaratra mentions the servitude to the Lord as the chief means of liberation. In later devotional literature five kinds of personal relationship with God are clearly mentioned : *Santa* (quietness)

dasya (servitude), Sakhya (friendship), vatsalya (parental affectional) and madhurya (sweet love) (Chaitanya Charitamrita 11. 8).

The cult of devotion is the best of all cults. Sri Krsna says, 'The Yogin is greater than the ascetic.... and among the Yogis, the most completely united with me, I consider is he who address me with full faith and his innerself abiding in me'. (B. G. VI. 46, 47). The Bhagavata says : Even a Candala possessed of sincere faith and devotion, is dearer to God than a Brahmana, sadly looking in faith (Bh. iii. 33.7) Even a person of low birth is freed from bondage if he utters the name of God only once (Ibid. V.1.35). Says Narada, 'Among the devotees of God there is no distinction of birth, learning, apparence, family, wealth, religions observance, and the like, since all belong to Him. (Narada Sutra, 72,73).

Advaitavad in Acarya Sankar who considered knowledge to be of paramount importance, acknowledges Bhakti as the surest steps towards attainment of divine bliss, particularly for those who are steeped into the worldly affairs. The other Vedantists of the stamps of Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbark, and Ballava have in their writings, indicated the supremacy of Bhakti or devotion as a distinct means to attain divine pleasure.

So, it can be concluded that the cult of Bhakti or devotion had its origin in time immemorial and is accepted as a means to win the grace of God. In the middle ages, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu based his doctrine of love on Ragatmika Bhakti as enunciated in the Bhagavata, which in later days, would be followed in all sincerely by his adherents. Such doctrine of Bhakti inspired Sri Krsnadas Kaviraj to compose his magnum epic Chaitanya Charitamrita. In this great book we have at least a glimpse of the nature of Sri Chaitanya's Bhakti tattwa in course of his imparting teaching to Sanatan Gosvamin and from the evidences Ray Ramananda while holding discussions with Sri Chaitanya on the nature and excellences depicting positive aspects of Bhakti. According to Chaitanya Charitamrita Jiva is tied in eternal servitude to *Krsna* and the highest that the Jiva expects in his life time is unequivocal service to God. Such unqualified service being Jiva's Supreme achievement (param Purusartha) in a single life span so to say. Raganuga Bhakti is the prime essence from which takes origin the endless desire of service to God to serve Him as one very close as

son, friend or as one who is lovable in all respects. According to Sri Chaitanya to enjoy divine bliss is squarely an impossibility even through the sustained practice of Baidhi Bhakti (devotion following Sastric injunctions), for in such case God's image resplendent with super resourcefulness encapsulates his graceful inner self saturated in all sweetness. In Chaitanya Charitamrita we get the hints of Raganuragabhakti. Sri Chaitanya in his devotion to *Kṛṣṇa* gives the fullest expression to Raganuraga bhakti. Chaitanya practised this sort of devotion all his life and did his best to bring it within the reach of the commoners and Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita has put on record the supreme excellences emanating from such Bhakti in almost ever detail.

II

Sri Chaitanya's Teachings to Sri Sanatan Gosvamin

Here an humble attempt is made to describe as far as practicable the doctrinal approaches concerning Sadhya Sadhan tattwa which Mahāprabhu Sri Chaitanya discussed with and explained to Sanatan Gosvamin. At the very outset of imparting his teachings Chaitanya pointed to Sri *Kṛṣṇa* as the Sadhya tattwa. *Kṛṣṇa* alone commands devotion of the Jiva and the later is eternal bond with the former on the basis of Acintyobhedabhed and being His constant servant as such. The magic spell of Maya makes the Jiva forgetful of his svarupa and in such a state feels the irresistible temptation for attachment to worldly objects, the consequences being his suffering from the constant pangs of sorrow, three types in particular—spiritual, elemental and supernatural. According to Sri Chaitanya the only way to escape such miserable state of existence and thereby attaining liberation from Maya-imposed bondage is to cherish unbound and unqualified devotion towards to God, i. e. *Kṛṣṇa*. This can only be gained through the grace of the high-souled, preceptor, the Vaisnavas and the sastras.

In discussing the Sambandha Tattwa or the way to attain the grace of Sri *Kṛṣṇa*, Chaitanya makes it clear to Sanātana—in the four yugas, devotion to God ought to be only preoccupation of the Jiva. Such Bhakti ensures accomplishment of Karma, Yoga and Jnana (Knowledge). This much-covered accomplishment helps the Jiva get past magic-illusion of Maya on one hand and ensures attainment of

divine grace on the others. To *Kṛṣṇa* Bhakti is the only thing to reckon with. By judicious quotation from the Bhagavata Chaitanya has classified Bhaktas in three groups or categories viz., Uttama (the very best), Madhyama (the better) and Kanistha (of average capacity). The Uttama Bhakta is noted for profound Sastric scholarship and abiding faith in God ; the madhyama one is not a scholar but has profound devotion for God and the last named possesses average capacity either in both or in one of the two. A devotee worth the name needs be adorned with all the good qualities of head and heart. The devotion being discussed is of two types-Baidhi and Raganuraga. To adore God in strict conformity to Sastric rites accounts for the origin and development of Baidhi Bhakti while adoration of God regardless of Sastric injunctions but with a heart overflowing with love pure and simple is known as Raganuraga Bhakti. In the Chaitanya Charitamrita is discussed and recorded Chaitanya's clear directives as to how best to serve God. Through service to God a devotee (Bhakta) develops a number of Lakṣanas (signs) that play on the surface and these are (i) not to get saddened at heart failing to procure coveted riches (ii) to chant God's name non-stop (iii) not to develop and nurse any attachment for worldly objects (iv) to entertain no claim to high position but always thinking one self low-placed (v) to retain absolute faith in *Kṛṣṇa*'s graces (vi) having the irresistible feeling for expounding graces divine and choosing as residence places sanctified by the Lila of *Kṛṣṇa*. Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is the Nayak of such Preman, Sri Radharani being His worthy Nayika (Principal Lila-mate). The Bhaktas alone can sip this nectre of love. According to Bhagavata Sri *Kṛṣṇa* incarnated Himself for the destruction of demons, because they proved themselves too heavy burden for the earth. But Kṛṣṇadas Kaviraj says the true reason was His own strong desire for relishing the sweetness of His Associates' Love for Him and making them relish His sweetness—which could not be tasted in all its aspects in the unmanifest Lila. Kṛṣṇadas Kaviraj announces in his Chaitanya Charitamrita that His mercy goes so far as to make Him eager for the salvation of the distressed and that such an eagerness is part of His nature (Chai. Cha. iii. 2.5). Sri Chaitanya makes a synthesis between Bhakti Sadhana Svarup and Rasa Svarup and thus brought about a magnificent change in the process of *Kṛṣṇa* worship.

. III

Rayramananda Samvad

Rayramananda, the Governor of Mahendra under Orissa-king Prataprudra was a devotee worth the name. Once Sri Chaitanya held philosophical discourses with him which stands recorded in dialogue form, in the eighth chapter of Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita. Here Mahaprabhu is the questioner and Ramananda the responder. Sri Chaitanya was Bhaktivadin, pure and simple. He left no stone unturned to establish the supremacy of devotion of Bhakti as a surest means to reach God, to attain his grace and finally being favoured with salvation. He discussed the parmanent importance of Bhakti while discussing Sankar-Vedanta and imparting knowledge of Sanatana. It is discrinible that in Rayramananda Samvad, Ramananda speaks of Bhakti as the singular to reach the end, it being attainment of Lord's grace. It has aided in addition an understanding completely in a new perspective, partaining to the attainment of the Sadhaka in course of his sadhana and with that as well stands discussed the nature of the feelings having direct impact attainable through the interplay of Baidhya and Raganuraga bhakti, the whole exercise having confirmation through philosophical discourses. At the very outset, mention should be made of the well-marked distinctiveness between Gauriya Vaishnavism and other religions pursuits based on Karma and Jnana. Then is found narrated different modes of Krsna-worship ; His supremacy beyond all challenges, His staying in the circle of love-associates, His exhilaration of love divine and His being an emblem of multitude nonssene. His Svarup exhibiting fullest, His most graceful apparition. Discussions have also been made about His mastery over three kinds of sakti viz., Jivasakti, Mayasakti and Svarupasakti. Other discourses centre round on a set of views contained in the Vaisnava philosophy on a number of varied topics, such as Joy and Sorrow, liberation, the external residence of a vaisnava Bhakta. etc., etc.

When Rayramananda referred to sastras while discussing Sadhya Sadhan, Chaitanya expressed his willingness to know about the Svarup of the Sadhya under a changing process ; At first Roy told about the observance of the tinets of one's own religion and thus following one's relegious prescriptions with a view to performing the Sadhyavastn. For it is so said in the Vishnu Purana that Vishnu is pleased to see

one performing religious rites sanctioned within the frame work of Varnasrama Chatustaya, as best one can. But Mahaprabhu terms it surface exposition (Bajhya). But why so ? According to Sri Chaitanya Jiva's svarupa consists in practising external servitude to *Krsna* and service to Him is Jiva's Parusartha or Preman. The means to attain the Saddhya is Bhakti and Bhakti culminates in Preman. Here such Bhakti is Baidhi. The Gauriya Vaisnav devotee does not hankar after enjoyment of perpetual happiness or attainment of liberation from this world and the world beyond. His singular aim is offering of service to Sri *Krsna*. The particular sloka contained in Vishnu Puran refers to attainability of happiness and freedom from bondage through Baidhi Bhakti. This is why Chaitanya cannot accept such type of Bhakti as is found in Vishnu Purana, it being quite contrary an experience. So is Chaitanya's advice to Ramananda is to think over different type of Bhakti (probably a kin to Raganuraga—which of course is not explicitly stated at this stage).

In replying Rayramananda referred to the Geeta which says the essence of Saddhya lies in surrendering all karma to *Krsna*. Sri Krsna said to Arjuna, 'Deliver unto Me all that you want to do, all that you want to eat, all that you desire to offer to god in sacrifices, in brief again all that you want to give to others'.

Admittedly offering of Karma to Sri Krsna is considered superior to the rites enjoined with Varnasram. Chaitanya would although accept it as such is not willing to accept it as service to Krsna, for this reason the intention of such sacrifice being to please Krsna and for nothing else. So Mahaprabhu cannot accept it. So he urges Ramananda to think over it once again.

Then Ramananda quoted from the Bhagavata and the Geeta to establish that the fact the essence of saddhya lies in renunciation of one's own religion. To Uddhava said *Krsna* in the Bhagavata, "O Uddhava, do listen to Me : He who renounces all religions to take shelter unto Me is the most pious. In the same way in the Geeta Lord Krsna said to Arjuna," "Leave all Karmans that bind you have abode in Me. Don't grieve, I will deliver you from all sins ". This may lead to question : Is renunciation of all karmans the means to the attainment of Shdhya ? Who is the competent authority to give up karmans ? In this context we find so said in the Bhagavata that so long one does not reach Nirveda state or one becomes absorbed in *Krsna*, still then

Karma is Jiva's irrefragable pursuit. But as giving up one's own religion is not considered enough for the realisation of the idealized characteristics pertaining to Gauriya Vaisnava faith, Sri Chaitanya recognized it as something superficing eternal leaving the inner core untouched and so was his directive to Ramananda to say something squarely endorsing the nature of real devotion or Bhakti.

Then Rayramananda proclaimed devotion saturated with knowledge as the best type. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* says to Arjuna : He who has attained Brahman is the possession of an atman reflecting delightedness, he is past all griefs and desires. To all Jivas he is noted for his absolute impartiality. He gets absorbed in Me through love. Sri Chaitanya was not prepared to accept it, for devotion tintured with knowledge would not encourage service to God. So says He : This is in a skin-deep state ; dive-deep and go beyond that. (Geeta 18.54).

The Ramananda ventured to suggest that Bhakti without Jnana (devotion without knowledge) was far above, almost on the top of the scale. By way of elucidation he refers to Bhagavat wherein Brahma says to *Kṛṣṇa* : Those who leave knowledge altogether, act as on virtuas in body, mind and word and listen to with undivided attention Your Excellences being chanted by the pious move a long way to conquer you, although it is evident you are beyond being conquered in the three worlds. But this also will not meet Chaitanya's approval since in such case as well service to *Kṛṣṇa* does not appear to be the objective. So he says it is also a superficial state : dive-deep and go beyond that. (Bhagavat 10.14. 3).

Thus spoke *Rayramananda* devotion culminating in Preman can achieve all that is corrected and in this context cited a sloka he composed. The meaning of the sloka is as follows :

Various are the articles with which worship of Dinabandhu is done. But the mind of a devotee melts in Preman. Food and drink gives pleasure so long as one is subjected to hunger and thirst. (Chai. Car-2/8 sloka by *Rayramananda*). Leave no time to by the mind saturated with molten *Kṛṣṇa* Preman. The earnest desire to have Him constitutes the price. Even million of good deeds performed in a life fail to help one reach Him. (Ibid. 2/8). Here Prema-Bhakti signifies the *Kṛṣṇa*-Preman, attributable to the serene heart of the devotees. It also would not win Mahaprabhu's unqualified approval although it has reference to a cool and collected heart full to the brim of profound

reverence for *Krsna* much higher and more glorifying in comparison to devotion without knowledge, simply because to Sri Chaitanya service to *Krsna* would remain not mentioned clearly. So says he : Leave it there, more forward, just go beyond this.

Thus spoke *Rayramananda* : Dasya-Preman is above everything. It is so said in the Bhagavata : At His feet lie all pilgrimages uttering of whose Name once results in absolute freedom from imposed bondage. A servant of that Lord can suffer from no wants. (Bhagavata 9. 5. 16). Similarly in a sloka composed by Yamuna, O, Lord, when shall I sweep of all my earthly pleasure-hunting habits and be Thy true servant and when shall I make my existence all-joyful. (Contd. in Chai. Cha. 2. 8). It is desirable that in dasya-Preman, reverence for *Krsna* and aptitude for service to Him are present. But this too failed to elicit Mahaprabhu's approval as it contains devotion to *Krsna* not approvingly sufficient in measure. Mahaprabhu expressed his desire to have something over and above this.

Then *Rayramananda* dwell on vatsalya rasa and enlogized it as the essence of all rasas. It is so said in the Bhagavata : O, Brahmins, how could Nanda have the fortune to rear up *Krsna* and what made Yasoda so blessed as to be favoured with the chance to feed Him with milk of her breast ? (Bhagavata 10. 8. 46). The amount of affection which Yasoda was favoured with, that is beyond the dream for certain for Brahma, Siva, even Goddess Lakshmi (Bhagavata 10. 9. 20). Vatsalya Preman is admittedly soaked with unmixed care leading to chatisement and rebukes at times, but it is Son's Sakhya Prema. Mahaprabhu spoke highly of it but, at the same time wanted to know something deeper.

The spoke *Rayramananda* about Kamta Prem, there being nothing about it. Sri *Krsna* in His Ras Lila embraced the handsome Gopis, embodiment of exquisite beauty and grace. The bliss they enjoyed did not favour the lot of even Lakshmi resting in high glea on the left breast of Sri *Krsna*, not to speak of others. (Bhagavata 10. 47. 60). Of this Kanta Prema Lord *Krsna* has said this in the Bhagavata : Ye have come out defying the unbreakable domestic shackles, only to add to my pleasure and me in return admit my inability to repay. Thee any way even though I enjoy the infinite life-span of Gods. So you yourselves be repaid my debts unto you. (Bhagavata 10. 32. 22). Uddhava felt tempted to be favoured with such Kanta Preman. So said

it is in this respect : I feel inclined to kiss the dust gathered under the feet of the Gopis who have come out leaving everything being in order to partners in the celestial dalhane of Sri *Kṛṣṇa* even would I like to be grown as herbs to be trampled under their feet (Bh. 10. 47. 61). Of them Gopis it is so said in *Brahma Samhita* that they are born of *Kṛṣṇa*'s Alhadini Sakti (Br. Sam. 4. 37). Their hearts are seed-bed of Kanta Prema. The sacred Job assigned to them is to please *Kṛṣṇa* (Chai. Cha. 1. 4). They cleanse and decorate their figures in order to serve *Kṛṣṇa*. (Ibid). The Gopis have surrendered themselves heart and soul to *kṛṣṇa*, their positive love of course, being self-denying. (Chai. Cha. 2. 8). In this Kanta Prema is found mingled love eternal, over and above Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya Premas. (Chai. Cha. 2. 8). Such Kanta is manifold numerically for without the assistance of many, *Kṛṣṇa* Prema finds not fullest expression. (Chai. Cha. 1. 4).

This Kanta Prema is without Karma, its sole objective being multiplication of *Kṛṣṇa*'s pleasure. Such Kanta Prema Himself Ananda Svarup Sri *Kṛṣṇa* is immersed in Kanta Prema so much that to Him all is Ananda. This Kanta Prema contains the excellences of Samta, Dasya, Sakhya and Vatsalya and it is with its aid it is possible to be of service to *Kṛṣṇa* who is indebted immensely to this Prema and completely submissive to it—which again nurtures and extols this sweetness of nature. Mahāprabhu took much delight in this discourse by Ray Ramananda and requested him to give him the glimpse of something beyond what he discussed.

At this stage *Rayramananda* asserted that Radha Prema is the supreme manifestation of Kanta Prema. Radha Tattwa has been discussed else-where, so it is needless to repeat the same thing. To put it briefly it can be said that love of Radha is Sadhya Siromoni. It is so narrated in the *Bhagavat* that Sri *Kṛṣṇa* with Radha from among the Gopis while enjoying autumnal Raslila. In explaining this significant incident Ray Ramananda clarifies that other Gopis are extremely earnest in their love for *Kṛṣṇa*, but *Kṛṣṇa* Himself would be begging love of Radha, as it were, so overwhelmed with passion for Radha. He is Radha would excel all in her love for *Kṛṣṇa* (Geeta Gobinda 3. 2). *Rayramananda* referred to similar incident as depicted in *Geeta Gobinda* by Joydeb. There the Raslila was held in spring time and *Kṛṣṇa* made His abrupt disappearance in search of Radha.

There after Mahaprabhu expresses his desire to know more about the Svarupas of Radha and *Kṛṣṇa*, Rasa Tattwa and Prema tattwa. *Rayramananda* referred to Brahma Samhita where it is unmistakably established that Sri Kṛṣṇa is the Paramtattwa. Sri Kṛṣṇa Himself God, the source of all material aspects of the creation. He is the Supreme manifestation of Aiswrya and Madhurja (grace and sweetness) having his abode in Vrindavana for some time. His Upasana consists in Kama Gayatra and Kamabija. Male and Female, the morables and the unmorables, all feel irresistible attraction towards Him. It is He who is the subject and shelter of all types of Rasa and its variables, for He is Rasamaya and having Him as the source of all rasas become manifest in different ways and devotees representing all shades have the realisation of Rasamaya Kṛṣṇa in a graceful form. It is He who is Rasaraja and as such charming beyond measure. (Chai. Cha. 2.8). His celestial sweetness draws towards Him the Bhagavat Svarupas, such as Narayana and others and also the Bhagavat consorts like Lakshmi and others. Himself 'Prema Rasika' he cultivates the desire to drink the sweetness of His self. (Chai. Cha. 2. 8). Radha is His Aladini Sakti, love is whose essence of existence, otherwise known as Chinmaya Rasa. Radharani is in fact the incarnation of the mahabhava having its origin in such love divide. Her existence is all-Kṛṣṇa, in no way separable from Him but confined instead with Him in body, mind, soul in a word bound in inseparable love-bond of celestial magnitude and grace. She is known as the chief of kṛṣṇa's love-adherents, Chintamani being her svarupa. She fulfils the desire of Kṛṣṇa with the assistance of her companions such as Lalita and Other celebrities. She again delights kṛṣṇa beyond measure by adoring herself with exquisitely beautiful ornaments. She refuses to listen to and speak about any thing but the name of kṛṣṇa. She is so to say the reservoir of Kṛṣṇa Prema. Satyabhama, Parvati and such like are learners of love-gane at her feet. A substantial part of her qualitative excellences remain unknown even to Kṛṣṇa Himself, not to speak of other Jivas. (Chai. Cha.)

Although Rasatattwa and Prematattwa are not elaborately discussed by Ray Ramananda, yet in dilecting the Rasa Svarupa of both Radha and Kṛṣṇa it is so said that Ananda or bliss melts into Rasa and as and when it gets condensed it becomes Preman. In fact Rasa and Preman denote the same thing though in different forms. Rasa can be tasted by one having the capacity to taste it i.e. by a rasika. Again

the same is tasted by a devotee in his own peculiar way not intelligible to a commoner. A few ingredients when combined produce a specific taste quite different from each but each present in the whole combined substance. In the same way love, affection, tenderness, attachment, passion, amour, ecstasy solemn mood etc. combine to make possible the origin of Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Rati and in accordance with the Bhava of the devotee, springing from Rati, the devotee feels in him the inflow of bhakti rasa (Chai. Cha). Sri Kṛṣṇa idealize the rasa and Sri Rādhā is the prime agent of expressing it. It may be mentioned here that in the Upaniṣad, Brahman is Rāsamāya and the Jīva considers himself a favoured one if it can catch a glimpse of the Supreme Being. Brahman and Sri Kṛṣṇa being non-differentiated such Rāsa-tattva is Sri Kṛṣṇa Himself who is desired by all and Sri Rādhā is the Supreme embodiment of that Rāsa in a condensed state. So Rāsamāya Sri Kṛṣṇa and Prēmamāyee Sri Rādhā are the non-dual-expression of the divine beauty. It is also suggested in the Upaniṣads that non-dual ananda svarūpa Brahman admits duality for His Līlā. According to Chaitanya Charitāmṛta : Rādhā is all-power, Kṛṣṇa is Śaktiman, there is no difference between the two. To keep His Līlā going on, Sri Kṛṣṇa has accepted the discipleship of Sri Rādhā. Kṛṣṇa's sweetness become unbound in His contact with Sri Rādhā. Kṛṣṇa is beyond Himself with exquisite delight while enjoying companionship with Sri Rādhā. His love supreme becomes practically unmanifest without Sri Rādhā. This is why He spends days and nights in the specially nurtured grove to enjoy the intimate relation with Sri Rādhā (Chai. Cha. 2. 8.).

Thereafter when Mahāprabhu expressed his desire to know something in addition to what has already been referred to as relation between Sri Rādhā and Sri Kṛṣṇa. Rāya Rāmananda pointed out that the excess of love between them culminates in Vilās which again is responsible for the origination of Prēmā Vilās Vivarta. In the love-game both the participants lose their identity of selves. In this way they unite closely to reach the extreme height of pleasure. The nomenclatures such as 'Vipralambha' and Sambhoga apparently signify duality, but to all the intents and purposes it exhibits 'Alāṇī Prēmā' the celestial essence of love, love-nectar to express the least through words.

Suffering terrible mental pain caused by self-denial Sri Rādhā tells her messenger : Be tactful in informing Kṛṣṇa of the fact that I was

drawn towards Him before I had the single chance to meet Him even for the first time in life. Later we started exchanging looks, at each other and my love for Him would be increasing little by little, never crossing the limit. His consort I am not, nor is He my husband. It is Kandarpa (the God of Love) who is fully responsible for bringing both of us so close. O, dear, conceal nothing from Krsna. make every bit of it known to Him. When we two united we needed not the assistance of anybody and Kandarpa was the middle man. He concluded the whole business so deftly that we had our union without knowing how. But now Krsna proving Himself indifferent to me. I engage you as the messenger. Do your best to set the matter right. To me it is quite unbecoming that Krsna behaves in this way.

Such inexplicable expression of Vilas binds Sri Radha and Sri Krsna in eternal bond of love. It is given due consideration in Gauriya Vaishnava philosophy unequivocally in Acintyavedabhedvad and in religious matters in the discussion of love. Sri Gauranga is the combined Svarupa of Radha and Krsna.

This Sadhya tattwa saturated with sweet divine dalliance comes within the orbit of understanding only by Sadhana (practice of austerity) and it can be attained wholly by being a Sakti (divine companion). For the understanding of the essence of the love between Sri Radha and Krsna is denied to the Baidhi and Raganuga bhaktas. The ultimate objective of the practising 'Sakhibhava' is unconditional service to Krsna. Words prove inadequate to discuss the nature (Svabhava) of a Sakhi. In order to be of service to Sri Krsna, one has to renounce every ounce of worldly attachment pertaining to Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Such love attributable to a 'Sakhi' is void of this worldly passion (Kama), but inherent in pleasure divine in character (Chai. Cha).

Desirous of attaining the 'Gopibhava' the sages and seers have taken shelter in 'Raganuga Bhakti' learning aside Karma, Jnana Yoga and Baidhi Bhakti. This fact is found corroborated in Sruti and the Bhagavata (Bhagavata 10. 87. 23).

The other topics of discussions between Mahaprabhu and Roy Ramananda were the learning of the Jiva, his earthly attainment, sorrows, liberation songs, Jiva's most coveted things, the objective elements of his meditation, the ideal residence of a Bhakta and such

like. The topics were raised one after another in the form of a question by Mahaprabhu and Ramananda answered them accordingly. To Ramananda, Krsna Bhakti (adoration to Krsna) is the highest object that a Jiva should learn all his life, for nothing equals it. Jiva's attainment lies in getting immersed in adoration of Krsna. Man's property consists in Radha-Krsna Preman. In other words he who is blessed with such Prema is the richest individual under the sun. Sorrow in fact lies in separation from Krsna, be it genial or self-imposed. Krsna Prema guides to emunipation. Jiva has an existence veiled in Maya. But he who adores Krsna single mindedly frees himself from Maya. The songs, the subject matter of which is concerned with Radha-Krsna are the songs of demanding attention and worth-listening to. Association with Krsna Bhaktas is the most coveted object. The subject of meditation for a Jiva is the lotus-feet of Radha and Krsna, Vrindaban is the real residence of devotees. Radha-Krsna Lila should flood his hearing and the ever green memory of Radha and Krsna should claim his whole-hearted attention and quite absorbing meditation.

A real 'Bhakta' can feel the presence of God every where and as a gallant devotee he relishes to his hearts content God's Lilarasa. In this way in Ray Ramananda Samvada we find expressly stated and enlogised the tenats of Vaishnava.

Philosophy and the essence of Vaisnava Faith on the one hand and the nature of the mystic and eternal love Radha Krsna on the other hand. Such love can be enjoyable only to the adherents of Raganuga Bhakti.

Similarly in Ray Ramananda Samvad as contained in Chaitanya Charitamrita, Lord Krsna the son of Nanda, is to be worshipped by Visavas. Sri Brindabana He has chosen as His residence where His resourcefulness and sweetness have attained their fullest expression. True, different modes of His adoration are prescribed, but going beyond all such contemplated presentations, the sweetest and the most lovable one is performed by the Brojabandhus (Ladies residing at the Brojadham). In the same way of all sacred loves delineating religious feelings and sentiments of vaisnavas, Srimalad Bhagavata is considered the best to the Gauriya Vaisnavas sect in the matter of processing and expounding their religious aspirations. What remained once hidden in

the hearts of the sages and seers found elaboration and expression in the Bhagavata in a way that gave vent to a number of pent-up sacred sentiments centering round Sri Krsna, the supreme Being. The tenth scanda of the Bhagavata is flooded with rasa's of different descriptions, viz., Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Madhura. The devotees alone can claim the exclusive inheritance of these rasas of which they make a show when so warranted. Sri Krsna depicted in the Bhagavata is All-Rasa. Supreme Brahman in the Upanisads and devotion senti-fied by raganuraga is the only way to win the favour of Sri Krsna. The God head in Upanisad whom speech cannot describe and mind cannot trace is Sri Krsna in Bhagavata who is ever dalliant, bestowed with attributes and All-Love to His devotees. In Chaitanya Charitamrita Mahaprabu got the nature of this celestial expressed and expounded through Ray Ramananda. Such devotion concerns not only Gauriya Vaisnava faith, but also the only surest means for the attainment of all that is desired. It may be mentioned in this context that what seems unattainable by Advaya Tattwa can be so easily obtained through the culture of Bhakti. (Kenapanisad 2/3, the Geeta 18. 55). Secondly God manifests Himself only to the devotee. (Mather Sruti). He fails even to make the full assessment of His self without the help of a devotee. (Bhagavata 9.4.64). Thirdly the only way to attain freedom from the bondage of Maya is pure devotion. (Geeta 7.14). Fourthly, it is well-nigh impossible to realise the sweetness and Rasabhava of the Lord. (Tai.Upanisad 2.7). So, inorder to have the blessing of God, devotion is doubtless much better than Karma, Jnan, Yoga. (Bha. 11.14/20-21). Such devotion impels one to adore God as one so dear to one's heart. (Bhe.Upanisad 1.4.8 Satapath sruti). This can be concluded then that devotion not only leads one to God but it also brings God quite close to the devotee. (Bhagavat 1.11.113).

It may be mentioned here that quite a good number of God-seekers under the sun have nursed different thoughts in the deep of their heart and the love-based relation between man and God which stands exposed in different chapters of Chaitanya Charitamrita, particularly in its Madhya Lila which Ray Ramananda has so deftly brought to light stands supreme and occupies a unique place in the history of human thought. It is not so alone in the religious world but in our social life as well as it leaves a significant mark distinction. Chaitanyadev was admittedly one of the great scholars of his time. He was born in a

high Brahmin family noted for eridition and culture. Himself an ascetic of distinctive order, he would admit no distinction between man and man. To him anyone irrespective of so called class-distinction was his preceptor only if he was Krsna conscious. It is he who taught all who came in his contact to love-all, it is he again, who voiced the dignity of man irrespective of caste and creed and social status. He championed the cause of the tortured, inhumanly treated and down trodden. He stood for them for he loved them one and all. Herein lies his greatness, apart from his religious conviction. Chaitanya loved and adored God, but loved man not a wait less. He searched for God in every human heart, be he classed high or placed at the lowest bottom in a social scale. He was to say the least, the prophet of humanism.

IV

Bhaktivad as Propounded in the Bhagavata

To recapitulate :

The origin of the cult of bhakti can be traced in the vedic hymns and the Upanisads. It is also found in the Epic and later devotioned literature , God can not be apprehended by the senses. He is attainable only through whole-hearted devotion. Religious observances sans devotion leads one nowhere. "The self cannot be realized by the study of the Vedas, nor by intelligence, nor by deep learning ; it can be realized by him only whom it chooses or favours ; to him self reveals its own nature. (Ka. U. 11. 23 ; Mu. U. 111. 2. 3) Again, the revelation of God to man is the highest boon granted by Him to man (Mbh,XII, 340, 16. 17). God is always fond of those who are devoted to Him. (Ibid, XII, 343,54.55).

In the Bhagavata much stress is laid on the grace of God. Self-exertion is wholly futile in case of a man to enjoy communion with God. Man can have a vision of God only when he chooses to reveal Himself to him. Thus God can be attained only by His grace.

Narada defines Bhakti as of the nature of intense love for God. Devotion or Bhakti is undivided love for God, absolutely free from earthly cares and attachements. It is not overshadowed by logic, knowledge and action. Bhakti is the highest end. It is not a means to any higher end. Devotion never perishes and is infinite.

The Bhagavata preaches the cult of unmotivated devotion. (ahaituki bhakti) to God. Devotion, to say the least is the spontaneous attachment for the desired object, God. Divine love (preman) is the completion and protection of devotion.

In the Svetasvatara Upanisad the doctrine of grace is emphasized and the doctrine of self-surrender is clearly suggested. (VI. 23). The Taittiriya Upanisad (11.7) and the Bradaranayaaa Upanisad (IV. 3. 32) describe Brahman as being of the nature of bliss and the source of all human joys.

'Bhakti' is of the nature of raga (attachment). But as declared by Sandilya, it has for its object the highest and the best. Svapnesvara explains that devotion as an attachment does not lead one astray from the path of liberation (moksa). The Narada Pancharatra defines Bhakti as realisation of God as 'mine' accompanied by Preman (deep love) and without attachement for anything under the sun.

Devotion is not faith (sraddha) which forms a part of all actions. Belief in God deepened into faith ; faith is deepened into devotion. Bhakti, then, is the burning faith in God.

"Like God's grace man's love for God is inherent and perennial. It remains temporarily dormant. But both are the phases of the same attempt to reunite. Proper spiritual practices help remove the obstacle to its manifestation. These spritual practices constitute the lowest variety of bhakti known as Sadhana-Bhakti, Vaidhi-bhakti or margiya-bhakti. When the mind becomes free from all Gunas, it is called nirguna, ahaituki, aikantiki, atyam tiki etc. In this stage love flows uninterrupted towards God like a spontaneous flow of river into the ocean. One who has attained nirguna bhakti is still conscious of a difference between himself and God. He is then called a maha-bhagavata". When as a result of superconscious experience, the lover enjoys the natural bliss of the realization of his identity with the Absolute, his bliss expresses itself in the form of love and service for the whole of creation as God. One who has attained this final stage of bhakti, has reached the status of God Himself..... This highest love itself is called para bhakti (Swami Tyagi Sananda, philosophy of the Bhagavata).

By attachment of devotioned love a person becomes fulfilled immortal and contented (Narada Pacheatra, 4). He becomes intoxicated with joy, absolutely quite and completely self-satisfied (Ibid, 5, 6).

Communing the Lord of his heart he delights in himself, (atanarama), sees Him alone, hears Him alone and think of Him alone. (Ibid 55). He feels His presence every where (Ibid 70). He belongs to Him and not even to himself (Ibid 73).

Sri Krsna says : 'I am like one who is not free (asvatantraivay). I am entirely dependent on my devotees (bhakta-paradhina). My heart is given over to my saintly devotees. I am their beloved. I have no linking either for myself or for my immortal consort Laksmi without the association of my saintly devotees whose sole refuge I am. How can I leave them who have renounced their wives, home, children, relations, wealth and this world and the next and completely surrendered themselves to me ? They do not know anything other than me, nor do I know anything else but them''. (Bhagavata IX, 4. 66. 68).

God is the God of love. The Geeta preaches the cult of devotion. Through is salvation to all, irrespective of caste character or sex is reality. The right to love God is undeniable.

Sri Krsna says : 'Even if a person of vilest conduct worships me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as a saint, for he has made the choice that is irrecoverable as it is righteous. He quickly becomes a virtuous soul and attains lasting peace. O, Arjuna, this is My word of promise that he who loves Me with all his heart never perishes. Even person of sinful origin attain the supreme goal by taking refuge in Me alone'. (13. G. IX, 30-32)

The Bhagavata also speaks in the same vein. Even a candala is purged of his impurity of his caste by his firm devotion to God. (IX.14. 21). Even a person of low birth is liberated from bondage, if he utters the name of God only once (V, 1, 35). The desire for liberation is the starting point of devotion. It is rather the minimum qualification. The cult of bhakti is open to all. It is universal. It admits of no restriction. So according to the Bhagavata love is the religion for all. It is Catholic in all respects. Narada and Sandilya preach the universality of the cult of devotion. Svapnesvara remarks ; just as the non-violence or non-injury (ahinsa) is the common duty of all, so is devotion to God. The path of Bhakti is superior to all. It is self-evident. It is easy, because it fills the soul with peace and ecstasy of joy. (Narada-Sutra 58-60).....'And among the yogins, the most completely united with Me. I consider, is he who adores Me with full faith and his inner self

abiding in me'. (B. G. VI 46-47). Those who follow the path of devotion are superior to those who follow the path of action, knowledge, or yoga ! (Sandilya-Sutra, 22, 23).

The Bhagavata says, "Devotion has nine marks : listing to the name of God, chanting His name, recollection of Him, serving Him, worshipping Him, saluting Him, servitude, friendship and self-dedication to Him (VII. 5. 22. 23). These are aspects of secondary devotion. Primary devotion is disinterested and unobstructed devotion to God. This devoting alone leads to the realization of God. (1.2.6). The disciple of parasara holds that attachment to the worship of God and the like are marks of devotion. Garga thinks that attachment to talks of his glory is the sign of devotion. Sandilya holds that ardour in His worship and the talks of His glory is the mark of devotion..... Narada thinks that dedication of all our actions to God and the feeling of extreme uneasiness on forgetting Him are the marks of devotion." (Quotations from the cult of Bhakti by Prof. Jadunath Sinha).

Below is another quotation from the writing of Dr. S. N. Das Gupta : Hindu Mysticism. This aims at the clarify certain vital aspects of devotion.

"Even in the Geeta true wisdom was regarded as a fire which reduces to ashes, as it were, all the past deeds whose fruits were not yet on the point of being enjoyed. But in the Bhagavata we read (11,14) that it is Bhakti which destroys all past sins. The old principle of self-surrender to God and a life spent in God-intoxication is the happiest of all lives. A man of such self-surrender has nothing else but God as his possession. He is supremely self-controlled and the enjoyment he has from his constant association with God keeps him absolutely happy and content with all things. Such a man does not aspire to any heavenly happiness and even to liberation. Devotion is regarded as having also a protective virtue. Even an ordinary devotee who is often led away by his sense attachments is so purified by this devotion that he is no longer overpowered by external attachment on passions. The Lord can be realized by bhakti and nothing else.

Neither with the performance of the allotted duties, nor knowledge combined with the austere discipline, of Tapas can purify a man who is devoid of all bhakti. This bhakti is however, is no longer the old contemplative meditation of God, stirred by a deep-seated love, it

manifests itself in the soft melting of the heart and expresses itself in *tears, inarticulate utterance of speech, laughter, songs and dances*. Such as can only be possible through a mad intoxication of love. *This kind of bhakti is entirely different from the calm contemplative life of complete self-surrender to God and a mind wholly immersed in God and the thought of God.*

The cardinal peculiarities convincingly evident in pre-Bhagavata era in respect of Bhakti show process of marked evolution in the Bhagavat era, although such devotion retained all the super qualities of devotion. It seemed to have sought something more intimate, so far as the relation between the devotee and the Lord is concerned. Here there arises no question of Moksha or liberation, but the emergence of a love bond that bind both. In the vedic period devotion is declared as one of the means to attain God ; but in the Bhagavata it is described as the only means to enjoy the blessings of God through ever-sought for union with the supreme self. It is not absolute surrender to Him, but life-long offering of services that begs nothing in return. God is all-love and it is love alone that can connect the relation between the devotee and the Lord, Sri Krsna is Rasamaya. He is Rasik-kula-churamoni, knowledge cannot reach Him, karma is an insignificant substitute. Only love can do the miracle ; Love alone can bring two hearts so close to each other that one feels the heart-beat of the Supreme Self. This is the highest state which Krsna Prema alone helps one to ascend. One has to abandon everything mundane in order to have a taste of love-nectar. And once that is tasted even in the conceivably smallest does, the self and the super-self become one, indivisible, inseparable and infinite.

No call of the finite can deter him whose sense of oneness leads him to the lotus-feet of Sri Krsna across the ocean of eternity over the bridge of devotion. Karma, Jnan and such like pale insignificant before such mighty devotion that admits of no bound ore-ted by space and time. This is the essence of Bhakti as the Bhagavata enumerates much subtlar than the period proceeding the Vedas-Upanishads and the Puranas. In fact the wisdom as it were gravitates round love, which the Gauriya Vaisnabas accepted as their doctrine and their Raganuraga. Bhakti surpasses human conception in regard to coming close to the Beloved who is no other than Sri Krsna.

Smt. Chinmoy Chattopadhyaya has essayed an attempt to show the attitudinal difference in reference to Bhakti in different particularly in the pre-Bhagavata and post-Bhagavata eras. As the opinion expressed in her article, 'Bhaktiraser Vivartan' (evolution of the concept of Bhakti or devotion) approximates closely to our contentions we quote below the following :

The ancient Aryan seers after deep meditation discovered the truth that God is Anandamaya (All-Bliss) and Rasasvarupa (All-Rasas). One reaches the highest state of Ananda if one can have His access and glimpse. The Risis stopped here and did not go further. They left God's Anandamayata and Rasasvarupa unelucidated or further expounded and clarified about God-concept what they uttered is that He is without any form, devoid of Gunas and deeds shunned of all upadhis and He is beyond being conceived and expressed through an exercise of mind's power to the utmost. Such utterances in fact last a veil over the God-concept and group it in inexplicable mystery. On the other hand Srimad Bhagavata has unveiled the mystery covering the God-concept and has revealed with astonishing clarity. God's Anandamaya Svarupa and Rasa-Svarupa, Krsna in the Bhagavata is the Brahman as it evinced in the Upanisad. Upanisad describes Him beyond comprehension and subsequent description.

Where as Bhagavata has presented Him well within everybody's reach. According to Bhagavata to a devotee He shows Himself as He. Though formless and above Gunas and deeds, He is like a child, a sweet companion and love-playmate to a devotee. Although He stays farthest, He is nearest to His devotees. In this way the Bhagavata has clarified God-concept in a way which is well within the orbit of understanding of a devotee. A reading of Sri Bhagavata does not give us an insight into the All-consciousness Svarupa of Brahma alone, but in addition the Rasamaya and Anandamaya Svarupa of Him, blessed with vision of which we accept Him as one very close to our heart enjoying consequently infinite and inexhaustible nectar born of Ananda. In this respect Srimad Bhagavata is in a large measure superior to Upanisad. Maharsi Dvaipana has admitted it unreservedly. (Bhakti Raser Vivartan, p. 21-20)

Sri Chaitanya and the Gauriya Vaisnava Acaryas have described love as the Purisartha in life. In their opinion Bhakti or devotion has had its fullest exposition in the Bhagavata, though references to it are

not rare to be discovered in the Geeta and other religions texts. Here God is All-love (premamaya) and His celestial love glistening in varied manifestations is described beautifully conched in sweetest words by those who were favoured with a bit of such all-prevelling love. Delighted beyond measure are all in having the glimpse of Rasamaya Brahman. It is so asserted in the Taittiriya upanisad (2.7). Exactly the same thing the Bhagavata expounds only with the addition that here on earth every Jiva is entitled to establish a contact with the Rasasvarupa in various capacities through the exposure of Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Madhur bhavas. Such Madhurya (sweetness) is what the devotees realises drop by drop as it were, in fact it simply goes to strengthen the tie of relation between the devotee and Him for whom he leaves every thing to turn a devotee.

Bhakti or devotion as chalked out by the Bhagavata is a significant advance in as much as it comes to the aid of the devotee to realise that God is all-love and a real devotee that is one who is prepared to accept God as Premamaya (Love-Essence) is not satisfied till he dives deep into the sea of love encircling him. This is precisely the reason why a devotee worth the name refrains always from hankering after Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksa. It is not denying the fact that love leads straight to the divine bosom saturated with all that a devotee looks for. Again not Aisarya (resourcefulness) but Madhurya (sweetness) is all that helps the devotee to reach Him whom he searches for every moment of his life. Madhurya is predominant : it is unquestionably enjoying the supreme position in so far as access to God is concerned. Not apprehension but 'Priti' is everything. 'Priti' is described as unqualified love (Nirupadhi Preman). It has its exposition in Vrindavana as illustrated fully in the Bhagavata. Such prema invokes the love-intoxicated God-seeker to leave everything behind and engage himself whole-heartedly, sanctified by single minded devotion in the service of Sri Krsna. Falling not to respond to the irresistible attraction of the ocean, a river having its origin in a mountain rushes at top speed towards the ocean, no amount of barrier on its way created by unsurmountable rocks and stones can put a halt to its onward flow, the Brajosundaries (the hand-some maids of the Brajodham) in the like manner moved fast to reach Krsna their beloved, their Heart of Hearts past all obstacles turning a deaf ear to what might others say by way of coaxing or cajoling, advice or warning. This is about those who could come out in the open in search of

Sri Krsna. But those who could not and had to stay interned in home, sat silent and speechless directing their mind and attention, even consciousness to the meditation of their Lord, their 'husband' whom they accepted as their 'end' in life.

Sri Krsna is feigned earnestness tries to dissuade the Gopis from worshipping Him leaving their kitah and kin, near and dear ones. (Bhagavata 10-29/24-29). But the devotees would not respect His plea. Said they piteously, "O, Lord, please refrain from uttering such commandment unto us. Renounced we have everything to acquire competence for serving thee. So, be kind to allow us to serve thee. The First-born bestows His unfathomable kindness to those who after liberation. In the same manner do thou be gracious to us. Thou commandest us to be servicable to our husbands, offsprings and such as seen very close to us. Thou are the dearest soul and companion to all beings under the sun. Those anxious of their own good fail not to propitate thee who is the very soul unto them being an amalgam of existence-consciousness and bliss. Husbands, offsprings and such like are our tormentors. Then what is the use of serving them. O, Lord, be kind enough not to rear the thread of love that bind Thee with us. Thou hast taken away everything from us. Our hands refuse to get engaged in domestic jobs, our feet have lost the sense of movement. How can we go back to Brajo and for what ?" (Bhagavata-10-29/31-34).

Such inestimable love is considered for superior to 'Brahmananda' (ananda attuned to Brahman). Such love not only binds the devotees with the Lord, but the Lord with the devotees as well. So says Krsna Himself : You (devotees) have broken the chair of bondage, apparently unbreakable, that Tethers you to the pole of domestic servitude and have come to Me. For this reason alone I can't repay My debt unto you even if I am granted to longest span of life. So, You just repay the debts Yourselves and that too on my behalf, blessed for following the noble path of love'. (Bhagavata 10.47.60) This is Gopipreman as enunciated in the Bhagavata, which even Goddess Lakshmi was not able to achieve.

One finds oneself totally lost immersed in such love divine, infinite, immeasurable and unfathomable. When Sri Krsna left Brajodham, leaving the Gopis, they aided by the cultivation of single-minded

devotion started thinking each as Krsna, sometimes smiling, dallying and casting glances all around with a renovated look. (Bhagavata 10-30/13-23).

Bhakti or devotion is then prescribed by the Bhagavata as the surest means to attain God with his manifold splendour. It is fully expressed in the divine play enacted by the Lord with His devotees, so done through the spell cast Yogamaya. Such divine dallying does not come within the orbit of perception defying the scrutiny of logic. This is preciously the reason why Bhaktivada is found delineated in Bhagavata is too deep for human understanding ; it is shrouded in mysticism as well.

V

Bhaktivada According to or as shown by Sri Chaitanya

Now we reach a very important aspect of our discussion on the Bhaktivada. How Sri Chaitanya would view it ? It is very important in as much as it gives an idea about 'Bhakti' as followed and practiced in Gauria Vaishnava Samaj. It will be seen that Sri Chaitanya adhered closely to the tenets concerning Bhakti as enshrined in the Bhagavata. Below is given a translated version of eight slokas on Bhaktivada supposed to be composed by Mahapravru. Much flavour, it is admitted, is missing in the translating process.

1. Thou art the cleanser of the dust—eclipsed looking glass, our-Chitta, particularly invisible.

Thou art the Extinguisher of the awe-inspiring demoniac forest-fire encircling and attempting to devour the globe our present but temporary habitat.

Thou art the Distributor of warmth-free, cool, lunar rays moistened with and sustained by Ananda, all-bliss.

Thou art the singular contriver in taming the storm-tossed vast expanse, the sea, From thy feet O, Lord issuth forth the stream of nector. Be so gracious O, thy Love and to let me have a sip of it. Engage me to adore Lord Thee, O Krsna, the name and the named combined.

2. As a token of profound appreciation of Thy Grace, the grateful beings dare confor on Thee numerous apallations such as Sri Krsna, Govinda and the like. Thou showerth graces all the

time and unlimited infinity varied. Deserted by luck and wounded by self-pride I stand denied the latest desire To sing Thy Holy name, full throated.

3. Sadhaka prostrating lower than the blades of grass remaining tolerant in greater degree than trees, himself unhonoured hesitates not to bestow it on the deserving ones shall chant relentless the name of Sri Kṛṣṇa.
4. O, Jagadisa desire not I nor do I to covet riches and gross earthly possessions in course of vain pleasure-hunting, my singular prayer unto thee is to favour me with pure Bhakti and Bhakti alone with no claim whatsoever in return.
5. O, Offspring of Nanda, even though I am thy whole-time servant without any respite, I am past all hopes, fallen in fathomless deep of the ocean which stands out in other words, as a replica of the earth our temporary abode and oftentimes tossing hither and thither blown by the mighty waves dancing on bosom. O, my Lord, my love, I am pitifully undone and at this stage of utter helplessness Thy grace unbound can only deliver me. So, please so kind as to cast your benign glance at me.
6. Relentless chanting of Thy name fills my eyes with tear-drops that roll down either side of the cheek, utterance of words get emotion-soaked and exceedingly sweet, 'Svarupa-anuraga' has its origin in the cave of the heart, which becoming extraordinarily limitless overflows, with which delighted I become to adore Thee.
7. O, Govinda, O, my love even a moment spent being separated from Thee without having Thy sight seems an age to me—a moment expanded into eternity. Streams of tears issue from my couple of eyes like unceasing rains, overflow the vale of cheeks. It gives vent to my pent up feeling of separation from Thee and makes the worlds look quiet blank, a big void of Nothingness.
8. O, Lotus-eyed, my sweet-heart, however oppressive Thou may appear before me and whatever unreasonably cruel and indifferent-treatment Thou may mete me out, I will continue loving Thee, notwithstanding Thy rough and seemingly odd behaviour. I'm Thine and none else's. Have pity on me.

A close examination of the nature of Bhakti as substantiated in the slokes above, convincingly leads one to accept it that Bhakti to Sri Chaitanya implies the establishment of an eternal bond between God and the devotee. This bond, however, has as its paramount objective not liberation so called, but offering of whole-hearted service to the Lord. (Bhagavata 3.29.13). Such Bhakti or devotion as acclaimed in the Bhagavata, Chaitanya would not only advise his adherence to follow but to realise it through single-minded practice. The cardinal, points enunciated through a host of well-meaning stories in the Bhagavata, illustrating different aspects of Bhakti in tune with different levels of experience, Chaitanya realised in his life aided by the feelings bubbling within and urging for being expressed in toto. In fact he makes a synthesis between ethically sound moral values and Parakiabad. The celestial lila of Krsna with the Gopis may offend the feelings and appear immoral in common eyes. Such relation is styled parakia in as much as it induces the Gopis to 'look upon Krsna as their husband and both married and unmarried share the same view. Of course Jogmaya is instrumental in organising this Lila helping Krsna to go on with it in any way or to any length He wishes to move.

Gopipreman is a unique concept. It starts at the point where preman claiming no return reaches its zenith. It is found in the Geeta that Sri Krsna urges Arjuna to give his whole mind to Him, to worship Him, with undivided attention and verity to make Him his own. (Geeta 18.65). Next He urges on all believers in so called faiths 'to come in to me' (Geeta 18.66). All these lead one to have an appreciation of Gopipreman which is described in the Bhagavata as Parakia Preman, Lady-Love of exceptional nature. It is to be remembered the such display of love is possible when Bhakti reaches the highest point on the culmination of Sadhana. That Bhaktivada as propounded by Sri Chaitanya is based on unalloyed ethical excellences finds mention at many places of Chaitanya Charitamrita. Sri Chaitanya as an unusual means of God worship accepts Parakia. This is the peculiar mode of his sadhana and this he established beyond doubt through his own conduct.

It may be argued if it is so, that Sri Chaitanya did follow Bhagavat closely in this respect then wherein lies the difference or the opposite between the two modes of Sadhana-one his own and the other

prescribed by the Bhagavata. It can be said in response to such query that in this particular case similarity gets the better differences. Because Chaitanya is in no way different from those devotees the Gopis in particular, who having left behind each and every item of so called covetable thing, did follow Sri Krsna. To follow Sri Krsna his be-all and end-all, Chaitanya left every thing far behind in search of celestial bliss. With a heart full of love, adoration and devotion for Krsna, he would sing, "O, Krsna, just give me shelter and be kind to afford me ample protection". It is Sri Caitanya who recovered rather re-discovered the celestial sweetness contained in the Bhagavata but almost buried in oblivion. So goes the firm belief that God Himself came down assuming the human form to re-establish the glory of His blissful sweetness. It has been discussed in details in the second chapter. Hence, needless it is to elaborate it here. But one fact we venture to remind that in the Kaliyuga Sri Krsna came down this earth as Sri Krsna Chaitanya which stands corroborated by the clear prediction of the Bhagavata. Externally Bhagavat-Bhakti is manifest in Mahaprabhu's sincere attempt to play the role of Lok-Sikshak (preceptor to the masses) and internally in his singular energy in realizing it squarely in the midst of and with his devoted adherents. He along with his close associates sips the nectar of devine bliss. Where engenio to the whole development, love is dominant, that of the Gopis in particular in their desparate bid to have Krsna in their midst, we find Sri Chaitanya following in the steps of Sri Radha than Krsna. As a result in Gauriya Vaishnaba Samaj Krsna-worship passes through a process with Sri Radha in the centre. Later it shaped itself into Netai Bhajana. Thus it is no denying the fact that the very source of Chaitanya-devotion for the Lord Supreme is the Bhagavat yet in exposition and earnest pursuit. Bhagavat-Bhakti of Chaitanya himself and his devoted followers evolved verily to take a unique shape. In the Bhagavata Krsna, the Lord is All-Love and All-Rasa. According to Chaitanya Charitamrita is not only Rasa, He is Parama-rasika (Rasikulachuramoni).

Krsna is without a shade of doubt premamaya, but at the same time he is driven and for love and having a taste to it. Himself the Giver of Love, He is also the Receiver the enjoyer of love. The singular characteristics of bhakti as outlined by Sri Chaitanya is that He has Synthesized the process of culminating in sadhana with Rasatattwa

(the cult of Rasa). Chaitanya himself unearthed the golden treasure of love lying Hidden in Gopis' way to Krsna-Bhajana realised its strenght, cultivated it to his best and finally through His conduct and comradeship helped others to practise it befittingly. So there exist both difference and nondifference in respect of Bhaktibada as sealed in the Bhagavata and that enlivened by Sri Chaitanya. For, the same God is present in both Brojodham and Nabadwipa, at the former place in divine form and at the alter in human form. Otherwise Sri Krsna and Sri Chaitanya are one and the same with no difference between them. He who is Krsna in Brojodhama is Sri Chaitanya in Nabadwipa. In Nabadwipa Sri Krsna in Chaitanyarupa is the very shelter and dispenser of bliss in the form of Brojobhakti whereas in Brojolila Sri Krsna claims our attention as an unbodiment of love. To the Gauriya Vaishnava both Radha-Krsna and the combined images of Radha-Krsna and Chaitanya claim our utmost reverence and worship. So Bhakti has a wider connotation than the Bhagavata in Bhaktivada enshrined in Chaitanya concept as it includes the fact that God is not only Love or an Object of Love, but our asraya where we desire to make our last sojourn for settlement absolutely permanent, He being the Grand Dispenser of bliss and bhakti. Thus Bhaktibad as outlined by Mahaprabhu is multicoloured, sweetened with grace and above all 'something' which words fail to give vent to.

Chaitanya Charitamrita attempts a life-sketch of Sri Chaitanya and the nature of his bhakti. It is examined therein in details in different contexts and based on it, can it be concluded that Chaitanya's preman or love the 'Bipralambha' aspect of love.

The supreme joy attainable in course of love offering to God is termed 'Sambhoga' and the pangs of separation caused immense pain and afflicts the heart of the devotee, even after hundred years from Krsna's leaving Brindabana (Mathur Biraha), proving unbearably acute and heart-piercing to the Gopis. In far later years the Vaishnava Sadhaka-poets with Radha as their guiding force expressed in Padas (short lyrics) the heart consuming feels under different heads viz., Purbaraga, Prema-Baichitta, Mana etc. This feeling exactly is discernible in Sri Chaitanya which may be termed as a state of Bipralambha. It signifies interest longing for Krsna who remains separated, adopting Radhabhaba. It is secret, absolute mystical but made manifest through sadhana adopting Radhabhaba. Such

Premamoya Kṛṣṇa whom the Vedas and the Upanisads have described as Rasamaya Preman and would be adored by Radha in utmost secrecy (Bh.10. 30. 28). In the same way in the life of Chaitanya, the path of devotion as per his contemplation, is absolutely a secret affair, on the other hand Sadhan-Bhakti in obedience to his directive known as Kanta-Preman is shrouded in mystery.

What then constitutes the peculiarities of Chaitanya's bhakti as compared with other Sadhakas ?

The Alvars of the south worshipped God as Brajabadhu following the Bhagavata. A graphic description of the nature of such worship can be traced in Tamil literature. The Pre-Chaitanya Vaisnabacaryas as with a view to establishing Bhakti cult referred to Bhakti and the Bhagavata in the light of their respective versions of Brahmasutras. It is evident that all these Acaryas preferred the discipline attuned to Dasyabhava as a sure means to attain liberation.

So says Ramanuja even if in the expression Tattamasi the Jiva and Brahman are taken to be non-differentiated and on such knowledge depends 'moksa' yet there are many such expressions in the Upanisad where it is clearly indicated that Jiva and Brahman are differentiated (dual) and non-differentiated (Advaya) and that Bhakti (devotion) and not Jnana (knowledge) is chiefly instrumental in matter of attainment of Moksa. To him Bhakti (devotion), Upasana (worship) and Dhyana (meditation) belong to the same category. As regards Upasana, Ramanuja has opined that the upasak's (the worshippers) atma-Svarupa (own nature) would determine the course and nature of upasana (worship). Ramanuja's diety is Narayana.

Nimbarka has also singled out Bhakti or devotion as means towards the attainment of God. He had mention of several Sadhan Margs (Sadhan Paths), such as Karmayoga, Jnanayoga, Bhakti and Prapattiyoga absolute obedience to Guru. Here Karmayoga refers to Niskama Karma (unconditional). Jnana yoga refers to Brahma Vidya or knowledge to attain which what one needs most is the cultivation of pure mind. Bhakti refers to remembering God ceaselessly like the flow of sacred Ganga-water and Prapatti yoga is total surrender of self to God. Similarly to follow the Guru at every step is of much help in such Bhaktiyoga.

Madhacarya has laid stress on nine types of Bhakti as enumerated in the Bhagavata. In his opinion through Sri Hari-worship the Jiva

attains Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa. To establish the supremacy of Bhakti he opines that without His grace it is well-nigh impossible for Jiva to be favoured with salvation.

Ballavacarya has also pointed to Krsna-worship. According to him service to Him is the surest step for a devotee to attain what he desires most. Sri Krsna is Himself Brahman. So His worship is proper. Acarya has placed Bhakti for above knowledge. Though Jnana or knowledge paves the way for devotion, yet Chaitanya Bhakti would melt into Kanta-Preman and this is in all respects superior to mukti (Salvation).

In pre-Chaitanya era a galaxy of seer-poets of Bengal wielded their quills to compose 'Padas'—lyrics of exquisite fragrance breathing melody and music, depicting Radha-Krsna Preman.

Of them were Joydeb, Vidyapati and Chandidas. Chaitanya Deva it is said, derived much pleasure in going through such divinely inspired padas composed by the celebrated trio of undying fame. Their sincere attempt to present Radha Krsna in the Bhagavata-perspective went a long way in nourishing and nurshing Chaitanya's concept a great-deal, so tremendous was their influence on him. According to Dr. Chinmoyee Chattopadhyay : "Before Chaitanyadeva's advent, vaishnava sadhana imbued with the spirit Madhura-rasa found expression in the padas of Joydeb, Vidyapati and Chandidas." (Bhakti raser Vibartan p. 359)

The great Vaisnava-seer of modern times Prabhu pada Tridan-disvami Srimad Bhaktibilas tirtha Maharaj has said : Sri Chaitanya Deva introduced Sri Krsna Kirtan as an ingenious device to cleanse the dus-laden unclean 'eclipsed' chitta. It not only facilitates man's secondary need attainment of Moksa or Nirvan, but man's supreme attainment 'Premabhakti' (Love and devotion). It is on the devotee lies the immense responsibility for serving this well-decorated world. A devotee should remain ever alert to serve it, blessed with the inmost feelings of the divine Svabhava saturated with all-bliss and all sweetness. This above-self 'Priti Vivarta' is 'Premadharm' to Gauriya Vaisnava. This is what Gauranga Mahaprabu ever-radiant love-incarnate made a gift to humanity at large. Such supreme state reached through bhakti is Prema, according to Vaisnavacaryas (Gauriya Darsana Paramarther Alok p. 40).

Dr. Radhagobindanath, the illustrious exponest of Gauriya Vaisnava philosophy has said in this context "It is called Raganuraga bhakti.

Aisaryaajnana (knowledge of resourcefulness) vanishes in this bhajan (changing the name of God in chorus), Raganuraga bhajan is denied its outer flow till such time as 'aisaryaajnana' or knowledge concerning the glory of Sri Krsna would dominate. The irresistible zeal to serve Krsna is the motivating force behind Raganuraga Sadhana''.

It is not likely that everyone feels tempted to serve God following Kantabhava. It is to be admitted that different persons having diverse tastes, will follow different modes of Bhajan, not a single one can be prescribed for one and all. This precisely accounts for diverse methods of bhajana conforming as such to a particular taste, such as Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and the like. All these are by and large raganuraga. It should be borne in mind in this context that no bhajan as is evidently conducted accepting Brojabhava is mixed with Aisarya jnan. The devotee has to submit mind and soul to the Brajaparikarars in order to make his bhajan in accordance with Brajabhava, a distinctly embellished reality. (Cai Ch.)

The most intelligently graphic exposition of Dr. S. N. Das Gupta in this regard is quoted below :

“Chaitanya described God's love in its most exalted form as being the love of a woman in deep attachment to a man, where the attachment is so deep that all sex-considerations have ceased a love so intense that only an insatiable desire of union in love remains and all the earthly relations of man and woman have ceased God, he thought is Himself a Creator, controller of us all, and in His eternal love is always attracting us drawing us towards greater and greater perfection. Love in His very nature. So only through a passionate love of Him that we can enjoy His deep love for us. The older ideals of liberation, of heavenly happiness, of the destruction of the mind and the like were considered by Chaitanya to be absolutely insignificant for a person whose whole mind has been fired by a great passion that flows intermits to God, the great occasion of love, who washes away all his sins and defects''. Hindu mysticism (pp. 136-37).

Quoted below is another opinion in this regard by Dr. A. C. Das. “Such was Sri Chaitanya. But his religion was not altogether a new phenomenon. It had its roots in Bhagavata religion which dates back to the remote past. Still a new life and force was infused into the age-old tradition by the spiritual experience of Sri Chaitanya. Thus

we see that the traditional conceptions embodied in Indian theistic literature come to be reconsidered and reoriented. And as a result of this new a new theistic movement was on foot (A Modern Incarnation of God pp. 172-73).

A not-too-critical examination of the expert-opinions as quoted above is suggestive of the fact that Vaisnabism assumed a new shape through the influence of Sri Chaitanya which eventually established itself as Gauriya Vaisnab faith.

It is no wonder that such Bhakti-cult is manifest in most other religions faiths, but none found ardent to accept 'Kantaprem', resultant of Bhakti in following the prescriptions of the Bhagavata. It can be concluded on the other hand that not Bhagavata but the Vedas and Upanisads had its sway over the minds of the people belonging to different religions other than Gauriya Viasnabas. Chaitanya's action in remodelling Bhagavata-Bhakti to suit his purpose and plan of worship is a 'miracle', it is to say the least nothing but the outer expression of the flow of eternal love within. However a study is undertaken to establish the reaction and response of Bhakti in other beliefs. All of them of course have accepted bhakti as the means to attain the blessings of God. The Sakta and Saiva sects have accepted and incorporated bhakti in their system of faith in respective ways. To the Saktas, Sakti is the Eternal Mother, the Ruler of the Universe. They look upon her both as mother and daughter a unique exposition of Vatsalya rasa. Sri Ramaprasad and Sri Ramkrishna are two great sadhaks on this line in modern times. The Agomoni and Bijoya songs as are sung in Bengal testify to the fact that the Bengalees have profound inclination for viewing their all-powerful Goddess, daughter bordering every day experience the unbearable pangs of sorrow as well as within the cave of mind of a mother consequent upon separation from her daughter is expressed in these lyrics. In the same way the Sadhak worships God through the acknowledgement of sonship to his mother who is no other than Kali Herself. This becomes possible through 'Prativatsalya rasa'. In his life time Ramkrishna worshipped God through Kali, the Mother.

In the Saiva way we also discover such Bhakti. But this Bhakti so-called is mixed with Jnana in the North. In the South the Alwars and many Sadhakas in later times worshipped God as the Father. To

the Saivaites 'Yoga' came first and then Bhakti made its entry felt. In many Saiva Texts Siva is imagined as Vedic Brahman and Sivani comes to His aid As His Sakti. Thus is Saivaism Jiva and Siva are related as 'Bheda' and 'abheda'. A clear appraisal of such relation is attainable through 'Yoga' and 'Bhakti'.

The 'Bauls' of Bengal were deeply influenced by Vaisnabism. They worshi God as husband. Mirabai of the North was a great saint says she "Without love Nandalala is not attainable".

It can be summed up that the Chemistry of converting devotion into love was the supreme contribution of Sri Chaitanya to the world moistened with Krsna—consciousness.

Chapter V

NISTHACHAR

‘Nistha’ and ‘Achar’—these two terms are compounded to form Nisthachar. This particular compound word is of course missing in Chaitanya Charitamrita. But its importance is evidently acknowledged in detailing different aspects of Sri Chaitanya’s self-imposed duties which find mentions in Chaitanya Charitamrita. The term acar is mentioned in the Madhya Lila of Chaitanya Charitamrita chapters 1.6.2.22.&3.6. ‘Nistha’ is also observed herein. : Dr. Radha Gobinda Nath in offering explanations of the term achar has remarked that the term achar generally refers to the conduct of men in respect of taking meals, regulating the ways and means of daily life and doing such things as are helpful to ensure a smooth sailing of life. But in Chaitanya Charitamrita this term denotes a particular conduct by the application of which a particular group of men or class or a particular type of men are clearly indicated. As in the 2nd chapter 2. 22 of Chaitanya Charitamrita we find Vaisnabachar in the 3rd chapter 3.2, through desertion of Haridas (Jr), his basic weakness in respect of the following the codified instructions binding on the followers is understood. It may be mentioned that Haridas, the younger was deserted for his failure to act in conformity to the codes which defiled his conduct as a devotee. As regards ‘nistha’ it is so said in Chaitanya Charitamrita nistha is what is performed with repeated efforts in a very interested way. In other words to follow an action with undivided attention is nistha. In 2.2.23 of Chaitanya Charitamrita. we have that when Jiva is freed from a host of ill--desires and concentrate his undivided attention stupendously to God, in other words when he gets himself absolutely absorbed in the pursuit of a particular thing in terms of his faith, it is Nistha. In the 2nd chapter of Chaitanya Charitamrita 2.22, nistha is described as a step to love. So, a feeling saturated with love is well-nigh impossible without application of undivided attention. In Chaitanya Charitamrita it is said that Prema or Love is an irresistible longing for putting one’s self to the service of Krsna with single minded sincerity and with it alone is Krsna-worship possible.

There is a lot of compulsorily observable duties for one belonging

to a particular religion and his performances accordingly show to which religion he belongs. Such acars or observable duties are considered means to attain 'dharmaparamartha' (dhrama bestowing Supreme bliss). In Chaitanya Charitamrita is recorded the indispensability of performing such observable duties. According to Sri Chaitanya Bhakti is surest means to attain God—and this of two types Baidhi and Raganuga. To Chaitanya attainment of paramartha is impossible without Sadacar. In Chaitanya Charitamrita the acars of the Vaisnabas are listed and discussed in details and to explain the serious nature of offence in case of violation any of such items as enlisted, the story of desertion of junior Haridas is narrated. Such narration implies the absolute imperativeness of nisthachar and Lok-Siksa and at the same time the relevance of 'nistha' to attain God. According to Chaitanya Charitamrita nistha not only turns the mind of the devotee to God but fills his mind with love of and longing for God. (Chai. Cha 2.2). Of course its precondition is cleansing and purifying the mind, which again demands for it becoming a reality Sadachar, that is, sincere persuit of duties prescribed by religion. In Geeta Sri Krsna advises Arjuna performance of religion-sanctioned duties. (Geeta 16/23-24). Sri Chaitanya as well cites instances of the achars of saintly personalities in course of his offering advice to his devotees in respect of observable nisthachar. It is found in the Geeta—that God is pleased to take shelter in the hearts of such devotees as are accustomed to Sadacar and nisthachar (Geeta 9/29). Such devotees are Cristened 'Bilaksan Bhakti' (devotees having special traits) in the Bhagavata (Bhagavata 6/14/5). Chaitanya Charitamrita has categorically stated that nisthachar is the passport as it were to the kingdom of Bhakti. Chaitanya disapproved emphatically giving up of such false rites as are not sanctified by religious prescriptions and made it abundantly clear that deviation from the path of Sadachar and nistha would lead one practising them to fall in disrepute (Chai. Cha.2.19). Sincerest love for Krsna can be expressed only through only with the help of such acars are mingled with absolute nistha (Chai. Cha.). Elsewhere Chaitanya has reffered to a number of acars that met with his unequivocal disapproval, suchas evil association, mixing with woman association with men having no faith in Krsna. He insisted instead giving up of caste—barriers and taking refugee in Krsna as a destitute (Chai. Cha. 2. 22). Those who have longing for Krsna are pure in

heart and those who have no faith in and dependence on Krsna, are of impure nature. A sadhak should shun the company of such 'dark' person. Association with women is equally a positive hindrance to the realization of god, women stand in the way of men's entering the kingdom of Bhakti. Bhagavata has clearly stated that man and woman who are chiefly instrumental in making us forgetful of Satya, Sauca, Daya, Manna, Sadbuddhi, Lajja, Sri, Kirti, Sama, Dama and Bhaga must be avoided (Bhagavat 3/31/33-34).

Chaitanya says—senses are of few times beyond control and so they lead one to hanker after things that offend our religious aspiration. It is seen that even a sage known to have conquered senses, gets attracted towards earthly matters. This is because of the senses being restless (Chai. Cha. 3/2). So says Sastra : it is safer to live encapsuled in a cage encircled by fire than Associate with man turning their mind from Krsna. For, in such case it will simply magnifying sorrow and multiply its causes.

.....it is better to embrace serpents, tigers and crocodiles than associated with persons engaged in worshipping numerous good in the hope of getting an unexpected return thereon. (Chai. Cha). Sri Krsna Himself tells Arjuna that it is totally undesirable to discuss Sastras with one having no obedience to Him. He forbids Arjuna not to discuss the purport of Geeta with one who is 'ajitendrya' (who has not controlled his senses). He also forbids him to disclose the philosophy inherent to Geeta to the unwilling ears. (Geeta 18-67). 'Varnasram Dharma' is to be abandoned as it is a positive bar to the achievement of significant Krsna-Seva which is tantamount to Parampursartha.

It may be said here that Saranagati or thinking of Sri Krsna without any break as an acar finds mention not only in Chaitanya Charitamrita but in number of religious and Sastras since the Vedic period. It is so detailed in the Rk. Veda that afflicted Indra would come to God praying for protection from the enemies 1/22/5.

In Svetasvar Upanisad the risis desire for total surrender to God (Sv. Up. 6. 18). Bharadwaj Samhita proclaims that Saranagati is the means to attain God. (Bh.San p. 12). Such Saranagati has found its fullest expression in the Geeta. According to Geeta Saranagati means enjoying the blessings of God and therefore eternal peace as a result. (Geeta 18.57). As regards desertion of Junior Haridas it is established in support of Chaitanya's action that Haridas, himself a sannyasin

behaved like a house holder by asking quality rice from one Madhabi Dasi. It was totally contrary to the nature of a medicant who has renounced the world in order to take refuge in God. To Chaitanya the duty of a Bairagi consists in chanting God's name relentlessly, being self-reliant, being free from any kind of hankering after this thing or that, offering constant service to God and living on the essential minimum in life. To make Ragunath understand what Bairagya is, Sri Chaitanya forbade discussion on topics essentially domestic and lending an ear to the words of males and females alike, causing diversion of mind.

From the discussion above it is firmly understandable that nisthachar has a specific place in Vaisnab religion, its objective being to make man morally sound and devotee to God.

It should be bourne in mind That Chaitanya did never act as a sermonizer imparting religious instruction. He translated into action all that would lie inherent concerning a particular religious concept. He enlivened the abstract into concrete actions and discharge of duties as codified and advised his associates to do likewise.

Chapter VI

MYSTICISM

The avowed objective with which we carried on our research job in an humble way was to discuss if Chaitanya in Chaitanya Charitamrita is imagined to be God Himself. In many parts of the discourses spread over a number of papers particularly in the second chapter, it is presented in reference to knowledge of Sastras, findings of philosophy and the sayings of the devout Sadhakas. But it is absolutely impossible to present God as He is, depending solely on the knowledge of the Sastra and discussions of various disciplines. For God who resides in the fathomless religious consciousness is beyond the cautious scrutiny of logic. God is to be realized. Even if it is possible to have an idea of God aided by reason, the real self of God appears transparent to a heart filled with limitless eagerness, love and devotion. Such realization is quite distinct from display of the intellectualism, experiences gained through science and philosophical theorisations. This is termed spiritual realisation attainable with an aid of Sadhana or Yoga-jnan (knowledge of the coveted union with the Supreme Self). The Sadhaka in course of his transcendental sadhana realises the Supreme Being, that is God. God remains in and beyond the world and Fixes His abode in the recess of human heart. Spiritualism makes possible establishing the connecting link with God coming within the orbit of realisation. In Chaitanya Charitamrita spiritualism is all—pervasive overriding dry reason. Such spiritualism surpassed all conceivable thinking. As a result Sri Krsna alias Sri Krsnavatar Sri Krsnaitanya is attainable through strenuous spiritual exercise. This Sri Krsna or Sri Chaitanya defying the grip of lame reason the whole issue is shrouded in mystery. For according to Chaitanya Charitamrita, Tattwa cannot be explained by reason, it can be grasped only with the aid of devotion or bhakti which again is a gift of God, attainable only through His grace. Similarly the relation between God and the devotee as is evidently established centering round the latter eludes the grasp of reason, while it is directly realised by the devotee.

In different chapters of Chaitanya Charitamrita particularly in the fourth chapter of the Adilila and eighth chapter of Madhyalila, the

above assertion is applicable, in respect of exposition the nature of Tattwa. Ray Ramananda himself told Sri Chaitanya that the extreme abstruseness of Radha and Krsna permeating their Lila remain unmanifested to the Jnani (so called wise) Karmi (the doer), Yogi, the devotee, even to devotees practising raganuraga. It is realisable only to one deeply engrossed in Kanta bhava or Sakhi bhava. The nature of such a Sakhi is past all description. An excellent comparison in Chaitanya Charitamrita suggests that Radha is the paradisiacal creeper signifying Krsna Prema while the Sakhis are twigs holding flowers of exquisite colour and beauty. Their singular aspiration is to devote themselves to the service of Krsna and it is they alone who are entitled to observe and appreciate the abstruse lila of Radha and Krsna. So important is Sakhi bhava.

To people denied this Sakhibhava, Lila of Krsna or God remains not manifest and mystical. Men of average or below average attainment try in vain to go into the depth of His Lila, to have an understanding of it, the whole exercise proving futile from the very start. It is for above their finite knowledge. The beloved is always mysterious to the lover and the relation between the devotee and God being wholly circumscribed by Kanta-Premika bhava it has become all the more mysterious for beyond average comprehending capacity. In the Chaitanya Charitamrita there is an explicit reference to two types of devotion—Baidhi and Raganuraga, when a Sadhaka aided by such devotions feels in him the irresistible longing or desire, then he is able to enjoy a realisation of God. He should qualify his being by purity of self. Such realisation is of course through God's blessings. For it is he who attains Sakhibhava through sadhana, can unveil the mystery covering God and have an understanding of His all-love presence.

Similarly Chaitanya's life and saintly career would also remain enveloped in mystery. As reasons advanced for his advent it is clarified in Chaitanya Charitamrita that his coming was due to putting an end to age-old crisis and enthrust men to love Krsna on line of Braja episode. Inscrutable, of course, is Chaitanya's significant mode of loving Krsna following in the foot steps of Sri Radha, or put it precisely Radha-like in all respects. Almost none but a few celebrities like Parama-bhagavata Ray Ramananda, Swarup Gosvami and very few others could appreciate it. In Gambhiralila such mode of Krsna love in the part of Chaitanya is evident, severe pangs of sorrow caused by separation

from Krsna make Chaitanya act in a way peculiarly his own as a positive response and this is manifested in Gambhira. "O, Krsna, the Soul of my Soul, O, my love/the darling of Braja whither to go, where should I have a glimpse of Thee, tell me thou, O, Murali Badan (celebrated flute-player), Love celestial relating to Krsna macerated with Radha bhava defies utterance and in matter of having feeling the devotee experiences :

"Unbearable burning sensation
On body's outer crust,
While over flows delight born
In the deep of heart !

How warm and cool is Krsna's Love
In Chaitanya Charitamrita most of Chaitanya's performances appear extra-mundane. For example, exhibition of Radha-Krsna on the same human frame, making a show of resources to Kashi mitra, Prataprudra and others, rescue of Prakasananda, driving a chariot which even seven elephants fail to move, and the simultaneous presence of seven different sects etc. etc.

Even a careful reading of Chaitanya Charitamrita would not help one of average intelligence to view Chaitanya Svarupa in clear light, It is not so simple because it is extra-mundane. Isvar-tattwa is revealed only to the initiated. Only to him that Krsna makes His presence felt tearing the veil of mystery.

'Krsna illuminates the dark region of heart'

Only when absorbing thought He is circled with' (Chai. Cha 2.39). In support of such impressions the experience of a devotee acquires in course of his longing for winning the Grace of the Lord cannot be communicated to others.

There are many who regard God as a Supreme Self transcending all limit, time and place and as such recognised verily as a transcendental omnipresence. To them all such performances as cannot come to the orbit of experience are mysterious, such mystery alluding to the consciousness of the unknown.

J. B. Pratt defines mysticism as "the sense of presence of a being or reality through other means than the ordinary perceptive processes or the reasons (J. B. Pratt. on the religious consciousness. Chap. XVI, p. 337). According to W. K. Wright, '(it) is cultivation of the

consciousness of the presence of God'. According to Mc. Gregor "This (mysticism) is a knowledge which by its very nature cannot belong to a single knowledge. It is an exchange, a sharing by which two human lives are in some measure joined together, giving and receiving. (Introduction to Religious Philosophy p. 178).

The celebrated Indian Philosopher Dr. Surendra Nath Das Gupta has made a searching analysis of mysticism. To him nothing on earth can describe nature of divine love. Yet the relationship established between the devotee and God based on love is undeniable, although such relationship is mysterious. He has said "Love of God is not a thing which we produce in ourselves by excessive brooding or by self-hypothesis or by any other method. It is a permanent flame, slowly burning in the coversns of all our hearts. Only however, when it gains strength through study and through association with other devotees at an opportune moment do we come to know of it. The basis of all religions is this love of God ! For if this love of God were not vital to us, all that the great prophets have been trying to preach would have been unveal and futile. If it were not a real experience which in some sense shared by all, an experience which enables us and raise us from above the selfish pettinesses of life, no prophet and no religious deed would be able to appeal to our higher nature and establish the claim of religion. Religion is by nature an outwardly attitude of life and which we have along with our worldly attitude". Man does not live by bread alone is a very classic proposition. If we by nature wanted only that which satisfies our appetites, there would have been no art, no philosophy, and no religion. Our being is such that we take us to the satisfaction on our appetites, to sense gratifications, there are others which in an unacceptable manner lift us higher. The senses when properly exercised give us sense pleasure, the mind through its activities of logical thinking affords the corresponding jobs and the satisfaction of truth—seeking and the spirit longs to associate itself with some higher ideal, with a greater and superior being or with a transcendent unspeakable something of which it has at first only an indistinct vision". (Dr. S. N. Dasgupta, Hindu Mysticism pp. 130-131)

According to Prof. Bimal Krishna Motilal, no logical thinking or a reasoning can help us discuss matters transcendental by nature. In his language "The vedic seer raised the question, which is really there,

to whom we must offer oblation ?''. This shows that mysticism is as old as the birth of civilization. But so is man's attempt to comprehend rationally the religious and the mystical. Both the religious man and the rational man in our society to-day raise their eye-brows at the question of rational comprehension of the religious and mystical. For the rational man believes that religion is basically irrational, it is, at its best, above and beyond reasons, and at its worst, below reasons. The man will hesitate because for him, religion beyond experience or on faith or on both. Hence he would argue, it is impossible for an agnostic, who lacks any experience, either religious or mystical, to have a rational comprehension of religion or mysticism.

For a man may understand the definition of drunkenness, but will never rationally understand what it is really to be drunk. (The logical illumination of Indian mysticism p. 33).

Thus it can be boldly asserted that the question surrounding the existence or no-existence of God can not be answered by exercise of intellect even of the highest order, rational or logical. It is a matter deeply concerned with one's feeling as such resultant of a deep-rooted emotionally integrated approach. Whenever an individual supposedly chosen by God starts showing such signs as signal his peculiar expression of love of God, he is raised very high by his contemporaries who view whatever he thinks or does as mysterious. They utterly fail to locate the mystery impulse ingrained in it. Such transcendental experience cannot be translated in human tongues. It is in fact a specific experience of a particular blessed individual. He denies himself attachment to worldly pleasure and exert efforts to discover the connecting link between himself and God. Such an individual needs no mediator but acts himself all the time till the goal is reached. In other words it is expressed through a person with or without a reason, as is determined not here but somewhere else. Truth such an individual faces is unfolded to some extent to people at large, expressed in knowledge and integrated emotion. His message reflects knowledge about God and their actual and day-to-day conduct of his exalted life, speaks of crystallised emotion as a part of oblation to God. Such emotions are sometimes creators of delight while sometimes deep melancholy. Delight in the sense that He is realized and sad when separated from the Supreme Being. Such transcendental experience attained by a chosen individual is not without a purpose or a plan.

To the individual so elevated it teaches the commoners the importance of just dealings, honesty and the means to link oneself with the Truth Eternal. In different climes and time, such God-individuals are not rare, Outwardly they develop some differences in their ways of life.

Nevertheless, on top of everything God is there permanent consideration and God-seeking is the be-all and end-all of their life. God-consciousness is solely dependent on transcendental thought. At different ages it is referred to in the Sastras and prompts the Sadhaka engage in mysterious utterances. To the Sadhaka, it is the awakening of Kula-Kundalini, to a commoner it is the awakening of life or God residing in the recess of his heart.

How and when mysticism had its origin is a subject matter of history. In reference to mysticism elaborated in Chaitanya Charitamrita it can be said that it is for the first time mentioned in the Vedas. For, in the Rk. Vedas and Atharva Vedas that are accepted on all hands as the most ancient specimens of Indian religio-philosophical thoughts contain such 'mantras' as signify distinctly oblation to different gods ; the objective being realization of cherished desires by the offering of prayer. Here the imaginative aspect of realising the cherished desire is without doubt extra-mundane affair and is not qualified by any reason. For on point of reason the longing for such realization is an impossibility. It is a type of Sadhana at its best.

Such a religious offering has a characteristics of its own. It is more powerful than God. It is the common belief that through offering to God the creation of desired objects is possible. It is an aphorism which developed into Vedic mantras and absolute faith in sacrifice.

Religion is generally related to God and matters divine. But it is so believed that Vedas are revealed and the World-edicts are secretly described in them. It is pre-ordained, it is spiritual. No specific cause can prove how a particular offering will produce a particular object. It rests in the hearts of the sages, at least so is it declared.

All offerings are considered useful for the good of mankind. It is admitted that any one can acquire his cherished object of this world and the world beyond having recourse to such offering. Such offerings afterwards are known as religion or spiritual consciousness.

It is no magic at all. For the mode of offering is dictated from above. It is pragmatic as well as spiritual if properly followed. It is quite different from social codes and customs ; it cannot be experienced being a spiritualised religions conception. Spiritualism is in fact the religion of a man.

The contents of the Vedas contain eternal truth which human thoughts cannot verify. It gives a clue to the absolute truth which still invigorate Indian religion and philosophy. Any religion or philosophical opinion becomes acceptable if it does not accord with this theory (Tattwa).

Western mysticism as a concept has a well-defined history. According to most of them it is closely linked with the Supreme consciousness of an individual. But mysticism inherent as a Sutra (aphorism) is beyond the utmost long reach of human beings.

The components of offering (utsarga) as contained in the Vedas are :

- (i) A firm faith which if followed properly will lead to attainment of cherished object both of this world and of the world beyond.
- (ii) Through offerings come into operation such rules (Bidhi) that admit of no changes, that is, they remain unchanged.
- (iii) It is characteristically pre-ordained, man having to do nothing, that has its seemingly automatic origin.
- (iv) It is a clear call for performing a specific set of duties.
- (v) The Sovereignty of the Vedas is unchallengable, defying lame reason and blind philosophy.
- (vi) The Truth Absolute manifests itself to all through the interpretation and sayings of the Vedas.
- (vii) The Vedic system calls forth Faith and Obedience. Its Svarup is spiritual, mystical, hidden power and it is the root-cause of all truths. Its acceptibility is not proven, nevertheless it is the source of worldly pleasures. It is indeed independent, freed from the grasp of reason and logic.

This 'Rupa' or 'Bhaba' is gifted by Him who controls and conducts the affairs of such apparent world ; it is linked with the notion that man also has got Him as his guide. Man is in Him, so says the Geeta. Such mystical power exists not only in the world outside but in the heart of men. This is experienced through Sadhana sanctified by pious

thinking . The Svarupa of This Mystical Existence beggars description. He manifests Himself in different forms bestowing bliss of varied nature. Man realizes Brahman as the Supreme Being, but fails to describe Him. Sadhana alone can solve the mystery.

Spiritual feels are past intellectualization, but it is the force latent in all thinking. Yama (the God of Death) disclosed this truth to Naciketa in Kathaupanisad, that the man who has self-realization can be blessed with Supreme self-realization. This is adhyatma Yoga. In Kathaupanisad Yama makes it clear to Naciketa that birth and death are simply illusions. The body has its origin and decay.—Life has nothing of this kind. Life is eternal admitting of no birth and no death. This life is the source of all actions and activities.

This Truth Absolute is the mystical concern of the Upanisada. The Upanisads dwell on Atman, Brahman who is invisible, Deathless, without any beginning, eternal and admitting of no changes. He cannot be grasped by scholarship or merit. He who has realised Him, has known Him. The knower then establishes rapport with the Truth Eternal.

The subject matter in the Upanisads are discussed in utmost secrecy. In other word they dwell on something not of this world but of the world lying beyond. They cannot be described as this, or that. They demand union of the subject to be perceived and the individual who actually makes efforts to perceive.

This is morality ; This is self-evident. The moon, the sun and the stars need no light. The blessed individual who is free from sins, who has control led his senses, who is Prajna that is self-content, can only know Him. For such one pure in mind and body maintains his separate identity as one independent of knowledge of this world. So, this is realizable only to the sages and saints. This is Parajñana (Supreme knowledge) separate from Aparajñana (worldly knowledge). With this knowledge being placed in his heart, he is at one with Brahman. So a particular individual can perceive Him through sadhana. This is antra-darsan (seeing of one's own self), which words fail to describe. He is the Supreme self beyond all descriptions, so remaining untouched as Sri Rama Krishna declares.

One hundred and fifty years before Christ, it is Patanjali who made an attempt to direct the course that may lead to the Supreme self by lifting the mind upward through a prescribed system of Yoga.

If it is questioned 'Who am I' ? we cannot give a positive and convincing answer within cannot be covered by any definition. It is a complex issue. Philosophy attempts to get its 'Svarupa' revealed in its own way of course. To some philosophers 'Atman' is one, while to some it is many. The whole proposition is misleading, for 'Atman' is existence, consciousness, both unchangeable. To follow Atman one has to detach one-self from objects of senses and absorb deep in Sadhana. Such in-depth Sadhana can help attainment of the bliss of the Supreme self.

In the Buddhist philosophy Nirvana is shrouded in mystery, because they deny the existence of atman, yet they firmly believe in Nirvana. Nirvana presupposes cessation of sorrows. Undescribable it is, reliable through 'Yoga' alone.

The Vaisnavas characterises God as one attainable through meditation, prayer and devotion. The devotee realises the excellences of God through bhakti and the onward progress of Sadhana makes him declare himself as His servant, son and comrade. God Himself is linked with devotee through bhakti or devotion. Thus the relationship between the bhakta and Bhagavata (God) is closely specialised as human relations, expressed through love and love alone.

This is corroborated in the Bhagavata. According to the Bhagavata, God that is Sri Krsna has assumed a new form. God is submissive to the devotees in devotion and the untold pathos of the Bhakta (the devotee) caused by Krsna's leaving Braja for Mathura is described in the Bhagavata. There different devotees loved Sri Krsna by cultivation of the raser appropriate to each, such as Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya etc. Kanta or Madhur love Sri Chaitanya practices life-long. Such love is a kin to that which the lover feels for his beloved. Such love denies the hunger or flesh. Chaitanya has described God as an embodiment of love, It is love which is at the root of the bondage imposed by sin and facilitates attainment of God.

It is singularly the contribution of the Bhagavata. In the Vedas and the Upanisada antecedent to the Bhagavata God is beyond touch beyond words, without a form, attainable only by sadhana of the Rishi (sages), whereas in the Bhagavata God is in a form, all-blissful all-simple amidst the devotees to whom He is tied by a love-bond. Only Bhakti and Raganuraga Bhakti can do this miracle.

In later ages, we find exemplified mystical happenings in the lives of Indian saints or sadhakas. For example, the relationship between Chandidas and Rajakini, Bamadeva, Kabir, Tukaram, Ruhidas, Mirabai, Tulsidas to name a few. The nature and utility etc. of such mysterious experiences beggar description in words : it can be realised by the mystic sadhak alone. In the recent past we get a host of such instances in the life of Sri Ramakrsna, as cannot be explained but by transcendental knowledge. The relationship that Sri Ramakrsna established between the Goddess who was mother unto him and himself appeared mysterious to Mathur babu and Rani Rasmoni. On the other hand, an exact appreciation of the mysteries in Ramkrsna's life promoted Bhairabi, the celebrated tantra-sadhika boldly assert that Sri Ramakrsna was Avatar. Even Totapuri, a great sadhak was struck with wonder to see Ramakrsna attaining 'nirbikalpa samadhi' as directed by his Mother, Goddess Kali.

Love of God, the nature of which is described by the sadhaka or found in Sastras can be comprehended by mystic appreciative feelings. We can have an idea of the pragmatic world by having recourse to conjectured devices or reason relying on the perception of senses. But matters concerning God which senses cannot get hold of, cannot be expressed in language which is unattainable to reason and worldly experience, can be traced only through such elevated feelings that does not differentiated between the subject and the object. There reason is not required to come to our aid, yet the Supreme Existence staying for above all conceivable uncertainties. The sadhaka on fusing His own self in God's or having taken shelter in God, enjoys bliss (ananda) beyond measure. The mind of a sadhaka is free from an iota of doubt about the existence of God. Only men of common run engages themselves in idle speculation on God and kill not precious time on trifles. Man is quite incompetent to judge the issue confronting humanity at large. He whom the Supreme Being blesses, wins Him in the long run. All told it may be concluded that unquestionable submission to the preceptor (Guru) and Bhava-Sadhana (sadhana in reference to a specific bhava) is the surest way to unfold the divine love-mystery and its perfect realization.

“Radhakrsna's love-game in secrecy capsul'd,
Dasya, Vatsalya benumbed withdrawing might ;

The Sakhis forward claim absolutely right,
 They alone organize it as and when schedul'd''.

Chai. Cha. 2.4 (translated)

Such Lila without Sakhis invisible,
 Exulted full while extended for,
 To none else doth He access offer,
 Sakhi—love being alone permissible''.

“They (Sakhis) alone allow'd entry

Into the bower
 bedecked with foliage and flower
 There can they view Love Divine—
 Kissing their body and soul
 In shower''.

Chai. Cha 2. 6 (Translated)

Such is love Divine/Such is the mystery/ The love-bond between God, that is Krsna and the devotee is shrouded in mystery. Only a sadhaka can tear the veil obstructing sight and bring out the truth a power he is favoured with as a gift by God.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

The subject of my research venture was to establish the fact that Sri Krsnadas Kaviraj Gosvamin in his magnum epic has attempted boldly to prove that Sri Chaitanya is the incarnation of Sri Krsna. In different chapters of my research—work I have tried as best as I can to present the factual analysis in relation to the aforesaid thesis. Chaitanya Charitamrita contains an exhaustive account of Chaitanya Lila with reference to the Bhagavata and opinions of the followers of Sri Chaitanya. All such discourses noticeably establish the non-duality between Sri Krsna of the Bhagavata and Vishnu of the Vedas. Similarly it has also been stressed in the Bhagavata that Sri Krsna descent on earth as Chaitanya was a necessity. It is significantly illustrated in the third and fourth chapters of Adilila and in the Ray Ramananda Sambad contained in the Madhyalila of Chaitanya Charitamrita. To Krsnadas Kaviraja Chaitanya was no other than Krsna or God, who descended on this earth to realize the objective He cherished.(Chai. Cha 3/22).

Krsnadas Kaviraja described Chaitanya as Krsna aided by the Sastras, the realization of the Sadhakas and his own feelings. In the Bhagavata it is written :

Asan Varnastrayojihya Grhhyatonuyugam Tameh/Suktaraktasrthapecta idanim Krsnatam gatah. (Bh.10.8.13) with the help of this informative sloka it is known that non-dual Sri Krsna assumed different forms in different times. In the Kali Yuga he has the 'Yellow' complexion.

Sri Krsna in yellow complexion is Sri Chaitanya. But he is Krsna-varna all inside. His chief mission is to spread the name of Sri Krsna in the four corners of the globe. In fact it is Sri Chaitanya who is to be worshipped whole-heartedly in Kaliyuga. In a Sloka of a Upapurana quoted in the Chaitanya Charitamrita (1. 3) it is declared that Sri Krsna in the garb of an ascetic would infuse new life into Jivas wallowing in sin with the singing of Lord's name. In Chaitanya's life it is fully illustrated. In the Anusasan Parva of the Mahavarata it is so described in the Vishnu Sahasra namastotra : Samuyasakrschamah

Samto misthasnatiparayana. This also finds fully manifested in Chaitanya's life.

Again 'Suvaranavarno hemango bar angaschandanangadee' as found in the Mahavarata reminds us of Sri Chaitanya. A sloka in the Bhagavata confirms that Sri Krsna assumed the form of Sri Chaitanya to admit His indebtedness to Gopiprema (Bh.10.31.22). In the Geeta it is so assured by Krsna that He is merciful to him who worships Him in any form which appales to him . (Geeta 1/11). All these to say the least prove that in Kaliyuga Sri Krsna has come down assuming the form of Sri Chaitanya. The Sastras, The Puranas, the Geeta and the like are full of such references in a positive way.

Even the sayings of Sri Chaitanya-bhaktas at different times have established beyond doubt the fact that Sri Chaitanya is no other than Sri Krsna in human form. Sri Basudeva Sarbovauma has remarked that God Himself took the initiative to rehabilitate so to say, Bhaktiyoga evidently evanescent as ages would be rooling over. He came down as Sri Krsna Chaitanya with a view to teaching Bhakti and Bairagya. To Srirup Gosvamin the entire amount of love-essence of the Gopis residing at the Brojodham shaped itself in course of time as the lotus-eyed Sri Chaitanya. According to Sri Sanatan Gosvamin Sri Krsna as depicted in the Bhagavata as the God Himself assumed the form of Sri Chaitanya as His own devotee. Sri Jiva Gosvamin opines that Sri Krsna as Sri Chaitanya appeared in the Kaliyuga with the avowed objective to spread God's name. To Sri Svarupa Damodara Sri Krsna's incarnation as Sri Chaitanya aimed at complete realization of three-distinct 'Vasana'. Besides these celebrities Ray Ramananda, Advaitacarya, Nityananda and others hinted at Sri Krsna's becoming Sri Chaitanya whom they had the privilege to watch very close and at different stages of his lila. Advaitacarya accepted Sri Chaitanya as God. "How to express the thrill I feel in the recess of my heart where Madhaba resides and others apart". It is Nityananda who for the first time introduced the worship of Chaitanya idol, through out the length and breadth of Bengal. So, on the clear-cut evidences of a host of Vaisnava Acaryas, it is not so different to imagine that Chaitanya is God Himself or that God manifested Himself in the form of Sri Chaitanya (it is so described in different chapters of Chaitanya Charitamrita).

Krsnadas Kaviraj aided by personal intuition has indicated that Chaitanya is Sri Krsnavatar or God. Of course such intuition or realization is based on devotion and love which is many times beyond the exercise or logic and shrouded in mystery. Even in matter of composing his magnum epic Chaitanya Charitamrita he admits that it was so done in obedience to divine directive. It is said in it that in his dream he was directed by Nityananda to move to Vrindabana. Through Nityananda's grace he had the privilege to sit at the feet of Sri Rupa, Sri Sanatana and later Sri Raghunath Das Gosvamin and Sri Svarupa Damodara. Sri Sanatana acquainted him with the substance of Bhaktirasa and Sri Rupa helped him to realise the exact nature of Bhakti. Such diverse accounts show his humility and love of God. To put it briefly his devotion and love inspired him a great deal in his composition-work. Krsnadas as frankly admits his limitless indebtedness to the beginning and finishing his composition to Sri Govinda, Sri Chaitanya, Sri Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Sri Bhakti, Sri Svarupa, Sri Rupa, Sri Sanatana, Sri Raghunath, Sri Guru and Sri Srijiiva. That he was divinely inspired is admitted as "Sri Madan Gopal more Lekhai ajna Kori". (Sri Madan Gopal induces me to write this Chai. Cha. 3/20/83-84).

In addition to personal realization, materials for composing this time-honoured work, would be collected from different sources, particularly from the observations of Acaryas learned in Sastras. His predecessors Vaisnava servants left behind a huge number of written or un-written documents which he fully utilised to serve his purpose. These documentary evidences went a long way in helping him to reach definite conclusions in respect of Sastric injunctions concerning Sri Chaitanya. Of these written evidences mention may be made of Chaitanya Bhagavata of Vaisnava seer poet Vrindabanadas. To give an account of the 'Antyalila' of Sri Chaitanya, Krsnadas Kaviraj relied solely on the Adi and Madhya Lila of Sri Chaitanya in Vrindabanadas and at the same time made a superb synthesis of the theories (Tattwas) and facts (tathyas) of Chaitanya's life by exploring deftly the philosophical aspects of the entire Vaisnava literature.

It may be said that his in-depth knowledge, devotion and feelings have synthesised themselves marvellously in respect of scrutiny of theories and delineation of the conclusive assertions. One of the topics

discussed in Chaitanya Charitamrita is Preman or love which is otherwise called fifth Purusartha. It is reliable only by devotion and not by reason any way. Such devotion is termed Ragatmika Bhakti which according to Krsnadas Kaviraj is of Supreme importance (Chai. Cha. 2.22). It is the most profound and mysterious tattwa of the Gauriya Vaisnava Sadhakas. "Only the Sadhakas have access to such Raganuga and none else, it is they who are chiefly instrumental in its projection". (Chai. Cha. 2.27). Chaitanya Charitamrita is replete with hundreds of such sacredinviolable assertions which give vent to Chaitanya's divinised feelings. Such feelings man having average intelligence cannot possess. Sri Krsna has made it quite clear to Arjuna. Says He, O, Arjuna, many times both thou and I were born. To Me everything is crystalclear, to thee it is not (Geeta 4. 5). Krsna means to say that Jogamaya over-powers Him. This is precisely the reason why the commoners denied that knowledge fail to understand Him as regards His imperishable svarupa. (Self-manifestation). Many such sayings clarify the Tattwa the Avatar-tattwa in particular and the reasons for such ignorance is also explained. As a surest means of freeing oneself from this maya God's prescription is "Follow Me alone" (Geeta 18.66) This sort of self-surrender is discernible in the Gopis of Bhagavata . If Chaitanya has realised it and if such unearthly realization has turned him into an inspired devotee even though he is perfectly divine, the unfolding of mystery lying hidden in it is attainable to one only be the grace of the preceptor, the Sastras and through ceaseless involvement in Sadhana. "Chaitanya-Lila is as deep as the Sea/None else but a devotee can it see". As such inexhaustible love of Sri Chaitanya is primarily responsible for having an understanding of Chaitanya tattwa. Krsna Kaviraj could realise his objective only through the preceptor, the sastras and tireless Sadhana. In the Sastras it is so written that hearing with reverence, paying whole-hearted attention and ceaseless Sadhana are at the root of the realisation of Tattwa. Krsnadas Gosvamin enjoyed the companionship of the noted devotees of Sri Chaitanya. He has unhesitatingly accepted them as his preceptors and have paid them his respectful homage. He has influenced by his preceptors and indirectly so much so that his ambition of life to describe Sri Chaitanya as he deemed best was fulfilled, In His imagination both devotion and reason combined. In Chaitanya Charitamrita the philosophical aspects of Chaitanya's life and teachings have been

delineated in perfect harmony. He has accepted 'conclusions' of Sri Bhagavata, as is mentioned before Krsnadas's observation that Chaitanya was Krsnavatar was possible when he attempted a study of the conclusions of the Bhagavata Vis-a-vis Chaitanya's Svarupa and 'Tatastha' Laksanas. For in Chaitanya were available those narrations as were found in the Sastras. Secondly, seers versed in the life and teachings of Sri Chaitanya the direct observers of his Lila at diverse stages, made a study of their mental accomplishments in light of their knowledge acquired from the sastras. Krsnadas Kaviraj collected all these narratives and through his sadhana realised that Sri Krsna was the Supreme Being of the whole-Universe. He has made a mention of it in His work "Isvara paramah Krsna Sacchidananda Bigraha/Anadiradi Govindah Sarvakaranam" (Brahma Samhita). Such realization again led him to accept Sri Chaitanya as Sri Krsnavatar.

Chaitanya Charitamrita has regarded to the letter the means to have the feeling of one's 'madhurya' (sweetness) imbued in Radhabhaba and thus more alone the way to God, as described in the Bhagavata. "Sri Radhika is the incomparable refuge of such love/I, for my part, is the excellent piece of wonder". "Losing His self in all sweetness/Himself desireth to have a taste of love all His own". In other words Krsna desired so to taste His love as Radha (would be doing). So, was His reason to come down as Sri Chaitanya. Radha is ananda and the Secret behind Chaitanyalila was to enjoy the Supreme bliss that Radha would be having while offering love to Krsna. Again it is so said in the Bhagavata that sometimes God would assume body and get engrossed in dallying out of grace for mankind. (Bh.10.33.34). This leads many to conclude that Sri Krsna's Nabadwip Lila was much needed. Average men would try to understand in a traditional way the love of Sridam, Subal and others to Sri Krsna. The affection of Nanda and Yasoda to Krsna as their son, and last but not the least the soulful love of the Gopis inspired by Radhabhaba to Krsna. As a result they remain too steeped in ignorance to guess the unearthly qualities attending to such love. Sri Krsna's Nabadwip Lila is considered imperative on all scores to get the commoners' heart saturated with love sanctified by Radha bhava. "Through a personal exhibition, one can teach others to act accordingly (Chai. Cha.1.3.19). 'None but me can initiate Broja Prema, 'Down the earth I let be born abatars in a playful mood'. (Chai. Cha.1.3.20/21). Such divine words come out of

the lips of Almighty Supreme to have an idea of Sri Kṛṣṇavataṛ Sri Chaitanya. 'Nama Samkirtan' (Chanting of God's name) is the 'Dharma' in Kaliyuga. It is seen in the Bhagavata and Gautamiya tantra. In Gautamiya tantra it is seen as 'Hare nama hare nama hare namabaiba Kebalam/Kalyu nastyeba, nestyeba Gatiranyatha' (Chai. Cha). So Harinam is the acknowledged dharma in Kaliyuga, The reason why Kṛṣṇa is Chaitanya, is explained by Mahaprabhu to Sanatan Gosvamin as follows : "Chanting of Kṛṣṇanama is the dharma of Kaliyuga/Assuming yellow complexion. Kṛṣṇa Himself introduced it/ people in return showed traces of devotion and love to the best they could/ Brajendra nandan thus introduces Dharma/people sing in love and dance in delight/ in this way goes on Samkirtan (Chai. Cha. 2.20/284-87).

Mahaprabhu said again : "Jivas like me rely on sastras for gaining knowledge/ An avatar never calls him so. The sages make a through examination of the signs attesting incarnation (Chai. Cha. 2/10).

The sastras and seers well-versed in them did not hesitate to conclude that God, incarnation of God and Sri Chaitanya himself are one and the same with no difference. In the Geeta and the Bhagavat Isver alies Sri Kṛṣṇa is established as 'Param tattwa'. Sri Kṛṣṇa's descent in yellow complexion and the account of nama samkirtan would be descrinible in Sastra and the Bhagavata. So if sastra, tattwa given by sadhak and fact relating to avatar are accepted, then Isvar's coming down, assuming Chaitanya form do not go against the propositions enunciated in the Sastras and illustrated by the Sadhakas for the very reason that in the Dwapara era Sri Kṛṣṇavataṛ tattwa is confirmed in the sastra and acknowledged as fact by persons versed in Sastra. The sage Garga while christening Sri Kṛṣṇa indicated that Sri Kṛṣṇa is Param Brahman. He came to such decision taking note of the tatastha Laksans and His Svarupa. In the Bhagavata it is so mentioned that the devotees would offer their prayer for the coming of Avatars to serve some specific purposes. The Gopis would offer their daily prayers to Goddess Katyayani to accept as their beloved Gobinda whom they expect to be born as the offspring of Nanda Gopa.

It is also revealed in the Bhagavata that Brahma with other gods would be praying on the sea-side for the descent of God long before the birth of Sri Kṛṣṇa. These are also of course indicated by the Sastras and seers enjoying profound knowledge of them. Bhagavat to say the

least, is primary responsible for critical indication of the Svarup Laksans and tatastha laksana that are found clearly manifested in the life of Sri Chaitanya. The role of Advait Acarya deserves special mention in this context. It is said that he would be offering prayers for the advent of Sri Chaitanya before he saw the light of the world. His parents it is said, had forehand knowledge about Chaitanya's coming down this earth in dream. Even before Chaitanya became an ascetic people of Nabadwip had no hesitation to accept him as God. Later in the north his svarupa was revealed through Prakasananda Sarasvati, Sarbovauma Bhattacharya and in the south Ray Ramananda in particular. In the Chaitanya Charitamrita we can get an exhaustive account of it. Ramananda described Chaitanya as God. In the Chaitanya Charitamrita it is emphatically asserted that Sri Chaitanya imbibed the bhava of Sri Radha, his complexion is also hers. (Chai. Cha. 1. 4. 26-27)

That Chaitanya came down to spread God's name and follow Radhabhava finds expression in his life style and performances. In support of the fact that Chaitanya was God Himself it is said (i) a human body is generally three times and a half of his hand in length, but in case of Sri Chaitanya it was four times of his hand. "Nagrodha parimondala Chaitanya Gunadham" (Chai. Cha. 1.3.33-34) (2) When Mahaprabhu entered the temple of Lord Jagannatha, the nature of love that set its mark on his body made the celebrated scholar of those days Basudev Sarbovauma feel bewildered beyond measure. To him such Prema of Love was 'Sattvika'. A divinised soul alone can possess such love. It is sudipta Bhaba (Chai. Cha. 2/6/10-12). Different men at different times chanced to notice on his petson marks of divine origin, bringing into focus his 'bhagavat svarupa'. In respect of his saying God's name and propagating divine excellences it is said in the Chaitamrita "He chants God's name, an act surface designed

In deep of heart sips he love-necter in a mood assigned".

Again he shared his responsibility with others in matter of spreading God's message Nityananada and others were deputed to Bengal for the purpose. Sri Rup, Sri Sanatan and others were inspired by him in the like manner.

All that Krsnadas Kaviraj incorporated in Chaitanya Charitamrta was not the working of imagination at all. He verified each and every item of the incidents of Chaitanya's life, analysed it or did not hesitate

to examine it critically if so needed. The conclusions he reached in each case were based on the accounts written or verbal by his predecessors such as Murari Gupta's Karcha, Chaitanya centred poetry and dramas of Karnapur, Vrindabandas's Bhagavata and Svarup Gosvamin's Karcha most of them, named above were Chaitanya's close associates. So the authenticity of the source defies all challenge to the contrary.

This is why Chaitanaya-Charitamrita gives a reliable account of Chaitanya's life-philosophy which is as important as Chaitanya's life. It unfolds phase by phase Chaitanya's Bhaba-Jivan. Krisnadas has never falter to acknowledge his inestimable indebtedness to his predecessors and his making record of it is scattered over the pages of Chaitanya Charitamrita.

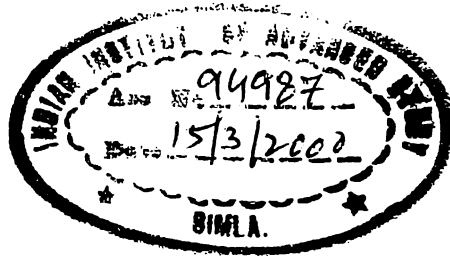
Krisnadas ambition was to spread the message of Sri Chaitanya throughout the length and breadth of the world then known to him. His firm belief was Sri Krsna of the Bhagavata is Sri Chaitanya in the Kaliyuga. He is Brahman to the seeker of knowledge, Paramatma to a Yoginand Bhagavan to a devotee. "Saddvaitam Brahmapanisadi tadapyasya tanuva, ja atmantaryami purusa iti sosyamsabivabhah /Saraishvayra purno ja iha Bhagavan sa Svayam na Chaitanyam Krsnajagati paratattvam paramiha". (Chai. Cha 1/2 Mongatachavan)

Chaitanya as an avatar has a peculiar nature of his own. As an Avatara his avowed objective or chief concern was to cleanse the impure chitta and on cleansing to direct it towards God. In this respect Chaitanya is different from other avatars who preceded him. Love expressible through singing of God's name was his means. So in the Chaitanya Charitamrita he is described as 'parama Rasik', though 'Rasamaya' himself, he tastes the nectar born of Ananda, though 'Anandamaya' himself. He is the dispenser 'Karuna and 'rasa' to all who desire it.

Here is an apparent contradiction. In 'Dasabatara Stopra', Joydeb did not mention the name of Sri Krsna or Krsnabatar Sri Chaitanya. He has mentioned a mention of Kalki avatara in Kaliyuga. In supporting Joydeva it can be submitted an Avatara comes out of an Avatari. This Avatari is Sri Krsna, the purna Brahman and all avatars are His partial expositions. Jaydeva has given an account of the avatars, not of the Avatari. This Avatari is according to the Bhagavata 'Bhagavan Savyam', what remained completely out of sight, come within the

orbit of eye-sight, as Sri Krsna. That very 'Purna Brahman' has assumed the 'Chaitanyarupa' in Koli.

In the Bhagavata Bhaktialone is declared as the surest means to attain God. Like Isvar-tattwa, Chaitanya-tattwa is reliable only through knowledge of the Sastras and Sadhana. Krishnadas Kaviraj by dint of profound scholarship and Sadhana made a critical study of the whole Bhagavata and on completion of his survey declared Sri Chaitanya to be the God in human form and described him as such aided by penetrating insight and intuitive knowledge. Gauriya Vaisnab Samaj is indebted to Krsnadas Kaviraj in many ways. It is his positive assertion concerning Sri Chaitanya that help the Samaj to accept Sri Chaitanya as the sine Quanon, the Prime condition for performing religious rites and observing in philosophical discourses.



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