THE GOSVĀMĪS OF VṚNDĀVANA

2316



O.B.L. Kapoor

"They were not ordinary men of this world. They were the angels, the denizens of Celestial Vṛndāvana, who came down on earth to assist Śri Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the task of reclaiming Vṛndāvana as the chief centre of Bhakti and delivering the fallen souls from bondage and suffering by showing to them the sweetest and the smoothest path of Bhakti."

"They built the modern Vṛndāvana; they identified the holy sites connected with the divine *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; they wrote extensively to systematize the doctrine of Bhakti; and what is more, they tried by their own example to set the people on the path of Bhakti."

"Their lives will continue to inspire and guide the people traversing the path of Bhakti. They are like the light-posts on the path of Bhakti, leading like "kindly light" the erring souls to Celestial Vṛndāvana, the land of eternal peace, love and happiness."

This book describes their lives in detail, as far as possible, and gives the substance of some of their important works, particularly useful for the devotees, desirous of attaining the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

क्रमांक 2316

THE GOSVĀMĪS OF VṚNDĀVANA

Biographies of the Fourteen Principal Ācāryas of Vṛndāvana, Who Propagated the Teachings of Śrī Caitanya

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O.B.L. Kapoor
(Ádikeśava Dāsa)



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PREFACE

Vṛndāvana is the highest paradise on earth. It is here that Kṛṣṇa revelled in pastimes of love with the cowherds and the milk-maids of Vraja. It is here that His flute maddened the animate and inanimate with the bliss of divine love. It is here that Brahmā, the creator of the universe, wished to roll in dust. It is here that Uddhava, the foremost amongst the jnānīs, wished to be born, if only as a creeper or a blade of grass. It is here, in its caves and groves and under its trees, that many a saint meditated and realized the supreme end of life—the lotus feet of the Lord.

When Kṛṣṇa revelled in Vṛndāvana, its beauty and grandeur were the envy of gods. The nature bestowed its bounties with a lavish hand. The crops were full, the trees were laden with fruits, the pasture lands were green and the cows gave plenty of milk. Privation and want were unknown and the people were a merry band of seraphs and cherubs with a glow of happiness on their cheeks. Every grove and nook and corner of Vṛndāvana pulsated with life and transcendental bliss.

Hundred years after the disappearance of Kṛṣṇa Vṛndāvana was turned into a forest, infested with wild beasts. The inhabitants having all fled on account of the inroads of Jarāsandha, no trace of human life was left.

It was Bajranābha, the great-grandson of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who reclaimed Vṛndāvana and tried to restore its glory by building temples, installing the images of Govinda Deva, Madana-Mohana, Gopīnātha and other deities, and by rediscovering the holy places connected with the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with the help of Śāṇḍilya Ṛṣi.[1]

History repeated itself. At the time of the advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Vṛndāvana was again a forest. The attacks of Huns, the hostile attitude of the Buddhists against the Vaiṣṇavas, the incursions of Mohhamad Gazanavī, and the oppression of Sikander Lodi had robbed it of its sanctity and beauty and reduced it to a hunting ground for the rulers and their chiefs.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's heart bled to see the miserable condition of the holy land. He sent a band of His able and devoted followers to reclaim it. They were not ordinary men of this world. They were the angels, the denizens of Celestial Vṛndāvana itself, who had come down on earth to assist Mahāprabhu in the task of reclaiming Vṛndāvana as the chief centre of Bhakti and delivering the fallen souls from bondage and suffering by showing to them the sweetest and the smoothest path of Bhakti.

They built the modern Vṛndāvana with temples, ponds, groves and the bathing-*ghāts* on the Yamunā; they identified the holy sites connected with the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa; they wrote extensively to systematize the doctine of Bhakti; and what is more, they tried by their own example to set the people on the path of Bhakti.

Their lives will continue to inspire and guide the people, traversing the path of Bhakti. They are like the

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1 *Skanda-purāṇa, Vaiṣṇava Khanda, Śrī Bhāgavata-māhātmya, Śloka* 17.

light-posts on the path of Bhakti, leading, like "kindly light", the erring souls to Celestial Vṛndāvana, the land of eternal peace, love and happiness.

In this book I have described their lives in detail, as far as possible, and given the substance of some of their more important works, specially useful for the devotees, desirous of attaining the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

I need hardly express my deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to my esteemed friend Śrī Badri Nārāyaṇa Bhāgavata Bhūṣaṇa, Founder–*ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Bhakti Rakṣaka Mandapa for kindly undertaking the publication of this work and publishing it expeditously. My thanks are also due to my good friend Śrī Rādhāramaṇa Sādhu for all the pains he took in reading the proof, designing the cover and supervising printing.

O.B.L. Kapoor

February 20th, 1995
Rādhāramaṇa Mārg.
Vṛndāvana, U.P., India

Abbreviations

A.P.	— *Advaita Prakāśa*
Bh.	— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*
Bh. M.	— *Bhaktamāla*
Bh.R.	— *Bhaktiratnākara*
Bh. R.B.	— *Bhaktirasabodhini* Commentary on *Bhaktāmāla* by Priyā Dāsa
Bh. R.S.	— *Bhaktirasāmṛta–sindhu*
Bh.S.	— *Bhakti Saṁdarbha*
C.Bh.	— *Caitanya Bhāgavata*
C.C.	— *Caitanya Caritamṛta*
C.C.U.	— *Caitanya Caritera Upādāna* by Dr. Vimāna Bihari Majamadar
C.S.C.	— *Companions of Śrī Caitanya* by Dr. D.C. Sen
Ch. G.	— *Chaya Gosvāmī* by Dr. N.C. Jānā
D.M.M.	— *District Memoirs of Mathurā* by Growse
G.V.A.	— *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna* by Haridāsa Dāsa
G.V.S.	— *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava Sāhitya* by Haridāsa Dāsa
H.V.F.M.	— *Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal* by Dr. S.K. De
Pr.S.	— *Priti Saṁdarbha*
P.V.	— *Prema Vilāsa*
S.G.	— *Sapta Gosvāmī* by Satiśa Candra Mitra
V.L.M.B.	— *Vaiṣṇava Literature of Medieval Bangal* by Dr. D.C. Sen
Vr. Bh.	— *Vṛhadbhāgavatamṛta*

CHAPTER I

Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī

Vraja – Vṛndāvana

According to the Vaiṣṇava tradition Vraja or Vṛndāvana[1] is the highest paradise. It is the transcendental dwelling place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Being a manifestation of His own *Svarūpa Śakti* or Intrinsic Energy, it consists like Him of the attributes of *sat* (existence), *cit* (intelligence) and *ānanda* (bliss) and is conditioned like Him by love. Everything here — the sun, the moon and the stars, the trees, the creepers and the grass, the birds and animals and even the smallest particles of dust are made of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* and are engaged in their own manner in the loving service of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is so charmed by the sweetness and beauty of Vṛndāvana and its spontaneous outflow of love towards Him that He never goes even a step out of it,[2] so that we can neither think of

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1 Vraja is also called Vṛndāvana, because Vṛndāvana is the central and the most important part of Vraja.

2 *Vṛndāvanamparityajya sa kvacit naive gacchati*—(cited in *Laghubhāgavatāmṛta* from *Yāmala)*

Kṛṣṇa without Vṛndāvana, nor of Vṛndāvana without Kṛṣṇa. The ever growing beauty, sweetness and love of Vṛndāvana make Kṛṣṇa ceaselessly dance and revel in love with the milk–maids and the cowherds of Vṛndāvana.[1] No wonder, therefore, that even Uddhava, the wisest of the associates of Kṛṣṇa, wishes to be a blade of grass or a creeper in Vṛndāvana so that he may be consecrated by the dust of the holy feet of the *gopis*.[2]

It is this celestial Vṛndāvana that exists here on earth as the geographical Vṛndāvana.[3] It only appears as phenomenal on account of our coloured vision.

Demolition of Vraja by Mohammedans.

The geographical Vṛndāvana, however, has had a history. It has from time to time been ravaged by the invasion of foreigners. In 1017 A. D. Mahmud Gazanavi conducted his seventeenth invasion. He demolished many temples and carried away with him so many statues made of gold and silver and so much jewelery that 100 camels were required to carry them.[4] Among the temples, he demolished, was the famous temple at the birth place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Mathurā. This temple was so gigantic and beautiful that according to Mahamud himself it could not have been built in less than 200 years and must have cost at least 100 million *dinars*

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1 *Kṛiṣṇopaniṣad*, 7

2 *Bh.* 10, 47, 61.

3 *Padma Purāna*, Pātālakhaṅda 69, 2-2
Vṛidāvana Mahimamṛta 4, 82.

4 Growse: *A District Memoir of Mathurā*, 3rd Ed: p. 33

(gold mohurs).[1] In the time of Sikandar Lodi (1488-1516) all the temples of Mathurā were demolished and the idols were given away to butchers to be used as weights for weighing meat.[2] Hindu mode of worship was prohibited. Hindus could not even shave their heads. They were compelled to grow beard.[3]

From the beginning of the eleventh century till the close of the sixteenth century the demolition of Vraja by the Muslims continued unabated. "Till the close of the sixteenth century, except in the neighbourhood of the one great thoroughfare, there was (in Vraja-mandala) only here and there a scattered hamlet in the midst of unclaimed woodland."[4] No one lived here except some forest tribes and animals. There was no sign of the holy places connected with the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which were discovered by His great–grandson Mahārāja Vajranābha 100 years after the disappearence of Kṛṣṇa.

The *Śrī–mūrtis* installed by him were lost. All other *Śrī–murtis* were hidden in the forests, wells or ponds by their pujārīs for fear of being demolished by the Mohammadans. Vraja–mandala, the highest place of pilgrimage of the Hindus and the center of their religion and culture, which was described by the Greek writers as the land of gods, was reduced to a forest, full of wild animals and was used as hunting ground by the Mohammadan rulers.

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1 *ibid*, p. 34

2 *ibid*

3 *ibid*

4 *ibid* p. 75

Mahāprabhu's vow for the revival of Vraja and Lokanātha.

At this time Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had appeared like a sun on the eastern horizon of India. His fame as the biggest *pandita* of Nadiyā, at that time the highest center of learning in India, was already established and he had now emerged as the Messiah of the Vaiṣṇavas and the greatest religious and social reformer of his time. He had begun to be regarded as the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, Who had mercifully appeared on Earth as a devotee to show to the fallen *jivas* of Kali the path of *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti*. His attention was drawn by the devastated condition of Vraja, the home – land of *bhakti*. It made his heart weep. He vowed to revive its original grandeur and beauty, to rediscover its holy places, connected with the divine *līlā*[1] of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to rebuild its temples and to make it suitable for living for the Vaiṣṇavas, who wanted to go and live there and practise *sādhanā*.

But He could not devote Himself to this task right now, when He was busy organizing a band of followers, who could go from door to door to preach his doctrine of love and prepare the background for His great mission. At this time He could only turn the mind of the people to *Vraja–bhakti* and *Vraja–rasa* as the highest and the sweetest end that could be achieved. Even then he was on the look out for some powerful souls, who could renounce the world and start the work with exclusive devotion.

Lokanātha was an old friend of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He used to study *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from

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1 Divine sports

Śrī Advaitācārya when Mahāprabhu was a student in the *tola*[1] of Gaṅgādāsā Pandita. In his very first meeting with Him he felt so much attracted by Him that he completely surrendered himself to Him for all his life. He was now living in his native village Talakhandī in North Bengal. When he came to know that Mahāprabhu had turned out to be a veritable dynamo of *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti* and had resolved to charge the whole world with the current of *bhakti*, his heart began to dance with joy.

He renounced the world and set out towards the far off Navadvīpa with a view to pass the rest of his life in His sweet company.

When Lokanātha reached the house of Mahāprabhu, He saw Him sitting outside, surrounded by Murārī, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa and other devotees. He had already determined to renounce the world and take *sannyāsa* for the deliverance of the fallen souls, for whom His heart always wept. He was sitting grave and silent and drawn completely within Himself, when Lokanātha lay prostrate before Him. As soon as He saw him His seriousness disappeared. His heart was filled with great delight. He lifted Lokanātha and, drawing him close to his heart, said in a voice choked with emotion, "Lokanātha, you have come! Oh! How merciful is Kṛṣṇa! I have found my lost friend". He began to dance and sing the name of Lord in a rapturous mood. The dance and *kīrtana* lasted till late at night. At the close of *kīrtana* He said to Lokanātha, "Lokanātha, you have come walking a long distance and are tired. Go home and rest. Come tomorrow morning, when I shall open my heart to you. Kṛṣṇa

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1 A Sanskṛta school

has kindly sent you to me for the fulfilment of a great task, which is so dear to Him ".

Lokanātha went, but though tired he could not sleep. Throughout the night kept ringing in his ears the sweet words of Mahāprabhu — "Kṛṣṇa has kindly sent you to me for the fulfilment of a great task, which is so dear to Him". He wondered what that great task could be. He was overjoyed to think that he would get an opportunity to serve both Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu.

The next morning, when he went to Mahāprabhu, He embraced him lovingly and said," Lokanātha! You are very fortunate. Kṛṣṇa has chosen you for a task, which is so dear to Him. You go to holy Vṛndāvana. That land of Kṛṣṇa's love–pastimes is now a deserted forest. You reclaim all the holy places associated with His *līlā*. You have now to devote yourself exclusively to this great task. You need not stay any more in Navadvīpa".

Lokanātha was stunned!. He was going to faint. Somehow he controlled himself and said with folded hands and tears flowing profusely from his eyes, "Prabhu! I renounced the world and came here to pass the rest of my life in Your sweet company and to drink to my heart's content of the cup of ambrosia that flows from Your lotus feet. You are the soul of my soul, the life of my life. How can I live without You? Why are You so cruel to me Prabhu? What offence have I commited on account of which You are giving me this punishment?"

"No punishment Lokanātha, I am giving you the rare priviledge and opportunity of the service of Kṛṣṇa. Don't you know how dear is Vṛndāvana to Kṛṣṇa? He is not pleased so much by His own service as He is by the service of His *dhāma*.[1] Vṛndāvana is also my heart and soul. By sending you to Vṛndāvana I am only keeping you close to My heart".

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1 The dwelling place of the Lord.

"Prabhu! Do not trick me like this. Do You not have the slightest place in Your heart for me? If so, why are You pushing me away as soon as I have come?".

"Lokanātha, I am not sending you to any other place. I am sending you to Vṛndāvana, which you always meditate upon along with Kṛṣṇa and His *līlā*; I am sending you to Vṛndāvana, where even a day's stay enables a man to attain the highest end— *kṛṣṇa–prema*.[1]

"Prabhu! I do not want to attain anything except the nearness of Your lotus feet. Do not send me away from Your feet." Lokanātha said this and fell at His feet and began to weep.

Mahāprabhu tried to pacify him by saying tenderly, "Listen Lokanātha... Try to understand the importance of the work I want you to do. Everyone practises *sādhanā* to achieve his desired end, but blessed are they, who not only try to attain the end themselves, but also try to help others attain it. You know that Nitya Vṛndāvana (the eternal transcendental Vṛndāvana) is only for the *siddha*[2] Vaiṣṇavas, but the *bhauma* Vṛndāvana (Vṛndāvana on Earth) is for all. I want that you rediscover and revive Vṛndāvana and make it accessible to all, the devotees and the non–devotees alike. If you want My happiness, you should go and start the work forthwith."

Nothing that Mahāprabhu said regarding the importance of Vṛndāvana and the necessity of its revival could persuade Lokanātha to leave his company and go to Vṛndāvana. He was fully conscious of its importance.

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1 *Bh. R. S.*, 1, 2,237

2 Those who are accomplished in *sādhanā* and have realized the end.

He knew that every tree or creeper of Vṛndāvana could easily give to the *sādhaka* what he could not attain by *sādhanā* performed life after life. Even then he could not leave Mahāprabhu, Whom he had begun to regard as his *Iṣṭa*,[1] for the sake of Vṛndāvana. There was nothing in this world or the transcendental world, which he could not forego for Mahāprabhu. But there was only one thing for which he could leave Mahāprabhu and that was the happiness of Mahāprabhu Himself. Therefore when He said that if he wanted His happiness he should go to Vṛndāvana and start the work of its revival, he had to acquiesce. This is called *bhakti* — renouncing everything, even the *iṣṭa* for the happiness of the *iṣṭa*.

When this talk was going on Gadādhara Gosvāmī's disciple Bhūgarbha was also present. He said to Mahāprabhu, "Prabhu, if You permit, I may also go to Vṛndāvana with Lokanātha. I shall consider it a great fortune, if I can be of any help to him in the great task entrusted to him."

Mahāprabhu said, "Oh! That would be fine."

Lokanātha stayed in Navadvīp only for five more days to enjoy the company of Mahāprabhu. On the sixth day he left for Vṛndāvana with Bhūgarbha. Mahāprabhu and His companions bade him farewell with a loving ambrace and tearful eyes. As Lokanātha was going he was shedding tears and turning again and again to have a look at Mahāprabhu. He did not know whether he would have the good fortune of seeing that sweet face again. The doubt lurked in his mind that that was perhaps his last meeting with him. As he thought of

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1 The deity one worships exclusively.

this the stream of tears flowing from his eyes swelled more and more till it turned into a ceaseless tide.

This was actually his last meeting with Mahāprabhu.

Early life of Lokanātha.

Lokanātha was born in the year 1483 or 1484 in village Tālakhaṅḍī in district Yashohar. He was two or three years older than Mahāprabhu. His father was Padmanābha Chakravartī and mother Sītā Devī. Padmanābha had studied in Navadvīpa and taken initiation from Advaitācārya. He was famous as a scholar and devotee in North Bengal. He had established a *catūṣpāṭhī*[1] in Tālakhaṅḍī. Lokanātha was in the beginning a student in that *catūṣpāṭhī*. When he was fourteen years old his father sent him to Shāntīpura to study *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from Advaitācārya. At that time Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu was a student in the *tola* of Gaṅgādās Pandita.[2] Lokanātha became his intimate friend. The study of *Bhāgavatam* maddened Lokanāthaa with the love for Kṛṣṇa. According to *Advaita–Prakāśa* Advaitācārya then asked Gaurānga to take complete charge of him and look after his spiritual progress.[3]

After completing his study of *Bhāgavatam* Lokanātha returned home. He started his own *tola* and began to teach. He was respected as much for his scholarship as for his devotion. But on account of *kṛṣṇa–prema*

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1 A tola or school where Sanskṛta is taught.

2 According to *Advaitaprakāśa* Mahāprabhu at that time used to study Veda from Advaitācārya. He was then 17 years old, while Lokanātha was 19. (*Advaitaprakāśa*, 19)

3 *Prema–vilāsa* also mentions Lokanātha as a disciple of Gaurānga *(Prema–vilāsa,* 20).

his eyes always swimmed in tears and he remained indifferent to the world. The image of Gaurānga also was constantly present before his mind. He felt that he could not live without Him. He thought several times of going to Navadvipa and live in His company. Fortunately Gaurānga Himself came to him.

We know from *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* that Mahāprabhu travelled to East Bengal some time after He had defeated the *digvijayī* (world conqueror) *pandita* in *śāstrārtha*[1] and His reputation as the most learned *pandita* of Navadvipa had spread far and wide. There He conducted studies and performed *kirtana*.[2] During His travels in East Bengal He went to Tālakhaṅḍī and stayed with Lokanātha for a number of days. He took Lokanātha with Him and went to Vikramapura, where He met Tapana Misra, the father of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. From there, walking along the coast of river Brahmaputrā, He went to the village Bhetiyā, where lived Lakṣmī Nāth Lāharī with his brother Puruṣottama, who was known as Svarūpa Dāmodara after his *sannyāsa*. After staying for a few days with Lakṣmī Nāth and Puruṣottama He went to Śrī Haṭṭa to meet His grandfather Upendra Misra.[3] Upendra Misra had at that time gone to Baruṅgā. Therefore He went to Baruṅgā. Throughout this period Lokanātha was with Him. While returning from Varuṅgā to Navadvīpa He left Lokanātha at Tālakhaṅḍī

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1 Debate relating to the meaning of the *śāstras*.

2 *C. C.*, 1. 16. 8-9.
C. Bh. says that He also distributed degrees to hundreds of students (*C. Bh.* 1. 10. 96) A degree conferred by a *pandita* of Navadvipa had great importance.

3 *Prema Vilāsa*, 24.

The next five years Lokanātha passed with great difficulty in separation from Mahāprabhu. During this period both his father and mother died. Then the fire of separation blazed up to such an extent that he was compelled to renounce the world and go to Navadvīpa. The fire of separation had hardly extinguished when he was asked to leave Navadvīpa and go to Vṛndāvana.

The Journey to Vṛndāvana

Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha took three months to reach Vṛndāvana, because during those days the direct route to Vṛndāvana was not safe and they had to go through circuitous route, also because they had to depend on *bhikṣa*,[1] which was not always available and they had often to go without food or eat such fruits and vegetables as were available in the forests. But the suffering and privation of the journey did not affect them at all, because they talked incessantly of Kṛṣṇa and Gaurānga and the nectar, emanating from the talks was so relishing and intoxicating that they felt neither thirst nor hunger, nor fatigue. They were the pilgrims of the same path. They were inspired by the same purpose and were dedicated to the same cause. Their mind body and soul always swam in the ocean of love for the same sweet, beautiful and loving Personality, that had made them renounce the world and everything. Therefore by their talks they could churn the ocean and bring the nectar out. Every sip of the nectar so enthralled, entranced and enraptured them that they forgot all the

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1 Food that is begged

trials and tribulations of the journey. *Narottama Vilasa* says that the nectar had melted their two hearts into one :

tanu mana ek ithe kichu bhinna naya /
parama adbhuta ai duhāra praṇaya //

Nityānanda Dāsa unravels the mystery of their union by pointing out that Lokanātha was the incarnation of Manjulālī or Līlāmañjarī and Bhūgarbha of Nāndīmukhī or Premamañjarī of *vraja–līlā*[1] and in *vraja–līlā* the bond of love between then was such that they appeared like one soul in two bodies. Therefore in this life also Mahāprabhu joined them together:

Manjulālī Nāndīmukhī haya mahā–prīta /
Gaurānga dilena saṅga jāni suniścita. //

In Quest of the spots connected with the *Līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa

As soon as Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha reached Vraja they set to work on their mission. For some time they conducted their search for the holy places in Mathurā and then in the forests of Vraja. The task was so difficult and so full of risk at every step that one cannot even imagine. The forests were so thick and full of bushes that one had to make his way before he placed his foot almost at every step. Wild animals roamed about here and there. There was no habitation except that of some tribals, who had neither any

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1 Kavikarṇapūra also describes them as such in *Gauragaṇoddeśa–dīpikā.*

knowledge of the holy places nor any interest in them. The account of the holy places given in the scriptures was the only basis on which research could be carried on. But the scriptures gave only some hint about their geographical position, on the basis of which it was difficult to find their exact location. But they carried on their search undaunted, some times even at the risk of their life. If by chance they came across the ruins or remains of some ancient temple or the sign of a pond somewhere, their hearts sprang with joy. If they did not find anything they prayed to Vṛndā Devī, the presiding goddess of Vṛndāvana in piteous voice and said, "Vṛndā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa and the organizer and supporter of His divine *līlā*! How long will you keep the *līlā–sthalīs*[1] hidden from our view? When will you manifest Nandagrāma, Barasānā, Rādhākuṅḍa and Śyāmakuṅḍa? Oh! When shall we see Śṛṅgāravaṭa, Banśīvaṭa, Kesīghāṭa, Kālīdaha, and other holy places bearing in their bosom the sweet memory of the divine *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa? How is it possible without your mercy to get even an inkling of them?."

No one had before them tried so assiduously and persistently with all his heart and soul to discover the *līlā–sthalīs*. No doubt Śrī Advaitācārya and Śrī Nityānaṅda had gone to Vraja before them and wandered about in search of these places, but they had returned to Bengal after staying there only for a few days. The efforts of Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha did not go in vain. Gradually some discoveries were made and they started keeping record of them.

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1 The holy places relating to *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*.

Journey to the South in search of Mahāprabhu

After three or four months they heard that Mahāprabhu had taken *sannyāsa* and gone on pilgrimage to the South. Their hearts began to yearn for a look at Mahāprabhu as a *sannyāsī*.

They postponed their search for Vṛndāvana for some time and started on their journey to the South. Was it possible to find Mahāprabhu in the vast Southern India, specially when he was always on the move, going from one *tīrtha*[1] to another?. It was only their maddening love for Mahāprabhu that made them launch upon the journey without thinking of the prospects of the fulfilment of their purpose. They went from *tīrtha* to *tīrtha* but Mahāprabhu could not be found anywhere.

Mahāprabhu returned to Purī after travelling for two years in the South. He lived in Purī for two years and then started for Vṛndāvana. But he could not go beyond Gauḍa. He met Rūpa and Sanātana at Rāmakelī and returned to Purī. He went to Vṛndāvana the next year (1514) through the jungles of Jhārikhaṅḍa. When Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha returned to Vṛndāvana they learnt that Mahāprabhu had come to Vṛndavana and returned only a few days before their arrival. Who can describe their grief on coming to know this?.

However, like two mad persons they again started from Vṛndāvana with a view to find Him somewhere on the way. But how could they find Him if He did not want?. He wanted them to give their undivided and exclusive attention to the task that was so dear to Him revival of Vṛndavana. They had not gone far, when

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1 Holy place of pilgrimage.

Mahāprabhu appeared before Lokanātha as a *sannyāsī* in a dream and said, "I am always with you in Vṛndāvana. You must not leave Vṛndāvana and go anywhere else.[1] "

Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha then returned to Vṛndāvana and again applied themselves to the task entrushed to them.

Lokanātha and his deity Rādhāvinoda.

While Lokanātha was engaged in his quest for the *līlā–sthalīs* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his mind was also set on Kṛṣṇa and His *līlā*. He always shed tears in Their remembrance. He wished that he had an Image of Śrī Kṛṣṇa so that he could serve Him. When this thought came to his mind he was living under a Tamāla tree in a forest called Chattra–vana. Near Chattra–vana is a *kuṅḍa* (pond) called Kiśori-kuṅḍa.[2] In the bottom of that *kuṅḍa* lay hidden, one does not know since when, an Image of Śrī Kṛṣṇa called Rādhāvinoda. The desire for His loving service that arose in the mind of His devotee could not remain hidden from Him. It made Him equally anxious to receive and enjoy his service. Frolicsome as He is, He thought of a clever device. He assumed the form of a tribal and carried Himself in the form of the Image of Rādhāvinoda to Lokanātha. He said to him, "Mahārāja! This is my Ṭhākura Rādhāvinodā. I have been serving Him since long. But now I have become old. It is not possible for me to serve Him any more. I

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1 *tomāri nikaṭe nirantara āchi āmi /*
vṛndāvana haite kotha na jābe tumi //
(*Narottama–vilāsa* p. 16)

2 Round the *kuṅḍa* is now situated a village called Umarāo.

am leaving Him with you. I shall be happy if you kindly serve Him."

Lokanātha was taken by surprise. It was to him a bolt from the blue. The benign Lord had responded to his desire and come to him of His own. Tears of love and gratitude streamed out of his eyes. He took the image, clung it close to his heart and was for some time lost within himself. On regaining outer conciousness he looked all round for the man, who had brought the Image, but he was nowhere to be seen. Who was he and where had he gone after doing him that great favour? The thought was plagueing his mind, when Rādhāvinoda smiled and said, "Who else will bring Me? I have brought myself. I was lying in the Kiśorīkuṇḍa nearby. Since you desired eagerly to serve Me I have come. I am very hungry. Give Me something to eat.[1]"

Was Rādhāvinoda really hungry?. If so, how did he suddenly become hungry after having been lying in the pond for God knows how many years?. The answer is that the hunger of the diety depends on the desire of the devotee to serve Him.

Has not Kṛṣṇa said in *Gītā* that whatever the manner in which a devotee worships or wants to serve Him, He always reciprocates in a manner most appropriate to his mode of worship?[2] If, for example the devotee has the parental attitude and wants to serve

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1 *ai umarāo grāme vipine basati /*
ai je Kiśorīkuṇḍa tathā mora sthiti //
tomāra utkaṇṭhā dekhi vyākula haila /
ke more ānibe muein āpani āilā //
śighra kari more kichu karāo bhakṣa /
(*Bhakti-Ratnākara* 1, 331-333)

2 *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante*
tāṁstathaiva bhajāmyaham.
— *Gītā*, 4,11

Him as father serves his child, He begins to behave towards him like his child. It is not that He so pretends. The devotee's love makes Him forget His divinity and behave towards him like his child. He actually feels hungry and thirsty like a child and, when He does not get food to eat or water to drink, He cries like a child. So far as the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and His devotee is concerned the regulative principle is not Bhagavān or Paramātmā, but love. Both Kṛṣṇa and His devotee are subservient to love. As *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* says "Love makes them both dance and dances itself."[1]

Lokanātha's love for Rādhāvinoda and his intense yearning for His service made Him actually feel the want and necessity of his loving service. His hunger, therefore, was not feigned but genuine. Lokanātha happily and speedily cooked whatever he could and gave Him to eat. He ate with great relish and to His fill.

Rādhāvinoda's assistance in the search of Vṛndavāna

Along with the search for the *līlā-sthalīs* of Vṛndāvana now began Lokanātha's loving service of Śrī Rādhāvinoda. It was not possible for Lokanātha, who lived on whatever was available in the forests to gather all the materials required for His service. Still he did all the best he could. He offered Him flowers, *tulasī*[2] and such fruits and vegetables as were available in the forest. He made Him sleep on a bed covered with petals

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1 *Kṛśnera nacāya prema, bhaktere nacāya /*
āpane nācaye-tine nāce ek thāñya //
— *C. C.* 3, 18 17.

2 A sacred plant of which the leaves are a necessary accompaniment of any food offered to Him.

of sweet–smelling flowers. In the summer season he fanned Him with a fan made from leaves. In the rainy season and in winter he made Him lie comfortably in the hollow of a tree, while he himself lay under the tree, getting wet all over with rain or shivering in cold [1]. He made a bag from the fibers of some plant in which he kept Rādhāvinoda when he went out somewhere on his mission and hung the bag round his neck. The bag was the moving temple of Rādhāvinoda. He felt happier in it than even in His celestial abode in Vaikuṇṭha or Golokā.[2]

It is said that Rādhāvinoda was of considerable assistance to him in the search for His own *līlā–sthalīs*. But whether He directly assisted him or not, it is true that by His grace he was highly succesful in his mission. Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhatta writes in his *Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa*[3] that he discovered 333 forests and holy places connected with the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Assistance of Rūpa, Sanātana and others.

In 1514 Mahāprabhu came to Vṛndāvana. He discovered Rādhākuṅḍa, Śyāmakuṅḍa and some other holy places. In 1515 and 1516 came Rūpa and Sanātana. Mahāprabhu had asked them to assist Lokanātha in the discovery of Vṛndāvana and to revive the Bhāgavata religion by compiling books on *bhakti* and installing Śrī Vigrahas in Vṛndāvana.

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1 *Bhakiratnākara,* 1262-1265.

2 *Bhaktiratnākara* 1, 333-332.

3 This work is regarded as authentic, because it was written in 1553, when Rūpa and Sanātana were alive and was approoved by them.

After Rūpa and Sanātana came one after another Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāja, Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī and Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Each of them was a scholar of outstanding merit and a devotee of the highest order. Each made his own contribution in reviving Vṛndāvana and making it the center of the *bhakti*–movement in India. But the largest contribution was that of Rūpa and Sanātana. With their arrival Lokanātha's work became much lighter. He told them about all the *tīrthas* he had discovered. They compared them with the accounts given in the *śāstras* and after due confirmation renamed some of them. Gradually Lokanātha left the entire work of the discovery of the *tīrthas* upon them and himself began to live in retirement in a solitary place near Kesīghāṭa in Vṛndāvana and devote all his time to *bhajana* and the loving service of Rādhāvinoda.

Rādhāvinoda cooks for Lokanātha.

Rādhāvinoda was also happier now to receive the whole time attention of Lokanātha. Sometimes Lokanātha was so much lost in meditation that he forgot all about his routine service. At that time Rādhāvinoda Himself came to his help. One such episode is mentioned by Śrī Bālakarāma in his commentary on *Bhaktamāla*. The episode is like this:

Once Lokanātha adorned Rādhāvinoda beaufully. He was so charmed by His beauty that he kept on looking at Him for a long time with great absorbtion and forgot that he had also to cook for Him. At that time a devotee used to assist him in cooking. He kept waiting for him in the kitchen. After waiting for a long time he thought of going into the temple and telling him

that it was getting very late for cooking. But Rādhāvinoda did not want that Lokanātha should be disturbed in his trance. Therefore while Lokanātha was absorbed in looking at Him, He assumed another form similar to that of Lokanātha and came out of the temple just when the devotee was about to enter it and started cooking. The devotee helped Him as usual. How could the devotee know that fortune had so smiled on him that day that he was enjoying the company of Rādhāvinoda Himself. After some time he went into the temple for some work and was surprised to see Lokanātha sitting in a trance. He went now into the temple, now into the kitchen. Each time he was surprised to see Lokanātha in both the places. At the end he fell at the feet of Lokanātha inside the temple and told him about what had happened in the kitchen. Lokanātha went into the kitchen and saw to his surprise that the food was ready, but no one was there. He understood that was the *līlā* of the frolicsome Rādhāvinoda. He went into the temple and looked at Rādhāvinoda with a sarcastic smile, disapproving of His conduct. Rādhāvinoda also smiled.

Revival of Vṛndāvana

Rūpa and Sanātana carried on the work of Lokanātha. They discovered many more *līlā–sthalīs* and built temples. Many other devotees came to Vṛndāvana at the behest of Mahāprabhu and began to live in huts surrounded by trees and creepers, which they called "*kuñja*". In due course Vṛndāvana was covered all over with *kunjas* and temples. It was at this time that Rūpa, Sanātana, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Jīva and others compiled many classical works on *bhakti*.

The revival of Vṛndāvana was almost complete. Devotees and pilgrims in large numbers began to come

to Vṛndāvana to see all the holy places connected with the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Disappearence of Mahāprabhu and His principal associates.

Not very long after this dark clouds began to gather over the spiritual sky of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava society. The news of the disappearence of Mahāprabhu in Purī came like a thunderbolt. This was followed by other catastrophic happenings. The great pillars of the society began to fall one by one. First Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaitācārya, then Kāśīśvara, then Sanātana, then Rūpa and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa departed from this world. Raghunātha Dāsa, who had come to Vṛndāvana after the disappearence of Mahāprabhu, retired, after these happenings, to the seclusion of Rādhākuṇḍa like a broken reed. There remained only four *mahāpuruṣas* in Vṛndāvana, who kept the flame of *bhakti* burning. They were Lokanātha, Bhūgarbha, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and Jīva.

The anxiety of Śrī Jīva.

Śrī Jīva, on account of his extraordinary intelligence, learning and managerial capacity was, after Rūpa and Sanātana, the main organizer of the *bhakti* movement started by Mahāprabhu. His anxiety was that the numerous works on *bhakti* compiled by him, Rūpa, Sanātana and the other Gosvāmīs, which had appeared on the spiritual horizon of Vṛndāvana as the brightest luminaries to dispel the darkness that surrounded the world, had so far shed their light only on Northern India. The torch that was lit in Vṛndāvana had also to be carried to other places, particularly Bengal, Assam and Oriṣsa. He was not able to find suitable persons to shoulder the responsibility of fulfilling this great task.

His anxiety was increasing and the clouds of despondency were becoming thicker and thicker. Suddenly a silver lining was visible in the clouds. There came to Vṛndāvana three *sādhakas*, each one of whom was a veritable image of *bhakti* and *vairāgya* and was wholly dedicated to the cause of the *bhakti*-movement. They were Śrīnivāsa, Narottama and Śyāmānanda. It is these three, who in the years that followed carried the torch of *bhakti* to Eastern regions and illumined the hearts of people with light celestial—Śrīnivāsa in South Bengal, Narottama in North Bengal and Assam and Śyāmānanda in Orissā. Śrīnivāsa became the disciple of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śyāmānanda of Jīva Gosvāmī.

Narottama decided to be the disciple of Lokanāthaa and within his own mind surrendered himself completely and for ever at his feet. Jīva took upon himself the responsibility of teaching the three and making them fit in every respect for the great task he was going to entrust to them.

Lokanātha's vow

Jīva Gosvāmī was faced with a problem. Narottama had mentally accepted Lokanātha as his guru. It was not possible for him to take initiation from anyone else. Lokanātha had taken a vow not to give initiation to any one. He had also not given initiation to anyone till now. But Narottama's initiation was necessary. Jīva Gosvāmī and the other *mahātmās* realized the gravity of the situation. They approached Lokanātha and tried to persuade him to give up his vow. They said to him, "You know that Narottama is the son of Rājā Kṛṣṇānanda of Khetarī, who is famous for his power and opulence in Bengal. Narottama is his only son and rightful heir. On account of his influence, *bhakti*, and *vairāgya*, he

is the fittest person to preach Mahāprabhu's religion of love to the people of North Bengal. Unless you give him initiation we cannot send him out of Vṛndāvana." But Lokanātha remained firm in his resolve. With folded hands he pleaded his inability to break his vow.

There was nothing else that anyone could do. Narottama decided to pass the rest of his life in the service of Lokanātha, even though he did not want to accept him as his disciple. But Lokanātha would not accept his service. Narottama began to live at some distance from the cottage of Lokanātha and serve him unnoticed as best as possible. Like his watchman and bodyguard he circumambulated his cottage chanting *harinama* in a low voice and took care to see that no one disturbed him in his *bhajana*. He was always on the look out for whatever service he could render unnoticed. Early in the morning Lokanātha used to go to answer the call of nature at a particular place in a nearby forest. Narottama thought he could easily serve him as sweeper. When Lokanātha returned to his cottage after easing himself, he could remove the faeces from the spot and clean it. He could also clean the path from his cottage to the spot. In that way he would not only clean the spot, where Lokanātha purged, he would also clean his heart of its impurities.

He thought – "Although I have come to Vṛndāvana after renouncing my princely pride and priviledges, the people in Vṛndāvana still regard me as the son of a *rājā* and look at me with all the reverence due to a prince which strengthens the subtle pride I still possess. Why should I not strike at the very root of my pride and dignity by assuming the role of a sweeper?" He did the same. Every day at about 3 A.M. he went to the spot where Lokanātha used to go for the call of nature, cleaned it with a broom and placed near it an

earthen pot filled with water and clean earth for washing hands. Then he went and stood behind some tree. When Lokanātha returned to his cottage after purging, he again went there, removed the faeces and swept the spot with a broom[1]. He felt happy beyond description in doing this service and clasped the broom again and again close to his heart and drenched it with his tears.[2]

Lokanātha understood on the very first day that some one had cleaned the spot and kept water and clean earth for him to wash his hands. He thought that some tribal living in the forest rendered that service to him on account of his old age. This went on for some time. Lokanātha did not pay much attention to this on account of his absorbtion in *bhajana*. When a year had passed like this, he began to think, "Who is this man who renders this service to me regularly in season and out of season? Whoever he may be, is it proper on my part to accept this service from him? How abominable it is! No, I am not going to tolerate this any more". The next day he went there about an hour before the usual time and hid himself behind a tree. After some time he saw a man coming. He could not recognize him from a distance. He shouted, "Who are you? Come near". Slowly the man came near and fell at his feet. Even then he could not recognize him on account of darkness. He lifted him up and said, "Who are you?" "Narottama" replied the man in a low voice with head cast downwards. "Narottama you! You do this work every day!"

Narottama could not say anything. He cast his head further downwards. "You are the son of a *rājā*.

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1 *Prema-vilasa*, 11th ullasa

2 *ibid*

How ill–becomming it is of you to do this! Don't come here from tomorrow".

"Prabhu! even though born as a prince, I am a beggar. I have renounced the world and come here in the hope of finding Kṛṣṇa. But I am like a ship without sailor or anchor. I am not able to find the path along wich I should go. It is not possible to find Kṛṣṇa without the mercy of the guru. I have surrendered myself at your feet for ever regarding you as my guru".

Lokanātha was somewhat move He kept standing for some time saying to himself, "Narottama is a great soul, a born devotee, highly deserving of initiation. But how can I break my vow? This boy has put me in a quandary. No, I cannot accept you as my disciple," he said.

Narottama sighed deeply and left the place.

The next morning when he was returning after circumambulating the cottage of Lokanātha, Lokanātha called him and said, "My child! Kṛṣṇa is merciful to you. I am compelled to break my vow. On the *pūrṇimā* of the coming month of Śrāvaṇa I shall duly initiate you".

There was no end to Narottama's happiness He fell at Lokanātha's feet and bathed them with the tears of his eyes.

After initiation began the period of Narottama's loving service of the guru and *rasa–sādhanā* under his guidance. The guru was a *siddha mahāpuruṣa,* well accomplished in the *sādhanā* of *vraja–rasa*. The disciple also soon became *siddha*.

Jīva Gosvāmī was happy to see this. He consulted the other *mahatmās* and conferred on him the tittle "Ṭhākura", Narottama became 'Narottama Ṭhākura

Departure of Narottama

One day Jīva Gosvāmī went to Lokanātha Gosvāmī and said, "We are sending Śrīnivāsa and Śyāmānanda

to Gauḍa for preaching Mahāprabhu's religion of love. We also want to send Narottāma with them. Your consent is neccesary".

Lokanātha Gosvāmī was at that time about a hundred years old. Though even now he did much of his work with his own hands, he now needed the assistance of a disciple like Narottama more than ever before. He had not made any other disciple. He also did not want to make any. Still he said, "I shall be very happy, if Narottama goes out for preaching. I shall certainly let him go".

While bidding farewell to Narottama he said, "I bless you with all my heart that you succeed in your mission. You are my only disciple. I had to break my life–long vow to accept you as my disciple. You alone have now to keep burning the flame of my *śikṣā–dīkṣā* and *rasa–sādhanā*".

Narottāma said with folded hands in a voice choked with emotion, "Gurudeva! kindly permit that I may come from Gauḍa from time to time and have your *darśana*"

"No my child" said Lokanātha "You need not come again, take this as my last *darśana*". Narottama, could not bear this. He fell senseless on the ground.

On regaining consciousness he took from his gurudeva his *pādukā* (sandal), clasped it close to his heart and started on his journey to Gauḍa with Śrīnivāsa and Śyāmānanda and four big boxes containing books loaded on two bullock–carts for preaching Mahāprabhu's religion of love.

Lokanātha Gosvāmī passed away on the *aṣṭamī* of the Kṛṣṇa–pakṣa of Śrāwaṇa some time between 1583 and 1588. His *samādhi* exists near the temple of Śrī Gokulānanda, the Ṭhākura of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī in Vṛndāvana. Lokanātha's Ṭhākura Śrī Rādhāvinoda is also installed in this temple.

Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha did not write any books.[1] They hardly had any time for this. They passed all their time in *līlā–smaraṇa* and *japa*. It is, however, believed that Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana learnt much from them regarding the secrets of the doctrine of *bhakti*. They also had their hand in the compilation of *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, although Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāja does not mention the name of Lokanātha and he mentions the name of Bhūgarbha only once. They had asked him out of humility not to say anything about them.

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1 Satishchandra Misra in his book *Sapta Gosvāmī* (p. 50) mentions a book entitled *Sītā–Caritra*, written by Lokanātha Dāsa. It is the biography of Advaitācārya's wife Sīta Devi. Some think that this Lokanātha Dāsa is no other than Lokanātha Gosvāmī.

CHAPTER II

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī

In October 1514 Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu started on his journey from Puri to Vṛndāvana followed by his countless followers and admirers, dancing and singing in ecstasy. The procession marched on like a stream of humanity heading towards the sea. Suddenly Mahāprabhu changed the course of the stream. Instead of going to Jhāḍakhaṅḍa, through which lay the shortest route to Vṛndāvana, he turned towards Gauḍa, the capital of king Husain Shah of Bengal. No one could understand what attracted him towards Gauḍa. It could not be anything worldly. For nothing of this world could deflect him from the path of Vṛndāvana, dearer to him than even his own self.

The attraction was the meeting with Amara Deva and Saṅtoṣa Deva, the two brothers, who were the ministers of Husain Shah, Amara Deva was prime–minister, Santoṣa Deva was finance minister. Both were learned in Sanskṛta, Fārasī and Arabī. Both were pious and religious minded even though they worked under a Muslim ruler. Both were equally respected by the king and his subjects, Hindus as well as Muslims. What is more, both loved Kṛṣṇa with all their heart and soul and both had resolved to renounce the world and tread the

path of *bhakti* under the guidance of Mahāprabhu. Both had written several letters to Mahāprabhu requesting him to help deliver them from the bondage of the world. Mahāprabhu had written in reply, "Kṛṣṇa will deliver you soon. You should, for the time being, remain in the world and attend to your worldly duties, but keep your mind all the time with Kṛṣṇa, just as a woman, who loves a man other than her husband, though engaged outwardly in the performance of her household duty, inwardly always enjoys the company of her paramour:

paravyasaninī nārī vyagrāpi gṛhakarmasu /
tadevāsvādayatyantarnavasaṅga rasāyanam. //

Mahāprabhu reached Gauḍa and stopped at Rāmakelī, a place near the capital, for rest. When Amara and Saṅtoṣa came to know about this there was no limit to their happiness. They had never expected that Mahāprabhu would himself go to them. The same night they went to him in the guise of two poor and lowly persons and fell at his feet and said with tearful eyes, "Prabhu! Since you have done this favour to us, kindly give us shelter under your lotus feet and deliver us from the bondage of the world."

Mahāprabhu lifted and embraced both of them and said lovingly, "Do not worry. Kṛṣṇa will show mercy on you. You are His eternal servants. He would soon accept you in His service. From now on you will, as His own servants, be known as Sanātana and Rūpa instead of as Amara and Saṅtoṣa."[1] Further to reassure them he said, "I have come only to assure you that

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 1, 195.

your deliverance is certain. There is no other purpose of my visit to this place."

The people accompanying Mahāprabhu were taken aback. They looked now at Mahāprabhu, now at Rūpa and Sanātana. They wondered who those two persons could be, on account of whom Mahāprabhu had taken the trouble of travelling such a long distance, so much out of his way to Vṛndāvana! What special merit they could have, on account of which Mahāprabhu had felt so much attracted to them. They had heard Him saying that they were the servants of Kṛṣṇa, which undoubtedly meant that they were His own servants. But why should he have taken so much trouble for servants? It was the servant, who always went to the master, not the master to the servant. It was the servant who depended on the master, not the master, who depended on the servant.

They did not know that the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and His devotee was not like the relationship between an ordinary master and his servant. Kṛṣṇa depended on the devotee as much as the devotee depended on Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa was as much anxious to meet the devotee, as the devotee was anxious to meet Him. The fact is that it is always Kṛṣṇa, Who mercifully goes to the devotee, not the devotee to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa does not go to the devotee only to show mercy on him, He goes to him also to fulfil His own desire to see him. It is therefore that *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* says that Kṛṣṇa went to Madhuvana, not to give *darśana* to Dhruva but to have his *darśana* — *madhorvanaṁ bhṛtyadidṛkṣyā gatah*.[1]

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1 *Bh.*, 4, 9, 1.

Mahaprabhu went to see Rūpa and Sanātana, because he was attracted by their devotion. But there was also another important purpose of his visit. He wanted to utilise their extraordinary talent in the service of Vaiṣṇavism. He wanted them to compile the *Vaiṣṇava-śāstras* and to rediscover the holy places of Vṛndāvana.

Genealogy

Rūpa and Sanātana came of a royal family. Their nephew Jīvā Gosvāmī traces his ancestry to Śrī Sarvajna Jagadguru[1], the powerful king of Karnāṭa. He gives his genealogy at the end of *Laghuvaiṣṇavatoṣanī* as follows:

Sarvajna Jagadguru was a powerful king of Karnāṭa. His son was Rājā Aniruddha. Aniruddha had two sons — Rūpeśvara and Harihara. He divided his kingdom between them. But Harihara usurped the throne of Rūpeśvara. Rūpeśvara went and began to live in Śikhara, the kingdom of his friend Śikhareśvara. His son Padmanābha was learned in *Yajurveda* and all the *Upaniṣads*. He desired to live at the bank of Ganges. Therefore he went and began to live in Navahaṭṭa[2] at the invitation of Rājā Danujamardana[3]. He had five sons —Puruṣottama, Jagannatha, Nārāyaṇa, Murārī and Mukuṅda. Mukuṅda's son Kumāra left Navahaṭṭa and

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1 Dr. D.C. Sen and Nagendranath Basu have determined that he was born some time at the end of the fourteenth century.

2 According to Dr. Sukumāra Sen this implies modern Naihātī near Kumārahaṭṭa.
– *Bānglā Sāhityera Itihāsa*, p. 302-303.

3 According to *Bhaktiratnākara* he began to live in Bākalā Candradvīpa in South Bengal.
(*Bh. R.*, 1, 561-565)

went to East Bengal. Kumāra had several sons, of whom three became famous in the Vaiṣṇava society. They were Sanātana, Rūpa and Vallabha.

Birth.

It is difficult to determine with certainty the date of birth of Sanātana. Dr. D.C. Sen believes that he was born in 1492[1]. Some other scholars also have endorsed his belief. But Satish Chandra Sen holds that he was born in 1465, which seems to be better borne out by facts. Sanātana was prime–minister, when Mahāprabhu went to Rāmakelī. He went to Rāmakelī in the fifth year after his *sannyāsa*, that is, in 1514 or 1515. If Sanātana was born in 1492, his age at that time should have been 23. He must have become prime–minister several years before Mahāprabhu went to Rāmakelī. If he became prime–minister 5 years before[2] his age at that time should have been 18 or 19 and Rūpa Gosvāmī's even less than that, which cannot be believed. But if he was born in 1465, his age at that time should have been 49 or 50, which is reasonable for the post of prime–minister.

Education.

Sanātana Gosvāmī's grandfather Mukuṅda Deva held some high office in the kingdom of Husain Shah. He lived in Rāmakelī. His son Kumāra Deva lived in Bākalā Candradvīpa. After the death of Kumāra Deva

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1 D.C. Sen : *The Vaishṇava Literature of Medieval Bengal.* p. 29.

2 *Bhakiratnakara* mentions that Mahāprabhu had heard even before his *sannyāsa* that Sanātana was prime–minister. (Bh. R. 1, 364-383).

Mukuṅda Deva brought Sanātana and Rūpa to Rāmakelī and made adequate arrangement for their education. They were first taught by a *pandita* named Rāmabhadra Vāṇīvilāsa and then they were sent to Navadvīpa for higher education. There for some time they studied Nyāya from the famous Sārvabhauma Bhattācārya. After completing the study of Nyāya they joined the *tola* of his younger brother Vidyāvācaspati. On account of their extraordinary intelligence within a short time they became well versed in literature, Vyākaraṇa and the *śāstras*.

But during those days knowledge of Arabī and Fārasī was necessary for success in worldly life, because the entire work of the goverment was done in these languages. Therefore Mukuṅda Deva sent Rūpa and Sanātana to Saptagrāma so that they might study these languages from Mullās under the supervision of his friend Fakaruddina, the ruler of Saptagrāma. They did not take long to master these languages as well. Even when engaged in these studies Sanātana Gosvāmī used to read *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, in which he had great interest. Jīvā Gosvāmī mentions in *Laghuvaiṣṇava toṣaṇī*, while giving his genealogy, that when Sanātana was a young boy, he saw a dream at night in which a Brahmin gave him a copy of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. At dawn the same Brahmin came and gave him the same copy. Since then he used to read *Bhāgavatam* every day. He learnt the secret teachings of *Bhāgavatam* from Paramānanda Bhattācārya, a *siddha* Ācārya, when he first arrived in Vṛndāvana. He mentions his name as one of his *śikṣā-gurus* in the *maṅgalācaraṇa-śloka* in the beginning of *Vṛhatvaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī*, which is as follows:

Bhattācārya Sārvabhauma vidyāvācaspatīn gurun
Bande vidyābhūṣaṇañca gauḍa-deśa-vibhūṣaṇam/
Bande Śrī Paramānaṅda Bhattācārya rasapriyaṁ
Rāmabhadraṁ tathā bāṇī vilāsañcopadeṣakam.//

Dīkṣā–guru.

The *dīkṣā–guru* of Sanātana Gosvāmī was Vidyāvācaspati. This is clearly proved by the aforesaid *śloka* in which the word "gurun" expressly qualifies Vidyāvācaspati and is honorific.[1] Gurun is plural, but is used as singular when honorific. If *gurun* referred to both Sārvabhauma and Vidyāvācaspati it should have been used in *dvivacana*. If it were used for all those mentioned in the *śloka* the word "vande" would not have been used twice. Manohara Dāsa interprets the *śloka* in the same manner in *Anurāgavallī*.[2] Narahari Cakravarti[3] and Dr. Rāḍhāgovinda Natha[4] also mention Vidyāvācaspati as the guru of Sanātana. Besides this is the general belief in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya.

Dr. Vimānabihāri Majūmadar[5] and Dr. Jānā[6], however, maintain that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was the *dīkṣā–guru* of Sanātana. In support of their view they point out that in the tenth *śloka* of *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta* Sanātana Gosvāmī has mentioned Mahāprabhu as his guru. The *śloka* runs as follows:

namah śrīgurukṛṣṇāya nīrupādhikṛpākṛte /
yah śrīcaitanyarūpo'bhūt tanvan premarasa kalau. //

But Mahāprabhu is here revered as *jagat–guru*, not as *dīkṣā–guru*, as Sanātana Gosvāmī has himself clarified in his commentary on the *śloka*.[7]

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1 Dr. S.K. De : *Early History of the Vaiṣnava Faith and Movement in Bengal*, p. 148 fn.

2 *Anurāgavallī*, 1st. Manjarī.

3 *Bhaktiratnākara*, 1, 598.

4 *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta*, Pariśiṣṭa, p. 419.

5 *Caitānya–Caritera Upādāna*, 2nd Ed. p. 137.

6 *Vṛndāvanera Chaya Gosvāmī*, p. 47-48.

7 Dr. Radhagovinda Natha has another argument in support of the view

Appointment as Minister

It is not known how Sanātana became a minister. Some writers[1] mention a story, which is as follows:

King Husain Shah of Gauḍa asked his mason named Pīrū to erect a *mandirā*[2] for him. Husain Shah climbed the tower with the mason, when it was almost ready. He was very much pleased with the mason and promised to reward him. The mason was elated. He said, "Your highness! I can build a *mandirā* even better than this." Husain Shah was infuriated. He said, "You wretch! If you could make it better, why didn't you? Have you concealed that art for some other king? You will be punished with death." Immediately he asked his attendant to push him down the tower. But since he had said that he would reward him, he said, "Before you die, let me know how I should reward you." The mason replied, "Since I am going to die, no other reward will be of any avail. You may name this *mandirā* after my name." So the *mandirā* was named "Pīrūsā Mandirā."

The dome of the *mandirā* was not yet completed. One day Husain Shah climbed the *mandirā* with a sepoy, whose name was Hingā. He was unhappy to see the half–built dome. In a fit of rage he said to Hingā, "Hingā, you go to Moragrām." He was about to tell him what

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that Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu was not the *dīkṣā–guru* of Sanātana. He says that after his meeting with Mahāprabhu in Rāmakeli, Sanātana performed *puraścaraṇa* with a view to attain the company of Mahāprabhu. This shows that he was already initiated, because *puraścaraṇa* cannot be performed without initiation.

1 Dr. Naresh Chandra Jānā: *Chaya Gosvāmī,* p. 25.
Bābā Krishna Dasa: *Ujjvala–nīlamaṇi.* Introduction; pp. 9-11

2 During those days the kings often built a tower in their capital, from which they could command a distant view. The tower was called *mandirā.*

he should do there, when his Murashid came and he was lost in conversation with him. Hingā did not have the courage to ask the enraged Husain Shah about the purpose of his visit to Moragrām. He also could not disobey him. So he went to Moragrām and began to loiter there aimlessly and grieviously. When Sanātana Gosvāmī learnt about his pitiable condition, he advised him to go to Gauḍa with a band of expert masons from Moragrām. Hingā did the same. Husain Shah was pleased to see the masons. He was surprised how Hingā came to know about the purpose for which he was sent to Moragrām, though he did not tell him anything about it. Hingā said that it was not he but Sanātana Gosvāmī, who came to know about the purpose and advised him accordingly. Husain Shah was very much impressed by the acuteness of Sanātana's intelligence. He had also heard about the talents of Rūpa and Sanātana from his Murshid. Therefore he sent for the two brothers, received them with due decorum and asked them to share with him the responsibility of governing the state as ministers. Rūpa and Sanātana had to agree for fear of incurring his displeasure. The story may not be correct, but it cannot be denied, as *Bhaktiratnākara* also says, that Husain Shah appointed Rūpa and Sanātana ministers on account of their extraordinary inteligence[1]. Sanātana was given the title "Sākara Malik"[2], which means Prime Minister, while Rūpa was given the title "Dabīra Khāsa"[3], which means Private Secretary [4].

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1 *Bhaktiratnākara,* 1, 581-582.

2 "Malik" is derived from the Arabic "Malik", which means "king", "Sākara is derived from the Arabic "Sāgira", which means "sub" or "under", that is, next to the king.

3 "Dabīra Khāsa, is derived from the Persian word "Dabir–i–khāsa" which means private secretary.

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Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī became the right and left hands of Husain Shah. In all matters, whether they related to administration or defence, he depended entirely upon them and did not do anything without consulting them. While in the *durbar*, court or camp of Husain Shah, both Sanātana and Rūpa dressed themselves like Mohammadans, talked Arabic and Persian fluently and behaved according to the decorum and etiquette of Amīrs and Umarāoes. But towards the evening when they went back to Rāmakelī they found themselves in their true selves. They purified themselves by a bath and got engaged in oblational and other religious activities, like the study of scriptures, *japa,* meditation and talks and discourses on religious subjects.

In Rāmakelī Sanātana had created an environment similar to that of Vṛndāvana. He built the temple of Madana Mohana and a number of *kuṅḍas* or ponds, called Sanātana Sāgara, Rūpa Sāgara, Śyāma—kuṅḍa, Rādhā—kuṅḍa, Lalitā—kuṅḍa, Vishākhā—kuṅḍa, Surabhī—kuṅḍa, Rangadevī—kuṅḍa, and Indurekhā-kuṅḍa, which can be seen even today. He planted Kadamba trees round the *kuṅḍas* further to make the place look like the forests of Vṛndāvana. *Bhakti-ratnākara* mentions that he used to sit under a Kadamba tree near

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"Dabīra-khasa" the title of Sanātana. But *Caitanya Bhāgavata* clearly says that Mahāprabhu gave Sanātana the name "Sanātana" in place of Sākara Malika —

sākara mallika nāma ghucāiyā tāna /
sanātana avadhūta thuilena nāma //
(C.C., 2, 1, 174)

When Rūpa and Sanātana went to see Mahāprabhu at Rāmakelī, Nityānanda and Haridasa said, "Rūpa and Sākara have come to see you." Here Sākara means Sanātana.

Śyama—kuṅḍa and meditate on *Vṛndāvana–līlā*, while tears of love profusely coursed down his eyes[1].

Resignation and Imprisonment.

Sanātana's devotional sentiment was natural and hereditary. It was so far subdued under the pressure of his responsibilities and multifarious activities as prime–minister. But even though subdued, it was burning inside like the fire of brick–kiln. It was bound to flare up and come outside with the slighest stroke of wind. The stroke came when Husain Shah attacked Orissa and demolished the temples and the deities of gods and goddesses in Orissa. This was too much for Sanātana Gosvāmī to bear. His conscience revolted. He said to himself in self–reproachment, "Cursed be the prime–ministership, on account of which I have to mortgage my soul to a ruler, who is enemical to my religion! Cursed be the halo of glory, majesty, celebrity and lordliness, which does not allow the soul to grow and bloom according to its natural disposition! Cursed be the life of which the outer and the inner aspects stand poles apart! Something must be done to get out of it all."

It was at this time that Rūpa and Sanātana met Mahāprabhu at Rāmakelī. Their meeting with Mahāprabhu marked the beginning of a new chapter, in their lives. They were swept away by a new current of *Kṛṣṇa–prema*. Worldly life became impossible for them. With a view to rescind the worldly ties they engaged

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1 *bāḍīra nikaṭe ati nibhṛta sthāna te /*
kadamba–kānana dhārā śyamakuṅḍa tāte //
vṛndāvana līlā tathā karaye cintana /
nā dhare dhairaja netra dhārā anukaṣṇa //
(Bhaktiratnākara, 1, 604-5).

two Brahmins to perform the *puraścaraṇa*[1] of *Kṛṣṇa–mantra* for them.[2]

After *puraścaraṇa* both the brothers decided to renounce the world and proceed to Vṛndāvana. Since Sanātana's responsibility was heavier it was decided that Rūpa should sneak out first, Sanātana should follow after some time. But the responsibility the two brothers carried on their shoulders of feeding and looking after the welfare of their relations and the *sādhus*, the *pandi-tas*, and the Brahmins, who depended on them, was not small. It was incumbent upon them to make adequate arrangements for their sustenance before they renounced.

So Rūpa first went to Fatehābād with all the fabulous wealth he had amassed. He had already sent all the members of his family to Fatehābād and Candradvīpa[3]. He gave away half of his wealth to the Brahmins and the Vaiṣṇavas, one–fourth to his family for their sustenance, and the remaining one–fourth he kept with trustworthy Brahmins for emergencies. Besides he kept ten thousand gold *mohurs* with a merchant for use by Sanātana[4]. Jayānanda writes in *Caitanya Maṅgala* that in this way Rūpa distributed twenty–two lakh gold *mohurs* amongst the *Sādhu–Vaiṣṇavas* and others.

Sanātana stopped going to Husain Shah's *durabāra* on the pretext that he was unwell. Husain Shah became suspicious. Since Rūpa had already gone, he thought Sanātana was also preparing to pack off. He could not

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1 Religious practice calculated to push the *sādhaka* forward in spiritual life. The most essential part of it is prolonged *japa* of the *mantra* of a deity.

2 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 4-5.

3 *Bhaktiratnākara*, 1, 648-649.

4 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 5-8.

afford to lose his able prime–minister, specially at this time, when the war clouds had started casting their shadow on his kingdom. He asked the royal physician to go and examine him. The physician went and examined and came back to report that he was well and happy and that he saw him surrounded by a number of *sādhus* and *panditas* and lost in conversation with them on religious topics[1]. Husain Shah was red with anger. The next day he went himself to Rāmakelī to meet him. He saw him in the company of *sādhus* and Vaiṣṇavas conversing with them in a happy mood. He said to him frowningly, "Sākara Malika! Are you not aware of the present situation in the state? Is it proper for you at this time to feign illness and remain sitting at home? Do you not know that this kind of intransigence amounts to rebellion and is fraught with serious consequences? Give up this madness and hold the reigns of the state and run its affairs efficiently as before, otherwise get ready to face the consequences of disobeying my orders."

Sanātana replied boldly, "Your highness! I am now surrendered at the feet of my Lord. I am His servant and no one else's. I shall serve Him and take orders from Him and no one else. Kindly excuse me."

How could Husain Shah stand this? Immediately he made him prisoner and sent him to jail.[2]

In the war with Orissa the army of Husain Shah suffered defeat. Next time he decided to lead the army himself against Mahārajā Pratāpārudra of Orissa. Again he felt intensely the necessity of an assistant like

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 15-16.

2 *ibid*, 26.

Sanātana. He thought that perhaps imprisonment had softened his temper and he could now be subdued. He called him and said, "Sākara! listen. Give up your obstinacy. Reassume your dignified role and help me in the fight against Pratāparudra by accompanying me to the battle."[1]

Sanātana replied curtly,"No, your highness! This is not possible. Your army will march on demolishing the temples and defiling the idols of gods and goddesses in its way. I cannot be an accomplice in the sins you will commit." [2]

Husain Shah again put him into jail and proceeded with his army towards Orissa.

Deliverance.

Sanātana always prayed to Mahāprabhu and said, "Mahāprabhu! You have kindly delivered Rūpa from bondage. When will you deliver me? There is no one else who can. I have cast my dice. I have seen the hollowness of the world and renounced it completely. I have renounced power and pelf, name and fame, kith and kin and everything else to attain your Lotus Feet. You have said in *Gītā* that You Yourself undertake the responsibility of looking after the welfare of one, who surrenders himself completely to You and knows no one else, thinks of no one else, depends on no one else. But I find that I am now doubly chained. I tried to get out of the jail of *Maya*, but now I find that I am jailed

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 27.

2 *ibid*, 28.

within jail. How long will I rot in jail my Lord, how long? Show mercy on me."

Mahāprabhu responded to his prayer. He received a secret letter from Rūpa, in which he said, "Mahāprabhu has started for Vṛndāvana. Vallabha and I are going to Vṛndāvana. You also come after securing your release from the jail by bribing the jailor. I have deposited ten thousand *mohurs* with your favourite merchant for the purpose.[1]

The jailor, whose name was Sheikh Habū, was well disposed towards Sanātana, because Sanātana had done him some favour when he was prime–minister. But he was afraid of Husain Shah. Sanātana said to him, "You need not fear. If Husain Shah returns alive, you tell him that Sākara Malika went out to evacuate while in chains, and committed suicide by plunging into the river. I shall become a *daravesha*[2] and go to Mecca." As he said this he placed the bag containing seven thousand *mohurs* before him. The jailor succumbed to the temptation. He not only cut asunder his chains, but arranged to send him to the other side of the Ganges[3].

On way to Vṛndāvana.

Sanātana could not go to Vṛndāvana through the main road, for fear of being detected. He went through a circuitous route along with his servant Īśāna. Walking day and night for two days he reached mount Pātarā.

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 30-34.

2 A Mohammadan devotee.

3 *C.C.*, 2, 20, 9-14.

There he stayed for a night at the house of a Bhūmika[1] The Bhūmika treated him with bountiful generousity. He said, "You stay here comfortably tonight. In the morning my men will take you across the mountain." Sanātana had not taken a morsel of food for two days. He bathed and ate to his fill the dainties munificently served by the Bhūmika. But he got suspicious. He had heard that the Bhūmikas of that place welcomed the tourists, gave them accomodation and good things to eat, but at night they robbed them of all they had and killed them. Sanātana did not have anything of which he could be robbed. But he was not sure of Īśāna. He asked him, "Do you have any money?".

" I have seven *mohurs*", he replied.

" Seven *mohurs*! I brought you with me, because I thought you would be a good companion on the path of *vaiṛāgya*[2]. But I find that you are a *bhogī,*[3] not a *vairāgī*. I feel aggrieved and disappointed." He took the *mohurs* from him and placed them before the Bhūmika and said, "We have these *mohurs*. Please accept them and help us to cross the mountain."

Bhūmika was impressed by the simplicity and generousity of Sanātana. He said, "You have prevented me from committing a sin. My astrologer had told me that you had eight *mohurs* with you. I would have taken them by killing you both at night. But now I shall not take them. I shall take you across the mountain without charging anything."

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1 Land owner.

2 Detachment from the world.

3 One given to sensuous enjoyment.

Sanātana said, "If you do not take them some one else will, after killing us. So please accept them for the sake of our life." [1]

The Bhūmika then took the *mohurs* and sent them across the mountain escorted by four pike–men.

After they had crossed the mountain, Sanātana said to Īśāna, "The Bhūmika spoke of eight *mohurs*. Do you have one more?"

"Yes, I have", said Īśāna.

"You return home with that *mohur*[2]. Your path is different from mine. I depend on God, you depend on mohurs"

Īśān went back to Rāmakelī with tears in his eyes. Sanātana proceeded alone towards Vṛndāvana.

Sanātana reached Hājipur. There he met Śrīkānta, his brother–in–law, who held some high office in the *durabāra* of Husain Shah and had gone to Hājīpur to purchase horses for him[3]. Śrīkānta could not bear the sight of his brother–in–law, the erstwhile prime–minister of Gauḍa, dressed like a beggar with only a *kanthā*[4], over his body and a *karavā* (an earthen pot) in his hand. He tried to persuade him to change his clothes, but couldn't. On his insistance, however, he accepted a blanket, because he said that it was too cold in the western region and a blanket was indispensable.[5]

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 20, 28-32.

2 *C.C.*, 2, 20, 32-35

3 Hājipur is a village near Shonapur in Bihar, where even today a big fair is held for a month beginning from Pūrṇimā in the month of Kārtika, in which horses and elephants are brought from different parts of the country for sale.

4 A patched cloth or quilt made of rags.

5 *C.C.*, 2, 20, 43.

Sanātana flung the blanket over his shoulder and started for Vṛndāvana. He was going fast, as fast as he could, in his anxiety to meet Mahāprabhu. On the way he sometimes got food to eat, sometimes did not. Sometimes he slept at night, sometimes did not. He kept waking and weeping throughout the night in remembrance of Mahāprabhu. For want of food, for want of sleep and for want of rest his body became frail, but he was unaware of it. He was unable to walk, but he was walking, sometimes tottering, sometimes quivering, sometimes falling like one, who had drunk deep of the nectar of love — love for the golden Kṛṣṇa, who was called Gaurāṅga.

Meeting Mahāprabhu in Kāśī (Vārānasī)

Soon Sanātana reached Kāśī. He heard that Mahāprabhu had returned from Vṛndāvana and was staying in Kāśī at the house of Chandraśekhara Ācārya and that his ecstatic dance and *kīrtana* had generated an unprecedented wave of *bhāva–bhakti* which had been swashing the whole of Kāśī. There was no limit to Sanātana's joy when he heard this.

The next moment he went and sat at the door of Candraśekhara's house. His heart was restless to meet Mahāprabhu, but he was not able to gather courage to go in, because he thought he was lowly and undeserving. How strange! Sanātana, who was the Chief—minister of a big state, at whose door often sat hundreds of chieftains, landlords and officers holding high position for favour of a brief audience, was now sitting at Candra-śekhara's door–step and considered himself so low and unworthy that he could not even knock at the door!

But this is the natural consequence of *bhakti*. *Bhakti* and humility go together. Absence of humility

means absence of *bhakti. Bhakti* is called the mother of humility. It makes a devotee so humble that even if he be great, he regards himself as the smallest of the small and the lowliest of the lowly; even if he be pure and worshipable, he regards himself as impure and untouchable; even if he be a reservoir of *bhakti,* he regards himself as devoid of even a drop of *bhakti;* even if he be nearest to the Lord, he hesitates in knocking at His door, because he thinks he does not deserve to meet Him on account of his impurity and the offences committed by him. It is not that he feigns to be so, it is natural to him.

But he does not really have to knock. His eagerness, his earnest desire to meet the Lord is enough. The desire, like a call–bell automatically makes His heart and soul ring and He rushes bare footed from His high seat to embrace him. Mahāprabhu came to know that His dear Sanātana had come and he rushed towards him, shouting, "Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa!". Sanātana recognized his voice. As soon as he raised his head, he saw the treasure of his heart, the soul of his soul, the golden Gaurāṅga rushing towards him with open arms and tearful eyes to embrace him, saying, "My Sanātana! My life, My soul!"

Sanātana lay prostrate before Him like an old offender. Mahāprabhu wanted to lift and embrace him, but he quickly stepped aside and said, "Prabhu! I am too low and worldly a person. Having been in the service of a Muslim ruler, I am not fit to be touched by you. Please do not touch me."

"No, no, Sanātana! damn your humility. My heart breaks to see it. On account of your *bhakti* you possess the power to purify the universe[1]. Let me also be blest by your touch." So saying Mahāprabhu locked him in his arms and bathed him with his tears.

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 20, 55.

Mahāprabhu made him sit by his side, caressed him fondly and asked how he secured release from the prison. Sanātana narrated the whole story. Mahāprabhu then asked Candraśekhara to change Sanātana's *daravesh* dress and give him the dress and form of a Vaiṣṇava. Candraśekhara got him shaved and after he had bathed in the Ganges, he gave him a new dress to wear, which he did not accept.

Mahāprabhu went to the house of Tapana Misra[1] for *bhiksā* and took Sanātana with him. Tapana Misra fed him with Mahāprabhu's *mahāprasāda*.

The next day Mahāprabhu introduced Sanātana to a Mahārashtrīya Brahmin, who was his devotee. The Brahmin requested Sanātana to take *mahāprasāda* at his place as long as he stayed in Kāśī. Sanātana said, "I can not take *bhikṣā* regularly at one place. I would rather go for *mādhukarī*."[2]

The Brahmin wanted to give him a new *dhoti*[3]. Sanātana said, "If you want to give me a *dhoti*, give me an old one used by you." The Brahmin did the same. Sanātana tore the *dhoti* into two pieces. He used one as *dora–kaupina*[4] and the other as *bahirvāsa*[5].

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam says that even a man of the lowest caste, who has *bhakti* in his heart is superior to a Brahmin, who has all other qualities but no *bhakti*. Such a person has the power to deliver not only himself, but his entire family from bondage.(*Bh.*, 7, 9, 10)

1 Tapana Miśra had met Mahāprabhu, when he was on his tour of East Bengal and Mahāprabhu had advised him to go and live in Vārānasī.

2 Begging pieces of bread from several places instead of taking whole meal from one place.

3 A sheet of cloth worn by men or women.

4 A cloth worn over privities.

5 An outer garment.

Thus dressed as a Vaiṣṇava *sādhu* Sanātana started for *mādhukarī*. Mahāprabhu was pleased to see this, but his eyes were fixed on the blanket he was carrying on his shoulder. Sanātana understood what he had indicated by his penetrating eye. He went to the bank of the Ganges, where he saw a beggar, with a *gūdaḍī* [1]. He said to the beggar, "Brother! Please take my blanket and give me your *gūdaḍī*. I shall feel greatly obliged."

The beggar frowned and said, "You are yourself a beggar like me. You have no right to jest with me and make a fun of my *gūdaḍī,* because some one has given you a blanket."

Sanātana explained to him that he was not jesting and succeeded in exchanging his blanket with the *gūdaḍī*. He draped himself with the *gūdaḍī* and came to Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu's face radiated with joy. Though he knew everything, he said with feigned astonishment, "Sanātana! What has happened to your blanket?" When Sanātana told him how he had exchanged it with the *gūdaḍī* he was wearing, he said approvingly, "Yes, so I thought. When Kṛṣṇa has, like a good physician, mercifully cured you of the disease of worldly attachment, why should he let the smallest trace of it remain."[2]

Thus by making the prime–minister of Bengal renounce even the last vestige of worldly attachment Mahāprabhu set up an ideal of Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsa* and breathed a new life into the Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

After this began the series of question–answers, whereby Mahāprabhu preached to the world through

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1 A quilt made of rags.

2 *C.C.*, 2, 20, 90.

Sanātana the cardinal principles of pure *Bhāgavatam* religion. Sanātana asked one question after another and Mahāprabhu answered.

First Mahāprabhu established Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Godhead and described the other gods as His various incarnations. Then he dwelt at length upon *sādhana–bhakti* and *rāgānugā–bhakti*. After keeping Sanātana in his close proximity for two months and making him fully conversant with the principles of Vaiṣṇavism, he said to him, "Sanātana, some time ago, I met your brother Rūpa at Prayāga. I instructed him and made him proficient in *Kṛṣṇa–rasa* and sent him to Vṛndāvana to expound and preach it to others. You also go to Vṛndāvana. I am entrusting you with four important duties:

1. The rediscovery of the holy places connected with the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.
2. The establishment of the doctrine of unalloyed devotion *(śuddhā bhakti).*
3. The installation of *Kṛṣṇa–vigrahas*[1] and
4. The preparation of a code–book of conduct for the Vaiṣṇavas."

Besides he said, "You will also have to look after my devotees, who will go to Vṛndāvana for *bhajana* after renouncing the world with nothing at all to steer them across the ocean of the world except a *kanthā* and *karava."*[2]

Sanātana said, "Prabhu! if you want me to do all this, kindly impart *śakti* by placing your foot on my head."

Mahāprabhu placed his benedictory hand upon his head and blessed him.

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1 *vigraha* = image of a diety.

2 *C.C.*, 2, 25, 176.

Sanātana started for Vṛndāvana with tears of impending separation continuously coursing down his eyes. While his body was moving his heart and soul were still lying at the feet of Mahāprabhu, unwilling to leave. He slowly moved forward, but at every step turned back to look at Mahāprabhu's lotus face, not knowing when again he would have the good fortune of having its *darśana*.[1]

At the same time Mahāprabhu started for Nīlācala.[2]

Sādhanā and Revival of Holy Places.

On reaching Vraja Sanātana first met Subuddhi Roy and then Lokanātha Gosvāmī and Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī, who had already been sent to Vraja by Mahāprabhu. After that he lived in a solitary place on the bank of Yamunā in Vṛndāvana, called Āditya Tīlā and started life of intense *vairāgya* and *bhajana*. He used to be so absorbed in *bhajana* that he lost body –consciousness. He almost conquered hunger. There was hardly any habitation in Vṛndāvana. So he went to Mathura for *mādhukarī*, when his absorption in *bhajana* was not so deep, otherwise he collected whatever leaves or vegetables he could collect from the forest, boiled them without salt or spices and ate after offering them to the Lord. Sometimes that also was not possible. He only laughed and danced or wept in ecstasy without any consciousness of hunger or thirst.

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1 Looking on.

2 Mahāprabhu came from Nīlācala to Vṛndāvana in Kārtika (October–November) 1515. (*C.C.*, 2, 18, 112). He met Sanātana in Kāśī while returning from Vṛndāvana in Māgha–Phālgum (December–January) 1516. He returned to Nīlācala two months later in April.

After some time he was reminded of Mahāprabhu's command regarding the discovery of the *līlā–sthalies* or the holy places connected with the *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa. Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha had already done some work in this direction. He continued the same. He roamed about in the hills and the forests praying to Rādhārānī for guidance and discovered the places one by one, with the help of the *śastras* and the spiritual experiences inspired in his heart by the mercy of Rādhārānī.

One year in Nīlācala.

After a year it became impossible for Sanātana to bear the separation of Mahāprabhu any more. Since Mahāprabhu had also asked him to meet him in Nīlācala once, he started for Nīlācala. He went through the forest of Jhārikhaṅḍa. On account of the irregularity and unwholesomeness of food, which was not easily available on the way, he developed eczema of a virulent type. Pus began to exude from the pores of his body. In self–condemnation he began to say to himself, "Having been in the service of a Mohammadan king I was already impure and untouchable. This disease has further added to my impurity. On account of it I will not be able to go to the temple of Jagannātha. I will also not be able to go to Mahāprabhu, because Mahāprabhu lives near the temple and many devotees going to the temple of Jagannātha for *darśana* and the *sevaits*[1] of Jagannātha pass from that side. If any of them gets touched by my body, it would mean an offence knowingly committed by me. It would, therefore be proper to

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1 The persons responsible for the service of a deity.

commit sucide by lying down under the wheels of the chariot of Jagannātha at the time of Ratha–Yātrā. I would thus not only be relieved of the present predicament, I would also attain the lotus–feet of Lord Jagannātha." With this determination he reached Nīlācala. He thought that the proper place for him to stay in Nīlācala was the hut of the Mohammedan recluse Ṭhākura Haridāsa. Haridāsa, who regarded himself as low and untouchable, lived in a secluded corner of the city in a thatched hut. He did not go to the temple or to Mahāprabhu, for *darśana*, fearing that he might touch some one on the way. Mahāprabhu himself went to give *darśana* to his dear Haridāsa everyday, after visiting Jagannātha's temple in the morning.

Sanātana reached the *kuti* of Haridāsa. A little later Mahāprabhu also reached there after having the *darśana* of Jagannātha. Sanātana performed obeisance to Him from a distance. Mahāprabhu was overjoyed to see him and proceeded towards him with arms wide open to embrace him. As Mahāprabhu proceeded Sanātana shrunk back saying, "Prabhu! do not touch me. I am low and sinful. I have lost my caste by serving a Mohammedan. Besides You see pus is exuding out of my body. If it touches Your body, it will add to my sins."

But Mahāprabhu would not listen. He embraced him forcibly and embraced him again and again on account of exuberance of love. His body was badly smeared with pus. Sanātana's self–condemnation crossed all limit.

Mahāprabhu asked Sanātana to live with Haridāsa in his *kuti*[1]. Sanātana never went to Jagannātha's

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1 Cottage.

temple. Like Haridāsa he only made obeisance to the *cakra* of the temple everyday from a distance. Mahāprabhu came to him every day with the other devotees, embraced him and conversed with him on subjects relating to *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*. It was impossible for Sanātana to bear that Mahāprabhu's body should be smeared with the abominable pus of his body day after day. He began to think of committing suicide in some way or other as soon as possible.

One day Mahāprabhu said to Sanātana, "Sanātana! Kṛṣṇa cannot be attained by committing suicide. If He could be attained by suicide, who would not commit suicide a thousand times to attain Him. He can be attained only by *bhajana*—by *bhakti,* and by no other means.[1]

Sanātana was surprised to hear this from Mahāprabhu, because he had not told him anything about his resolve to commit suicide. He said, "Prabhu! You are omniscient and all–powerful. I am only a doll in Your hands. I shall dance as You make me dance. But I do not know what purpose may be served by making a low and sinful creature like me live in this world."

Mahāprabhu replied, "Sanātana! you have surrendered yourself to Me. Your body is my property. How can you demolish another man's property? Do you not know even this simple rule of good conduct? What kind of a man are you? Your body is my main instrument, through which I want to accomplish so many things. Vṛndāvana is so dear to me. I want to revive its glory by rediscovering all its *līlā–sthalīes*. I cannot do this, because, on account of my mother's command, I have

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1 *C.C.,* 3, 4, 55-56.

to live here in Nīlācala. I want this to be done by you. I also want you to preach *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti*, and do so many other things. And you want to demolish the very body through which I want to do all these things."[1]

Sanātana cast his head down in shame. He gave up the idea of committing suicide.

The time of Jagannātha's Ratha-Yātrā soon arrived. As usual many devotees arrived from Bengal. Mahā–prabhu introduced Sanātana to each one of them and asked them to give their blessings to him so that he might fulfil all the great tasks entrusted to him.

Once in the month of Jyeṣṭha (June) Mahāprabhu wanted to test Sanātana. He called Sanātana at Yameṣvara Ṭoṭā, where he was invited for mid–day *bhiksā*. Sanātana was happy beyond measure, because he was called by Mahāprabhu. He went walking through the sandy sea–shore. The sand was hot like fire on account of the scorching heat of the mid–day sun. It burnt his feet and caused blisters. But he was so much lost in the happiness caused by Mahā–prabhu's invitation that he was totally unaware of it. Mahāprabhu's attendant Govinda gave him the remnants of the *mahāprasāda* eaten by Mahāprabhu. After he had eaten the same he went to the place where Mahāprabhu was resting. Mahāprabhu asked him, "Sanātana, through which route did you come?".

"I came along the sea–shore."

"Along the sea–shore! Walking on the broiling sand! Why did you not come through the safe and snug path of Sinhadvāra? Your feet must have got burnt and blistered. How did you come?."

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 4, 78-83.

"I did not feel any trouble and I am not even aware of blisters. I am unworthy of going along the Sinhadvāra. The *pūjarīs* of Jagannātha keep going and coming from that side. Will I not commit an offence if any of them gets touched by me?."

Mahāprabhu was happy to hear this and said, "Sanātana, I know that you have the power to purify the entire universe. Even the gods would be purified by your touch. But it is the nature of a devotee to observe *maryādā*[1]. If you do not observe *maryādā* who else will?".[2]

So saying Mahāprabhu embraced Sanātana most lovingly and parted, carrying the pus of Sanātana's body on his body as his ornament.[3]

Pandita Jagadānanda was one of the closest and dearest companions of Mahāprabhu. He had gone to Bengal for a short while. When he returned from there he went to see Sanātana.

Sanātana said to him, "Pandita Jī, I am just now in a dilemma. You are a close confidant of Mahāprabhu. Kindly advise what I should do. Mahāprabhu embraces me every day. His golden body is smeared with the poisonous pus of my body. This causes great agony to me. I had thought of relieving myself of it by committing suicide, but Mahāprabhu has warned me against it. I do not know what I should do."

Mahāprabhu was the very life and soul of Jagadānanda. How could he tolerate his body being

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1 Propriety in conduct. For a Vaiṣṇava propriety consists in regarding himself as the lowliest of the lowly and acting accordingly.

2 *C.C.*, 3, 4, 115-132.

3 *ibid*, 133.

smeared with the most abominable exudation of Sanātana's body everyday. His whole body shivered on hearing this. He said, "Sanātana, the simplest way of getting out of the situation is that you return to Vṛndāvana as soon as you can after Ratha-Yātrā. You have met Mahāprabhu. On the Ratha-Yātrā day you will see Jagannātha. After that everyday that you stay here will be a day of agony to you and agony to us, who will see Mahāprabhu's body smeared with your pus. You must also go to Vṛndāvana soon, because the work Mahāprabhu has entrusted to you is full of great responsibility and needs your whole–hearted attention."[1]

The next day when Mahāprabhu came to meet Haridāsa and Sanātana, Haridāsa made obeisance to Him and He embraced him. Sanātana, as usual, made obeisance from a distance. Mahāprabhu, as usual, proceeded onwards to embrace him, while he receded backwards to escape. Ultimately Mahāprabhu overtook him and embraced him heartily. When Mahāprabhu sat down with both of them, Sanātana said with folded hands, "Prabhu! I am in great distress. I came here for the good of my soul. But what is now happening is just the contrary. Every day your body is smeared with the foul smelling pus of my body, which you do not hate, but which gives me great pain. This offence committed by me day after day sounds to me like the death–knell of my soul. Therefore kindly permit me to return to Vṛndāvana soon. Pandita Jagadānanda also has advised me accordingly."[2]

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 4, 141-143.

2 *C.C.*, 2, 4, 150-159.

Mahāprabhu was out of himself with rage against Jagadānanda. His face became red. He shouted, "Jagā! That fry! He will advise you; who, in all matters, whether mundane or spiritual, is like his guru and who can even advise Me! He has so much courage, so much vanity in him!"[1]

Sanātana kept on looking for some time at Mahāprabhu's figure fuming with rage. Then some thing tickled the tendermost corner of his heart and tears of love trickled down his cheeks. He held Mahāprabhu's feet with both of his hands and said, "Prabhu! Now I know how fortunate is Jagadānanda and how unfortunate I. You regard him Your own and therefore you scold him and by scolding make him drink of the sweet cup of Your affection. You regard me as alien and therefore You extol me and by extolling make me drink of the bitter cup of praise and regardful behaviour."[2]

Mahāprabhu felt somewhat mortified. He said, "Sanātana, do not say like that. Jagadānanda is not as dear to Me as you. I scolded him, because I do not like that one should disregard decorum and not pay anyone the respect due to him. By advising a person like you, who is well versed in the *śāstras* and knows more than anyone else what is good or bad, proper or improper, he showed lack of regard for you. I extoled you because of your qualities, not because I do not regard you as My own. You do not like that I should embrace you, because you think your body is impure. But to Me your body is as pure as nectar, because it is *aprākṛta* (transcendental). You know that at the time

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1 *ibid*, 157-160.

2 *ibid*, 161-163.

of *dīkṣā*, when the disciple surrenders himself to the guru and Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa makes his body *cinmaya* (spiritual) like His own. It is with the *cinmaya* body that he practises *sādhanā*.[1] Therefore I cannot describe to you the happiness I feel in embracing you. You need not think that you commit any offence when your body touches Mine. You remain here this year with a mind free from all anxiety and give Me the happiness I feel in your company. After the end of the year I shall send you to Vṛndāvana."[2]

As Mahāprabhu said this He embraced him. As soon as He embraced his eczema was gone and his body became radiant like gold.[3]

Mahāprabhu kept Sanātana with Him at Nīlācala till Dolayātrā (Holi festival), after which he sent him to Vṛndāvana. During this period He discoursed with him upon philosophical and religious subjects and completed the remaining portion of the teachings, given to him at Vārānasī.

Sanātana and Śrī Madana Gopāla (Madana Mohana)

On returning to Vṛndāvana Sanātana lived in his old *kuti* in Āditya–ṭilā on the bank of Yamunā. He started his *sādhanā* and the work of discovering the *līlā–sthalies*, building temples and installing Śrī Vigrahas etc, entrusted to him by Mahāprabhu.

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 4, 192-193.

2 *ibid*, 199-200.

3 *ibid*, 201.

Growse writes in his Memoir of Mathurā that Sanātana first established the temple of Vṛndā Devī, of which no trace is found now.[1] After that other temples were built and Śrī Vigrahas were installed.

One day Sanātana went to Mathurā for *mādhukarī*. As soon as he entered the house of Dāmodara Chaube, he saw the beautiful Image of Śrī Śrī Madana Gopāla. The Image stole his heart. He was lost in *bhāva–samādhi* [2] and there arose in his heart the irresistible desire of serving the Image lovingly with all his heart and soul. He tried to suppress the desire. What was the use of entertaining a desire, which could not be fulfilled? It was futile to think that the Chaube family would give away their dear Ṭhākura to him. Even if they did, how and wherefrom could he get all the means to serve Him and make Him happy? But it was not possible to suppress the desire. The more he tried to suppress it, the stronger it grew. All the time, whether he was sleeping or waking, walking about or sitting in meditation, the beautiful and graceful image of Madana Gopāla emerged in his mind and made him restless. He went to the Chaube's house again and again on the pretext of *mādhukarī* and returned after Madana Gopāla's *darśana*.

Dāmodara Chaube's wife was a great devotee. She had parental attitude towards Madana Gopāla. She also had a son, whose name was Sadana. Her love was equally distributed between Madana and Sadana. She treated them both with equal care and affection.

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1 "On their arrival in Vṛndāvana the first shrine, which the Gosains erected was one in honour of eponymous goddess Vrinda Devi. Of this no trace now remains, if (as some say) it stood in Sevakunja." (District Memoir of Mathura, 3rd. Ed., p 241).

2 Ecstatic state of total absorption.

Madana Gopāla lived there as a member of the Chaube family and played happily with Sadana.

Slowly Sanātana got mixed up with the Chaube family. He was happy to see that the love of Chaube's wife towards Madana Gopāla was as natural and intense as her love towards Sadana. He desired to test her love on the scale of *rāgānugā–bhakti* or spotlessly pure and spontaneous devotion. With this purpose he once said to her, "Mā, you serve Madana Gopāla with great care and affection. That is good. But it is not good to regard Him as a member of the family like Sadana and treat Him in the same manner as you treat Sadana. After all Madana Gopāla is your *iṣṭa*[1], He should be worshipped as *iṣṭa,* with veneration and with all the ritualistic rules and regulations prescribed by the *śāstras*."

The simple lady said, "Bābā, you are right. I shall now do likewise."

The next time when Sanātana went to her, she said at once, "Bābā! I tried to follow your advice. But Madana Gopāla did not like it. That day He told me angrily in a dream, "Mā! You have now started distinguishing between Me and Sadana. You regard him as your son and keep him close to your heart, while you regard Me as your *iṣṭa* and worship Me with all the pomp and splendour and superfluity of rituals to keep Me away from you. I do not like it."

Sanātana was taken aback. A shiver went through his spine. Tears trickled down his eyes. He was stupefied by the way in which Madana Gopāla exposed His

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1 God, Who is worshipped exclusively.

loving nature and His greed for the loving service of the lady. He admired the fortune of the lady and prayed to Madana Gopāla to be forgiven for depriving Him temporarily of the *rasa*[1] of the loving service of the lady by advising her to serve Him as her *iṣṭa*.

Sanātana had already thought that hoping to be blessed with the opportunity of offering his loving service to Madana Gopāla was like hoping against hope. But cold water was finally thrown upon his hope, when he realized how Madana Gopāla relished the loving service of the lady and how He became restless when deprived of it even for a short while.

But Sanātana's inference was not correct. The day Madana Gopāla had seen him a strange unrest was created in His heart. He had also begun to long for the loving service of Sanātana. As Sanātana's attraction towards Him increased, His attraction towards Sanātana also increased.

There was no limit to Sanātana's astonishment and happiness when one day the Chaube's wife said to him in a sorrowful mood and with tears coursing down her eyes, "Bābā! from today you have to accept the responsibilitiy of the service of Madana Gopāla. Gopāla is now grown up and has become restive and unmanagable. He does not want to remain under the protection of His mother. He asked me in a dream yesterday night to give Him to you. I have also become old and imbecile and cannot serve Him well. It is in His interest as well as mine that I entrust Him to some one, who can serve Him well and with affection."

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1 Transcendental relish

The lotus of Sanātana's heart blossomed to see the sun of his fortune suddenly rise. He returned to his *kuti* with the Treasure of his heart hugged close to his heart.[1]

Sanātana built another hut of straw near his own, in which he installed Madana Gopāla. For the *bhoga*[2] of Madana Gopāla he depended on *mādhukarī*. From the flour he got in *mādhukarī* he prepared *bātī*, by kneading the flour, rolling it into the shape of balls and backing them on fire. He offered to Madana Gopāla these balls along with saltless and spiceless vegetable prepared from the leaves he collected from the forest. Madana Gopāla kept on some how swallowing this fare for a few days, hesitating to complain about it. But He could not carry this on for a long time. One day he said to Sanātana in a dream, "Sanātana! I find it difficult to swallow your balls of flour with leaves boiled without salt. I have to push them down the throat forcibly. How long can I continue to do this? Why not give me some salt along with these?"

Tears trickled down the eyes of Sanātana. In utter helplessness he said in all humility with folded hands, "Prabhu! You know that I am your humble servant, a recluse, without any wherewithal for Your service. You ask for salt today. Tomorrow you may ask for molasses and then for *Rāja-bhoga*.[3] How shall I manage? If you

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1 It is said that the Śrī Vigraha of Madana Gopāla has an old history. It was one of the eight Vigrahas, which śrī Kṛṣna's great-grandson Mahārāja Vajranābha found during his search in Vraja. For a long time it lay buried under the ground in Āditya Tīlā, from where it was taken out by Advaitācārya. Advaitācārya entrusted its service to the Chaube family of Mathura. (Satishchandra Mitra : *Sapta Gosvāmī* p, 109).

2 Offering of food.

3 Royal repast.

want better service you should make your own arrangement. You can do so, because you are omnipotent."

Was not Sanātana surprisingly harsh to Madana Gopāla? Did he not ill treat Him by refusing to comply with His simple request for salt — Him, Whose loving service he had so passionately longed for and Who came to him only because He was tempted by his service? Even though he was a recluse, was it not possible for him to fulfil His desire by begging?.

The subject requires reflection. Sanātana could even sacrifice his life for the service of Madana Gopāla. But how could he give up the path that was necessary to qualify him for His highest service. His highest service was *mānasī–sevā* or service in contemplation. *Mānasī–sevā* is not encumbered by any restrictions of time or space or laws of the physical world. The paraphernalia required for *sevā* are easily available. He has only to think of them and they are there. This is possible, because by constant contemplation the *sādhaka* acquires the *siddha–deha* or *bhāva–deha. Bhāva–deha* is the spiritual body, made of *śuddha–sattva. Śuddha–sattva* is the combination of the three aspects of the *svarūpa–śakti* or Intrinsic Potency of Bhagavān — *sandhinī*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī*, corresponding to the three ingredients of His Selfhood, namely *sat*, *cit*, and *ānanda. hlādinī* is the *śakti* that causes bliss. It includes within itself *saṁvit śakti*, which causes knowledge and *sandhini–śakti*, which makes for the existence of things. Just as *hlādinī* includes *saṁvit*, *saṁvit* includes *saṁdhinī*. The inclusion of *saṁdhinī* in *saṁvit* implies that in *cit–jagat* or the transcendental world thought implies existence, in other words one has only to think of a thing to make it exist. Therefore the *sevā* or the service rendered by the *sādhaka* to the deity in contemplation through his *siddha–deha* in the transcendental world is

far more satisfying to Him than the service rendered by him on the phenomenal plane.

But in order to attain the qualification for that kind service, which implies the attainment of *siddha–deha,* life of strict spiritual discipline, involving *vairāgya* and uninterrupted *bhajana,* such as Sanātana Gosvāmī was leading, was necessary. That would not have been possible, if he spent his time and energy in catering to the wishes of Madana Gopāla. He had to limit his service of Madana Gopāla on the mundane plane in order that he might render higher and more satisfying service on the transcendental plane.

Besides Sanātana was asked by Mahāprabhu, in his role as *jagat–guru*, to set up the highest ideal of *vairāgya*. Was it not incumbent on his part to ignore the wish of his *iṣṭa* in order to fulfil the command of the *iṣṭa* in the form of the guru?

The truth is that Madana Gopāla knew Sanātana's limitations and relished whatever he offered, because he offered it lovingly. Still He put forth His demand, because He loves to tease and tickle His devotees and watch their reaction, and relishes it all the more, if the reaction is unpleasant.

Ṭhākura Madana Gopāla builds His own Temple

Now as desired by Sanātana, Madana Gopāla had to make His own arrangements for service. He was waiting for a suitable opportunity. One day Rāma Dāsa Kapoor, a big merchant of Punjab was going somewhere on a boat through Yamunā. The boat was loaded with valuable materials, which he had to sell somewhere. When the boat reached Ādityatīlā, it got stuck up in a mound of sand inside the river and tilted on one side.

The boat man tried very much to pull it out, but could not. The merchant looked all round to see if there was some one, who could help, but not even a sign or shadow of a man was seen. The situation was full of anxiety, because the place was infested by robbers and night was approaching. If they came to know about the boat, they could swoop down upon it. As the day darkened the clouds of despair and despondency hovering over the merchant also darkened. Accidently he saw the thin flame of a lamp burning on the top of the *tilā* (mound) near the river. That appeared to him like a silver lining in the clouds. Hurriedly he went up the *tilā.* He saw a small cottage with the beautiful image of Madana Gopāla and a *mahātmā* seated in front in meditation. The sight breathed hope in his heart. He fell at the feet of the *mahātmā*, grievously narrated to him the story of his plight and said prayerfully, "I am confident that you can help me out of the miserable situation in which I am and which threatens to ruin my life. If by your grace the boat comes out safe, I promise that the entire profit I make in my business this time I shall spend in the service of your Ṭhākura."

Sanātana Gosvāmī looked at Madana Gopāla smilingly and said in reply, "Do not worry. Madana Gopāla has heard your prayer and will soon show mercy on you."

Rāma Dāsa came down with the blessings of Sanātana Gosvāmī. He had hardly reached the boat when he saw that a new current had come from somewhere and gone past the boat, releasing and setting it well on the right path.

The profit Rāma Dāsa made in business that year was unbelievably large. He came back and offered the whole of it to Madana Gopāla. A magnificent temple

was built with a *nātyaśālā*[1] and a suitable altar, on which Madana Gopāla sat right royally like *tīrtharāja*[2] to give *darśana* to the pilgrims. Extensive land was also purchased, from the income of which adequate arrangements for the service of Madana Gopāla were made[3]. Rāma Dāsa and his wife took initiation from Sanātana Gosvāmī and were blest.

After some time the image of Rādhā was installed by the side of Madana Gopāla[4]. He was then called "Rādha–Madana Mohana" or "Madana Mohana."[5]

In his passion for the loving service of Madana Gopāla Sanātana forgot all about the responsibilities entrusted to him by Mahāprabhu. Some time later, when Mahāprabhu's words again rang in his ears, he lay prostrate before Madana Gopāla with tearful eyes and said, "Ṭhākura! Now give me leave so that I may follow the path of *vairāgya* and *bhajana* and attend to the duties assigned to me by Mahāprabhu."

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1 A hall or theatre for music and dance.

2 King of a holy place.

3 Mahāprabhu had asked Sanātana to install *vigrahas* and make temples. It was perhaps for this reason that He deliberately provoked Madana Gopāla to make His own arrangements, which He did.

4 At the time of Kavirāja Gosvāmī Madana Gopāla was known by his old name as well as new. This is apparent from the following lines of *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta*, in which both the names are mentioned:

Eī grantha lekhāya more Madanamohana
āmāra lekhana jeno śukera paṭhana
śeī likhi, Madana Gopāla ye likhāya
kāṣṭhera putalī jeno kuhuke nācayā"
(*C.C.*, 1, 8, 73-74)

5 According to *Bhaktiratnākara* Puruśottama Jānā, the son of Mahāraja Pratāparudra of Orissa, sent two Rādhā–images to be installed by the side of Madana Gopāla and Govinda Deva. But according to a message received in dream the smaller of the two images was installed on the left of Madana Gopāla as Rādhā and the bigger on His right as Lalitā.

He entrusted the service of Madana Gopāla to Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Brahmacārī and went elsewhere. He lived sometimes in Govardhana, sometimes in the forests of Gokula and sometimes in Rādhākuṅda or Nandagrāma under a tree or in a hut made of leaves and straw and spent all his time in *bhajana* and in the performance of the various duties assigned to him by Mahāprabhu. But occasionally he went to Vṛndāvana to see Madana Gopāla and supervise the arrangements for His service. His *bhajana-kutī* behind the old temple of Madana Mohana can be seen even today.

Madana Gopāla Tricks Sanātana

Though Sanātana had come away from Vṛndāvana, leaving Madana Gopāla to the care of Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Brahmacārī, Madana Gopāla had not left him. He was always with him and took care of him. While Sanātana lived in Nandagrāma[1] his absorption in *līlā-smaraṇa*[2] was so deep that he often forgot to take food. There was no question of his going out for *mādhukarī*. He only took some milk, which Vrajavāsīs brought for him.

Once, as providence would have it, no one brought him milk for three days. On the fourth day came a cowherd boy with milk in a *loṭā*[3] and said, "Bābā, my mother has sent this milk for you. Please take it." He was entranced by his sweet voice, charming face, black, curly hair hanging over his cheeks and the red turban over his head. He kept looking at him like one under a spell. In

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1 The *kuti* in which he practised *bhajana* in Nandagrām also can be seen today.

2 Contemplation of divine *līlā*.

3 A small metallic vessel.

order to make him stay longer, he went on asking questions, "Lālā[1], where do you live? What is the name of your parents? How many brothers are you?" and so on. The boy told the name of his parents, gave his address and said, "We are four brothers. I am the youngest."

The boy gave milk and went. Sanātana Gosvāmī felt that he had come to steal his heart and had run away with it. When he drank the milk he was stupefied by its supernatural taste and smell. In a moment his trance was broken and he began to see in the image of the boy the image of his own Madana Gopāla. He felt intrigued. Still he went to the place where He had said He lived and enquired about Him and His parents, but in vain[2].

Jesting with Jagadānaṅda

There is an interesting episode to show that though Sanātana Gosvāmī was solemn and grave, he was not without a sense of humour.

Jagadānaṅda had come from Nīlācala. One day he invited Sanātana Gosvāmī for *mahāprasāda*. Before going Sanātana tied a piece of orange coloured cloth round his head. On seeing that cloth Jagadānaṅda was transported with joy because he thought that it was the *prasādī* [3] of Mahāprabhu. He said, "Where did you get this *prasādī* from?"

"From Mukuṅda Sarasvatī."

"From whom?!"

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1 Term of endearment for boys in the language of Vraja.

2 The story is given by Priyā Dāsa in his commentary of *Bhaktamāla*.

3 Anything used by the deity or a Vaiṣṇava is called *prasādī*, and it is regarded as sacred.

"Mukuṅda Sarasvatī."

"Mukuṅda Sarasvatī! Another *sannyāsi's* cloth on your head!" As Jagadānaṅda said this, in a fit of rage, he picked up the pot containing rice and wanted to hurl it upon Sanātana's head.

Sanātana stood smiling unmoved. When Jagadānaṅda saw Sanātana smiling, he understood that there was some mistery behind the cloth. He desisted from hitting Sanātana.

Sanātana said, "Pandita Jī! This is called *Caitanya-niṣṭha*[1]. It was to see this that I enacted this drama."

Jagadānaṅda's anger subsided. He embraced Sanātana and said, "This kind of joke is not good Sanātana."

Then both sat down to eat. As they ate they talked. They talked of Mahāprabhu and shed tears of love.

Mercy of Rādhārānī

Rūpa Gosvāmī used to do *bhajana* in a *kutī*[2] in Kadambaṭera near Nandagrāma. He began to think that he had been doing *bhajana* for so many years and entreating Rādhārānī to give him *darśana,* but she had not shown mercy on him. He was so much overpowered by a mood of despondency and grief that he stopped food and drink and did not go for *mādhukarī*. Two days passed like this. The third day he got the message that Sanātana Gosvāmī was coming to see him. He thought if he had milk and rice and sugar he could prepare *khīra*[3] to entertain him. But it was not his wont to ask

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1 Exclusive devotion towards Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

2 The *kutī* exists even today

3 A food made of rice, milk and sugar.

for any particular thing from any one. He was also not going for *mādhukarī*. So there was no possibility of fortune favouring him with these things by chance.

Rādhārānī's heart was already agitated to see that Rūpa Gosvāmī was fasting. She now thought she could serve both Rūpa and Sanātana by a single act of mercy. She went herself to Rūpa Gosvāmī in the guise of a girl of Vraja with milk, rice and sugar to persuade him to prepare *khīra* and eat.[1]

When Sanātana Gosvāmī ate the *khīra* he was intrigued by its supernatural taste and odour. He asked Rūpa where from he got the milk and the other materials for the *khīra*. On Rūpa's narrating the whole story Sanātana said, "Rūpa, you put Rādhārānī to trouble by fasting and by desiring to entertain me with *khīra*. The devotee should not desire anything or fast. If he does the *iṣṭa* feels pained. He has himself to take the trouble of fulfilling his desire."[2]

There is another episode to show how merciful Rādhārānī was towards Sanātana. Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote *Cāṭupuṣpāñjali*. In its first *śloka* he compared the *veṇī* [3] of Rādhārānī's with a *nāgina*[4]. Sanātana did not like this. He thought it was like comparing nectar with poison, because Rādhārānī hair also were, like her body, made of *sat–cit–ānanda* and *mahābhāva*.

The same day when he was returning to his *kutī* after *mādhukarī* he saw near Rādhāsara[5] a swing

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1 Priyādāsa: *Commentary on Bhaktāmala,* 356

2 This episode is described in detail in the chapter on Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.

3 Tail of hair

4 A female snake with a hood

5 The name of a pond

suspended to a tree, on which a girl radiant like lightning was swinging and her *sakhis* were pushing the swing to make it sway back and forth. Suddenly Sanātana Gosvāmī saw her back and shrieked, "Lālī! snake, snake on your back!" and ran to remove the snake. As he ran the girl smiled and disappeared with her *sakhis*.

Sanātana understood that the girl was no other than Rādhārānī Herself, who had appeared before him to make him understand that Rūpa had correctly compared Her *veṇī* to a snake. He could not forget the charming and intoxicating beauty of the *veṇī*, which flashed upon his mind moment after moment and made him lose consciousness. He could not help thinking how the sight of *veṇī* must be acting upon Kṛṣṇa like the bite of a poisonous snake and making him restless.

Immediately he went to Rūpa Gosvāmī, expressed regret for his mistake and said, "Rūpa! you are blest. You have all the blessings of Rādhārānī. There is not the slightest touch of imagination or fancy in what you write. You write what you see.[1]"

The Conversion of Jīvana Ṭhākura

Sanātana Gosvāmī's *vairāgya* was proverbial. Connected with it is the story of Jīvana Ṭhākura of village Mānakaḍa of district Vardhamāna. Jīvana Ṭhākura was a very religious person. But he had spent all his life fighting against poverty. He was not able to fight in his old age. In desperation he went to Kāśī and prayed to Lord Viśvanātha (Śiva) "Bābā! now have mercy

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1 *Bhaktiratnākara,* 5,754-765.
Priyā Dāsa also mentions this episode in his commentary on *Bhaktamala.*
–*Bhaktirasabodhinī,* 363

upon me, so that I do not have to face poverty any more."

Śiva responded to his prayer. He said to him in a dream, "You go to Vraja and seek shelter under the feet of Sanātana. He will remove your poverty."

Jīvana Ṭhākura went to Vraja. He met Sanātana Gosvāmī and told him about his poverty and the command of Śiva. Sanātana was surprised. He said to himself, "I am myself a destitute. How can I remove anyone's poverty. Śiva knows this. Why then has he sent Jīvana Ṭhākura to me?"

Suddenly flashed before his mind an old episode. Once while he was walking along the bank of Yamunā, his foot struck against a touchstone. Regarding the touchstone as an obstacle in *bhajana*, he wanted to throw it into Yamunā. But he thought it might be of use to some one in need. So he concealed it somewhere. He pointed out that place to Jīvana Ṭhākura and said, "You take the touchstone from there. Your poverty will disappear."

There was no end to Jīvana Ṭhākura's happiness on getting the touchstone. "Oh! I am now the richest man on Earth. Even the kings will be jealous of me."

As he was walking along the bank of Yamunā with the touchstone firmly tied to a corner of his garment, he was swimming in a pool of happiness and his heart was filled with a sense of gratitude towards Lord Śiva and Sanātana Gosvāmī. Suddenly a new current crossed his mind:

"What could be the reason for Sanātana Gosvāmī's total indifference towards the treasure, for which I came running all the way from Kāśī and which even the kings covet? He threw it away and forgot all about it, as if it was as useless as a piece of rag. Obviously he is the owner of a treasure in comparison with which even

the most precious thing of this world pales into insignificance. Yes, it is therefore that he renounced all the power and pelf that goes with the high office of prime minister of Bengal. Is it not a pity that I cling to the very thing, which he spurned and cast away as an irksome trifle? Woe be to me and my greediness! Since by the mercy of Bābā Viśvanātha I have found a *mahāpuruṣa* like Sanātana Gosvāmī, why should I not try to obtain from him the very treasure, which makes him so happy and self–satisfied that he spurns the highest treasure the world can provide.

A moment's company of Sanātana Gosvāmī brought about a total and unprecedented change in the life of Jīvana Ṭhākura. The very stone, which a little while ago had breathed new life in him, began to bite him like a scorpion. He threw it away into the Yamunā and felt relieved. Then he went to Sanātana Gosvāmī, fell at his feet and said grievously and prayerfully, "Prabhu! By your mercy my ignorance is gone. Now instead of any worldly treasure give me a bit of the treasure you own yourself. I surrender myself completely at your feet."

Jīvana Ṭhākura took initiation from Sanātana Gosvāmī and began a new chapter in his life. Walking on the footsteps of Sanātana Gosvāmī he earned the treasure he desired.

Sanātana Gosvāmī and Emperor Akbar

Writing about the Gauḍiya Gosvāmins of Vṛndāvana Growse says:

"Their fame spread so rapidly that in 1573 the Emperor Akbar was induced to pay them a visit and was taken blind–fold into the sacred enclosure of Vṛndāvana where such a marvellous vision was revealed

to him that he was bound to acknowledge the place as indeed holy ground.

"The four temples, commenced in honour of this event, still remain, though in a ruinous and hitherto neglected condition. They bear the titles of Govinda Deva, Gopīnātha, Jugala Kishora and Madana Mohana."[1]

Dr. Rādhāgovinda Natha has written on the basis of the above that Akbar met Sanātana in 1572. This can be accepted only if it is proved that Sanātana lived till or beyond 1572. Dr. Rādhāgovinda Natha writes that he lived till 1591.[2]

Dr. D.C. Sen also writes the same.[3] If this view is accepted the length of Sanātana's life would be 120 or 125 years. This is not impossible.[4] But there are reasons to believe that he did not live long after 1554. If he did he must have written something after 1554. His last work is *Vṛhadvaiṣṇavatoṣini,* which he wrote in 1554.

If Sanātana lived upto 1591, Rūpa also must have lived up to 1591, because it is well known that he passed away only a month after Sanātana. Rūpa Gosvāmī also did not write anything after 1554. It is unbelievable that the two brothers, who devoted all their life to the writing of books and other works entrusted to them by Mahāprabhu, should have suddenly decided to lay down their pens and not write anything for 37 long years. There is a *śloka* in Jīva Gosvāmī's *Mādhava*

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1 *District Memoir of Mathura,* 3rd Ed. p. 241

2 *Caitanya Caritamṛta, Bhūmikā,* p. 26

3 *The Vaiṣṇava Literature of Medieval Bengal,* p. 39

4 Some devotees in Vraja have lived even longer. See author's *"The Saints of Vraja"*

Mahotsava[1], in which he mentions about the passing away of Sanātana. *Mādhava Mahotsava* was written in 1555. It is therefore, clear that he passed away in 1554-1555.

Growse does not write that Akbar met Sanātana. He only says that he met the Gauḍīya Gosvāmins. This may mean that he met Lokanātha Gosvāmī, Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī, who were present at the time. Sanātana's name may have been joined with the visit of Akbar, because he was the most famous of the Gauḍīya Gosvāmīns.[2]

Even if it be accepted that Sanātana Gosvāmī lived upto 1573 and Akbar met him, it can not be believed that he made Akbar see the Celestial Vṛndavāvana, which is implied in what Growse has written. For according to the *bhakti–śāstras* the vision of Celestial Vṛndāvana can be had only through spiritual eyes or the eyes of *prema*, which Akbar did not possess. It may be contended that Sanātana could give him the spiritual eye. If Sanātana had done so, a total change would have immediately come upon him, which did not.

Vraja–Parikramā (circumambulation of Vraja)

After the disappearence of Mahāprabhu in 1533 many devotees began to come from Bengal and Orissa and live in Vṛndāvana. With their arrival the work of preaching the Vaiṣṇava religion gained fresh momentum. Sanātana Gosvāmī started the practice of circumambulating Vraja. Every year he made a journey of 84 *krośa*,

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1 *Mādhava Mahotsava,* 1,3.

2 Haridāsa Dāsa: *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sāhitya, Pariśiṣta,* p. 10.

circumambulating Vraja with a large party of Vaiṣṇavas. His main purpose was to preach *bhakti* in the villages of Vraja.

Since he was famous as an ideal Vaiṣṇava, a great *pandita* and a special favourite of Madana Gopāla and was recognized as the leader of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community in Vraja, his arrival in every village was regarded as a great event and was celebrated with great eclat and enthusiasm. The villagers had his *darśana* and listened to his discourses and were blest.

His attractive personality and sweet words and behaviour won their hearts and they felt like being sold out to him for ever and ever. Thus he marched from village to village like a victorious Mahārājā, capturing the hearts of people and extending his empire from one place to another.

The practice started by Sanātana Gosvāmī continues in the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava society even today.

Revival of the Bhāgavata Religion

Sanātana Gosvāmī applied himself with assiduity and concentration to the task of collecting the old *bhakti–śāstras* and compiling new ones. He wrote several works of clasical importance on *bhakti*. Slowly besides Rūpa Gosvāmī, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Raghunātha Dāsa, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa and Jīva Gosvāmī also joined him. Many other works were written by them under his supervision. Thus he not only revived the Vaiṣṇava religion, but made its foundations secure for all times.

This was by no means an easy task, because most people, specially in Bengal, were *śāktas* and they not only scorned the *bhakti* movement started by Mahāprabhu, but regarded it as contrary to the *śāstras*.

Mahāprabhu knew that it was necessary for the success of His *bhakti* movement to defeat in

śāstrārtha[1] His topmost adversaries, who rejected His movement on the basis of *śāstras*. He also knew that a religion based merely on *bhāva–bhakti* would not last long, if its foundation was not securely laid on the *śāstras* and reason. The first of these tasks was performed by himself by defeating the topmost religious leaders like Sārvabhauma Bhattācārya and Prakāśānanda Śarasvatī. The second he entrusted to his erudite and talented followers like Rūpa and Sanātana. He educated and disciplined them in the Bhāgavata religion or the religion of pure *bhakti* and asked them to write books on it, supporting everything they wrote by quotations from the *śāstras*, particulary from *Śrīmad Bhāg-avatam*, which he regarded as Vyāsadeva's own commentary on his *Brahma–sūtra* and the essence of the Vedas.

The fact is that Mahāprabhu did not inculcate any new religious doctrine. He regarded the religion of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* itself as his own religion.[2]

Sanātana strictly followed the line of Mahāprabhu and made others do the same. It was incumbent on others to show whatever they wrote to Sanātana and get it approved by him. Without his approval the work was not regarded as authoritative.

The Passing away

Mahāprabhu had said to Sanātana *"tomāra sarīra more pradhāna sādhana* — Your body is the primary means for the fulfilment of my purpose."

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1 Disputation based on *śāstras*.

2 *bhāgavate kahe mora tattva abhimata* (C.C. 2. 21. 17)

His purpose was now fulfilled. Sanātana had become too old. He decided to pass the remaining part of his life in exclusive *bhajana* in solitude. He began to do *bhajana* under a tree on the bank of Mānasa–gaṅgā, near the temple of Cakreśvara Mahādeva in Govardhana. He withdrew his mind completely from the world, so much so that he forgot even to eat and sometimes remained without food for days together. He slept hardly for an hour or two. Day and night he was lost in the sweet contemplation of the *līlā* of Rādhā–Govinda.

Once he remained in this state without food and drink for a number of days. Madana Gopāla could not bear this. He came to him in the guise of a herd–boy and said, "Bābā! you are here. No one knows you are here. I chanced to come this side, pasturing the cows and saw you. I have brought a pot of milk for you. Please drink. I shall take away the pot later."[1] *Further he added, "We Vrajavasīs feel much agrieved to see you living like this under a tree. Why not for the sake of our happiness live in a cottage?*[2] "

Madana Gopāla sat in the hearts of the Vrajavāsīs and inspired them to make a *kutī* for Sanātana. On their insistance he began to live in it. At that time Sanātana's face radiated with the light of supreme satisfaction that comes when the purpose of life is fulfilled, all the problems are solved, all the secrets are revealed and

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1 *āchaha nirjane tomā keho nahi jāne*
dekhitlāma tomāre āsiyā gocārane
aī dugdha pān kara āmāra kathāye
laiyā jaibo bhānda rākhīyo ethāye
(*Bh. R.* 5, 1305-1306)

2 *kutīre rahile mo sabhāra sukha habe*
aiche raha nahile vrajavāsī dukha pābe
(*Bh. R.* 5, 1307)

the truth is finally known. In the effulgence of that light he sat in a corner of his *kutī,* concealing the treasure of his learning and the hight of spiritual attainment under the cover of humility like an unlettered destitute, who neither knew nor owned anything.

Even then people came from far off places to see this god in the guise of a man. *Panditas* and philosophers came with their problems to find their solutions, *sādhakas* came to seek guidance and those who wanted to traverse the path of *bhakti*, came to surrender at his feet and be initiated. All returned satisfied and blest.

It was Sanātana Gosvāmī's practice to circumambulate Govardhana every day. He observed it strictly as a rule of spiritual discipline he had imposed upon himself. He was now 90 years old and it was difficult for him to circumambulate. Still he did it.

Once he fell down while circumambulating. A herd–boy lifted him and said, "Bābā, you are now old. It is not possible for you to walk seven *krośa* everyday, circumambulating Govardhana. Give up the practice."

The soft touch of the boy produced tremor and horripilation in his body. His sweet words kept ringing in his ears. But he did not pay heed to them.

Once again Sanātana Gosvāmī staggered and fell on the *parikramā–mārga*[1]. The same boy met and lifted him and said, "Bābā, you do not listen. Even though old you do not give up *parikramā*. Ṭhākura is won over by love, not by toil."

Even then Bābā continued *parikramā*. But he found himself in a predicament. The boy's image was so firmly printed upon his mind that he could not forget it even

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1 The path of circumambulation.

for a moment. Even when he sat down for meditation the image came up in his mind and stayed much against his will.

One day, when he was lost in contemplation a new thought came to him. He began to think "This Vrajabāsī boy is so powerful that he can oust even my *iṣṭa* from my mind and take complete possession of me, who has renounced all his kith and kin and everything worldly and whose *vairagya* has never faltered or wavered! No, this cannot be an ordinary boy. Then is it my Lord Madana Gopāla Himself, Who has been appearing before me in the guise of this boy? If I find Him again I shall not let Him go without knowing the secret."

By chance the boy met him again on the *parikramā –mārga* one day and began to insist on his leaving the *parikramā*. Sanātana Gosvāmī held his feet and, resting his head over them, said in a painful voice, "My Lord! Do not trick me any more. Appear in Your real form and let me know what I should do. Girirāja is my life and soul, so is the *parikramā* of Girirāja. How can I leave the *parikramā* so long as I am alive?"

The Lord was pleased with his devotion. But he could not bear his exertion in *parikramā*. He must remove his exertion without stopping the *parikramā*.

As Sanātana raised his head to listen to His reply, he saw that instead of the boy Madana Gopāla stood before him. His right foot was placed on a *Govardhana–śilā*[1] and He stood with a smile on His face and mercy in His eyes. He said in a tender voice, "Sanātana, it

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1 Slab of stone.

pains me very much to see you tottering and staggering and falling on the *parikramā–mārga* again and again. If you do not want to give up *Girirāja–parikramā*, do the *parikramā* of this *Girirāja–śilā*. This is my foot print on it. Your *parikramā* of this *śilā* will amount to the *parikramā* of Girirāja."

Madana Gopāla disappeared. Sanātana Gosvāmī brought the *śilā* over his head to his *kutī*. He bathed it with holy water and began to circumambulate it every day.

During his last days Sanātana Gosvāmī would sit before the *Girirāja–śilā*? and be lost in *japa* and meditation. His mental attitude used to be somewhat like this:

"*nābhinandāmi maranaṁ nābhinandāmi jīvitaṁ*
kālameva pratīkṣeahaṁ nideśaṁ bhṛtiko yathā

— My Lord! I desire neither to live nor to die. I await Your command even as the servant awaits the command of his master."

In this state the dividing line between life and death is obliterated. The devotee can at any time, either of his own or at the bidding of his *iṣṭa,* leave his body and go with Him to His Dhāma.

One day Sanātana Gosvāmī, sitting before the *śilā*, was circumambulating Girirāja in *smaṛaṇa*. Suddenly his face became radiant with the gloss of a supernatural effulgence and the *sāttvika bhāvas* appeared all over his body. In a few moments he entered into *samādhi,* his eyes became fixed and body motionless. On the *parikramā–mārga* he met Giridhārī, Who wanted to take him somewhere along with Him. But Sanātana tarried. Giridhārī understood his mind. He then appeared before him in the form of the twin divinities of his heart— Rādhā and Madana Mohana. He surrendered himself at Their feet, left the physical body and followed Them in

his spiritual *manjarī–deha* to the Eternal Nikuñja to serve Them in their eternal pastimes of love, pastimes that are pure, sublime, ecstasizing and nectarean.

The day when this happened was the Pūrṇimā (full–moon–day) of the month of Āsāḍha, 1554. Clouds of sorrow and bereavement gathered over the whole of Vraja. Sanātana Gosvāmī's body was laid in *samādhi* in the precincts of the temple of Madana Mohana in Vṛndāvana amidst tearful tributes of love offered by thousands of *mahātmās, sādhūs* and Vrajavāsīs.

Sanātana Gosvāmī was the acknowledged leader of the entire Vaiṣṇava community of Vraja. Everyone revered him as his father. Therefore everyone on that day mourned his disappearance by shaving his head. Āsāḍhi Pūrṇimā became known as Muḍiyā Pūrṇimā (Pūrṇimā on which the heads were shaved)[1]. Sanātana Gosvāmī was intensely devoted to Girirāja and circumambulated Girirāja till the end. Therefore everyone on that day circumanbulated Girirāja. Ever since then the practice of circumambulating Girirāja on Muḍiyā Pūrṇimā has been going on. The crowd of people circumambulating Girirāja on that day is so large that it becomes impos- sible for the authorities to manage it.

Sanātana Gosvāmī's Works.

There are four works of Sanātana Gosvāmī, whose authorship is undisputed, because they are clearly attributed to him by Jīva Gosvāmī at the end of *Laghutoṣaṇī,* by Sri Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in *Caitanya–*

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1 Even today Āsāḍhi Pūrṇimā is called Muḍiyā Pūrṇimā all over Vraja.

Caritāmṛta[1], and by Narahari Cakravartī in *Bhakti-ratnākara*[2]. They are:

1. *Digdarśanī* commentary on *Haribhaktivilāsa*
2. *Vṛhat-vaiṣṇava-toṣanī* commentary on the tenth chapter of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*
3. *Līlāstava*, and
4. *Vṛhatbhāgavatāmṛta*.

Digdarśanī Commentary on *Haribhaktivilāsa*

Haribhaktivilāsa is exhaustive compendium of Vaiṣṇava Ācāra and the entire body of rituals and devotional practices of the Vaiṣṇavas, duly supported by the *śāstras*. It was completed by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, as mentioned in the first *śloka* of the work. Also at the end of each chapter Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's name is given as its author. But Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja[3] and Narahari Cakravartī[4] have stated that it is the work of Sanātana.

Dr. D. C. Sen has tried to reconcile the two views by stating that the real author of the work is Sanātana, but because he was an out-caste on account of his association with the Mohammedans, there was very little chance of its being accepted by everyone. He, therefore, gave the name of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, who came of a famous and highly respected Brahmin family of the South, as its author.[5]

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 1, 30-31

2 *Bh. R.*, 1, 806-808

3 *C.C.*, 2, 1, 30-31

4 *Bh. R.*, 1, 606-608.

5 Dr. D.C. Sen: *The Vaiṣṇava Literature of Medieval Bengal*, pp 37-38

There is no evidence to prove that Sanātana Gosvāmī was an out caste. It is true, however, that out of humility he regarded himself as untouchable, because he had been the prime–minister of a Mohammedan ruler. It is not unlikely, therefore, that he might have himself compiled *Hari–bhakti–vilāsa* and given the name of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa as its author. Narahari Cakravartī has clearly written that he wrote it in the name of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa:

gopālera nāme śrī gosvāmī sanātana ।
karilā śrī haribhaktivilāsa varṇana ॥

(*Bh. R.*, 1, 198)

The correct view, however, seems to be that Sanātana Gosvāmī wrote a small Vaiṣṇava–*smṛti* and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa enlarged it into *Haribhaktivilāsa*. There are two things that lend support to this view. One is that hand–written copies of a work of Sanātana Gosvāmī titled *Laghu–hari–bhakti–vilāsa* are found in the Govinda–granthāgāra at Jaipur and in Varendrānusandhāna Samiti at Rajashāhī. The other is that at the end of each *vilāsa* or chapter of *Hari–bhakti–vilāsa* is written *"Gopāla Bhaṭṭa vilikhita". 'Vilikhita'* means "written in detail". If Gopāla Bhaṭṭa were its original writer he would have written *'likhita'* and not *'vilikhita'*.

This view is also supported by the following lines of *Anurāgavallī* of Manohara Dāsa:

śri sanātana gosvāmī grantha karila ।
sarvatra ābhoga bhaṭṭa gosāiñ dila ॥

There is, however, no dispute regarding Sanātana Gosvāmī's *digdarśanī* commentary of *Hari–bhakti–vilāsa*. It is difficult to determine the exact date of the work. But it is certain that it was written before 1541, because

it is mentioned in *Bhaktirasāmṛta–sindhu* of Rūpa Gosvāmī, which was compiled in 1541.

Vṛhadvaiṣṇava–toṣanī

Vṛhadvaiṣṇava–toṣanī is Sanātana Gosvāmī's commentary on the tenth *skanda* of *Śrimād Bhāgavatam.* In the beginning of the commentary he has written that he has clarified everything in it that was not clear in the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī. But the fact is that he has dealt in detail with each topic and dealt so beautifully that his commentary excels in excellence the commentaries of all the ancient commentators. The reason is that he has emphasised the *mādhurya* of Kṛṣṇa much more than His *aiśvarya,* which no ancient commentator has done.

Jīva Gosvāmī brought out an abridged edition of *Vṛhadvaiṣṇava–toṣanī,* which is called *Laghu–toṣaṇī.* At the end of *Laghu–toṣaṇī* he has given śakābda 1476 or 1554 A.D. as the date of compilation of *Vṛhadvaiṣṇava–toṣanī,* which makes it clear that Sanātana was very old when he wrote this and that he passed away the very year in which it was completed.

Līlāstava

Jīva Gosvāmī mentions a work of Sanātana titled *Līlāstava.* Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāja mentions a work titled *Daśama–Carita.*[1] Narahari Cakravartī clarifies that this is only another name of *Līlāstava*[2]. The work is now lost.

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1 *C.C.,* 2, 1, 30

2 *Bh. R.,* 1, 807-808

Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta

Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta is unique. In this work Sanātanā Gosvāmī has churned the limitless ocean of the *bhakti–śāstras* and presented their essence in the simplest and the most attractive form. It is also the description of his developing spiritual experience, including the experience of the highest *rasa,* expressed through stories that easily capture our heart. Atulakṛṣṇa Gosvāmī has written: "If you want to read a book that presents the essence of the Vaiṣṇava–*dharma*, lays down the easiest way of *sādhana–bhajana*, describes in an attractive manner all the different *avatāras* and the different *lokas* and leads to the attainment of the Lotus Feet of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa, there is only one work that I can confidently recommend and that is *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta*[1] "

The work is divided into two parts. The hero in the first part is Nārada. Nārada goes out in quest of the greatest *bhakta* and favourite of God. He first goes to a Brahmin of Prayāga and hails him as the greatest *bhakta* of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Brahmin says that he does not deserve the honour and directs him to a certain prince of the South, who, he says, is a great favourite of Kṛṣṇa. The prince in turn sends him to Indra, who, according to him, is the highest devotee. In this way the quest goes on. Indra sends him to Brahmā, Brahmā to Śiva, Śiva to Prahlāda, Prahlāda to Hanumāna, Hanumāna to the Pāṇḍavas, the Pāṇḍavas to the Yādavās, Yādāvas to Uddhava. Uddhava, however, points out to the *gopas* and *gopis* of Vṛndāvana as the greatest favourites of Kṛṣṇa. The *gopis* finally direct him

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1 Quoted by Satishachandra Mittra in Sapta Gosvami, p.125.

to Rādhā, the highest *bhakta* and favourite of Kṛṣṇa. He goes to Rādhā and there his quest ends. At each stage the devotee sending Nārada to a higher devotee eulogises the higher devotee and in this way the characteristics of the devotees at different stages of *bhakti* are brought out.

The hero in the second part is an inhabitant of Govardhana, whose name is Gopakumāra. His guru is Jayanta, a Brahmin born on the bank of Gangā in Gauḍa. Jayanta is an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa and a worshipper of Kṛṣṇa. It is the definite view of some scholars that Sanātana has used the name of Jayanta for Mahāprabhu and Gopakumāra for himself.[1] Just as the first part describes Narada's quest for the greatest *bhakta*, the second part describes Gopakumara's quest for the most perfect form of Kṛṣṇa or rather for the place and form, in which Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself most perfectly to the *bhakta*. It is believed that through this narrative Sanātana describes his own spiritual experiences. Gopakumāra is directed by his guru to go to Purī. From Purī he goes to Mathurā. He always repeats the *mantra* of ten syllables given to him by the guru. The *mantra* on account of its inconceivable power takes him to *svargaloka, marloka, tapoloka* and *satyaloka.* In this journey he first becomes a king. Then he attains the position of Indra and then of Brahmā. But he is not satisfied by the granduer of these *lokas* and positions. Therefore he returns to Mathurā, but he continues to repeat the *mantra*. In course of time he begins to feel that his physical body has become spiritual. With the spiritual body he goes gradually to Śivaloka, Vaikuṇṭha,

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1 Jānā: Chaya Gosvāmī,p.73.

Ayodhyā, Dvārakā and Goloka. By means of this narrative Sanātana Gosvāmī presents a beautiful description of each *loka*, the *Bhagavat–svarūpa* (the form of the lord) that governs it and the kind of happiness the devotee enjoys in His proximity. All these *lokas* are very attractive and blissful. But they do not satisfy Gopakumāra. He continues to repeat the *mantra* and prays to the Lord of each *loka* to bless him so that he may attain the lotus feet of Madana Gopāla in Goloka. In Goloka both Gopakumāra and Madana Gopāla are lost in ecstasy to find each other. Gopakumāra enters the *nitya–līlā* of Madana Gopāla.

Essentials of the highest–truth Revealed by *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta.*

Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta is the result of Sanātana's life–long study of *śāstras* and *sādhanā*, combined with his highest spiritual experiences. It aims at revealing the innermost secrets regarding the nature of the Lord as Love and the easiest way to attain Him. There are two important secrets he reveals regarding the nature of the Lord:

1. The essence of His highest form is *mādhurya* or sweetness.
2. His love for His devotees and dependence on them is absolute.

The Lord's Mādhurya

Bhagavān in His highest and most perfect form is unaware that He is Bhagavān. He has the conceit of a cowherd, Who is the son of Nanda, and is always in the prime of His youth. The lustre of His body is blue. He wears a peacock feather as His crown, holds a flute in His hand and is gay and sportive. His form and

colour, dance and music, deportment and demeanour, gaze and glance, speech and silence, sport and fun, smile and laughter everything is sweet beyond description. He is sweetness personified.

In His various forms *aiśvarya* (lordliness) and *mādhurya* (sweetness) are manifested in different degrees and proportion. The more the manifestation of *mādhurya*, the less the manifestacion of *aiśvarya*. In His highest form both *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya* are fully manifested. But *aiśvarya* is fully eclipsed by *mādhurya*. He is totally unaware of it. He plays freely with the other cowherd boys. He carries them on His shoulder, just as they carry Him on their shoulders. He eats their remnants, just as they eat His remnants.

He carries the shoes of Nanda Baba over His head. He is frightened when Yaśoda threatens to beat Him and weeps. All this is genuine behaviour, no acting. It would be acting, if He were aware of His lordliness or divinity. If He were aware of it, He would not experience the *rasa* (transcendental bliss) through which He realizes His essential nature as *rasa* and the words of *śruti* designating Him as such by saying *'raso vai sah'* would remain unsubstantiated.

The Lord's Love for His devotes.

Bhagavān is perfect in all respects, fully self–sufficient and self–satisfied. Still He yearns eagerly for the loving service of His devotees. The happiness He derives from their loving service is superior to the happiness inherent in His own Self.

Therefore He loves them more than He loves His own Self. Love by its very nature is incomplete and restless. The more love one has, the more one feels the want of it. Bhagavān's love is infinite. Therefore His

want and need of love are infinite. He wants infinitely to love and be loved. He enjoys loving and being loved by millions of His devotees, yet His thirst for love remains unsatiated. Therefore He is also anxious to inspire love in the hearts of those, who do not love Him, so that He may satisfy His ever increasing desire for love through them. This means that He is mercifully inclined even towards the people, who are averse to Him and He does their *bhajana*, even though they do not remember Him. This mystery is revealed when Gopakumāra meets Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha and Nārāyaṇa says to him, "Welcome! My child, welcome! I have been eternally anxious to meet you. It is a matter of great fortune to Me that I see you today. You passed through so many lives, but never turned towards Me. I was very much grieved to see your indifference. Therefore I transgressed My own rules of propriety and decorum and gave you birth in Govardhana and I Myself was born as your guru Jayanta. Then My heart was filled with the hope that you would turn towards Me and I began to dance with joy. You fulfilled My hope. Now live here eternally, so that both you and I are happy and blest."[1]

Gradual Development of *Mādhurya* and *Bhaktavātsalya*[2] in the Various Manifestations of Bhagavān.

Sanātana Gosvāmī has beautifully described in *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta* the gradual development of *bhak-*

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1 *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta*, 2, 4, 81-87.

2 Bhagavan's love for the devotees.

tavātsalya with the development of *mādhurya* in the different manifestations of Bhagavān.

Gopakumāra was a *sādhaka* of *sakhya–bhāva*[1]. He always repeated the *mantra* given to him by the Guru. The *mantra* had obliterated from his mind all feeling of awe and reverence towards Bhagavān. Therefore, when he went to Vaikuṇṭha there was an upheaval in his friendly sentiment on seeing Nārāyaṇa and he rushed towards His throne to embrace Him. The *pārṣadas* (companions) of Nārāyaṇa prevented him from doing so, since it was against the decorum of Vaikhuṇṭha and the dignity of Nārāyaṇa. Lord Nārāyaṇa was happy to meet him and welcomed him with sweet words. But He did not do anything to satisfy his friendly sentiment, free from all external restrictions of propriety and decorum. On the other hand, when the time of his luncheon arrived His *pārṣadas* on a mute gesture of Mahālakṣmī, cleverly took him out of His inner apartment.

Gopakumāra could not stay in Vaikuṇṭha. The *guru–mantra* he was always repeating took him to Ayodhyā, the *dhāma*, where Lord Rāma reigns. Rāma's behaviour towards Gopakumāra was more cordial. As soon as He saw Gopakumāra, he said, "Gopakumāra! Do not make obeisance to Me. You are My most intimate friend. The formalities of decorum need not come between you and Me, for they are irksome. I cannot bear anything that causes the least trouble to you. I am for ever sold out to you on account of your love for Me." Gopakumāra was very happy to hear this. But on account of the power of the *mantra* he saw the image of Madana Gopāla in every form of Bhagavān

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1 Friendly sentiment.

and expected the same kind of behaviour from Him, including hugging and kissing in exuberance of love. He found Rāma also wanting in it and felt sad. Rāma understood his *bhāva*. He thought that Dvarakā would suit him better. Therefore He sent him there.

In Dvārakā he met his *iṣṭa* Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He was so overwhelmed with joy to see His beautiful form as the king of Dvārakā that he fell senseless on the ground. Uddhava somehow brought him back to consciousness. Even then he was not able to contain his joy. On account of excessive joy he was not able to offer praise or make obeisance to Kṛṣṇa. He stood dumb and motionless like a statue.

Kṛṣṇa Himself moved towards him. But Uddhava stopped him. He pulled Gopakumāra towards Him and lay his head upon His feet. Kṛṣṇa caressingly passed His hand over his body and enquired about his welfare. Then He held him by the hand and took him inside near mother Devakī, Rohiṇī and sixteen thousand one hundred and eight queens. There He wanted to offer him food to eat. Therefore He took from his hand the flute, he was carrying with him. As soon as He held the flute in His hand, there was a change in His *bhāva*. Gopakumāra saw in Him the image of Madana Gopāla and became unconscious on account of ecstatic joy. Kṛṣṇa again caressed him and brought him back to consciousness with His kind words. He then fed him with His own hand. After He had fed He ate Himself.

Gopakumāra began to live in Dvārakā. The joy and happiness he experienced in Dvārakā was a thousand times superior to the happiness he had experienced in Vaikuṇṭha and Ayodhyā. He was specially happy because he lived in close proximity of his *iṣṭa,* Who was ever so kind and affectionate in His behaviour towards him. Still signs of a mysterious despondency were

visible on his face. The reason was that although Kṛṣṇa was so affectionately disposed towards him His behaviour was cramped on account of His *aiśvarya* and dignity as a king. He could not go with him for pasturing the cows or play freely with him like a cowherd. The atmosphere of Dvārakā was not congenial to hugging and kissing such as he always experienced automatically in his contemplation of Madana Gopāla.

One day Nārada Muni, who knew his state of mind said, to him, "You will find complete satisfaction in Goloka, not in Dvārakā or anywhere else. You go to Vraja–bhūmi and try to attain Goloka through *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa*.[1] Your *sādhanā* there will yield the desired result, because though situated on Earth, Vraja–bhūmi is identical with Goloka, situated above Vaikuṇṭha. Dvārakā Nātha is aware of your condition and He would Himself send you there."

On learning this Gopakumāra's heart began to dance with joy at the prospect of attaining Madana Gopāla in Goloka. The joy was so intense that he could not bear it and became unconscious. In that state he felt that he was being carried somewhere. On regaining consciousness he opened his eyes and saw that he was in a *kunja* of Vṛndāvana on Earth.

In Vṛndāvana he began to pass his days in *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa* as advised by Nārada. As he progressed in *bhajana* it became more and more difficult for him to remain without the *darśana* of Madana Gopāla. When it became impossible for him to bear the pangs of separation anymore, Kṛṣṇa appeared before him. But he appeared only to disappear. As soon as He disappeared

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1 Contemplation.

Gopakumāra fell unconscious. In that state he saw that he was being carried somewhere in a plane with incredible speed. The plane soon crossed Vaikuṇṭha, Ayodhyā and Dvārakā and reached Goloka.

In Goloka he was surprised to see all the places as they exist in Vrajamandala on Earth. He began to search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Mathūra–Vṛndāvana of Goloka. When he reached the abode of *Gopa–rāja* Nanda, he found that Kṛṣṇa had gone for pasturing the cows. So he went and stood at the bank of Yamunā, waiting anxiously for His return. After some time he heard the soul–stirring sound of the flute. A blue and soothing radiance emerged from the forest and a sweet and intoxicating fragrance filled the environment. The next moment he saw Kṛṣṇa, the very image of celestial beauty, emerging from the blue radiance with an enchanting smile on His face, a flute in His hand and a peacock feather over His crown. He was so overwhelmed with joy and emotion at the sight of Kṛṣṇa that he fell unconcious on the ground.

As soon as Kṛṣṇa saw him, He exclaimed, "Oh ! My good friend has come !" He rushed to embrace him and as He did so, He also became unconscious on account of excessive joy and emotion.

When Gopakumāra regained consciousness he saw that he was lying on the ground with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa was clasping him tightly with both of His arms and was unconscious. Tears of love were streaming out of His eyes. The *gopas* and *gopis* were grievously weeping and crying to see Kṛṣṇa lying in that state. Their cries reached Nanda and Yaśodā. They also came running along with the other elderly *gopas*. They were all bewildered and shocked, but could not do anything except weeping and crying.

Gopakumāra slowly unleashed himself from the arms of Kṛṣṇa. He was also stupefied to see Kṛṣṇa lying unconscious. He held His feet close to his head and began to pray piteously. Then came Balarāma. He understood the mystery behind the scene. He made Gopakumāra put his arms round the neck of Kṛṣṇa, caress His body and open His eyes with his hands and lift Him up.

The loving touch of Gopakumāra brought Him back to consciousness. As soon as He saw Gopakumāra He hugged and kissed him. As if He had found an old friend after a very long time, He asked him many questions regarding his welfare. Then He took him home for dinner, made him sit to eat with Himself, Nanda Bābā and Balarāma. He fed Gopakumāra with His own hand. In the meantime came Rādhā with some *laddūs* prepared by Her. He gave the *laddūs* to him. There was nothing more precious that He could give him.

In Goloka Gopakumāra felt fully satisfied. He began to live there and enjoy the ever new *līlā* of the divine couple — Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Prema, the End.

During the narrative of *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta* Sanātana Gosvāmī has also made important revelations regarding *sādhya*, the end to be achieved and *sādhana*, the means to achieve it. The end is not *mukti*. It is also not Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa, but *prema* or the love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. After the attainment of *prema* Bhagavān does not have to be attained. The devotee's *prema* draws Him and makes Him subservient to the devotee. The devotee then scorns at *dharma*, *karma*, *kāma* and *mukti*.[1] *mukti–sukha* (the happines of *mukti*) is oppossed to the *bhakti–sukha* (the happiness of *bhakti*), because

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1 *Vr. Bh.* 2, 7, 106.

it is by its very nature limited. *bhakti–sukha* is unlimited and ever–growing, because the *svarūpa* (the form) of Bhagavān, though always the same, is ever changing, ever new and ever excelling itself in beauty. He always performs new *līlā* to please His devotees. This is the climax of His mercy towards His devotees.[1]

In the state of *mukti* the *ātmārāma* (self–satisfied) *munis* experience only one kind of happiness. The absence of *vṛtti* (changing states of mind) in them does not allow expansion of happiness. In the devotee the same happiness multiplies a thousand times on account of *vṛtti,* just as the light of the sun becomes much brighter when it falls on the *sphaṭika–maṇi* (crystal stone).[2]

Mukti is the subsidiary or indirect result of *bhakti,* but *ātmaramatā* (self–satisfaction) is not even the indirect result of *bhakti.* It is detrimental to *prema,* because it destroys *utkaṇṭhā* (eagerness for a higher attainment). *Prema* by its very nature is full of discontent. It is never satisfied with itself. The more *prema* one has the more one aspires for it.[3] This discontent is not an indication of its imperfection, but of embellishment.[4]

Nārada Muni said to Bhagavān, "Give me the boon that no one may ever be satisfied with *prema*". Bhagavān said, "Nārada, this is the very nature *prema.*

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1 Op. Cit, 2, 2, 217-219.

2 *ibid,* 215.

3 *ibid,* 209- 211. *Bhakti* is therefore dynamic, *Mukti* is static.

4 *ibid,* 209-211.

Have you ever seen my *bhakta* satisfied with his *prema*?"[1]

How to Attain *Prema*.

The main cause of the attainment of *prema* is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Some receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa without any *sādhanā*, some receive it gradually through *sādhanā*. Kṛṣṇa is like a benevolent person, Who gives ready made food to some and provisions to others, so that they may cook for themselves and eat.[2]

The *sādhaka*, who wants to attain *Kṛṣṇa–prema*, should first remove from his mind the fear, which is due to regarding Kṛṣṇa as God. He should regard Kṛṣṇa as One, with Whom he has loving relationship as His servant, friend, parent, wife or beloved and should do *bhajana* under the *ānugatya* (following) of a *gopa* or *gopī* of the same *bhāva*. *Bhajana* should be according to *navadhā–bhakti* (the nine principal forms of *bhakti*) with the predominance of comtemplation and *kīrtana* of the *Vraja–līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In *kīrtana* again there should be predominance of *nāma–kīrtana*. This *Sādhana* should be done in Vrajā–bhūmi, which is dear to Kṛṣṇa, because if one lives there, it is certain that he will attain *prema* quickly.[3]

Kīrtana is superior to *smaraṇa* or contemplation, because in *smaraṇa* only the mind is engaged, while in *kīrtana* the tongue and ears are engaged along with the mind. Besides it also affects tha neighbours, who hear it.[4]

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1 Op Cit. 1, 7, 135-139.

2 Op. Cit. 2, 5, 215-216.

3 *ibid*, 2.15.220.

4 Op. Cit, 2, 3, 148.

Kīrtana is like a *mantra* that has the power to attract. It can attract Kṛṣṇa and draw Him close to the *sādhaka*.[1]

But if contemplation is so deep that the *vṛttis* of the outer senses turn inward and function with the mind, that is, if *sravaṇa, kīrtana* and *darśana* take place in the mind as they take place outside, then this kind of contemplation is better than *kīrtana*.[2]

However, *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa* should not be treated as separate from each other, because *kīrtana* enhances the pleasure of *smaraṇa* and *smaraṇa* enhances the pleasure of *kīrtana*.[3]

It should also be remembered that although *kīrtana* is generally regarded as the best *sādhanā*, for each individual the best *sādhanā* is the one, which he likes most and which pleases him most. He should practise that *sādhanā*, for it would bear fruit.[4] But the *sādhanā* must be a mode of *niṣkāma–bhakti*.[5] Any other kind of *sādhanā* like, for instance, *karma* and *jnāna* will not lead to *prema*.

Those who do *sakāma karma*, that is, those who perform good deeds with some selfish motive, with the desire, for instance, to go to heaven, they go to one of the three *lokas bhūh, bhuvah, svah.* Those who perform *niṣkāma karma* go to the four higher *lokas — mahah, janah, tapaṁ* and *satyaṁ.* They reap the fruits of the deeds performed by them. When the effect of

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1 *ibid.* 164.

2 *ibid*, 151.

3 *ibid*, 153.

4 *ibid*, 152.

5 *Bhakti* free from all desires for one's own self.

their deeds is exhausted, they are born again on Earth. Some of them also attain *mukti*. But the *sakāma–bhaktas* are not reborn. After they have enjoyed the fruits of their desires and after their hearts are purified they go to Vaikuṇṭha. The *niṣkāma bhaktas* go to the *Bhagavad-dhāma* directly.[1]

Niṣkāma–bhakti should be unmixed with *karma*, *vairāgya* and *jnāna*, because *karma* obstructs *bhakti*, *vairāgya* deprives it of its *rasa* and *jñana* destroys it.[2]

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1 Op. Cit. 2,1,10-15.

2 Op. Cit, 2,2,205.

CHAPTER III

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī

Śrī Rūpa, like his brother Sanātana, had long realized the futility of the world and all things worldly — power and pelf, name and fame, glory and granduer, kith and kin and everything else, which the men of the world prized and for which they lived and died. He had been restive to renounce them. But a spark was needed to ignite the fire of renunciation. The story goes that the spark came in the form of a remark from a washer–woman.

It was a stormy night. Rain and storm had played havoc in and around Gauḍa, the capital of Bengal. The rain had now stopped, but strong wind was still blowing. The way from Rāmakeli, where Rūpa Gosvāmī lived, to Gauḍa was filled with water and was slippery. Silence of the cremation ground that prevailed all over was broken occasionally only by the thunder of clouds. Nothing could be seen in the darkness of night except a palanquin escorted by pike–men, two of whom led the party with torches (*maśāls*) in their hands. In the light of the torches glittered the golden embroidery hanging over the palanquin. Inside the palanquin sat Rūpa Gosvāmī, the private secretary (Dabīra Khāsa) of King Husain of Bengal, reclining on a pillow and wondering

why he was suddenly summoned by the King in that unearthly hour of night.

As the palaquin moved with the men carrying the palanquin and the pike–men spattering and splashing in water, the splashing sound was heard by a washerman, who lived nearby. The washerman said to his wife, "Who is this unfortunate man going about at night, when the elements are in fury and not even an owl or a jackal is coming out of its nest or hideout?."

His wife replied, "Who could it be, except a dog, or a thief, or a slave of the King?."

The words of the washer–woman reached the ears of Rūpa Gosvāmī and struck the tendermost corner of his heart. With a start he sat up, throwing the pillow aside.

"What?! The dog, the thief and the slave of the king are all alike! Yes, yes, so they are. The words of the illiterate woman are not without import. A slave is a slave, whether he be the slave of a king or any one else. A chain is a chain, whether it be the chain of iron or of gold. And how is a slave unlike a dog? A dog keeps looking at the face of his master and is always at his beck and call. So is a slave. There is also no difference between a thief and a slave. A thief steals another man's property, sells it and what he gets in return he uses for his own enjoyment. The slave does the same. He sells the life, which God has given him for His service to someone else and the money he gets in return he uses for his own enjoyment.

"I have been trying all my life to cut asunder the chain of slavery that binds me. But have I been able to do so? Power and pelf, honour and wealth, that I have earned, have only polished the golden chain instead of cutting it. No more this slavery. No more the pomp and show that dazzle the eye of the soul. It was

not an ordinary woman that spoke and aroused me from my slumber, but Yogamāyā Herself, Who spoke through her. I must now renounce the world and become a pilgrim of the path that will lead me to the lotus–feet of the twin divinities of my heart — Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa." So he renounced.

We need not repeat here the details regarding Rūpa Gosvāmī's geneology, birth, education, his ascent to one of the highest posts in the ministry of King Husain Shah, his religious mooring and practices even while in the service of the Mohammedan king, his meeting with Mahāprabhu in Rāmakeli and the *puraścaraṇa* he performed to rescind the worldly ties and proceed to Vṛndāvana, about which we have said enough in the foregoing chapter on Śrī Sanātana.

It was after the *puraścaraṇa* that Rūpa heard the call from Yogamāyā. Immediately he decided to renounce the world. As soon as he returned from Gauḍa, after solving Husain Shah's problem, he said to Sanātana, "Brother, my call has come. I must go to Vṛndāvana. Kindly give me your permission and blessings."

Sanātana was taken aback. When Rūpa narrated to him the story behind his sudden decision to renounce, he said, "Rūpa, I have also to renounce and go to Vṛndāvana. Let us go together or let me go first since I am your elder brother. You can come after you have made adequate arrangements for the family, the Brahmins, and the *panditas*, who depend on us."

Rūpa said, "I should have no objection to this, because you are not only my elder brother, I revere you as my guru. But your responsibility is much heavier. The king depends much more upon you. At this time, when the dispute with Orissa is going on and war is threatened, you are particularly indispensible to him. If

both of us resign and go, he may suspect that we had secret alliance with the king of Orissa and have gone and joined hands with him. In that case he may torture our family and our plan to go to Vṛndāvana may also be jeopardised. It would be better if I alone resign and go to Vṛndāvana after making arrangements for the family and dependents and you come afterwards." Sanātana had to agree. Rūpa resigned. He sent some of his dependents to Candradīpa and some to Fatehābad.[1] He himself went to Fatehābad on boat with all the wealth he and Sanātana had amassed. He distributed the wealth among his dependents, the Brahmins and Vaiṣṇavas, after keeping one–fourth of it with trusted people for emergencies and depositing ten thousand gold *mohurs* with a merchant to be used by Sanātana in securing his release in case he was imprisoned.[2]

Renunciation: Meeting with Mahāprabhu in Prayāga.

Soon after arriving in Fatehābad Rūpa sent a man to Nīlācala to find the whereabouts of Mahāprabhu. He returned with the news that Mahāprabhu had gone to Vṛndāvana through Jhāḍikhaṅḍa. Rūpa also started his journey to Vṛndāvana through Jhāḍikhaṅḍa. His younger brother Anupama (Vallabha) accompained him.

On reaching Prayāga he learnt that Mahāprabhu had returned from Vṛndāvana to Prayāga and had at that time gone to the temple of Bindumādhava for *darśana*. He went there and saw Him doing dance and

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1 *Br. R.*, 1, 648-649.

2 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 6-9.

kīrtana in a state of ecstasy and thousands of people dancing and doing *kīrtana* with Him. He was lost in *bhāva* to see Him. Tears of joy and love began to stream out of his eyes. It was not possible for him to go and meet Him at that time. He and Anupama went and met Him later at the house of a South Indian Brahmin, where He was invited for *prasāda*.

As soon as they made obeisance before Mahāprabhu, He embraced them reciting the following *śloka* from *Itihāsa Samuccaya* :

"*na meabhaktaścaturvedī madbhaktah svapacah priyah* I
tasmai deyaṁ tato grāhyaṁ sa ca pūjyo yathā hyahaṁ II

— Even a Brahmin, who has learnt the four Vedas, is not dear to Me, if he is not a *bhakta*. A *bhakta* is dear to Me even if he is the lowest in cast. Give and take from him. Worship him as you worship Me."[1]

With this *śloka* He placed His foot on their heads and blessed them.[2]

Rūpa glorified Him by reciting the following *śloka*, which he composed at the spur of the moment:

" *namo mahābadānyāya kṛṣṇa–prema pradāyate* I
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa caitanya nāmne gauratviṣe namah II

— Oh Kṛṣṇa with golden lustre, whose name is Kṛṣṇa Caitanya! O most bountiful Lord, Who distributes *kṛṣṇa–prema*! I bow down to Thee."[3]

Mahāprabhu said, "Oh! How merciful is Kṛṣṇa to have delivered you from the world, the well of doom

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 50.

2 *ibid*, 51.

3 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 50-53.

and destruction. Both of you are so fortunate." Then he made Rūpa sit by his side and enquired about Sanātana. Rūpa said, "He has been imprisoned by Husain Shāh. He can be delivered only by Your mercy."

Mahāprabhu said, "He has already been delivered Rūpa. He will soon be here."[1]

Rūpa was happy to hear about Sanātana's deliverance. That day he and Anupama stayed with Mahāprabhu at the house of the Brahmin and partook of Mahāprabhu's *mahāprasāda*, offered by Him. The next day they returned with Him to the house of a devotee, who lived on the bank of Triveni.[2] The devotee arranged for their lodging in a *kutī* near by.

Meeting with Śrīpāda Vallabhācārya.

At that time there lived Śrīpāda Vallabhācārya, the great Ācārya of Vallabha Sampradāya, in Aḍail, a village at some distance from Triveni. When he learnt about the arrival of Mahāprabhu, he came to invite Him and His companions.[3] He was impressed by Rūpa Gosvāmī's *bhāva* and the divine lustre with which his face was radiant. When Mahāprabhu introduced Rūpa and Anupama to him, he stretched his arms to embrace the two brothers. But they stepped backwards saying, "No, no, Śrīpāda, do not touch us. We are low and sinful and not worthy of being touched by a divine like you."

Mahāprabhu was happy to watch the humility and self-reproachment of Rūpa, who was till recently seated

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1 *ibid*, 56-57.

2 The confluence of three rivers – Gangā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī.

3 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 61, 65.

on the highest pinnacle of glory and was revered even by the chiefs and chieftains of king Husain Shah of Bengal. He said to Vallabhācārya with a smile, appreciative of the conduct of the two brothers, "Śrīpāda, you do not touch them. They are too low, not at all worthy of being touched by a high caste Brahmin, and a pious and *Vaidic*[1] person like you."

Vallabhācārya said, " But I see the name of Kṛṣṇa always on their lips. How can they be low?. They are great and superior to everyone else." And he recited the following *śloka* from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

"*aho bata śvapaco'to garīyān*
yajjihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyaṁ ।
te pustapaste juhuvuh sasnurāryā
brahmānūcurnāma gṛṇanti ye te. ॥

(*Bh.*, 3, 33, 7)

— Indeed, superior to every one else is the man, who always chants Your name, even if he be the lowest in the eyes of the world. He has virtually done all the *tapas,*[2] all the sacrifices, all the good deeds and learnt all the Vedas.[3] "

Mahāprabhu was very happy to hear the *śloka*. Vallabhācārya took Mahāprabhu on a boat to his house in Aḍaila.[4] He was blessed with the vision of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the body of Mahāprabhu. Therefore he revered Him as Śrī Kṛṣṇa.[5] He washed His feet and sprinkled the

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1 Versed in the Vedas.

2 Penance.

3 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 71-72.

4 *ibid*, 77.

5 Gosvāmī Gokula Natha : *Śrī Ācārya Ji Mahāprabhu Kī Nija–Vārtā, Gharū Vārtā–tathā Caurāsī Baithakana Ki vārtā,* Published 1959, Vārtā, 34, p.68

water in which the feet were washed over his head and the heads of the members of his family and worshipped Him as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He gave Him to eat food that was not offered to any other diety.[1] After He had eaten, he made Him rest and massaged His feet.[2]

As the news of the arrival of Mahāprabhu spread, thousands of people began to come for His *darśana*. To avoid them He went to Daśāśvamedha Ghāta on the bank of Trivenī and began to live there in a *kuti* in a solitary place with Rūpa and Anupama.

Mahāprabhu's Teachings to Rūpa.

In Daśāśvamedha Mahāprabhu lived for ten days and taught to Rūpa the essential principles of *prema–bhakti*. He said, "Rūpa! *bhakti–rasa* is unlimited and undescribable. I can give you only a drop of it. Listen, amongst millions of *jnānīs* only one or two become *mukta*. Amongst millions of *muktas* only one or two become *Kṛṣṇa–bhakta*. *Kṛṣṇa–bhakta* is totally *niṣkāma* (without any desire). *Karmī, jnānī* and *yogī* are not totally *niṣkāma*. They desire *mokṣa* and other things. Therefore *Kṛṣṇa–bhakta* is completely *śānta* (peaceful), while the *jnānis*, *karmīs* and *yogīs* are *aśānta* (without peace).[3]

"*Bhakti* is like a creeper. Some fortunate *jīva* (soul) gets its seed with the mercy of the guru and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He plants the seed in his heart like a gardener and waters it with the water of *śravaṇa*[4] and *kīrtana*. The

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1 Gosvāmī Gokula Natha : *Śrī Ācārya Ji Mahāprabhu Kī Nija–Vārtā.*

2 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 85-90.

3 *ibid*, 148-149.

4 Listening to the Name or *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or discourses on the same.

creeper slowly grows. As it grows, it crosses Virājā, Brahma–loka and Vaikuṇṭha and reaches Goloka–Vṛndāvana, where it curls itself round a tree — the wish–fulfilling tree *(kalpataru)* of the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There grows on it the fruit of *prema*. The fruit ripens and falls on the ground. The gardener tastes it and is blest. *Prema* is the highest fruit — *parama–puraṣārtha* (the highest good).[1]

"As, however, the creeper grows, the gardener must take care that the growth of its main branch is not stunted by the growth of the subsidiary branches. The subsidiary branches that grow on the creeper of *bhakti* are the desires for *mukti*, name or fame, or any other thing besides *Kṛṣṇa–prema*. These must be chopped off as soon as they grow, because *śuddhā* or pure *bhakti* consists in devoting mind, body and soul in their entirety to the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.[2]

"Also the gardener must protect the creeper from being trampled by an elephant that roams near about. The elephant is *Vaiṣṇava–aparādha* or the offence committed against a Vaiṣṇava. *Vaiṣṇava–aparādha* is like a mad elephant that mercilessly tramples or uproots the plant and all efforts made by the gardener come to nought."[3]

Mahāprabhu then went on to describe the various stages in the development of *bhakti*. He said, "The sequence of the development of *bhakti* is this: *śraddhā, sādhu–saṅga, bhajana–kriyā, anartha–nivṛtti, niṣṭhā, ruci, āsakti, bhāva, prema*. The first stage is *śraddhā*, which

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 151-164.

2 *ibid*, 169.

3 *ibid*, 156.

means faith in Kṛṣṇa, the *sāstras*, and the *sādhus* (saintly persons). This is followed by the company of *sādhus (sādhu–saṅga)*. The company of *sādhus* presents an opportunity for *sravaṇa* and *kīrtana*. *Sādhu–sanga*, *sravaṇa* and *kīrtana* purge the mind of all evil thoughts *(anartha–nivṛtti)*. When the devotee is thus devoid of all anti–devotional thoughts his reliance on Kṛṣṇa becomes firm *(niṣṭhā)*. The firmness of reliance creates a taste or natural liking for devotional activities *(ruci)*, which further develops into a strong inclination *(āsakti)* for them. Then sprouts up the seed of unalloyed devotion in the heart of the devotee in the form of the spiritual emotion called *bhāva* or *rati*, which ultimately ripens into *prema*.[1]

"As *prema* grows more and more intense it develops into *sneha, māna, praṇaya, rāga, anurāga, bhāva or mahābhāva."* [2] *Sneha is sublimated form of prema*, in which the bond of affection is thicker and the attainment of Kṛṣṇa is of a higher order. It causes greater melting of the mind *(citta–dravatva)*. A devotee at this stage cannot bear separation from Kṛṣṇa even for a moment. His thirst for the sight of Kṛṣṇa is never satisfied. It grows more and more.[3]

"Māna is pretended repulse of endearment. It is even more intensified form of love than *sneha*. Therefore it leads to even greater melting of the mind. The excess of emotion in it is concealed and an unfavourable response to the beloved is pretended. But instead of causing any hinderance to the happiness of Kṛṣṇa, it

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 23, 5-9.

2 C.C., 2, 19, 178.

3 *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, 3, 2, 43.

gives him a special kind of pleasure, which surpasses the relish of *sneha*.

"*Praṇaya* is *māna* intensified to such an extent that it develops *Viśrambha* or confidence.[1] *Viśrambha* is the feeling of one's identity with the beloved. The identity, however, is not like the identity of *jiva* with Brahman in *sāyujya–mukti*. It is identity, in which *prāṇa* (life), *manah* (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence) and *deha* (body), etc., of the lover are regarded as identical with their counterparts in the beloved, so that the lover does not hesitate to do with the beloved what he does not hesitate to do with himself. For example, he does not hesitate to touch any part of the body of the beloved with his foot, just as he does not hesitate to touch any part of his own body with it.[2] This is why the playmates of Kṛṣṇa do not have any hesitation in riding His shoulders, or offering Him to eat things, which they have themselves partly eaten.

"*Rāga* is the state of intensified *praṇaya*, in which even extreme sorrow is experienced as happiness, if it brings about a meeting with Kṛṣṇa and even extreme happiness is experienced as sorrow, if it does not bring about or prevents meeting with Kṛṣṇa. For example when Rādhā climbs the top of a hill to gaze at Kṛṣṇa, Her feet are severely scrorched with the heat of the hill–stones and bruised by their sharp edges, yet she does not feel any pain, because Her entire body is filled with the supremely soothing and exhilarating calm of divine bliss.[3]

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1 *Ujjvalanīla–maṇi, Sthāyī*, 72-76.

2 Viśvanātha Cakravarti's *Ānanda–Camdrika Tīkā* on *Ujjvalanīlamaṇi*, Sthāyi, 78.

3 *Ujjvalanīla–nīla maṇi*, Sthāyī, 84.

"*Anuraga* is *rāga* intensified. When *rāga* is intensified it appears as fresh and makes the beloved also appear as fresh at every step. The *rūpa* (form) *guṇa* (attributes) and *mādhurya* (sweetness) and all other things pertaining to Kṛṣṇa appear as always fresh. On account of *anurāga*, though Rādhā always dallies with Kṛṣṇa, He always appears to Her as new, as if She had never seen Him before.[1]

"*Bhāva* or *Mahābhāva* is sublimated *anurāga*. *Mahābhāva* appears in two stages — *rūḍha* and *adhirūḍha*. *Adhirūḍha* is indescribable. Śiva describes it to Pārvati by saying, "If all the joys and sorrows of the transcendental Vaikuṇṭha and the infinite Brahmāndas were collected into two separate heaps, these would not be equal to the shadow of even a drop of joy and sorrow of Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa."[2] The sorrow of Rādhā, of course, is the transcendental sorrow, felt in separation from Kṛṣṇa, which is even more relishable than the joy of union."

At the end Mahāprabhu said to Rūpa, "Rūpa, I have given you a bare outline of *bhakti–rasa*. You should expand it through meditation. When you sit in meditation Kṛṣṇa will appear in your heart and reveal everything."[3]

In Mathurā–Vṛndāvana.

After imparting instruction to Rūpa in *bhakti–rasa* for ten days, Mahāprabhu started for Vārāṇasī. Rūpa said, "If You kindly permit I may also go with You."

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1 *Ujjvalanīla–nīla maṇi*, Sthāyī, 106.

2 *ibid*, 123.

3 *C.C.*, 2, 19, 234-235.

Mahāprabhu said, "Just now you go to Vṛndāvana. From Vṛndāvana you can come and meet Me in Nīlācala."

As Mahāprabhu said this He embarked the boat for Vārāṇasī and Rūpa fell unconscious on the ground. On regaining consciousness he started with Anupama for Vṛndāvana.

On reaching Mathurā Rūpa met Subuddhi Roy. Subuddhi Roy held some high office in Gauḍa. Husain Shah in his earlier days was his servant. He was flogged by Subuddhi Roy for committing a fault. The sign of flogging was on his back even when he became king. Once his wife enquired about the cause of the sign. When he told her everything, she was infuriated and insisted on Subuddhi Roy being punished with death. Husain Shah, however, punished him by making him drink water from the pot of a Mohammedan, so that he might be treated as an out–cast by the Hindus.

The out–cast Subuddhi Roy renounced the world and went to Kāśī. He asked the *panditas* at Kāśī how he could purify himself. The *panditas* replied that committing suicide by drinking hot ghee was the only way of purification.

When, however, Mahāprabhu reached Kāśī, he sought his advice. He said, "There is no necessity of committing suicide. You go to Vṛndāvana. Roll over its dust every day and chant *harināma*. Thereby all your sins will be expatiated and you will be purified. Even a single name of Śrī Hari has the power to expatiate more sins than a man can commit in all his life." Subuddhi Roy did likewise. When he heard that Rūpa Gosvāmī had come to Mathurā he was overjoyed. He went to Mathurā and met him. He took him round the twelve forests of Vraja. Both passed sometime happily in talking about the mercy of Mahāprabhu and the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

At this time Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha were engaged in the discovery of the holy places in Vraja. Rūpa Gosvāmī could not meet them, because his primary concern was the release of Sanātana and his visit to Vṛndāvana. Mahāprabhu had already told him that he was released from the prison and would soon be arriving in Vṛndāvana. He was anxious to meet him. Therefore he stayed in Vraja for only a month and started with Anupama for Kāśī, with a view to meet Sanātana somewhere on the way.

But he went along the bank of Gaṅgā, while Sanātana Gosvāmī was going from Kāśī to Vṛndāvana through the national highway. When Rūpa reached Kāśī, he was sorry to learn that Sanātana had already gone to Vṛndāvana. He was now at a fix. He did not know whether he should go to Vṛndāvana to meet Sanātana or to Nīlācala to meet Mahāprabhu. He decided to go to Nīlācala.

Visit to Nīlācala.

Rūpa and Anupama started for Nīlācala. They went through Gauḍa, because Anupama insisted that some arrangements for the maintenance of their family were yet to be finalised and they must complete them so that they might go to Nīlācala with a mind free from anxiety. Unfortunately Anupama's life term came to an end and he passed away from this world soon after reaching Gauḍa. Rūpa had to make all arrangements for the family alone. After the arrangements were completed he sent the family with Jīva, the young child of Anupama, to Bākalā, and then started for Nīlācala.

Like Sanātana, Rūpa also out of humility regarded himself as untouchable, because he had served a Mohammedan King. Therefore he also thought that the

only place, where he could stay at Purī, was the thatched cottage of the Mohammedan saint Haridāsa. He went to Haridāsa. Haridāsa received him lovingly with open arms and said, "Rūpa, we knew that you were coming. You are so fortunate. Mahāprabhu has been anxiously waiting for you. He was never tired of talking of you and eulogizing you."

Mahāprabhu used to go to the cottage of Haridāsa every day. The next day when he went, he was overwhelmed with joy to see Rūpa. He gave him a warm embrace and after making necessary enquiries about his welfare, sat down to talk with him. They talked long about the only subject they loved to talk about — the divine *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Ratha-Yātrā was soon to begin. Many of Mahāprabhu's devotees and followers had come from Gauḍa on the occasion with the ostensible purpose of participating in Ratha-Yātrā, but with the real purpose of having the *darśana* and company of Mahāprabhu. One day Mahāprabhu brought them all to the cottage of Haridāsa. After embracing Rūpa, He said to Nityānanda and Advaitācārya, His foremost follwers, "At Kṛṣṇa's call Rūpa has come here after renouncing the world. Both of you bless him, so that he may pave the way for the deliverance of the *jīvas* of this world by compiling works relating to *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti–rasa*." They gave him the best of their love and blessings.

Like Haridāsa Rūpa also did not go to the temple of Jagannātha for *darśana*, because he regarded himself as unworhty and untouchable. He contented himself by having the *darśana* of its summit from a distance. He also enjoyed the dance and *kīrtana* of Mahāprabhu and his *līlā* with his devotees from a distance. Mahāprabhu sent *mahāprasāda* for both of them everyday. After taking *mahāprasāda* they engaged themselves in *bha-*

jana – Haridāsa in *japa* and Rūpa in the compilation of works relating to *bhakti–rasa*.

Vidagdha–mādhava and *Lalita–mādhava*.

Rūpa was a born poet. His poetry depicted marvellous combination of poetic genius, highest learning and the deepest insight into the subtleties and intrincacies of *bhakti–rasa*. Even before his renunciation he had started writing two dramas titled *Haṅsadūta* and *Uddhava–saṅdeśa*. After renunciation he had started writing a drama relating to *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*, in which he wanted to include both *Dvārakā–līlā* and *Vraja–līlā*. But Satyabhāmā, one of the principal queens of Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā appeared to him in a dream and asked him to separate the two *līlās* and write a drama on each.[1] Mahāprabhu gave him a similar advice by asking him not to take Kṛṣṇa out of Vraja.[2] So he decided to write two separate dramas. The drama relating to *Vraja–līlā* he called *Vidagdha–mādhava*, and the drama relating to *Dvārakā–līlā*, *Lalita–mādhava*. While living in Nīlācala he was engaged in writing these dramas. Larger part of each of these was written in Nīlācala. On returning to Vṛndāvana he first completed *Vidagdha–mādhava* and then *Lalita–mādhava*.

The Company of Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Roy

For the compilation of the above works and for the other works, which Rūpa Gosvāmī compiled later it

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 1, 69.

2 *ibid*, 66.

was necessary not only to have thorough knowledge of the theory of *rasa*, but also to have direct realization of *rasa*. Mahāprabhu had already trained him in the theory during his visit to Prayāga. In Nīlācala he got the opportunity of living in His close proximity for a long time. It was His company that provided the necessary inspiration and enabled him to dive deep into the bottomless ocean of *rasa*. That made his own heart a reservoir of *rasa*, from which ensued the stream of *rasa*–literature, which gave a new orientation to *rasa* and laid down the path for its higher realization, hitherto unknown.

Apart from Mahāprabhu, Rūpa had the good fortune of enjoying at Nīlācala the company of two other persons, who were, the living embodiments of *rasa*, and who used to assist Mahāprabhu in various ways in relishing *rasa*. They were Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Roy.

Svarūpa Dāmodara was a resident of Navadvīpa. Since his childhood he was devoted to Mahāprabhu. When Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa,* he also became a *sannyāsī* and went and began to live in Nīlācala. Apart from being learned and highly proficient in *rasa–śāstra*, he was a good singer. He used to serve Mahāprabhu by singing songs of Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati or *Gītagovinda* according to his *bhāva*. If anyone wanted to sing a song to Mahāprabhu or read a *śloka* or book to Him, he could not do so without the prior approval of Svarūpa. He could do so only when Svarūpa certified that it would not run counter or in any way hamper the *bhāva* of Mahāprabhu.

Rāmānanda Roy was the governor of Rājamahendrī in the state of Orissa under Maharājā Pratāparudra. He was known as a prominent Vaiṣṇava and dramatist of Orissa. Mahāprabhu had met him during his journey to

the South and, in His long conversation with him, had made him reveal the various stages of *rasa–sādhanā*, the highest *rasa* that can be achieved and the ways and means to achieve it. These are delineated in detail in *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta*. Mahāprabhu used to say to him out of humility, "I am a *sannyāsī*. My heart is dry. What do I know of *rasa*? What ever I know, I have learnt from you."[1]

Rūpa learnt a great deal about *Vraja–rasa* from the company of these two Vaiṣṇavas.

Mahāprabhu's eulogy of Rūpa.

At the time of Ratha-Yātrā one day when Mahāprabhu was singing and dancing before the *ratha* of Jagannātha he repeatedly sang the following *śloka* from *Kāvya–prakāśa* :

"yah kaumāraharah sa eva hi varastā caitrakṣapāste
cvmīlita mālatīsurabhayah proḍhā kadambānilāh ।
sā caivāsmi tathāpi tatra suratavyāhāralīlāvidhau
revārodhasi vetasītarūtale cetah samutkaṇṭhāyte ॥

(Cited in *C.C.*, 2, 1, 58 from *Kāvyaprakāsa,* 1, 4)

The *śloka* refers to the secret meeting of a hero and heroine of the phenomenal world before marriage. The heroine says to one of her closest *sakhis* (girl friend):

"*Sakhī*, today I am reminded of my first meeting with my husband before our marriage under the Betasī tree in a sequestered nook on the bank of river Revatī.

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1 · *C.C.*, 2, 8, 123-128.

Today it is the same Basanta–pañcamī of the month of Caitra and the same enchanting and colourful night. Also today the breeze, laden with the sweet smell of the Mālatī flower is blowing slowly as on that day. Today my husband and I are also the same. But where is that maddening joy of the first meeting? My mind is restive to meet my husband again in the same manner under the Betasi tree on the bank of Revatī."

No one could understand what Mahāprabhu had in mind, when he sang this *śloka*, except Svarupa Dāmodara. Rūpa was watching Mahāprabhu, singing and dancing from a distance. He also heard the *śloka*. On returning to his cottage he composed the following *sloka*, which clearly explained the *bhāva* of Mahāprabhu :

" *priyah soayaṁ Kṛṣṇah sahacari kurukṣetra milita–*
stathāhaṁ sā rādhā tadidamubhayoh saṅgama sukham I
tathāpyantah khelanmadhuramuralī pañcamjuṣe
mano me kālindī–pulina–vipināya spṛhayati. II

(Cited in *C.C.*, 2, 1, 76 from *Padyāvalī*, 387)

— *Sakhī*, today I have met in Kurukṣetra the same my most beloved Kṛṣṇa. I am also the same Rādhā and the joy of our meeting is the same. Even then my heart yearns for the forests on the bank of Yamunā resounding with the sweet notes of the flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

The next morning Rūpa wrote the *śloka* on a palm–leaf, inserted the leaf into the thatched roof of the cottage of Haridāsa and went to the sea to bathe. At that time came Mahāprabhu with Svarūpa Dāmodara and others. He happened to see the palm–leaf and took it out. He read the *śloka* and was ecstasized. When Rūpa returned from the sea, he tenderly slapped him on the cheek and said, "Rūpa! how did you come to know my mind? No one else could know it."

Svarūpa Dāmodara said, "There is nothing to be surprised at in this. It only proves that Rūpa has Your blessings".

"Yes, Rūpa has all My blessings. I embraced and instilled My *śakti* in him. You should also explain to him the innermost secrets of *Vraja–rasa*, said Mahaprabhu"[1]

Rūpa Gosvāmī's work on the two dramas was in progress. Mahāprabhu knew that these dramas would prove to be two great reservoirs of *rasa*, from which the devotees would draw to their hearts content and be blest. But he was anxious to look into them even before they were completed. One day as he was turning their pages, he felt very much attracted by Rūpa's handwriting and began to praise it.[2] He came across the following *śloka* in praise of the name "Kṛṣṇa" :

"tuṇḍe tāṇḍavinī ratihvitanute tuṇḍāvalī labdhaye ।
karṇakroḍakaḍambinī ghaṭayate karṇārbudebhyah spṛhām ॥
cetah prāṅgaṇa saṅginī vijayate sarvendriyāṇāṁ kṛtiṁ ।
no jāne janitā kiyadbhiramṛtaih kṛṣṇeti varṇa dvayī ॥[3]

— One does not know how much nectar is contained in the two letters — Kṛṣṇa! As soon as they begin to dance in the mouth (like a dancing girl) one wishes that one had millions of mouths, not one. As soon as they enter the ears, one wishes that one had millions of ears, not two. As soon as they appear on the mind like one's eternal companion, they overcome all the senses."

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 1, 73-74.

2 *C.C.*, 3, 1, 74.

3 *ibid*, 99.

Mahāprabhu was greatly inspired by the *śloka* and began to read it aloud. Haridāsa began to dance in ecstasy. He said, "I have read much in the *śāstras* in praise of the name "Kṛṣṇa" and have heard much from the saints. But this kind of praise I have neither read nor heard."

Mahāprabhu embraced both Rūpa and Haridāsa in exuberance of joy. But He was not satisfied with this. In order to glorify Rūpa, on another day, He came to him with some of His principal companions like Svarūpa Dāmodara and Roy Rāmānanda, who were learned in *rasa–śāstra* and asked Rūpa to read out before them some passages from the two dramas. With great hesitation Rūpa read out the portions, which Rāmānanda wanted to hear. Everyone was charmed to hear them. Rāmānanda said, "This is no poetry, but a stream of nectar flowing smoothly and gracefully. It is perfect in all respects according to the ways of the different varieties and dimensions of *prema*. It is delightful and inspiring beyond measure."[1]

Rūpa had now lived in Nīlācala for ten months. He was now fully equipped for the task of compiling the *bhakti–śāstras*, which Mahāprabhu wanted him to perform. He had also received His blessings and the blessings of his companions. Mahāprabhu now wanted him to go to Vṛndāvana. So one day Rūpa Gosvāmī took leave of him. Mahāprabhu embraced him and said, "Go and engage yourself in the tasks ahead. Compile *rasa–śāśtra*, rediscover the holy places of Vṛndāvana, preach *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti* and *rasa–bhakti*. I will

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1 *C.C.*, 3.1 193-194.

also go some time to Vṛndāvana to see your performance."[1]

Bhakti–sādhanā and Preaching in Vṛndāvana.

Rūpa Gosvāmī returned to Vṛndāvana in 1519. His journey to Vṛndāvana coincided with Sanātana's journey to Nīlācala. But they could not meet on the way, because Sanātana was travelling through the forests of Jhāḍikhaṅḍa, while Rūpa was going on the highway through Viṣṇupura. Rūpa had left Nīlācala only eight or ten days before Sanātana arrived there. But Sanātana did not stay there long. He was also sent to Vṛndāvana after Holī. After relinquishing the high offices of the ministers of the extensive state of Bengal and cutting asunder the ties of all worldly attachments the two brothers met for the first time in the free environment of Vṛndāvana. There was no end to their joy on realizing that their long cherished desire of living in Vṛndāvana with *vairāgya* and doing *Kṛṣṇa–bhajana* was at last fulfilled.

As ordained by Mahāprabhu both applied themselves wholeheartedly to the task of preaching *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti*. But preaching in order to be fruitful must be accompained by practice. Therefore while preaching *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti*, compiling *bhakti–śāstras*, installing Śrī Vigrahas and building temples, they also practised intense *sādhanā* and set up an example of *vairāgya* and strict spiritual discipline in *sādhanā*. Slowly the works written by them began to come to light and be recognized as the most valuable contribution to the

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1 *C.C.*, 3.1 218, 219.
Mahāprabhu went to Vṛndāvana later in the form of his Gaura–govinda Śrī Vigraha, which he gave to Kāśīśvara.

religious literature of the world. Their reputation as the great masters of learning, as the embodiments of *rāgānugā–bhakti* and as the very images of humility and austerity travelled far and wide. People from distant places began to come to them to be blessed by their *darśana* and company.

Mahāprabhu had told Sanātana, "Many of my followers would renounce the world, accept *vairāgya* and go to Vṛndāvana for *Kṛṣṇa–bhajana*. You will have to look after them." They also now started coming in parties. Though Sanātana was supposed to look after them, he was by nature grave and seclusive and not as active and proficient in organisational matters as Rūpa. So although Sanātana discharged his responsibility towards them as best as he could, it was actually on Rūpa that their responsibility rested. Whenever a new *sādhaka* came to Vṛndāvana, it was Rūpa who had to make arrangements for his dwelling and *bhajana*. It was he, who had to steer the ship of his life across the ocean.

Several years after the arrival of Rūpa and Sanātana Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī arrived in Vṛndāvana. At that time Mahāprabhu suddenly disappeared from the world. Then Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī also came from Nīlācala. After some other Gosvāmīs had also arrived the work of the installation of Śrī Vigrahas and their worship gathered momentum. Each of them installed a Śrī Vigraha of his own and started serving Him.

Out of these *vigrahas* the *vigraha* of Govinda Ji was installed when Mahāprabhu was present. Other *vigrahas*, including Madana Mohana, the *vigraha* worshipped by Sanātana Gosvāmī, were installed after his disappearene.

The Discovery of Govinda Deva.

The story of the discovery and installation of Govinda Deva is given in detail in *Sādhana–dīpikā,* an old

Sanskṛta work, compiled by Śrī Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvāmī. Narahari Cakravartī has described the same, quoting the *ślokas* of *Sādhana-dīpikā,* in *Bhaktiratnākara* as follows:

Mahāprabhu had asked Rūpa Gosvāmī to discover the holy places of Vṛndāvana, as described in the *śāstras*. The *śāstras* said that the Śrī Vigraha of Govinda Deva, installed by Mahārāja Vajranābha was present in the Yogapīṭha[1] of Vṛndavana. Rūpa Gosvāmī went from forest to forest and village to village in search of the Yogapīṭha, but could not find it anywhere. Once he was sitting on the bank of Yamunā, reflecting thus about it:" How can man search God? The sun is not made to appear, but appears of its own. Similarly God appears of His own, not by one's effort, howsoever much one may try." So he began to shout passionately: "Hā Govinda! Hā Govinda!" and pray to Him, while tears streamed profusely out of his eyes.

Suddenly a beautiful Vrajavāsī boy came to him from somewhere and said in his sweet voice, "Bābā! What makes you cry?".

Rūpa told him about the cause of his anguish. The boy said, "Do not worry. Listen, the place called 'Gomāṭilā' in the *Keśī-tīrtha* of Vṛndāvana is the Yogapīṭha. Every day in the foremoon there comes on the Gomāṭilā a beautiful cow and pours out on a particular spot on it milk from its teat with deep affection and contentment. Just there Govind Deva lies concealed under the ground. Come along, I shall show the spot to you." The boy showed the spot and disappeared.

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1 The transcendental resort of the eternal *līlā* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana

Rūpa did not take long to understand that it was Govinda Deva Himself, who came to guide him and in exuberance of joy he fell senseless on the ground. On coming back to consciousness he went to the house of a Vrajavāsī close by and told him everything with tears flowing from his eyes. The Vrajavāsīs went to Gomaṭilā and dug the spot, drenched with the milk of the cow. They had dug only a little, when the beautiful image of Govinda Deva appeared. There was no end to their joy. They shouted, "Govinda Deva Kī Jai!" Their shouts rent the sky.

Rūpa Gosvāmī proved with the help of the *śāstras* that Gomāṭilā was the Yogapīṭha of *Dvāpara–yuga* and the *vigraha* of Govinda Deva was the one installed and worshipped by Mahārājā Vajranābha, the great–grandson of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.[1] A festival was organized to celebrate the appearence of Govinda Deva for several days. Many people came from distant places to have His *darśana*.

Rūpa Gosvāmī sent the message of the appearence of Govinda Deva to Mahāprabhu through a letter. Mahāprabhu and His companions were happy beyond measure to get the news.[2]

Immediately after getting the news Mahāprabhu asked Kāśīśvara, one of his close companions to go to Vṛndāvana to serve Govinda Deva. Kāśīśvara was at a fix. He could neither disobey Mahāprabhu nor leave His company. Mahāprabhu solved his problem by giving him His own Śrī Vigraha, named Gaura–govinda and saying,

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1 Mahārāja Vajranābha installed eight *Vigrahas* in Vraja. They are the four Devas — Haradeva, Baladeva, Govinda–Deva and Keśavadeva, two Nathas–Śrīnātha and Gopīnātha and two Gopālas — Sākṣī Gopāla and Madana Gopāla.

2 *Bhaktiratnākara,* 2, 436, 439.

"You take this with you. Know it to be non–different from Me. In the form of the *vigraha* I shall be with you". In order to make Kāśīśvara believe this He sat down to eat with the Śrī Vigraha. Both He and the *vigraha* ate together. Kāśīśvara was happy to see this. He went to Vṛndāvana with the Gaura–govinda *vigraha*, installed it by the side of Govinda Deva and began to serve Them both.[1]

Govinda Deva is so charmingly beautiful that Rūpa Gosvāmī has been compelled to give a warning to those, who want to go and see Him, through a *śloka*, which runs as follows:

"smerāṁ bhangītraya paricitā sāci vistīrṇa dṛṣtiṁ
vaṁśīnyastādhara kiśalayāmujjvalāṁ candrakeṇa |
govindākhyāṁ haritanumitah keśitīrthopakaṇṭhe mā
prekṣiṣṭhāstava yadi sakhe bandhu–saṅgeastiraṅgah. ||[2]

— Dear friend! If you want to enjoy life with your relations and friends, do not see the Śrī Vigraha of Śrī Hari called Govinda Deva in *Keśī–tīrtha*, Who stands there smiling in a thrice bent pose with a peacock feather as His crown, Who has big side–long eyes and on Whose lips rests the sweet flute, for if you see Him once, you would forget your kith and kin and everyone else."

We know from *Caitanya–Caritamṛta* that Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī got a temple and ornaments made for Govinda Deva by one of his disciples.[3]

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1 op cit, 1, 2, 239.
The *vigraha* of Gaura–govinda is worshipped along with the *vigraha* of Govinda Deva in Jaipur even today.

2 *Bh. R. S.*, 1, 2, 239.

3 *C.C.*, 3, 13, 131.

Istallation of the Image of Rādhā by the Side of Govind Deva.

Govinda Deva remained alone for a long time. The Image of Śrī Rādhā was installed by His side only a short time before the passing away of Śrī Rūpa. The story of the installation of the Image of Rādhā is given in *Sādhana–dīpika. Bhaktiratnākara* repeats the same as follows:

Puruśottama Jānā, the son of Maharājā Pratāparudra of Orissa was a great Vaiṣṇava like his father. When he came to know that the Śrī Vigrahas of Madana Gopāla and Govinda Deva in Vṛndāvana were worshipped without Rādhā, he sent two images of Rādhā to be installed by their side. As soon as the images reached near Vṛndāvana Madana Gopāla said to the *pujārī* in charge of His service in a dream, "People know the two images that are coming to Vṛndāvana as the images of Rādhā. But one of them is Rādhā and the other is Lalitā. You go ahead and bring both of them here. Install the smaller one as Rādhā to My left and the other one as Lalitā to My right." The *pujārī* had to obey and both the images were installed by the side of Madana Gopāla.[1]

Then Puruśottama Jānā wanted to send another image of Rādhā for Govinda Deva. He did not know where to find one. Rādhārānī appeared to him in a dream and said, "I am here in Cakrabeḍa near Purī since long. People worship Me as Lakṣmī. They do not know that I am Rādhā. You arrange to send Me to Govinda Deva."

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1 *Bhaktiratnākara,* 6, 63-93.

Purśottama Jānā sent that image of Radhā to Vṛndāvana. It was duly installed by the side of Govinda Deva and a big festival was held to celebrate the occasion.[1] It was on this occasion that Rūpa Gosvāmī composed his famous *stotra*, called *Cāṭupuṣpāñjali*.

According to *Sādhana-dīpikā* the *Rādhā-mūrti* installed by the side of Govinda Deva had once travelled from Vṛndāvana to Orissa, for the sake of a devotee, just as Sākṣīgopāla had to travel on foot to Orissa, as bound by the *bhakti* of a devotee.[2]

Construction of the Historic Temple of Govinda Deva.

In 1590 Rājā Mānsingh built the historic red-stone temple for Govinda Deva, which is regarded as the finest specimen of Hindu architecture and the most attractive temple of Northern India.[3] When Mānsingh thought of building this temple, King Akbar was building the fort of Agra with the red-stones of Eastern Rājāsthan. No one else was allowed to use this stone. But Mānsingh was at that time the trusted commander-in-chief of Akbar. On his insistance he allowed the stone to be used for the temple of Govinda Deva free of cost.[4] Besides he donated 130 *bīghas* of land for the *seva* of the temple.

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1 *Bhaktiratnākara,* 6, 76-84.

2 *Bhaktiratnākara,* 6, 88-101.
Bhaktiratnākara mentions that a *Rādhā-mūrti* was also sent by Janhvā Devi for the Śrī Vigraha of Gopinātha.

3 "(It) is the most splendid religious edifice that Hindu art has ever produced, at least in Upper India." Growse : *District Memoirs of Mathura,* p: 123.

4 Satishchandra Mitra : *Sapta Gosvāmī,* p. 100.

Mānsingh died in 1614. For a hundred years after the death of Mānsingh the temple remained, with all its original glory and granduer, the centre of attraction for pilgrims all over India. When Bādshāh Aurangzeb, who was enemical to Hindus, came to power, it was apprehended that he might demolish the temple. Therefore the Śrī Vigraha of Govinda Deva was taken to Rājāsthan and installed in a temple constructed for Him in the valley of Āmera. Later, when Mahārāja Jaisingh founded the city of Jaipur, he built another temple for Him in Jainivāsa and took Him there. He built his own palace called Candramahal in front of the temple in such a way that he could see Govinda Deva from inside the palace. Jaisingh was a devout Vaiṣṇava. He regarded Govinda Deva as the ruler of the state and himself as His *dīvāna* (prime–minister). On the *mohur* (gold coin) of the state was inscribed *'Mahā–rājādhirāja Śrī Govinda Deva Jī, Dīvāna Mahārājā Jaisingh.'* Today Govinda Deva remains in the same temple. On His right on the same altar can be seen the Śrī Vigraha of Gaura–govinda.

The main turret of Govinda Deva's temple in Vṛndāvana was so high that the light emanating from its light–pedestal could be seen from Agra. When Aurangzeb came to know that that was the light of a Hindu temple, he sent a Faujadāra to demolish it. He demolished the main turret and five other turrets adjoining it.[1] Before the arrival of the Faujadāra the Śrī Vigraha of Govinda Deva and the other *vigrahas* in Vṛndāvana were shifted to Jaipur.

During the rein of King Mohammad Shāh of Delhi (1729-48) the devotees of Vṛndāvana installed a *vigraha*,

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1 Op., Cit., p., 183.

a replica of Govinda Deva in a temple adjoining the old temple of Mānsingh. In 1819 a devotee, named Nandakumāra Basu, built another temple in the North–west of the old Temple, to which the *vigraha* of Govinda Deva was then shifted. It remains there today.

Humility.

Rūpa Gosvāmī was recognized as a great scholar and leader of the Vaiṣṇava society and as one whose knowledge of the *bhakti–śāstras* and *Kṛṣṇa–bhakti–rasa* was unequalled. Yet he was the very image of humility, the unfailing characteristic of a true Vaiṣṇava. Scholars aspiring for the title of *digvijayī* (world conqueror) *pandita* often came to him with a view to do *'śāstrārtha'* that is, to enter into a literary and philosophical debate with him and to get from him the certificate of vanquishing him in the debate. But he always signed the certificate of defeat without entering into the debate, so that he was not disturbed in his *sādhanā* and the compilation of the *bhakti–śāstras*.

Bhaktiratnākara narrates a story, exemplifying his humility. Once Śrīpād Vallabhācārya, the famous Ācārya of the Vallabha Sampradāya came to see Śri Rūpa. He was at that time busy compiling *Bhaktirasāmṛta–sindhu*. His nephew Jīva was sitting by his side and fanning him.[1] Vallabhācārya turned the pages of the manuscript and suggested a change in a *śloka*, in which, he thought, the word *piśācī* (a female friend) was used for *mukti*.

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1 Jīva was at that time twenty–four years old. He had completed his study of Vedānta and Nyāya under the famous Vedāntic scholar Madhusūdana Vācaspati of Kāśī and come to Vṛndāvana after renouncing the world to walk on the foot–steps of his uncles Rūpa and Sanātana. He had taken *Dīkṣā* from Rūpa Gosvāmī and started assisting him in his writings.

Rūpa Gosvāmī accepted the change out of humility and respect for the Ācārya. But Jīva could not tolerate this. When Vallabhācārya went to the Jamuna to bathe, he went with him, carrying his pot and clothes. On the way he explained to him that the word *piśācī* in the *śloka* was not used for *mukti*, but for the desire for *mukti* and made him agree to with-draw his suggestion.

This does not mean that Jīva challenged the Ācārya and defeated him in argument. It was only a case of oversight by Vallabhācārya, which he removed. Vallabhācārya appreciated this. He spoke to Rūpa in approbation of Jīva's counter suggestion.

But Rūpa did not like the behaviour of Jīva, which he regarded as contrary to the rules of behaviour of a Vaiṣṇava, who must be humble. He called him and said, "You are not fit for *vairagya*. You are full of vanity and anger, on account of which you have insulted the Ācārya. I do not want to see your face. Get away from here. Come only after you have purified your heart and made yourself competent for *vairagya*".

Jīva obeyed the command of the guru. With tears streaming out of his eyes he went into a forest, away from Vṛndāvana, and engaged himself in difficult *sādhanā*, full of austerity and stringency in order to purify his heart and make himself truly eligible for the *vairāgya–veśa*, he had already adopted. Austerity made his body a skeleton and life seemed to hang by a thread, when Sanātana Gosvāmī happened to see him in course of his wanderings. He took pity on him and asked Rūpa also to be merciful. Rūpa thought that he had purified himself by penance and accepted him.[1]

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1 A detailed description of the episode is given in the chapter on Śrī Jīva.

Mercy of Rādhārānī.

Even though Śrī Rūpa was always outwardly engaged in the discovery of the holy places and the compilation of the *Vaiṣṇava–śāstras*, his inward *sādhanā* always continued. It is apparent from his writing at the end of each work, which he compiled, that he continued to change the places, where he lived according to their suitability or unsuitability for *bhajana*. He lived sometimes in Bhadravana, sometimes near Nandīśvara, sometimes in Govardhana in the *bhajana–kuti* of Sanātana Gosvāmī and sometimes in Rādhākuṅḍa in close proximity of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. Who knows what transpired during this period so far as the loving relationship between him and his *iśṭa* — Rādhā–Govinda is concerned. But some of those episodes are commonly known. We shall briefly describe them here.

Rūpa Gosvāmī had been living in *Vraja–dhāma* and meditating on Dhāmeśvarī, (the presiding diety of the *dhāma*) Rādhārānī for a number of years, but She had not once appeared before him in person. While he was living in Nandagrāma, he was afflicted by a deep feeling of sorrow for not having been blessed by Rādhārānī. The sorrow became so deep that it was not possible for him to survive without Her *darśana*. He could neither go for *mādhukarī*, nor eat or drink.

In that condition he got the news that Sanātana Gosvāmī was coming to see him. Sanātana Gosvāmī was to him like his guru. The desire arose in his mind that he should entertain him with *khīra*.[1] But how and

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1 A pudding made from milk, rice and sugar.

where from to get the materials — milk, rice and sugar, for preparing *khīra*? It was not his wont to ask for anything from anyone. If he went out for *mādhukarī*, he would have possibly got only bits of bread and nothing else. He was compelled to supress the desire.

At the same time came a Vrajavāsī girl with milk, rice, sugar and other things. She said in a sweet voice, "Baba! you have not gone for *mādhukārī* for a number of days. You must be hungry. My mother has sent these provisions, so that you may prepare *khīra* and eat."

Rūpa Gosvāmī was taken aback. "Āhā ! Rādhārānī is so kind. As soon as the desire for entertaining Sanātana Gosvāmī with *khīra* arose in my mind, She sat in the heart of the mother of this girl and spurred her to send the provisions!".

Tears coursed down his eyes as he thought of the kindness of Rādhārānī. But the thought did not mitigate his grief. For he thought that although Rādhārānī was merciful, She showed Her mercy only indirectly through someone else. She did not do it directly by presenting Herself before him, because She did not consider him to be worthy of Her *darśana*.

The girl was surprised to see that he was weeping. She said, "Bābā! Why do you weep? Is it because you are too weak and cannot cook? If so, I can cook for you."

"No Lālī, I shall cook. I am not weak".

"Bābā! you must be weak, because you do not go for *mādhukarī* and do not eat. Tell me why you do not go for *mādhukarī*".

"Lālī! Do I live in Vraja for *mādhukarī?* I live here because I want to have the *darśana* of Vrajeśvarī Rādhārānī. Now that She does not show mercy on me, why should I go for *mādhukarī?* Why at all should I eat and live?".

"Bābā! you do not know that Rādhārānī is already merciful to you. My mother says that no one can live in Vṛndāvana without Her mercy. So you need not weep. I am going. Do prepare *khīra* and eat, otherwise Rādhārānī shall feel agrieved".

The girl went away. As she went she looked at Bābā with an affectionate smile. Her tender looks and sweet words created a sweet unrest in his heart.

In the mean time came Sanātana Gosvāmī. Rūpā prepared the *khīra* and offered it to him. Sanātana was mystified by the supernatural taste and odour of the *khīra*. The mystery deepened when he was slowly overpowered by a divine intoxication. He asked Rūpa where he got milk and other things from for *khīra*. Rūpa told him everything. A shiver went through the spine of Sanātana. With eyes wide open and wet with tears he kept looking at Rūpa. After sometime he said, "Rūpa! You do not know Who that girl was. She was Rādhārānī Herself. She had to take this trouble on account of you. How can She tolerate the hunger of Her devotee? Never again remain hungry. Also do not entertain any desire in your mind, whether for yourself or for some one else. Rādhārānī becomes restless to fulfil the desire of Her devotee as soon as it arises in his mind. Your desire to serve me with *khīra* was another reason why She had Herself to undertake the trouble of bringing the provisions to you".

On hearing this tears began to stream out of the eyes of Rūpa. He was reminded of Rādhārānī in the guise of the Vrajavāsī girl telling him as She parted, "Do prepare *khīra* and eat, otherwise Rādhārānī shall feel agrieved". Her words continued to ring in his ears and swell his eyes more and more with tears.

It was not necessary for Rūpa Gosvāmī to seek any other evidence for confirming what Sanātana Gosvāmī had told him. But the confirmation was made automatically, when he went to the house of the girl for *mādhukarī* the next day and enquired about her. Her mother told him, "Bābā, she went to her aunt's house several moths ago and has not yet returned".

There was now not the least reason to doubt that Rādhārānī Herself had come in the guise of the girl with the provisions for *khīra*. She could not but avail Herself of the opportunity of serving Her two devotees by a single act of mercy.

The episode has been beautifully described by Priyā Dāsa Ji in his commentary on *Bhaktamāla*.

Mercy of Gopāla.

Another episode, which had taken place some time before, also proves that the Lord has Himself to take the trouble of fulfilling the desire of His devotee. Kavirāja Gosvāmī mentions in *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* that once Rūpa Gosvāmī desired to have the *darśana* of Gopāla (Śrī Nātha Jī). Gopala's temple was on the Govardhana hill. He could not climb the hill, because he regarded it as the Śrī Vigraha of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Gopāla Himself had to come down from the hill to give *darśana* to him. He contrived through His *Māyā–śakti* to spread the rumour that Mohammedans were about to attack the temple. Therefore the devotees took Him to the house of Viṭṭhaleśvara in Mathurā, where He remained for a month. During this period Rūpa Gosvāmī lived in Mathurā with Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Raghunnātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Raghunnātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Lokanātha Gosvāmī, Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī and Jīva

Gosvāmī to avail himself of this opportunity of the *darśana* of Gopāla every day.[1]

Offence against a Vaiṣṇava.

After some time Rādhārānī began to shower Her mercy upon Rūpa Gosvāmī in abundance. He used to be absorbed day and night in the *darśana* of the *līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa. Before that many people came to him with their doubts and difficulties in *bhajana* to seek his guidance and he always gave them a patient hearing and solved their problems to their satisfaction. But now on account of his absorption in *līlā* he remained unaware of their arrival. They sat near him for some time in the expectation that his outward consciouness would return and he would attend to them. But they sat only to return disappointed.

One day a lame, but highly respected Vaiṣṇava, named Kṛṣṇadāsa came to him with some problems. At that time Rūpa was absorbed in watching a fascinating *līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā was trying to hold the branch of a tree and pluck a flower from it. The branch was out of her reach. She jumped again and again to catch it, but could not. Kṛṣṇa was watching this from a distance. He came quietly and stood behind Her and slowly pulled the branch down unnoticed by Her. As soon as She caught the branch, He left it and She remained hanging from it like a pendulum. Rūpa laughed at this. Kṛṣṇadāsa thought he laughed on his lameness. He went away in anger. But Rūpa remained unaware of his coming and going.

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 18, 48.

Suddenly the flow of divine *līlā* in the mind of Rūpa Gosvāmī stopped. Howsoever much he tried, he could not get even a glimpse of it. This made him restless like a fish out of water. Life became impossible. He could not understand why *līlā–darśana* had suddenly stopped. He went to Sanātana Gosvāmī to find out the cause. Sanātana Gosvāmī said, "You have, knowingly or unknowingly, committed an offence against some Vaiṣṇava. That must be the reason why *līlā–sphūrti* (*līlā–darśana*) has stopped. *Līlā–sphūrti* will start only on your apologizing to the person, against whom the offence is committed".

"I have not knowingly committed an offence against anyone. But if the offence has been committed unknowingly, how can I know against whom the offence has been committed?".

"You organize a feast and invite all the local Vaiṣṇavas. If some one does not accept the invitation, you can conclude that he is the one against whom the offence has been committed".

Rūpa Gosvāmī did likewise. When his man went to invite Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā, he refused to accept the invitation, vituperating angrily and describing how he was insulted that day.

Rūpa Gosvāmī went and apologized to him explaining the real cause of his laughter. He was satisfied and Rūpa's *līlā–sphūrti* was revived.

This episode is important from the point of view of every *sādhaka*. Perhaps it was specially contrived by Mahāprabhu to warn the Vaiṣṇavas against *Vaiṣṇava–aparādha* (offence against a Vaiṣṇava). He had already told Rūpa in course of his teachings to him that *bhakti* was like a tender plant and *Vaiṣṇava–aparādha* like a mad elephant, from whom the *sādhaka* must protect it, so that it may not be trampled and destroyed by him.

Perhaps he thought it necessary to over–emphasize it by means of the above episode for the good of the Vaiṣṇavas.

It is highly regretable that some Vaiṣṇavas today ignore the warning of Mahāprabhu and, on account of their faulty vision or narrow mindedness revile the other Vaiṣṇavas. *Hari–bhakti–vilasa* says, "A Vaiṣṇava is doomed, if he hates another Vaiṣṇava, or is angry with him, or bears ill–will against him or talks ill of him, or even if he does not express happiness and greet him on meeting him :

hanti nindati vai dveṣṭi vaiṣṇavānnābhinandati ।
krudhayate yāti no harṣa darśane patanādi ṣaṭ . ॥

(*Haribhaktivilāsa* 10, 239)

Śrī Bhagavān loves His devotee more than His own Self. Therefore He feels hurt, when a Vaiṣṇava is hurt. Even He does not have the power to protect a person, if he commits an offence against a Vaiṣṇava. This is evident from the Durvāsā–Ambarīṣa episode described in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

The Depth of Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Bhāva*.

Rūpa had wonderful power of controlling his *bhāva* and not letting it appear outside. It was difficult to gauge the depth of his *bhāva* from outside. According to an often quoted instance of this, which is also described by Priyādāsa in his commentary on *Bhaktamāla*, he was once listening to the *kīrtana* relating to the beauty, attributes and *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a congregation of the Vaiṣṇavas. The *kīrtana* was so powerful that it aroused intense *sāttvika bhāvas* in all the Vaiṣṇavas. They could not control the intensity of the *bhāva* and became unconscious. But Rūpa stood still like a tree unaffected

by the storm. There was no external sign of *bhāva* on his body. At that time Kavikarṇapūra arrived and stood near Rūpa Gosvāmī. He felt from his breath that he was emitting flames of fire, not breath.

The Passing Away

With the passing away of Sanātana Gosvāmī in 1554 at the age of ninety, it appears, the life–span of Rūpa Gosvāmī also came to an end. With his lifeless body, as it were, he performed his funeral, brought his ashes to Vṛndāvana, placed them in a *samādhi* near the temple of Madana-Mohana and organised a grand festival. Then with a heart laden with grief he entered his *kutī* and never came out of it. Oblivious of his body and its surroundings he remained always engaged in *japa* and meditation. Only within a month one day, while looking at Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa with thirsty eyes he closed his eyes from the world for ever.

Sanātana Gosvāmī passed away on the Pūrṇimā of the month of Āṣāḍha, Rūpa Gosvāmī on the Śuklā Dvādaśī of Śrāvaṇa. Just as they had together renounced their *aiśvarya* and come to terrestrial Vṛndāvana, they together renounced the terrestrial Vṛndāvana to enter the celestial Vṛndāvana.

The two brighest luminaries on the spiritual firmament of the world suddenly disappeared. But they left behind them their special and most valuable contribution to *bhakti*. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says that while Sanātana Gosvāmī gave us for the first time the *siddhānta* or a systematic philosophy of *bhakti*, Rūpa Gosvāmī gave his invaluable doctrine of *rasa* :

sanātana kṛpāya pāinu bhaktira siddhānta ।
śrī rūpa kṛpāya pāinu rasa bhāra prānta ॥

(*C.C.*, 1, 5, 203).

Rūpa Gosvāmī's Works.

According to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote *lakṣa* (countless) works. A brief description of some of his main works is as follows :

Haṁsadūta — As already indicated, Haṁsadūta was written before Rūpa Gosvāmī met Mahāprabhu. It is a *dūta–kāvya*, in which Lalitā, a companion of Rādhā, sends a swan as a messenger from Vṛndāvana to Mathurā to inform Kṛṣṇa of the love–lorn condition of Rādhā lying senseless on the bank of Yamunā. The condition of Rādhā in separation from Kṛṣna is described in most pathetic verses and Kṛṣṇa is requested to return to Vṛndāvana. Beautiful description of the places associated with the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which lie on the swan's way from Vṛndāvana to Mathurā is also given.

Uddhava Saṁdeśa — Just as in *Haṁsadūta* Lalitā sends the swan as a messenger from Vṛndāvana to Mathurā to acquaint Kṛṣṇa with the miserable condition of Rādhā in separation from Him, in *Uddhava–saṁdeṣa* Kṛṣṇa sends Uddhava as messenger from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana to acquaint Rādhā and Her companions of His condition in separation from them. He asks Uddhava to convey to them that although He has all the *aisvarya* to enjoy in Mathurā, He always feels unhappy and restless without them. He also tells Uddhava how he should lovingly embrace his *sakhās* (playmates) in Vṛndāvana, console Nanda and Yaśodā and the *gopis* and bring Rādhā, lying unconscious, back to consciousness by touching Her body with His *Vaejayantī–mālā* (garland made from Vaejayantī flowers).

Stavamālā — This is a collection of Rūpa Gosvāmī's *stavas* (hyms of praise) made by Jīvā Gosvāmī.

Vidagdhamādhava — This drama was written by Rūpa at the Instance of Lord Śiva, as indicated by him through the *sūtradhāra* (chief actor) in the beginning of the drama. We have stated before that Rūpa Gosvāmī had planned to write a single drama, combining the subject matter of *Vidagdha–mādhva* and *Lalita–mādhava,* but he had to write the two dramas separately, because he was asked to do so by Satyabhāmā in a dream and also because he was so ordered by Mahāprabhu.

Vidagdha–mādhava is a drama in seven acts, which aims at describing in dramatic form the entire *Vṛndāvana –līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. It begins with Rādhā's *pūrva–rāga* or first love. Rādhā falls in love with Kṛṣṇa on hearing the enchanting notes of His flute and seeing His picture, which Her *sakhī* Viśākhā shows Her. She sends a love–letter to Him through Lalitā, which Kṛṣṇa pretends to spurn. This makes Rādhā desperate and She wants to commit suicide by drowning Herself in Yamuna. Paurṇamāsī, Lalita and Viśākhā, however, contrive to bring about the first union of the lovers. Rādhā is then shown with consummate dramatic skill to pass through various moods and situations, as described in the *rasa–śāstra* till the final union is achieved.

According to the colophon the work was compiled in 1532-33.

Lalita–mādhava — This work was also inspired by Gopīśvara Śiva, who appeared to Rūpa in a dream. It describes the *madhura–līlā* not only of Vṛndāvana but also of Mathurā and Dvārakā. The *līlās* of Vṛndāvana, Mathurā and Dvārakā are ingenously intermingled. But just as in *Vidagdha–mādhava saṁbhoga* or love–in–union is more prominent, in *Lalita–mādhava vipralambha* or

love–in–separation is more prominent.[1] The work was compiled in 1537.

Dānakelikaumudī — This is a one act play. At the end of the play Rūpa Gosvāmī writes that he wrote it for some one dear and near to him. It is believed that he wrote it for Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, who, it is said, was so much aggrieved on reading about the *viraha* (Rādhā's separation from Kṛṣṇa) in *lalita–mādhava* that it had become difficult for him to survive. The play gave him relief.

The drama begins with Rādhā and Her companions going with pitchers full of fresh ghee to the sacrificial ground near Govinda–kunda, where Vasudeva is performing a sacrifice. Kṛṣṇa with His companions blocks their way and, pretending to be the Lord of the forest, through which they are passing, asks for tax (*śulka*). A dispute ensues regarding Kṛṣṇa's right for tax and the amount and method of payment. The case is argued on Rādhā's side by Lalitā and Viśākhā, on Kṛṣṇa's side by Subala and the jester Madhumaṅgala. Paurṇamāsī ultimately settles the dispute by offering Rādhā as the most appropriate *śulka* to Kṛṣṇa.

Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu — *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* and *Ujjvalanīlamaṇī* are the most important works of Śrī Rūpa. It took him several years to complete *bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*. Sanātana Gosvāmī also had a hand in its compilation. The work is a bold and serious attempt to give *bhakti* the shape of a science. It gives an elaborate description of the nature and kinds of *bhakti*, the different stages of *bhakti* with the characteristics of

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1 *Vipralambha* is much more relishable than *sambhoga*.

each, *bhakti* as *rasa*, the five kinds of *mukhya* or Primary *bhakti–rasas* with their *vibhavas* (Excitants), *anubhavas* (Ensuants), the *sattvika bhāvas* (External signs of internal emotions), and *Vyabhicārī bhāvas* (Auxiliary feelings), the seven *gauṇa–rasas* or Secondary *bhakti–rasas,* the Opposition of the *rasas* and *rasābhāsas* or Apparent *rasas*. Each of these is described most meticulously and precisely as required of a scientific exposition. The fact that the extensive *bhakti–śāstras* are quoted in it about four hundred times speaks not only of the erudition of the author, but also of the authoritative character of the work.

Ujjvalanīlamaṇī — *Ujjvalanīlamaṇī* is supplementary to *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu. Ujjvala* or *madhura–rasa* is the highest *rasa*. Therefore it has been dealt with in detail separately in this work. Rūpa Gosvāmi gives in it a detailed description of the *vibhavas*, *anubhavas*, etc. of *madhura–rasa* with great acumen and literary skill. The work is regarded as the crest–jewel of the Gauḍīya–vaiṣṇava literature.

Laghubhāgavatāmṛta — According to Rūpa Gosvāmī this is an abridged edition of Sanātana's *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta*. But really it is an independent treatise. It has two parts — *Śrī Kṛṣṇāmṛta* and *Bhaktāmṛta.* In *Śrī Kṛṣṇāmṛta* Rūpa has proved, on the authority of the *śāstras*, that Kṛṣṇa is Bhagāvan Himself and all other forms of Bhagāvan are His partial manifestations. He has also proved that the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternal and that it is still going on in Mathuramaṅdala.

In *Bhaktāmṛta* on the authority of the *śāstras*, he has classified the *bhaktas* according to their merit. The gradation begins with Mārkaṅdeya etc. and ends with Rādhā as follows:

Mārkaṅdeya, Prahlāda, Pāṅdavas, Yādavas, Uddhava, *gopis* of Vraja, Rādhā.

The scholars regard the work as "The Gateway to the knowledge of *bhakti*."

Updeśāmṛta — This work consists of eleven *slokas*, in which Rūpa Gosvāmī has given invaluable advice to the *sādhakas*. Śrīpāda Bhaktivinoda Thakura regards it as a ligthpost for the travellers on the path of *bhakti*. He has, besides translating it into beautiful Bengali verse, written a commentary on it.

Besides the above Jīva Gosvāmī has mentioned the following in the list works of Śrī Rūpa in his *Laghuvaiśṇavatoṣaṇi*.

1. *Aṣtādaśa Līlā Chanda*
2. *Utkalikāvali*
3. *Govinda–virudāvalī*
4. *Premendu–sāgara*
5. *Mathurā–māhātmya*
6. *Nātaka–Candrikā*
7. *Padyāvalī*

Four other works are mentioned in the list given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Adhikārī, a disciple of Śrī Jīva, which has been reproduced in *Bhaktiratnākara*.[1] They are as follows:

1. *Kṛṣṇa–janma–tithi–vidhi*
2. *Vṛhatgaṇoddeśa–dīpikā*
3. *Laghugaṇoddeśa–dīpikā*
4. *Prayuktākhyāta–candrikā*[2]

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1 *Bh. R.*, 1, 196-199

2 Dr. Vimāna Bihārī Majumadāra has expressed doubt regarding these works having been written by Rūpa (*Caitanya Caritera Upadāna*, pp. 148-149). Dr. Jana has proved that his doubts are unfounded–(*Vṛndāvanera Chaya Gosvāmī*, pp. 94-96).

In *Bhaktiratnākara* Narahari Cakravartī has mentioned another work titled *Smaraṇa–maṅgala–stotra,* comprising eleven *ślokas*, which are attributed to Śrī Rūpa. He has said, " Rūpa Gosvāmī gave these *ślokas* to Kavirāja Gosvāmī and asked him to expand them into *Govinda–līlāmṛta*. This seems to be confirmed by the following *śloka* of *Govinda–līlāmṛta,* in which Kavirāja Gosvāmī says that he composed *Govinda–līlāmṛta* along the lines suggested by Rūpa Gosvāmī:

ṣrī rūpa–darśilā–diśā–likhitaṣta–kolyā ।
śrī radhikeśa–kṛtakeli tatirmayeyama ॥

Govinda–līlāmṛta, 23, 94

But Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa, the author of *Sādhana dīpikā,* says in his commentary of these *ślokas* that Rūpa Gosvāmī asked Kavirāja Gosvāmī to compose them. In *Sādhana–dīpikā* also he repeats the same thing.[1] Therefore it remains doubtful whether the *ślokas* were composed by Rūpa or Kavirāja Gosvāmī.

Both Jīva Gosvāmī and Kavirāja Gosvāmī have mentioned only the main works of Śrī Rūpa.[2] There are many other works, which remain unknown and unpublished. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī has in his introduction to *Ujjvalanīlamaṇi,* published by him, given a list of some of them, which have now come to light. The list is as follows:

1. *Nikunja–rahasya–stava* — This *stotra* consists of 32 *ślokas*, and is the best description available of the *nikunja–vilāsa* of Śrī Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇā Dāsa Bābā writes that some *sampradāyas* now attribute it to

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1 *Sādhana–dīpikā,* Kakṣā 1.

2 *C.C.,* 2, 1, 37

the *ācāryas* of their own *sampradāya*.[1] But during Rūpa Gosvāmī's own time, his contemporary Śrī Vaṅśīvadana Thākura translated it into Bengali in *Payāra–Chanda* and published it in his name. It was published by Nitya–svarūpa Brahmacārī from Taḍāsa Mandir in 1902.

2. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu Sahasranāma Stotra* — This was first published in Nityānanda–dāyinī magazine in 1873.

3. *Ujjvala–candrikā* —This ilucidates the character of *Kṛṣṇa–prema* through a lively conversation between Śrī Rādhikā and Lalitā. The colophon bears the name of Śrī Rūpa as its author.

4. *Śrī Gaṅgāṣṭaka* —This *aṣṭaka* relates to Gaṅgā Devī, the daughter of Nityānaṅda Prabhu. The colophon bears the name of Śrī Rūpa.

5. *Sādhana–paddhati* — This consists of 100 *ślokas*. The colophon bears the name of Śrī Rūpa as its author.

6. *Premāndhastava* — The colophon in this also bears the name of Śrī Rūpa as its author.

7. *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka* — This is different from the Rādhāṣṭaka of *Stavamālā*. It was published in Nityānanda–dāyinī magazine in 1873.

8. *Śrī Navadvīpāṣṭaka* — This was also published in Nityānanda–dāyinī magazine in 1873.

9. *Upāsanā–paddhati* — A handwritten copy of this bearing the name of Rūpa Gosvāmī is found in the library of Gopīvallabhapur.

Dr. Jānā has mentioned the names of some books listed in the Trienntal Catalogue of the Govt. Oriental

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1 *Ujjvalanīlamani*, Bhūmikā, p. 99

MSS Library, Madras, which, according to their colophon are attributed to Śrī Rūpa.[1] They are:

1. *Vaiṣṇava pūjābhidhānam* (R. No. 3053 a - 48)
2. *Pañcaślokī* (R. No. 3053 a - 13)
3. *Gadādharāṣṭaka* (R. No. 3053 a - 68)
4. *Ekānta Nikuñja–vilāsa* (R. No. 3177 b)

Besides the above Dr. Jānā mentions the following books, bearing the names of Rūpa Gosvāmī as the author in the colophon, found in different libraries or in the lists of MSS prepared by different scholars:

1. *Advaita–stavarāja* (Pānihātī Grantha–mandir, Book No. 9)
2. *Jugala–stavarāja* (Calcutta University, Sanskṛta Dept. Book No. 456)
3. *Ānaṅga–manjarī–stava* (Baraha Nagar Grantha–Mandira, Book No. 2 Stotra ka)
4. *Śrī Sanātāna Gosvāmyāṣṭakam* (Calcutta University Bangalā Puthiśālā, Book No. 6616)
5. *Aṣtakāla–smaraṇī* — (Dhākā University, 1125)
6. *Sādhanāmṛta* — (A.V. Kathavate's report on the search of Sanskṛta MSS (1904) p. 22 No. 314)
7. *Śikṣādaśaka* — (Rudolph Roth's Jubin Gen. Catalogue, p. 10)
8. *Hare Kṛṣṇā Mahāmantra Nirūpaṇa* — (Rajendra Lal Mittra's Notices of Sanskṛta Manuscripts, LIX, p. 77 No. 2566)

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1 *Vṛṇdāvanera Chaya Gosvāmī*, pp. 135-136

Rūpa Gosvāmī's Contribution to *Bhakti* and *Bhakti–rasa–śāstra*

We have already stated that Rūpa Gosvāmī's most important contribution was his representation of *bhakti* in the form of a science. He for the first time gave us a systematic account of the various kinds and stages of *bhakti*, delineating meticulously the subtle moods and aspects and characteristics of each. His two works *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* and *Ujjvalanīlamaṇi* are regarded as the first systematic and authoritative exposition of the *bhakti–rasa–śāstra*. We shall do well to give a brief account of the most important features of *bhakti* and *bhakti–rasa*, as delt with in these treatises, namely *prema–bhakti, rāgānugā–bhakti, madhura bhakti–rasa* and *mañjarī–bhāva*.

Prema–bhakti

According to Śrī Rūpa the objects of worship are Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa. But the *sādhya*, the highest good or final end to be achieved is not the attainment of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa, but *prema*, or the loving service of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa.

Prema is the fruit of *sādhana–bhakti*, but not the product of *sādhana–bhakti*. It is not a *padārtha* or thing that can be produced. It is eternally realized and present in Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the essence of his *Hlāddinī Śakti*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa implants it in the heart of a devotee when it is purified by *sādhana–bhakti*.

Bhakti is both the means and the end. *Sādhana–bhakti* is means, *prema–bhakti* is the end. *Sādhana–bhakti* is the unripe stage of *prema–bhakti*. *Prema–bhakti* is the ripened stage of *sādhana–bhakti*. Both *sādhana–bhakti* and *prema–bhakti* imply the loving service of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa; *prema–bhakti* means their service through the celestial *mañjarī* body in the eternal

nikuñja; *sādhana–bhakti* means their service through *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* etc. in the physical body.

Though *sādhana–bhakti* appears as a means, it should not be regarded as merely a means, but as in itself the end, because it is only the unripe stage of *prema–bhakti*, the essence of the highest *Hlādini Śakti* or blissful energy of Kṛṣṇa.

Śuddha–bhakti or pure *bhakti* is free from all desires except those that are agreeable to Kṛṣṇa. The desire for *bhoga* or worldly enjoyment and the desire for *mokṣa* or liberation are not agreeable to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore *bhakti* is free from *karma* and *jnāna* or *vairāgya. Vairāgya* (Renunciation) and the virtues of self–control and purity are not by themselves parts of *bhakti*. They come to the devotee as the natural consequence of *bhakti*.

Rāgānugā-Bhakti

Sādhana-bhakti is either *vaidhī* or *rāgānugā. vaidhī-bhakti* consists in the observance of the rules and regulations or the rituals as laid down in the *śāstras*. It is conditioned by the fear of transgression of the rules and is, therefore, more formal and mechanical than spontaneous. In *rāgānugā-bhakti* there is a continuous flow of *rāga* or attachment to the Lord, which makes it impossible for the devotee to follow the rules and regulations of *vaidhī-bhakti*. The rules and regulations of *vaidhī-bhakti* must, however, be followed until the stage of *rāga* is reached. Once this stage is reached the necessity of external observances will cease.

In *vaidhī-bhakti* there is predominance of *aiśvarya*. The devotees pursuing *vaidhī-bhakti* regard Bhagavān as the controller of the universe, dispenser of justice and bestower of *mukti*. Therefore they go to Vaikuṇṭha,

where *aiśvarya* predominates. They attain one of the four kinds of *mukti* and remain in Vaikuṇṭha as the *pārṣadas* (companions) of Bhagavān. In *rāgānugā-bhakti* there is predominance of *mādhurya*. Therefore the devotees, who pursue *rāgānugā-bhakti* go to the celestial *Vraja–dhāma* and attain the loving service of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees pursuing *Vaidhi-bhakti* do not attain Vraja and the loving service of Kṛṣṇa.[1]

Rāgānugā-bhakti is the imitation of *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. *Rāgātmikā-bhakti* is the *bhakti* of the eternal *parikaras* or divine associates of Bhagavān in Vraja. They are the embodiments of the different aspects of *Hlādini Śakti* or the divine energy of bliss, which reflects itself in them in the form of different personal relationships, classified in terms of human sentiments into five broad categories of devotional sentiments or *rasa*, namely *śānta* (quietistic devotion), *dāsya* (devotion as servitude or faithfulness), *sakhya* (devotion as friendship), *vātsalya* (devotion as parent sentiment), *mādhurya* (devotion as the sweet sentiment of pure love as between husband and wife or between lover and beloved). The varieties of *rasa* reflected in the *parikaras* become the different types of *rāgātmikā-bhakti*, which the devotees following the path of *rāgānugā-bhakti* adopt as their ideals. In *rāgānugā-bhakti* the devotee does not establish a direct personal relationship with Bhagavān. He only imitates the particular mode of *rāgātmikā-bhakti* that suits his natural inclination. It is not possible for an ordinary person in physical body to attain the *rāgātmikā-bhakti* of the *parikaras* of Bhagavan, whose bodies are made of divine bliss. But *rāgānugā-*

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 8, 182

bhakti prepares him for attaining it ultimately in a transcendental body *(siddha–deha).*

Sādhanā as External and Internal

Sādhanā is both external and internal. Internal *sādhanā* relates to the mind, external to the body. In *rāgānugā-sādhanā* there is predominance of internal *sādhanā*, because it consists mainly in doing *līlā–smaraṇa* (contemplation of divine *līlā*), though external *sādhanā* in the form of *śravaṇa–kīrtana* etc. is not neglected. External *sādhanā* gives impetus to Internal *sādhanā*, while Internal *sādhanā* makes External *sādhanā* more relishable. In fact External *sādhanā* is but the external form of the Internal *sādhanā*. External *sādhanā* is fruitful only when conjoined with Internal *sādhanā*. Mechanical practice of External *sādhanā* is not the way of *rāgānugā-bhajana*. It also does not lead to the desired end.[1] In *rāgānugā-bhakti* the devotee practises External *sādhanā* with his physical body and Internal *sādhanā* with the imaginary spiritual body he contemplates upon *(antaścintita–siddha–deha).* While performing the External *sādhanā* like *śravaṇa–kīrtana*, he imagines himself to be in the proximity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as His *parikara* in his *siddha–deha* performing these activities for His satisfaction.

By constant meditation or *smaraṇa* the devotee makes the whole of *Vraja–līlā* live before him. He enters into that *līlā* in his imagination and by serving Kṛṣṇa, according to the particular *bhāva* or mode of *bhakti* adopted by him, lives in the ecstasy of that vicarious

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1 *C.C.*, 1, 8, 15.

enjoyment. The imaginary transcendental body *(antaścintita siddha–deha),* however, is not purely imaginary. It is a mental reflection of the transcendental body, which Bhagavān, out of His infinite kindness, imparts to the devotee.[1] Narottama Thakura says in *Prema–bhakti–Candrikā* that what the devotee desires and meditates upon in the stage of *sādhanā*, he actually attains on the completion of *sādhanā*. The imaginary or contemplated transcendental body, therefore, is just the transcendental body proper in the making *(pakvāpakva mātra vicāra).*[2]

We have said that *sadhana–bhakti* is only the unripe form of *prema–bhakti*, the essence of the *hlādinī śakti* of Bhagavān. *Hladinī śakti* is identical with the *svarūpa śakti* or the Intrinsic Potency of Bhagavān. Therefore in the contemplation of *antaścitita–siddha–deha,* which is a form of *sadhana–bhakti*, there is some identity, howsoever imperfect, with *svarūpa śakti*. As the contemplation continues the mind is purified by the effect of the *svarūpa śakti* and as purification increases the identity with *svarūpa śakti* also increases. Complete identification results in *prema* and the spiritualisation of the body and the senses or the realisation of the transcedental body. As soon as the transcendental body is attained the devotee is blessed with the *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa with His *parikaras*.

Madhura Bhakti–rasa.

Of the five kinds of *bhakti–rasa*, stated above, *madhura–rasa* is the highest. The outward resemblance

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1 *Bh.,* 3, 9, 11.

2 Prema–bhakti–*Candrikā*, 54-55.

of the theory of *madhura–rasa*, as described by Rūpa Gosvāmī, with the theory of *rasa* in poetics and the outward resemblance of *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* with the general behaviour of human beings on Earth, have given rise to serious misunderstanding among some scholars, particulary in regard to the divine sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs*. They are sweepingly described as "vulgar"[1], "immoral"[2] or "erotic"[3] and the emotionalism of the devotee, who contemplates them is deprecated as sensual delirium[4].

But there is nothing erotic or vulgar in the amours of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* of Vraja. They are the spiritual pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the bodily manifestations of His own highest energy of bliss (*hlādīnī-śakti*) and as such the natural expression of the divine Self. They are designated as *kāma* or lust, not because they have anything to do with *kāma,* in the ordinary sense, but because the outward movements (*ceṣṭā*) in them are similar to those of the love affairs of the ordinary heroes and heroines. This is natural, because the latter are but the perverted reflection of the former. Basically the two are opposed to each other as light is opposed to darkness. *kāma* in transcendental Vṛndāvana is not actually *kāma* in the ordinary sense, but *kāma* in transcendental sense or *aprākṛta kāma,* which actually means *prema* or transcendental love. The fundamental difference between *kāma* and *prema* is that while the former

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1 E.W Hopkins, *Ethics of India,* Yale University Press, 1924, p. 200.

2 John Mackenzie: *Hindu Ethics,* p., 177-178.

3 S.K., De: *Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith and movement in Bengal,* p. 418

4 Barth: *Religions of India,* p. 228

is self–regarding, the latter is other–regarding and aims entirely at contributing to the pleasure of the divine object. The question of *kāma* in the ordinary sense or sex simply does not arise in the denizens of Vraja, because they do not have physical bodies or senses. Their bodies and senses are all spiritual. Therefore their movements and activities are also spiritual, even though the language generally used to describe them and the imagery, which these descriptions arouse, may make them appear as little different from the physical movements and activities of the lovers on earth. It is because of this similarity that Jīva Gosvāmī has cautioned that so long as our mind and senses are not purified and there is any possibility of our deriving vicarious erotic pleasure from the contemplation of the amorous pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs*, we must not contemplate them.[1] It is perhaps for this reason that Rūpa Gosvāmī has described *madhura–rasa*, which he calls *ujjvala–rasa* in detail separately in *Ujjvalanīlamani,* while he makes only a passing reference to it in *Bhaktirasāmṛta–sindhu.*

It is also significant in this connection that the hero of *madhura–rasa*, can be only Kṛṣṇa and no one else, not even the *avatāras* like Paraśurāma and Nṛsinha, and its heroines can be only the *gopīs* of Vraja.

Two Kinds of *Madhura–rasa*

Madhura–rasa expresses itself in two forms — *vipralambha*, which signifies separation in love and *sambhoga,* which signifies union or consumation in love. *Vipralambha* is the highest form of spiritual realisation.

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1 *Bh. S.* Sec. 338

It increases the intensity of *prema* and embellishes the joy of *sambhoga*. The bitterness caused by *vipralambha* is only apparent, because it does not, like the state of separation between the lovers on the phenomenal planes imply the interposition of time and space. In the transcendental world, where union and separation can exist simultaneously, there is no substantive experience, except that of unmixed joy and inseparable union. In *vipralambha* the lover and the beloved are separate from each other only in so far as their outward experience is concerned. In their inner experience they are present together and their union in this state is far more blissful than their union in outward experience or *sambhoga*. In *sambhoga* only one Kṛṣṇa is experienced, in *vipralambha* Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa alone appears here there and everywhere. *Vipralambha* is, therefore, called *sambhoga–puñja* or *sambhoga* in abundance. In *vipralambha* the union is so intense that the lover attains the state of *moha* or senselessness, in which he remains unaware of everything, including his own self. Only the conciousness of Kṛṣṇa remains.[1]

Mañjarī Bhāva Upāsanā

A description of the *upāsanā*[2] of *madhura–bhāva* implying *sakhī–bhāva* is found in the *Pātāla Khaṅda* of *Padma Purāna*. Nimbārkācārya, Jayadeva, Caṅdīdāsa and Vidyāpati have also described it. But a clear mention of the *upāsanā* of *mañjarī–bhāva* as distinct

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1 *Bh. R. S.*, 2, 4, 98

2 Way of worship

from *sakhī–bhāva* has been made for the first time by Śrī Rūpa in *Ujjvalanīlamani. Mañjarī* is also a *sakhī*, but *sakhī* of a special type, having a special kind of *bhāva*.

The *sakhīs* or companions of Rādhā are of two kinds — *samasnehā* and *asamasnehā*. The *sakhīs*, who love both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the same manner are *samasnehā,* as for example Lalitā and Viśākhā. Those who do not love Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the same manner are *asamasnehā*. *Asamasnehās* are of two kinds — *Kṛṣṇa–snehādhikā* and *Rādhā–snehādhikā*. *Kṛṣṇa–snehādhikās* are those, who love Kṛṣṇa more than Rādhā, as for example, Dhaniṣṭhā. *Rādhā–shehādhikās* are those who love Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa, as for example Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. *Rādhā–snehādhikās* are called *mañjarī*. *Mañjarīs* are younger in age in comparison to *sakhis*. The *sakhis* serve Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa independently, but *mañjarīs* serve them under the guidance *(ānugatya)* of *sakhis*.

What specially distinguishes a *mañjarī* from a *sakhi* is the amazing purity of her *bhāva*. The *sakhis*, on Rādhā's insistence sometimes accept *anga–saṅga* (bodily association) with Kṛṣṇa, though they do not themselves desire it. But the *mañjarīs* can never think of it even in dream. Kṛṣṇa knows this. According to the *Gītā śloka "Ye yathā mām pṛapadyante"*, which implies that He always reciprocates the *bhāva* of a devotee, He has a similar *bhāva* towards them. But some times, either for the sake of fun or in order to test the purity of the *bhāva* of a *mañjarī*, Kṛṣṇa proposes *aṅga–saṅga* to her. She curtly refuses to oblige Him.

On account of her *bhāva–śuddhi* (purity of *bhāva)* the *mañjari* has the priviledge of being inside the *nikuñja* and serving Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa when They are engaged in Their amorous pastimes and of serving Them. *sakhī* is not allowed entrance into the *nikuñja*. Rūpa Gosvāmī

has indicated in his *stotras* the different kinds of service the *mañjarīs* render to the divine couple in the *nikuñja*. For example, they serve Them with betel,[1] comb Their hair,[2] decorate Their body,[3] prepare flower bed for Them,[4] and fan Them.[5]

It may appear that because the *mañjarī* deprives herself of *aṅga–saṅga* with Kṛṣṇa, she also deprives herself of the highest bliss that results from this kind of service to Kṛṣṇa and, therefore, she is not as fortunate as the *sakhīs*.

This is far from being true. On the other hand the *mañjarī* is a hundred times more fortunate, because she is on a much higher plane on account of her total and exclusive surrender to Rādhā and the complete identity of her *bhāva* with the *bhāva* of Rādhā. Her identity in *bhāva* (*bhāva–tādātmya*) with Rādhā enables her to experience whatever Rādhā experiences and there is no bliss higher than the bliss of Rādhā's inimitable love for Kṛṣṇa.

It is true that not only the *mañjarīs*, but the *sakhīs*, as such, are but the partial manifestations of Rādha and, therefore, they all have a share in Her happiness. Kṛṣṇadas Kavirāja says in *Govinda–līlāmṛta*:

" Rādhā's happiness is naturally the happiness of the *sakhīs*, because Rādhā is the *prema–kalpa–latā* (the wish–fulfilling creeper of divine love) in Vraja and the *sakhīs* are its leaves and flowers. When the clouds of *prema–līlā–rasa* pour *līlā–rasa,* not only the creeper, but all its leaves and flowers are rejuvenated."[6]

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1 *Karpanya Panjikā* 42

2 *ibid* 39–40

3 *ibid*

4 *Utkalikā–vallarī,* 48

5 *ibid* 52

6 *Govinda–līlāmṛta,* 10, 16

But the *mañjarīs* on account of the complete identity of their *bhāva* with that of Rādhā not simply share Rādhā's happiness from outside, they enter into it, as it were, and have exactly the same experience as Rādhā, so much so that if, at the time of union of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa in *nikuñjā*, Kṛṣṇa kisses Rādhā so passionately as to leave a sign on Her lips, the sign appears on the lips of the *mañjarī* as well. This is corroborated by the first *śloka* of *Vilāpa–Kusumāñjali,* in which Raghunatha Dāsa Gosvāmī, seeing a cut on the lips of Rūpa Gosvāmī (who is also the Rūpa Mañjarī of Vraja), says to him jestingly, "Rūpa Mañjarī! You are famous for your chastity. But what is this I see on your lips, when your husband is out? It appears that you had a secret meeting with the parrot Kṛṣṇa, who is fond of the Bimba–fruit[1] and He has bitten your Bimba–like lips"[2]

It is not that Rādhā's *bhāva* is reflected in the *mañjarī* only when she is in Her proximity. Even when Rādhā is inside the *kuñja* and the *mañjarī* is outside every change in Rādhā's *bhāva* is reflected in her. If there is sweating, trembling or horripilation in the body of Rādhā, the *mañjarī's* body is similarly affected. If tears drop from the eyes of Rādhā, tears also trickle down from the eyes of the *mañjarī*, if Rādhā is happy and there is a smile on Her face, the *mañjarī* also smiles, if Rādhā is in the state of *māna* or indignation with Kṛṣṇa, the *mañjarī* also becomes indignant. If Kṛṣṇa wants to know about the state of Rādhā's mind at any

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1 The red fruit of a cucurbitaceous plant. In Sanskṛt literature the lips of women are often compared to the Bimba.

2 *Govinda–līlāmṛta* says that when Kṛṣṇa touches Rādhā there is horripilation in the body of the *mañjarī* and when Kṛṣṇa kisses Rādhā's lips, the *mañjarī* is intoxicated.

time, He has only to look at the face of the *mañjarī*. Therefore Kavikarnapūra calls *mañjarī* the mirror of Rādhā's mind.[1]

The *mañjarī* is proud of her unique relationship with Rādhā. She loves Rādhā with all her heart and soul and Rādhā loves her with all Her heart and soul. Therefore the *mañjarī* cares little for Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand Kṛṣṇa depends on her for His meeting with Rādhā. When Rādhā is *mānavatī* (indignant with Kṛṣṇa) Kṛṣṇa supplicates to her and cajoles her. She then takes pity on Him, holds Him by the hand and takes Him to Rādha, as says Rūpa Gosvāmi in *Cātupuṣpāñjali*.[2] The *mañjarī's* love for Rādhā is her *sthāyī* (dominant or permanent) *bhāva*, her love for Kṛṣṇa is her *saṁcārī* (auxiliary or transient) *bhāva*. She loves Kṛṣṇa and serves Him with Rādha only because Rādhā loves Kṛṣṇa. She has nothing to do with Kṛṣṇa without Rādhā. She ignores Him completely as stated by Raghunatha Dāsa Gosvāmī in a *śloka* of *Vilāpa–Kusumañjali*.[3]

The climax of *mañjarī's* fortune is reached in her realization of what is called *prema–vilasa–vivarta*, the highest stage of the *prema* of Rādha–Kṛṣṇa. This results only in Rādhā's *prema*, which is unique and distinct in many ways from the *prema* of the *gopīs*. The *prema* of the *gopīs* of Vraja is called *mahābhāva*, the *prema* of Rādhā is called *mādanākhya mahābhāva*. The strange characteristic of Rādhā's *mādanakhya bhāva* is the experience of union *(sambhoga)* in separation *(viyoga)*

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1 *Alaṇkāra–Kaustubha*, 5, 158

2 *Cātupuṣpāñjali*, 23

3 *Vilapa–Kusumāñjali*, 102

and separation in union.[1] The passionate, ceaseless and ever unsatiable desire of Rādhā for deeper and deeper union itself gives rise to the feeling of separation in union.[2]

The feeling of separation further gives an edge to the desire for union, which makes union more and more intense and relishable. At every stage Rādhā's *bhāva* brings about a corresponding change in Kṛṣṇa. The process goes on till the body, mind and the vital force *(deha–mana–prāṇa)* of Rādhā become one with the body, mind and the vital force of Kṛṣṇa. This is union in love, not the actual union of the Advaitavādins.

In this state the conciousness of independent identity of the lover and the beloved is lost,[3] only the consciousness of a supreme state of blissful love remains, which is called *prema–vilāsa–vivarta*. It is characterized as *svasaṁvedya* (self–experiencing), because in the absence of the lover and the beloved it experiences itself.

This state has been described by Mahāprabhu as *sādhyāvadhi* or the highest end[4] which a *sādhaka* should try to achieve. This may give rise to the misunderstanding that the *sādhaka* has to imitate Rādhā to realize this end. But Rādha's *mādanākhya mahābhāva* can neither be imitated, nor is it necessary to imitate it. Because Rādhā's realization is also the realization of the *mañjari* the *sādhaka* has only to practise the *upāsanā* of *mañjarī–bhāva*, which according to Rūpa Gosvāmī, consists in doing *sravaṇa–kīrtāna* etc., with the physical

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1 *Ujjvalanīlamani,* Sthayi, 160.

2 *ibid* 130 *Anandacandrikā* Tīkā

3 *C.C.,* 2, 8, 193

4 *ibid,* 95

body and serving Rādha–Kṛṣṇa with the imaginary transcendental body *(antaścintita–siddha–deha)* under the guidance of a *nitya–siddha* (eternally free and self–realized) *mañjarī* :

sevā sādhaka–rūpeṇa siddharūpeṇa cātrahi ।
tadbhāvalipsūnā kāryā vrajalokānusāratah [1] ॥

Mahāprabhu gave a similar description of the *upāsana* of *mañjarī–bhāva* to Raghunatha Dāsa.[2] Constant practice of the *upāsanā* of *mañjari–bhāva* leads to the realization of the *mañjari* form which the *sādhaka* contemplates and the realization of the *mañjarī* form automatically leads to the realization of the end.

Upāsanā of *mañjarī–bhāva* is regarded as Śrī Rūpa's special contribution to the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. He for the first time used the word *'mañjarī'* and gave a list of the *mañjarīs* in his *Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa–Gaṇoddeśadīpika.*

Kavikarṇapūra, Narottama Thakura and Dhyanacandra Gosvāmī have written that Rūpa, Sanātana and the other principal Gosvāmins of Vṛndāvana are themselves incarnations of the *mañjarīs* of *Vraja–līla.* Kavikarnapūra has, in his *Gauragaṇoddeśadīpikā* specified Rūpa Gosvāmi as Rūpa Mañjari, Sānātana Gosvāmi as Rati Mañjarī, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī as Guṇa Mañjarī, Raghunatha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi as Rāga Mañjarī, Raghunatha Dāsa Gosvāmī as Rasa Mañjarī, Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī as Prema Mañjarī and Lokanātha Gosvāmī as Līlā Mañjarī.[3]

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1 *Bh. R. S.* 1, 2, 295

2 *C.C.,* 3, 6

3 *Gauragaṇoddeśadīpikā,* Śloka 180-201

CHAPTER IV

Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

On the bank of river Padmā in Bengal there is a village called Rāmpur, where lived Tapana Misra, a very sincere and simple–hearted devotee. He loved the Lord intensely, but did not know how to attain Him. He enquired from different people about the path that could lead up to Him. Every one told him about the path he thought best. But he could not find any one, who had himself gone on the path and could lead up to Him. He was lost in the maze of the different paths and did not know what to do.

In utter helplessness and despair he only wept and wept throughout the day and night and could not sleep. Little did he know that in so doing he was following the simplest and the most direct path of attaining the Lord. For the Lord Himself comes to one, who loves Him so sincerely and exclusively. He does not have to find the path to attain Him. He Himself becomes the path and the guide to lead him along the path.

This is exactly what happened with Tapana Misra. One night, when he was weeping, he fell asleep and saw a dream. He saw that some Divine Being was

telling him, "Listen, listen O Brahmin! You need not lose heart. Go to Nimāi Pandita. He will tell you everything about the End and the means. Do not take Him to be a man. He is the Lord Himself, Who has come down on earth in the guise of a *bhakta* to show the path of *bhakti* to the fallen souls of Kali. I have told you this secret, which is hidden even from the Vedas. Do not reveal it to anyone else."[1]

Tapana Misra's sleep was broken. Tears of joy flowed from his eyes as he thought of the dream. He must go to Navadvīpa and surrender himself at the feet of Nimāi Pandita, he thought. But he did not have to go to Navadvīpa. Nimāi Pandita had already established Himself as the biggest *pandita* of Navadvīpa. He was now out on a tour of East Bengal. Travelling in East Bengal, He had taken Lokanātha with Him and was at that time in Rāmpur itself. Tapana came to know about this and went and fell prostrate at His feet. He said to Him with folded hands, "Prabhu! I am a fallen soul. I do not find peace in this world. I do not know how to attain peace. Kindly tell me what I should do, what is the highest end of life and how it can be achieved."

Nimāi Pandita said, "Tapana! In this age of Kali *nāma–kīrtana* is the only *sādhana*. No other *sādhana* can take you across the ocean of this world.[2] Day and night chant this *mantra* containig thirty two letters and sixteen names of the Lord:

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare ।
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare ॥

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1 C. Bh., 1, 14, 121-124.

2 *ibid,* 137 - 139.

In due course *prema* will sprout in your heart and then you will yourself know every thing about *sādhya* and *sādhana*."[1]

Tapana was happy to hear this. It was not possible for him now to go back home. He sought Nimāi Pandita's permission to accompany Him wherever He went. Nimāi Pandita said, "Tapana, You go to Vārāṇasī, where we shall meet again. Just now I have told you everything about *sādhya* and *sādhana* in a nut–shell. There I shall tell you more in detail.[2]

Nimāi Pandita then embraced Tapana and bade him farewell. But before leaving Tapana again made obeisance to Him and quietly told Him about the dream he had seen. Nimāi Pandita confirmed the dream by saying, "What you saw in the dream is all true. But do not divulge it to anyone."

Birth of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa and Mahāprabhu

In this incarnation Mahāprabhu had a dual personality as *bhakta* and Bhagavān. His usual *bhāva* was that of a *bhakta*. The moments in which He appeared as Bhagavān before His devotees were rare. While in *bhakta–bhāva* He always concealed His divinity. But Tapana Misra was one of those fortunate persons to whom He not only disclosed the secret of His divine personality through dream, but also confirmed it by His word of mouth. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa was the son of Tapana Misra — fortunate son of fortunate father. He

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1 *C. Bh.*, 1, 14, 145 - 147

2 *ibid*, 150.

was born in Vārānasī in 1505, two years after his father had shifted there.

Mahāprabhu was as merciful to Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa as to his father. He was only 8 or 9 years old when, like Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, he was blessed with an opportunity to serve Him.

One day Mahāprabhu visited Vārāṇasī on His way to Vṛndāvana. He bathed in the Gaṅgā on the Maṇikarṇikā Ghāṭa. At that time Tapana Misra was also bathing at the Maṇikarṇikā Ghāṭa. All of a sudden he heard the sweet note of "Hari Bol, Hari Bol!" resounding in the air. What?! The sound of "Hari Bol!" in Vārāṇasī, the stronghold of the Māyāvadī *śannyāsīs*! The roar of the tumultous waves of the high sea in a desert! He could not belive his ears. He turned round and had gone only a few steps, when he saw Mahāprabhu, the Golden Moon of his heart, sitting under a banian tree,[1] radiating the golden lustre of His body and attracting crowds as the moon attracts the waves of the sea. There was no end to his joy. But the joy was not unmixed. For what he saw was not the Nīmāi Pandita of Navadvīpa but the Nīmāi with shaven head in the clothes of a *Sannyāsī*. Tears of joy and sorrow began to flow from his eyes. He went and fell at His feet. Mahāprabhu lifted and embraced him.

Tapana took Him to the temples of Viśveśvara and Bindumādhava for *darśana* and then to his home. He and his family took His *caraṇāmṛta*. Then he surrendered Raghunātha at His feet. Mahāprabhu took Raghunātha in His lap and caressed him.

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1 This tree exsists even today. It is known as *jatana–bata* (*Caitanya–baṭa*).

Tapana worshipped Mahāprabhu and made Him take His meal. After Mahāprabhu had eaten, He rested for a while and Raghunātha massaged His feet. Tapana, his wife and Raghunātha took His *prasāda*.

When Tapana Misra came to know that Mahāprabhu would go to Vṛndāvana, he insisted on His staying in Vārāṇasī for a few days and taking *bhikṣā* at his home every day. Mahāprabhu did not want to stay in Vārāṇasī, but on his insistance He had to stay for ten days.[1]

During those ten days Mahāprabhu talked to him in detail about *sādhya* and *sādhana*. Raghunātha also was blessed with the opportunity of listening to His teachings, massaging His feet and eating His *prasāda*.

When Mahāprabhu returned from Vṛndāvana he stayed at the house of Candraśekhara Ācārya for two months, but took his *bhikṣā* every day at the house of Tapana Misra.[2]

After two months when Mahāprabhu was about to start for Nīlācala Tapana and Raghunātha wanted to go with Him, but He persuaded them to stay on in Vārāṇasī.

Some time later when Rūpa Gosvāmī was going to Nīlācala, he stopped at Vārāṇasī and took his food at the house of Tapana Misra. At that time Raghunātha got an opportunity of his *darśana* and service.

In Jagannātha Purī.

Tapana made adequate arrangements for the education of Raghunātha. He began his study. But his mind

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 17,100.

2 Op. Cit, 2,19, 284 - 251.

and heart were captured by Mahāprabhu. He always pined for His *darśana* and service. He knew that there was no difference between Him and His Name. Therefore he repeated His Name day and night and said, "Oh! When will that auspicious day be, when I will again have the *darśana* of His lotus feet?". By the grace of Mahāprabhu that day arrived as soon as his education was completed and he became well versed in the *śastras*.

One day he came to know that some devotees were going to Purī on the occasion of Ratha-Yātrā. With the permission of his parents he joined them. As soon as he reached Purī, he went to Gambhīrā, where Mahāprabhu lived and fell at His feet, bathing them with the tears of his eyes.

Mahāprabhu said with a start, "Who, Raghunātha?!" As He said this His face radiated with joy.

Raghunātha said, "Yes Prabhu, your humble servant Raghunātha".

Mahāprabhu embraced and bathed him with His tears of grace.

Mahāprabhu enquired about the welfare of Tapana Misra. He made Raghunātha stay with Him in Gambhīrā that day. The next day he asked Govinda to make separate arrangement for his lodging.

Raghunātha stayed in Purī for eight months. During this period he enjoyed the company and ever increasing mercy of Mahāprabhu. He was an expert cook. He often invited Mahāprabhu and gave Him different dainties prepared by himself to eat. Whatever he prepared tasted like ambrosia.[1] After feeding Mahāprabhu, he ate His *prasāda*.

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1 C.C., 3, 13, 107.

After eight months Mahāprabhu sent Raghunātha back to Vārānasī. While bidding him farewell he said, "Raghunātha, do not marry. Serve well your parents. Study *Srīmad Bhāgavatam* from some Vaiṣṇava. Once again come to Nīlācala". As he said this he presented His *kaṇṭha–mālā* to him and embraced him. On receiving the blessings of Mahāprabhu in the shape of the *kaṇṭha–mālā*[1] he began to shed tears of joy. With heart full of love and throat chocked with emotion he asked Svarūpa and others for permission to leave and started for Vārānasī.

On reaching Vārānasī he remained engaged in the service of his parents and the study of *Srīmad Bhāgavatam*. After four years, when his parents died, he again went to Purī and stayed there for eight months, after which Mahāprabhu said, "Raghunātha, now you go to Vṛndāvana, live in the company of Rūpa–Sanātana, read *Srīmad Bhāgavatam* and always chant the name of Kṛṣṇa. Thus you will soon attain the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."[2]

Mahāprabhu gave him the fourteen feet long garland of *Tulasi* leaves and *pāna–bīḍī*,[3] which He had received as *prasāda* from Jagannātha and embraced him to infuse His *śakti* in him before he left.

In Vṛndāvana

The way to Vṛndāvana was long. But the pangs of separation from Mahāprabhu, which he suffered and

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1 The garland of *Tulasi* beads Mahāprabhu used to wear round His neck

2 *ibid, 119 - 120.*

3 A roll of betel leaf containig betel nut and other things, which is chewed.

His sweet memories made him oblivious of its length and the trials and tribulations of the journey. Always remembering Mahāprabhu, sheding tears in His remembrance and saying "Hā Gaura! Hā Gaura!" he reached Vṛndāvana.

His arrival in Vṛndāvana marked the beginning of a new phase in the *bhāva* and *bhakti* of Vṛndāvana. Rūpa and Sanātana found in him a valuable companion. They often sat together and talked of Mahāprabhu and shed tears of love as they talked.

Mahāprabhu's special purpose in sending him to Vṛndāvana was that a perennial stream of *Bhāgavatam–kathā* (discourses on *Bhāgavatam*) should flow in Vṛndāvana, just as it flowed in Nīlācala. In Nīlācala Gadādhara Pandita used to read *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and Mahāprabhu and his companions listened. Mahāprabhu gave as much importance to *Bhāgavatam–pātha* (reading of *Bhāgavatam*) as to the service of the Śrī Vigraha or the chanting of the Name, because like the Śrī Vigraha and the name of the Lord He regarded *Śrimad Bhāgavatam* as non–different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He regarded Raghunātha as a very suitable person for assuming the role of *Bhāgavatam–pathaka*[1] in Vṛndāvana since He had specially prepared him for it.

Raghunātha had all the qualities of an ideal *Bhāgavatam–pāthaka*. As desired by Mahāprabhu he had made a thorough study of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. The entire *Bhāgavatam* was, as it were, inscribed in his memory in golden letters. It appeared from the manner in which he explained the secret portions of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* that he was practised not only in swimming

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1 One, who reads and explains *Bhāgavatam* to others.

on the surface of the ocean that was *Srīmad Bhāgavatam*, but also in diving deep into it and bringing out the jewels that lay at the bottom.

His heart was always full up to the brim with *bhakti–rasa*. At the time of delivering *Bhāgavatam–pāṭha* (discourses on *Bhāgavatam*) it used to spill out in the form of tears. His vision got blurred and throat was choked and it became difficult to continue the *pāṭha*.[1]

He was also an expert in music and his voice was sweet. He could sing and repeat each *śloka* in different tunes![2] Ever since he came to Vṛndāvana, his *Bhāgavata –kaṭhā* became an integral part of the *bhajana* of the people of Vṛndāvana.

Influenced by his *Bhāgavatam–pāṭha* many people became his disciples. He asked one of his rich disciples to build a big temple for Govinda Deva in place of the old small temple.[3] It was in the hall of this temple that he used to do the *Bhāgavatam–pāṭha*.

Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa could not write any book, because all his time was spent in *smaraṇa* (contemplation) of *Kṛṣṇa–lilā* and *Kṛṣṇa–katha* and *kīrtana*. There was no question of his thinking or talking about any thing that was worldly.

There was also no question of his talking ill of any one, because he believed that there was no one, who did not practise *Kṛṣṇa–bhajana*.[4]

At the time of *smaraṇa* he wore the *Tulasī–mālā* or the *kaṇṭha–mālā* given to him by Mahāprabhu and

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 13, 127.

2 *ibid*, 128.

3 *ibid, 131.*

4 *ibid, 133.*

by the grace of Mahāprabhu dived deep into the ocean of *Kṛṣṇa–prema*.[1]

The Passing Away.

The bond of love between Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa was unparallaled. They were one in soul; different only in body. It was not possible for them to tolerate one another's separation. It is no wonder, therefore, that they left the world in the same year and more or less at the same time. Sanātana Gosvāmī left on the Pūrṇimā of the month of Āṣāḍha in 1554, Rūpa Gosvāmī on Śrāvanī Śuklā Dvādaśī and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa on Āśvina Śuklā Dvādaśī the same year.

In his last moments Raghunātha had round his neck the fourteen feet long *Tulasī–mālā*, the *prasāda* of Jagannātha given to him by Mahāprabhu and the name of Mahāprabhu on his tongue.

His *samādhi* exists within the precincts of what is known as Chausaṭha–Mahanton–Kī–Samādhi in front of the temple of Govinda Deva. In *Gauragaṇoddeśa–dipikā* he is named the Rāga Mañjarī of *Vraja–līlā*.

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 13, 134-135.

CHAPTER V

Śrī Prabodhānaṅda Sarasvatī

The life of Prabodhānaṅda Sarasvatī is shrouded in mystery. It is not possible to give a satisfactory chronological description of his life, because neither the ancient writers of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya nor Prabodhānaṅda himself have written anything about it. The complete silence of the writers of the *sampradāya* in respect of one, whose contribution to the literature of the *sampradāya* is of utmost importance, is itself a mystery.

We can at best lay down certain facts, which are very well known about him.

We know that he was the uncle of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and the younger brother of Trimalla Bhaṭṭa and Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa, who were Draviṇa Brahmins of Rāmānuja Sampradāya and the chief *pujārīs* of Śrī Raṅganātha of the famous temple of Raṅganātha in Śrī Raṅgam in South India. For Śrī Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvāmī, a disciple of Śrī Haridāsa Pandita Gosvāmī, who was a contemporary of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and the *adhikārī*[1] of the temple of Govinda Deva, writes in *Sādhana–*

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1 Person, who has authority or right of possession

dīpikā[1] that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was the nephew of Prabodhānaṅda.

We know on the testimony of Sanātana Gosvāmī that he was a great devotee and a favourite of Mahāprabhu. Commenting upon the second *śloka* of the *Maṅgalācaraṇa* of *Haribhaktivīlāsa,* in which Gopāla Bhaṭṭa calls Prabodhāṇanda "*Bhagavat–priya*", he says that the term means "one, who is loved by Bhagavān Śrī Caitanya" or "one, who loves Bhagavān Śrī Caitanya". His exclusive and exemplary devotion to Caitanya Mahāprabhu is apparent from *Caitanya–Candrāmṛta*, of which he is the undisputed author.[2] Nābhā Jī has also in his *Bhaktamāla* called him "*Caitanya Jī ke pyāre pārṣada*" or "a favourite companion of Śrī Caitanya."[3]

We also know that he was a scholar of repute, since Kavikarṇapūra, in his *Gaura–gaṇoddeśa–dīpikā* calls him *Sarvaśāstra–viśāradā*[4] Tungavidyā of *Vraja–līlā* who is like Sarasvatī (goddess of learning), in singing aloud the praises of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu:

tungavidyā vraje yāsīta sarva–śastra–viśāradā ।
sā prabodhāṇanda yati gaurodgāna sarasvatī ॥

Though a Rāmānuji Vaiṣṇava and a *pujārī* of Raṅga Jī, Prabodhaṅanda had strong leanings towards Śaṁkara–vedānta, before he came under the influence of Mahāprabhu. We may even infer from *ślokas* 19, 32, 42 and 52 of *Caitanya Candrāmṛta* that he had taken *sannyāsa* in Śaṁkara Sampradāya, before he met

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1 *Sādhana–dīpikā,* Pub. Haridāsa–Dāsa, Navadvīpa, p. 214

2 Śrī Jīva has mentioned Prabodhaṅanda as the author of *Caitanya–Candrāmṛta* in his *Vaiśṇava–bandanā*

3 *Bhaktamāla*, 181

4 Proficient in all the *śastras*

Mahāprabhu, because in these *ślokas* he painfully repents having passed his earlier days in *sannyāsa–āśrama*. His name Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī may also suggest the same, because his earlier name was Prabuddha. As for the scholars[1] who believe that Prabodhānanda was the author of *Śrī Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi,* the last *śloka* of this treatise alone is sufficient to prove that he was a *mayāvādī sannyasī* before he came in contact with Mahāprabhu, because in this *śloka* he clearly states that it was by His grace that he was able to cool down his heart and rescue it from the flames of the dry philosophy of *māyāvāda*.

It is not clear when Prabodhānanda first met Mahāprabhu. According to *Bhaktiratnākara* he was present in Śrīraṅgam at the time of His visit to South India and he along with his two brothers enjoyed His company for four months, during which He stayed with them.[2] It is possible that after Mahāprabhu had completed His journey of the South, he went to Nīlācala and surrendered himself at His feet, because the *ślokas* 16, 19, 27, 66, 129, 131, 135 and 136 of *Caitanya Candrāmṛta* indicate that he saw Mahāprabhu singing and dancing with Advaitācārya, Vakreśvara Pandita and other *pārṣadas* in Nīiācala. From Nīlācala he might have gone to Vṛndāvana at the bidding of Mahāprabhu.

Some writers believe that Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī and Prākaśānanda Sarasvatī are the same. If this be so, we shall have to believe on the basis of *Caitanya-Caritamṛta* and against *Bhaktiratnākara* that Prabod-

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1 Haridāsadāsa: *Gauḍiya–vaiṣṇava–abhidhāna,* Part III, p. 1290. Śrī Anantadāsa Bābājī's commentary on *Rādhāsudhānidhi*, Introduction

2 Bh. R. 1,133

hānaṅda first met Mahāprabhu at Kāsī at the time of His return journey from Vṛndāvana, when He stayed there for two months.

The belief that Prabodhānaṅda Sarasvatī is Prākaśānanda Sarasvatī seems to be based mainly on the similarity between the two names and Prabod- hānaṅda's own utterances in *Caitanya Candrāmṛta* implying that he was a *māyāvādī sannyāsi* before he met Mahāprabhu, Who dragged him out of the mire of *māyāvāda*. Lāladāsa, the author of *Bhaktamāla* (Banglā), goes to the extent of saying that it was Mahāprabhu, Who changed his name from Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī to Prabodhānaṅda Sarasvatī[1]. But while it seems certain that Prabodhānaṅda was a *māyāvādī sannyāsī* before he met Mahāprabhu, it cannot be said with certainty that he was the same as Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī; in the absence of anything in *Caitanya Caritamṛta* to support this.[2]

A question that worries writers and readers about Prabodhānaṅda relates to the total indifference of the Gauḍīya Ācāryas towards him. For they have neither written anything about him nor quoted anywhere from his works. Śrī Sunderananda Vidyavinoda has suggested two possible reasons for this:

1. Tradition has the story that Prabodhānaṅda gave shelter to Śrī Hita Harivaṁsa even after his excummunication from the Gauḍīya Sampradāya.[3]

2. Prabodhānaṅda adored the Gaura–Nāgara form of Mahāprabhu,[4] which the Gosvāmīns did not approve.

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1 *Banglā Bhaktamāla,* Mālā 22, p. 358

2 Dr. Vimānabihārī Majūmadara: *Caitanya–caritera Upādāna,* p. 169

3 *"Pravāsī"* Pattrikā, Baṅgābda 1362, Agrahayaṇa Aṅka, p. 166

4 *Caitanya–Candramṛta,* 132

The first reason relates to a story, which is not based on authentic sources. The second reason is correct. Prabodhānaṅda was an independent type of man. His devotion was of *rāgānugā* type, based purely on love. He had scant regard for the rules and regulations of *vaidhī–bhakti*, while the Gosvāmīns, although they practised *rāgānuga-bhakti*, had to lay stress on the rules of *vaidhī-bhakti* in the interest of the people in general so that they might not run amuck like unbridled horses and fall into the ditch of libertarianism. Therefore Prabodhānaṅda kept aloof from them and followed his own line of *upāsanā*.

Works

The following is a list of the works of Prabodhānaṅda:

Śrī Caitanya–Candrāmṛta — In this book Prabodhānaṅda has described the *mādhurya* (sweetness) of Śrī Caitanya and his exclusive and limitless faith in Him and in Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He says that Śrī Caitanya combines in His Personality both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa (*Śloka* 10) and He is *Bhagavatah parama* (the Supreme Lord, *Śloka* 7) and *Devacūṇāmaṇi* (the crest–jewel of all the forms of Godhead, *Śloka* 10). As a *sādhaka's bhakti* in the lotus–feet of Śrī Caitanya grows the ocean of *Rādhā–prema* begins to swell in his heart (*Ślokas* 68, 88, 123). Before the advent of Śrī Caitanya it was not possible for any *jīva* to reach even the shore of the occur of *Rādhā–prema*. But ever since His appearance that limitless ocean of love has itself come swirling up to the *jīvas* and is trying to drown them in the bliss of love (*Śloka* 100). The *prema–rasa* (bliss of love), which Brahmā and the other gods covet, which even Lakṣmī has not been able to get even though she has been practising penance for it since times immemorial,

Śrī Caitanya has been anxious to distribute to all the *jīvas*, irrespective of their qualification or disqua- lification (*Śloka* 77, 100). This is astonishing. Therefore in the very first *Śloka* of this book Prabodhānaṅda has described Mahāprabhu as *aparisīma, atyadbhuta–kāruṇyamaya sarvāvatāra–śreṣṭha* (most wonderful, infinitely merciful and the highest incarnation of Bhagavān).

Vṛndāvana–mahimāmṛta or *Vṛndāvana–śataka* — This consists of 100 *śatakas* of which only 22 have so far been discovered and seventeen have been printed.[1] In this Prabodhānaṅda has expressed his *Rādhā–niṣṭhā* (devotion to Rādhā) along with his *Vṛndāvana–niṣṭhā*.

Saṅgīta–mādhava–gītikāvya — In this book Prabodhānaṅda describes how the animate and inanimate objects are maddened with bliss and the *gopīs* rush to meet Kṛṣṇa unmindful of what others will say, when they hear His flute.

Āścarya–rāsa–prabandha — This describes the most wonderful dance of Kṛṣṇa in *rāsa–līlā*.

Sruti–stuti–vyākhyā — This is a commentary on *sruti–stuti*, in which the distinction between the *nitya–siddha* and the other *gopīs* is described.

Śrī Kāmabīja–Kāmagāyatrī–vyākhyā — This provides an explanation of *kāmabīja* and each particular letter of the *kāmagāyatrī*.

Śrī Navadvīpa–śatakam — This is written in glorification of Navadvīpa Dhāma.

Śrī Gītagovinda–vyākhyā — This is the best commentary on *Gīta–govinda*.

Gopāla–tāpini–tīkā — This is a commentary on *Gopālatāpinī* upaniṣad.

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1 Sunderananda Vidyāvinoda: *Pravāsi*, Baṅgābda 1362, Agrahāyaṇa, p. 167

Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi or Rādhā–sudhānidhi — The authorship of this work is under dispute. The Gauḍīya Sampradāya attributes it to Prabodhānanda, the Rādhāvallabha Sampradāya to Śrī Hita Harivaṁśa, who sang it when he was a child of only six months. The former blames the latter for removing from it one *śloka* of Mahāprabhu's *vandanā* in the beginning and one at the end and calling it *Rādhāsudhānidhi* in place of *Rādhā –rasa–sudhānidhi*.[1] The latter blames the former for adding the two *ślokas* and calling it *Rādhā–rasa–sudhānidhi* in place of *Rādhāsudhānidhi*.[2]

Against the authorship of Prabodhānanda it is said that it does not have the support of any writer, who was contemporary of Prabodhānanda; not even of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the author of *Caitanya–Caritamṛta*. None of the earlier Gauḍīya Ācāryas even quotes from the writings of Prabodhānanda.

Similarly against the authorship of Śrī Hita Harivaṁsa it is pointed out that none of the earlier exponents of the doctrine of Rādhāvallabha Sampradāya, including Śrī Sevaka Jī and Śrī Dhruvadāsa Jī quote from *Rādhā-sudhānidhi* in support of their doctrine. This indicates that it was only in a later period that *Rādhāsudhānidhi* began to be claimed by Rādhāvallabha Sampradāya as the work of Śrī Hita Harivaṁśa.

Those, who support the authorship of Śrī Hita Harivaṁśa, lay special emphasis on two external evidences. One is that all the old hand written copies of the book, including the one written in 1712 bear the name of Śrī Hita Harivaṁśa as its author.[3] The other

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1 Śrī Anantadāsa Bābā : *Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi,* Introduction, p. 6.

2 Śrī Hitadāsa Bābā: *Rādhāsudhānidhi,* Introduction, p. 6-7.

3 Śrī Lalitācaraṇa Gosvāmī: *Śrī Hita Harivaṁśi Gosvāmī Sampradāya Aura Sāhitya*, pp. 40-41

is that scholars like Growse, Wilson and S.K. De, who do not belong to Rādhāvallabha Sampradāya, regard *Rādhāsudhānidhi* as the work of Śrī Hita Harivaṁśa. Dr. Snātaka has quoted from *Prema–pattana,* written by Śrī Rasikottaṁsa of the Gauḍīya Sampradāya to show that even he regarded *Rādhāsudhānidhi* as the work of Śri Hita Harivaṁśa.

Those, who support the authorship of Śrī Prabodhānaṅda lay greater emphasis on internal evidence. They say that so far as the language, the subject matter and *bhāva* are concerned *Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi* closely resembles the other works of Prabodhānaṅda.[1] Śrī Sundarananda Vidyāvinoda and Śrī Anantadāsa Bābājī have given a detailed description of several lines of *Caitanya–candrāmṛta, Vṛndāvana–mahimāmṛta, Āścarya–rāsa–prabandha* and the other works of Prabodhānaṅda, which have been repeated in *Rādhā–rāsa–sudhānidhi* [2]

Śrī Anantadāsa Bābāji says "The author of *Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi* describes the beauty of Vṛndāvana and says that at the time of composing the work he derives inspiration from the Vrajavāsīs, whom he regards as worshipful. This proves that *Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi* is not the work of a child of six months lying in a cradle in the distant Bādagrāma, where he was born." [3]

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1 *Gauḍīya–Vaiṣṇava–abidhana,* Part III, p. 1290

2 Sunderananda Vidyāvinoda: *Pravāsī* (Pattrikā), Bangābda 1362, Agrahāyṇa, pp. 167-168.
Anantadāsa Bābā: *Rādhārasa–sudhānidhi,* Introduction, pp. 8-9.

3 *ibid.*, p. 7.

CHAPTER VI

Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

Amongst the Gosvāmīns of Vṛndāvana the position of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, who is regarded as the incarnation of Anaṅga Manjarī, is unique in the sense that he had all the blessings of Mahāprabhu at the tender age of only ten or twelve, when Mahāprabhu stayed at his house for four months. Early at that age Mahāprabhu gave him His company, His *caraṇāmṛta* and His teachings. Not only this, He laid out the plan for his future life and later gave him His own *dora–kaupīna* and installed him as guru by presenting to him the *āsana*,[1] on which He used to sit.

It is surprising that though Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was thus blessed by Mahāprabhu and was, as we shall see later, the author of some of the most important works of the Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, no information is given about him in any of the authoritative works of the *sampradāya*. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has mentioned him as one of his

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1 *Patarā* or wooden seat.

six *śikṣā-gurus* in *Caitanya-caritamṛta*.[1] But he has not recorded anything else about him. Narahari Cakravartī explains this by saying that he had himself, out of his humility, prohibited him from writing anything about him.[2]

But the other biographers, Vṛndāvana Dāsa, Locana Dāsa, Kavikarṇapūra[3] and Jayānanda, are also silent about him. Only Murārī Gupta has said something about him in his *kaḍacā*.[4] Later Narahari Cakravartī, Manohra Dāsa, Yadunaṅdana Dāsa and Naroṭṭāma Dāsa have said something about him — Narahari Cakravartī in *Bhakti-ratnākara*, Manohra Dāsa in *Anurāgavallī*, Yadunaṅdana Dāsa in *Karṇānaṅda* and Naroṭṭāma Dāsa in *Prema-vilāsa*.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was born in the year 1500[5] in a village named Belāguḍi on the bank of river Kāverī near Śrī Raṅgam in a family of Draviḍa Brahmins of Rāmānuja Sampradāya. Three brothers of this family, Trimalla Bhaṭṭa, Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa and Prabuddha Bhaṭṭa, who were famous for their learning, were the chief priests of Śrī Raṅganātha. Trimalla Bhaṭṭa was the eldest, Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa was younger to him and Prabuddha Bhaṭṭa was the youngest. Gopāla was the son of Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa.

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1 *C.C.* 1, 1, 36-37.

2 *Bhaktiratnākara*, 1, pp. 6-10.

3 Kavikarṇapūra has written only one *aṣṭaka* (hymn of eight *ślokas*) in his praise.

4 *Kaḍacā*, 3, 15, 14-16.

5 Śrī Madhūsudana Tattvavācaspati has written in *"Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Itihāsa"* (p. 169) and Amūlyadhana Rāyabhaṭṭa in *"Vṛhat-Vaiṣṇava Carita Abhidāna"* (p. 120) that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was born in 1503. If so, he was only 7 years old when Mahāprabhu went to the South. Murārī Gupta says in his *Kadacā* (3, 15, 14-16) that he was a boy at that time. A boy of 7 is unlikely to behave in the way in which Gopāla Bhaṭṭa did towards Mahāprabhu. It would be more sensible to believe that his age at that time was between 10 and 12. If so his date of birth should be 1500, because Mahāprabhu was in the South between 1510 and 1512.

As Gopāla grew his extraordinary intelligence and love for learning became apparent. Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa entrusted his younger brother Prabuddha Bhaṭṭa with the responsibility of giving him proper education. Under his tutorage Gopāla began to make rapid progress and within a short time became proficient in grammar, *Nyāya-śastra*, rhetoric etc. Prabuddha had his leanings towards Advaitavāda. He wanted to mould Gopāla also along that line. But Gopāla was a *bhakta* by birth. This is evident from the fact that once, when he was much younger, he had gone with his father to Nīlācala. On having the *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha he had such an upsurge of *bhāva* in him that his father was convinced of his extraordinary devotional leanings.[1]

Gopāla's Four Months with Mahāprabhu

There was a high tide in the *bhāva-bhakti* of Gopāla, when Mahāprabhu graced his house in 1511. Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa* in 1510 in the month of Māgha and went to Nīlācala in the month of Vaiśākha. The same year He commenced His journey for the South. In Āṣāḍa He reached Śrī Raṅgam. After taking His bath in the sacred Kāverī, He went to the temple of Śrī–Raṅganātha. He was overwhelmed with *bhāva* to see Śrī–Raṅganātha and started dance and *kīrtana* before Him. Crowds of people started pouring into the temple for His *darśana*. Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa was also looking at His exquisite beauty and extraordinary *bhāva* and listening to his soul stirring *kīrtana* like one spell bound from a distance. After His *bhāva* subsided, he requested

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1 *Bhaktiratnākara*, 1, 159-160

Him to have *bhikṣā* at his place, to which He gladly agreed.

There was no end to the happiness of the Bhaṭṭa family on having Mahāprabhu in their midst. Everyone made obeisance to Him. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, who was eleven years old at that time, was overwhelmed with *bhāva* to see Him and fell at His feet. Mahāprabhu lovingly placed His lotus feet on his head to bless him. Then He took him in His lap and caressed him, as if he was His own since eternity. Gopāla could not bear His divine touch and grace and became senseless.[1]

Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa washed Mahāprabhu's feet with the water of Kāverī and gave the *caraṇāmṛta* to each member of the family to drink.[2] As soon as Gopāla took the *caraṇāmṛta* an unprecedented current of *prema-bhakti* shook his frame and he began to dance in ecstasy. *Aśru* (tears), *kampa* (trembling), *pulaka* (horripilation) and the other *sātvika bhāvas* appeared on his body, as the first indication of the blossoming of the flower of divine grace in his heart, which continued to spread its fragrance far and wide round him till the end.

After Mahāprabhu had taken His *prasāda* Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa said, "Prabhu, *cāturmāsya*[3] has arrived". I request that during this period You kindly stay here so that we may have the opportunity of listening to *Kṛṣṇa–kathā* (talks about Kṛṣṇa) from Your mouth and be blest. Mahāprabhu acceded and lived in his house for four months.[4]

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1 *Sapta Gosvāmī,* p. 269.

2 *C.C.* 2, 9, 83

3 The four months of the rainy season.

4 *C.C.* 2, 9, 86.

Everyday Mahāprabhu bathed in the Kāverī and did dance and *kīrtana* before Lord Raṅganātha: Thousands of people came for His *darśana* from distant places and were inspired to sing *harinama* by merely looking at Him.[1]

During this period Gopāla always remained with Mahāprabhu and served Him in various ways.[2] On seeing that Gopāla had natural love and inclination for the service of Mahāprabhu, Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa offered him at His feet for ever.[3]

Gopāla heard from Kṛṣṇadāsa,[4] Mahāprabhu's attendant, who had gone with Him to the South, about Mahāprabhu's pranks in His boyhood in Nadiyā. He developed a strong desire to have a glimpse of His *Nadiyā–līlā*. He began to blame Brahmā, the Creator of the universe and say, "Brahmā! Why did you give me birth so far away from Nadiyā and deprive me of the *darśana* of the *Nadiyā–līlā* of Mahāprabhu? Oh! Why did you not give me an opportunity to see Him dancing in His *Nadiyā-nāgara*[5] *veśa* (form) with curly hair,

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(From previous page) Some writers have questioned the authenticity of the account given in *Caitanya-Caritamṛta* regarding Mahāprabhu's stay for four months at the house of Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa and His meeting Gopāla Bhaṭṭa during His tour in the South. S. K. De says that "The account of his (Gopāla's) meeting with Caitanya is enveloped in the uncertainty of legends *(Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement,* p. 96)". Dr. D. C. Sen thinks that the story has been fabricated to give importance to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa *(Caitanya and his Companions,* 112). But there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the account in view of the fact that it is supported by such ancient writers as Murārī Gupta *(Kaḍacā,* 3, 15, 14-16) and Kavikarṇapūra *(Caitanya Caritamṛta,* 13, 4).

1 *ibid*, 2, 9, 89.

2 *Bh. R.* 1, 98.

3 *ibid* 125-126.

4 According to some accounts he was Govinda Dāsa, not Kṛṣṇadāsa.

5 Citizen of Nadiyā

beautifully bedecked with flowers? Why did you injure my heart with a spear as it were, by showing me His *sannyāsa veśa* divested of those hairs? Oh! Why at all did you make Vrajendranandana Kṛṣṇa the life and soul of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, a *sannyāsī*?". Thus blaming the Providence for his ill luck Gopāla sat in a solitary place, weeping and sobbing, while tears incessantly flowed from his eyes.

Mahāprabhu appears before Gopāla as *Nadiyā–Nāgara* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa

Omniscient Mahāprabhu came to know of the thoughts that afflicted the mind of Gopāla. As wished by Him Gopāla's weeping and wailing turned into sleep. In a dream he saw the *Nadiyā–līlā* and Mahāprabhu freely playing and jesting with His associates.[1]

As soon as the sleep broke he went to Mahāprabhu and was surprised to see Him in the form of the cowherd Kṛṣṇa and the very next moment in the form of the golden Gaurāṅga of Nadiyā, Whom he had just seen in the dream.[2] He was surprised to see the heavenly lustre on His face, the beauty of His curly hair bedecked with flowers, the scintillating *tilaka* on his forehead, the winning glance of his lotus–eyes and His sweet smile, which easily crushed the pride of a thousand moons. He fell at His feet in obeisance and as he raised His head to look at Him again, he saw the same *sannyāsī*, with shaven head and crimson clothes.[3]

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1 *Bh. R.* 1, 107-109.

2 *ibid.* 112-113

3 *ibid.* 2, 119

Then again he became impatient and fell at His feet. Mahāprabhu tried to console him by saying, "Gopāla! Do not lose heart. You will be soon free from bondage and go to Vṛndāvana, where you will meet Rūpa and Sanātana. They will tell you all about the mistery relating to My personality and My *bhāva*. You will assist them in the fulfilment of My purpose. Your disciples will preach my religion of love all over." So saying Mahāprabhu took Gopāla in His lap, bathed him with His tears and asked him not to disclose what he had seen to anyone else.[1]

Mahāprabhu said to Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa, "I love your Gopāla. He has all My blessings. You give him good education, but do not marry him."[2]

Mahāprabhu's teachings to Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa.

As long as Mahāprabhu stayed with Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa, he enjoyed his talks on Kṛṣṇa with Him. He had developed friendly feeling towards Him. Therefore his talks with Him were sometimes serious, sometimes humorous.

Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa was a worshipper of Lakṣmī–Nārāyaṇa. One day Mahāprabhu said to him humorously: "Bhaṭṭa! Your Lakṣmī is the devoted wife of Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Lord of Vaikuṇṭha. Still She longs the company of Kṛṣṇa. Why?"[3]

Bhaṭṭa said, "Kṛṣṇa and Nārāyaṇa are non–different. *Kṛṣṇa–līlā* and specially His *rāsa–līlā* are more

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1 *Bh. R.* 1, 123-124

2 *Prema Vilasa*, p. 274.

3 *C. C.*, 2, 9, 111-112.

enjoyable. Therefore, if Lakṣmī desires the company of Kṛṣṇa, what is wrong in it? It does not in any way affect Her devotion to Her husband."

"This is true", said Mahāprabhu, "but the fact is that She practises so much *japa*, *tapa*[1] and fasting in order to attain Him, still She fails. The *śastras* say that the *śrutis* practised *tapa* and got Him, but She has not been able to get Him till this day. What is the reason for this?"

Bhaṭṭa said, "Prabhu! My intelligence does not work here. How can my limited understanding penetrate the unlimited depth of the ocean of *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*. Only he can, who has the grace of Kṛṣṇa".

Mahāprabhu laughed and said, "Listen. Kṛṣṇa attracts everyone by His *mādhurya*. But everyone cannot attain Him. He can be attained only by those, who approach Him through *Vraja–bhāva*. The people of Vraja do not regard or worship Him as God. Everyone in Vraja knows Him as the son of Nanda and not as God, the Supreme Being, Who has neither beginning nor end, neither birth nor death. Therefore they regard Him as their son, husband or friend, and behave towards Him accordingly. They tie Him to *udūkhala*,[2] ride His shoulders, eat His remnants and give Him their remnants to eat. This would not have been possible if they regarded Him as God. *Aiśvarya–jñāna*[3] is detrimental to *mādhurya–jñāna*.[4] Therefore in order to attain Kṛṣṇa it is necessary to worship Him according to the *bhāva* of

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1 Austerity

2 Wooden mortar used for cleaning rice by pounding it with a pestle.

3 The knowledge of the Lord's lordliness.

4 The knowledge of the Lord's sweetness.

the Vrajavasīs, which is devoid of the knowledge of His *aiśvarya*. It is said in the *"nāyaṁ sukhāpo" śloka* of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (*Bh.*, 10, 9, 16) that Kṛṣṇa is easily realized by His *bhaktas*, but not so easily by the *jñānīs*, or by Brahma or Śiva or Lakṣmī. The *śloka* means that only the *bhaktas* of Kṛṣṇa, who worship Him in the *rāgānugā* way under the guidance *(ānugatya)* of a *gopī*, can attain Him in the way in which the *gopīs* attained Him. The *śrutis* worshipped Him in *gopī–bhāva* under the guidance of *gopīs*. Therefore they got the body of *gopī* and with that body participated in the *rāsa* of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is a *gopa* (cowherd) by caste. Therefore He accepts only the *gopīs* as His beloved, not a goddess or any other lady. Lakṣmī had the conceit and the body of a goddess. She tried to attain Kṛṣṇa in the same body rather than in the body of a *gopī* after worshipping Him in the *rāgānugā* way under the guidance of a *gopī*. Therefore She could not attain Him.

Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa believed that Nārāyaṇa was Bhagavān Himself and His worship was the highest worship. Mahāprabhu's joke was intended to remove this misconception from his mind. Therefore He explained to him the relative position of Kṛṣṇa and Nārāyaṇa by saying, "Bhaṭṭa! You should not doubt in the least that Kṛṣṇa is Svayaṁ Bhagavān or Bhagavān Himself, not Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa is only a partial manifest of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa attracts Lakṣmī, but Nārāyaṇa cannot attract the *gopīs*. Not to speak of Nārāyaṇa, even Kṛṣṇa, when he assumes the four–armed figure of Nārāyaṇa, cannot attract the *gopīs*.[1]

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 9, 141-150

"Metaphysically, however, there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and Nārāyaṇa. Similarly there is no difference between Lakṣmī and *gopī*. Lakṣmī enjoys the company of Kṛṣṇa through *gopī*. One and the same God assumes different forms according to the *bhāva* of the *bhakta*. It is an offence to regard them as different in substance."[1]

Thus through jokes and humorous talks Mahāprabhu revealed to Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa many secrets of *bhāva–bhakti*. Since Gopāla never left the company of Mahāprabhu he got an opportunity to hear them and his *bhakti*, though natural, was further strengthened.

At the conclusion of *cāturmāsya* one day Mahāprabhu took leave of the Bhaṭṭa family. They bade Him farewell with tears in their eyes. What befell upon Gopāla in the absence of Mahāprabhu cannot be described in words. While going He had consoled Gopāla by saying, "Have patience. Your desire will soon be fulfilled."[2] He took His words as His blessing regarding his *Vṛndāvana–vāsa* (living in Vṛndāvana) and began anxiously to wait for the time, when he would meet Rūpa and Sanātana in Vṛndāvana.

Gopāla's Proficiency in *Śāstras*, Music, Dance and Drama

Mahāprabhu had advised Gopāla not to renounce the world as long as his parents were alive and to study *śāstras*. Therefore he devoted himself whole–heartedly to the service of his parents and the study of *śāstras*.

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1 *C.C.*, 2, 9, 153-157

2 *Bh. R.*, 1, 142

Within a short time he acquired proficiency in all the *śāstras* and the fame of his learning spread far and wide. He surprised even the great *panditas* by the excellence with which he expounded the doctrine of *bhakti* and criticised *māyāvāda*.[1]

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was not only proficient in the *śāstras*. He was also a great poet and was equally proficient in dance and music.[2]

Murārī Gupta has said in his *kaḍacā* that even in his boyhood Gopāla evinced his taste in dance and music by adopting dance and *kīrtana* as his games —

bālyakrīḍāṁ parityajya kṛṣṇaṁ gāyanaṁ nanatta ca ।
(3, 15, 16)

Dr. Vimānabihārī Majūmadāra has quoted a *śloka* from so far unpublished Kavikarṇapūra's *vandanā*, found in Pothī No. 638 of Baraha–nagara–grantha–mandira, from which it is learnt that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was also proficient in the art of drama.[3]

In Vṛndāvana

As soon as Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's parents died, he considered himself free from the only bond that tied him to the world. Like a calf, released from the peg running fast to the cow, he ran to Vṛndāvana. If he were free to go to Nīlācala, he would have gone there and fallen at the feet of Mahāprabhu. But Mahāprabhu had ordained him to go straight to Vṛndāvana. His command had to

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1 *Bh. R.* 1, 144 / 146

2 *ibid*, 152

3 *Śrī Caitanya–Caritera Upādāna*, p. 160

be obeyed. On reaching Vṛndāvana he went to Rūpa and Sanātana. They had already heard a lot about him from Mahāprabhu and had been anxiously waiting for his arrival, for he was to help them in the compilation of the *bhakti-śāstras* and the dissemination of the teachings of Mahāprabhu. They were very much delighted to meet him. His arrival was regarded as an important event not only by Rūpa–Sanātana, but by the entire Vaiṣṇava society in Vṛndāvana. How important it was can be easily understood from the fact that the information was immediately sent through a special messenger to Mahāprabhu. In the absence of postal facility during those days information from one place to another could only be sent through messengers, who had to travel very long distances. It was therefore only on very special occasions that messages were sent.

Mahāprabhu was also very happy to get the message. He conveyed it to the devotees of Nīlācala and spoke to them about Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's qualities of head and heart. He wrote a letter to Rūpa–Sanātana, asking them to take care of him as their younger brother.[1] Along with the letter he sent for Gopāla Bhaṭṭa His *dora-kaupīna*, *bahirvāsa*[2] and *āsana* (*paṭṭā*)[3]

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1 *Bh. R.*, 1, 189-90

2 Outer garment

3 *Bh. R.*, 1, 193-194.
Dr. Jānā expresses doubt regarding Mahāprabhu's sending these valuable presents to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa on the ground of the following line in *Anurāgavallī*, which says that on arriving in Vṛndāvana, Gopāla met Rūpa–Sanātana and the two Raghunāthas —

āsiyā pāilā rūpa sanātana saṅga |
duī raghunātha saṅg premera taraṅga ||

He thinks that because Raghunātha Dāsa came to Vṛndāvana after the disappearence of Mahāprabhu, the question of His sending these presents to him does not arise. But *Anurāgavallī* does not say that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa met Raghunātha immediately on his arrival.

When Gopāla Bhaṭṭa learnt of this, he was so much overwhelmed with *bhāva* that he could not control himself and became senseless. On regaining consciousness he repeatedly made obeisance to the *dora–kaupīna, āsana* and *bahirvāsa*. But even on Rūpa–Sanātana's insistance he refused to sit on the *āsana*.

However when they explained to him that by sending the *āsana* Mahāprabhu had authorised and commanded him to give *dīkṣa* to people by sitting on that *āsana*, he had to obey.[1]

Appearance of the Śrī Vigraha of Śrī Rādhāramaṇa

Mahāprabhu had asked Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to worship *śālagrāma* and said that he would see Rādhāramaṇa in *śālagrāma*.[2]

According to Gopāla Kavi Mahāprabhu had asked Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in a dream to go to the source of Gaṅḍakī river in the Himalayas and worship the first Śālagrāma he found there as Rādhāramaṇa. Also, according to him Mahāprabhu in the form of tortoise (*kurmākṛtī*), which He had assumed in Nīlācala in the state of intense *viraha*, had Himself appeared in Gaṅḍakī in the form of the *śālagrāma* Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was asked to bring and worship.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa went to the source of the Gaṅḍakī through Saharaṅapur. In Devabanda he met Śrī Mādhava Praśāda Sharmā, the land lord of the place.

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1 According to Gopāla Kavi Mahāprabhu had in His letter asked Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to give *dīkṣā* to Śrīnivāsācārya, who had appeared as His own partial manifest *(Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Caritra,* p. 8)

2 *Bh. R.*, 4, 316

Mādhava could see from the lustre of his body and his *bhakti–bhāva* that he was a *mahāpuruṣa*. He took him to his house and, after serving him with all the respect due to him, got his sons Dāmodāra and Gopīnātha initiated by him.

From Devabanda he went, travelling through the forests of Nepal, to the source of Gaṅḍakī. After bathing in the river, as soon as he put his hand inside it to take water for offering it to the sun, a *śālagrāma–śilā* came into his hand. He clasped the *śilā* close to his heart. He gathered eleven more *śilās* of different size from the river and returned to Vṛndāvana. He made a small *kutī* on *rāsā–sthalī* (the place where *rāsā–līlā* was performed) near Nidhuvana, in which he lived and did *bhajana*.

He passed most o his time in the loving service of *śālagrāma*. He used to keep the *śālagrāma* in a *pitārī* (a container made of twigs), hang the *pitārī* to the branch of a banian tree and swing *śālagrāma*. He believed that the words of Mahāprabhu would come true and one day *śālagrāma* would manifest Himself as Rādhāramaṇa. In imagination he used to see a *vigraha* of Rādhāramaṇa, whose face resembled the face of Rūpa Gosvāmī's Govinda Jī, chest resembled the chest of Madhu Pandita's Gopīnātha and feet resembled the feet of Sanātana Gosvāmī's Madana Mohana. Thus he tried to see the three in one.[1]

The story goes that once a wealthy person came to Vṛndāvana and offered costly dress and ornaments to the *vigrahas* of all the temples in Vṛndāvana. That made Gopāla Bhaṭṭa desire much more eagerly that

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1 *Bh. R.* 4, 321-322

śālagrāma manifested Himself as Rādhāramaṇa. He began to think that if his *śālagrāma* had hands and feet, he could also decorate Him in the same way in which the *pujārīs* of other temples were decorating their *vigrahas* with the dress and ornaments provided by the rich man and be happy. *Śālagrāma* heard his silent prayer. On the Pūrṇimā of the month of Vaiśākha in 1542, when in the morning he opened the *pitārī* for the usual service of *śālagrāma*, he was delighted beyond measure to see that the same *śālagrāma*, Whom he had found first in Gaṅḍakī, had appeared as Rādhā–ramaṇa. Rādhāramaṇa's Śrī Vigraha was just like the one he used to imagine.

Rādhāramaṇa is beautiful beyond description. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa decorated Him exquisitely with flowers and made Him look still more beautiful. He watched His beauty and kept watching with tears of love incessantly flowing from his eyes till he lost all outward consciousness. He knew that Rādhāramaṇa was no other than Śrī Gaurāṅga. Therefore while worshipping Him, he was often reminded of his *Nadiyā–nāgara–rūpa*, which He had shown him in his boyhood and he became restless to see Him again in that form. Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, Who was already sold out to him on account of his love, could not but fulfil his desire. So one day He did appear to him in that form out of the *vigraha* of Rādhāramaṇa.[1]

According to some Mahāprabhu's assurance to Rūpa Gosvāmī that He would Himself go to Vṛndāvana one day to see how he had completed the work entrusted to him, was fulfilled by His coming to Vṛndāvana

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1 *Bh. R.* 4, 319

in the form of Rādhāramaṇa. This is confirmed by the words *"Gaura halo radharamane* — Gaura became Rādhāramaṇa", which once came out of the mouth of Rāmadāsa Bābājī in one of his inspired *kīrtans*.[1]

We do not see the Śrī Vigraha of Śrī Rādhā by the side of Śrī Rādhāramaṇa.[2] This also seems to lend support to the belief that Śrī Gaurāṅga appeared as Rādhāramaṇa, because the *vigraha* of Gaurāṅga is the combined *vigraha* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.[3]

The way in which Gopāla Bhaṭṭa enjoyed the *rasa* and *mādhurya* of transcendental Vṛndāvana is described by Nābhā Jī in Chappaya No. 94 of *Bhaktamāla*. Priyādāsa in his commentary of the Chappaya says :

"The beautiful *mūrti* of Rādhāramaṇa, which appeared out of *śālagrāma*, was the treasure of the heart of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. He was always engaged in His loving service and was famous for it. He enjoyed to his heart's content the *rasa* and *mādhurya* of Vṛndāvana. Whoever got his *prasada* became like him."

The Disciples of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa

The Gauḍīya Gosvāmīs were all the very embodiments of humility. They did not want to accept disciples, because they thought they did not deserve to be guru. Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha did not take any disciples. Lokanātha had also vowed not to give *dīkṣā*

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1 The *kīrtans* of *siddha* Śrī Rāmdāsa Bābājī Mahārāja were not his own compositions. They came to him in his state of *bhāva* from a transcendental source and other people recorded them. They are published in two big volumes under the title *"Guru Kṛpāradāna"*.

2 In the temple of Rādhāramaṇa a silver crown is installed by the side of the *vigraha* of Rādhāramaṇa, which represents Rādhā.

3 *C.C.*, 6, 4, 55-56

to anyone, though he had to break his vow in the case of Naroṭṭāma Ṭhākura. Rūpa and Sanātana were concerned about the *śiṣya–paramparā* (the line of disciplic succession) of the *sampradāya*, which had to be maintained. Mahāprabhu had solved the problem to some extent by authorising and ordering Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to give *dīkṣā*; Rūpa Gosvāmī tried to prepare at least one more person for the task. Jīva Gosvāmī was still young. Therefore he entrusted the responsibility to Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa. He asked Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to initiate the people from the western region and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa to initiate those coming from Gauḍa.[1]

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī gave initiation to many people of the West, prominent among whom were the two brothers Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Gopīnātha Gosvāmī, whom he had brought with him on his return from Gaṅḍakī. Gopīnātha had not married. He was a great devotee and renunciant. He served Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and also helped him in the service of Rādhāramaṇa. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa wanted to give him the right of service of Rādhāramaṇa. He asked him to marry so that the right became hereditary and did not go into the hands of unauthorised persons. But since Gopīnātha Gosvāmī was not inclined to marry, he gave the right of service to Dāmodara Gosvāmī.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's other prominent disciple was Śrīnivāsācārya. According to the dispensation of Śrī Rūpa he should have been initiated by Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa. Why this deviation from the rule? To understand the mistery behind it we may look back at Mahāprabhu's own initiation by Keśava Bhāratī. Before receiving the

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1 Anurāgavallī, 2, p. 14.

sannyāsa mantrā from him, He first whispered into his ear the *mantrā*, which He said He had received in a dream and then received the same *mantrā* from him. Thus He kept His original position as Ādiguru, the first guru or the guru of gurus, unchanged. Similarly, as Gopāla Kavi says, He first authorised Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to give *dīkṣā* by sending His *āsana* to him and then took *dīkṣā* from him Himself in the form of Śrīnivāsācārya, who is regarded as His own partial manifest.

Śrīnivāsācārya was adept in dance, music and drama. So were Naroṭṭāma Ṭhākura and Śyāmānanda, who came to Vṛndāvana about the same time as Śrīnivāsācārya. They together went about in Vraja singing and performing *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*. It was at this time that Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was also trying to start the tradition of *rāsā–līlā* performance, which is current till now. It is possible that the source of the inspiration of all of them was Gopāla Bhaṭṭa himself, who, as we have seen, according to the accounts given by Murārī Gupta and Kavikarṇapūra, had become an expert in dance, music and the art of drama in his boyhood.

The Passing Away

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī passed away at the age of 85 in 1586, exactly 100 years after the appearance of Mahāprabhu. His Samādhi exists near the *prākaṭya sthalī* of Rādhāramaṇa in Rādhāramaṇa Gherā.

Kavikarṇapūra has said that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was the Anaṅga Mañjarī of *Vraja–līlā*. Others have called him Guṇa Mañjarī :

anaṅga mañjarī yāsīt sādya gopālabhaṭṭakah, ।
bhaṭṭa gosvāminam kecidāhuh śrī guṇa mañjarīm ॥

(*Gauragaṇoddeśa–dīpikā*, 184)

Works

Haribhaktivilāsa — The most important work of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī is *Haribhakti–vilāsa.* It is a compendium or the corpus of Vaiṣṇava rituals and practices, of which each rule is supported by copious illustration from the *Purānas*, *Saṁhitās*, and *Tantras.* It was compiled before 1541, because it is quoted in *Bhaktarasāmṛtasindhu*, which was compiled in 1541. There is a dispute with regard to its authorship, some writers holding that it is the work of Sanātana Gosvāmī. We have resolved the dispute, in the chapter on Sanātana Gosvāmī by proving that Sanātana Gosvāmī compiled a brief *Vaiṣṇava Smṛti* and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī expanded the same into *Haribhaktivilāsa.*

Some writers find fault with the work by pointing out that although it is intended to be a code of religious conduct for the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, it "departs in many details from the accepted views of the sect."[1] The criticism is based on the misconception that the work was prepared as a *Smṛti–grantha* for the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, which is not a fact. It was meant for the Vaiṣṇavas in general. Indirectly, therefore, the work supports the view that the Gauḍīya Gosvāmīns did not try to establish a separate *sampradāya.*

Ṣaṭasaṁdarbha Kārikā — Gopāla Bhaṭṭa is recognized as the original author of Jīva Gosvāmī's *Ṣaṭsaṁdarbha.* Jīva himself acknowledges this in the *Maṇga-*

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1 S.K. De: *Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal,* p. 104.
Dr. Vimāna Bihārī Majūmadāra: *Caitanya–Caritera Upādāna,* p. 162.
Dr. Jānā: *Chaya Gosvāmī,* p. 299.

lācaraṇa śloka of the work. He says, "I was inspired to write this work by Rūpa and Sanātana. An old friend of theirs, belonging to the South (Dākṣiṇatya Bhaṭṭa), had already compiled the work, drawing from the treatises of old Vaiṣṇavas, which was in the form of scattered and unsystematic notes. I have systematized them and elaborated upon them." Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa informs us that by the old Vaiṣṇavas Jīva Gosvāmī means Rāmānujācārya, Madhavācārya and Śrīdhara Svāmī and by Dākṣiṇatya he means Gopāla Bhaṭṭa.

Satkriyāsāra-dīpikā — This work is intended to fulfil an omission in *Harībhakti-vilāsa*. It contains a description of fourteen *saṁskāras* (purificatory rites) like *upanayana* (the sacred thread ceremony) and marriage, which is not given in *Haribhaktivilāsa*.

Saṁsakāra-dīpikā — This contains a description of the ritual relating to *Veśāsrya* (*Vaiṣṇava-sannyāsa*) and the conduct of householder, *Sannyāsī*, *Avadhūta* and *Paramahaṁsa*.

Commentary on Kṛṣṇakarṇāmṛta — Gopāla Bhaṭṭa has written a beautiful commentary on *Kṛṣṇakarṇāmṛta*, called *Kṛṣṇavallabhā*. Manohara Dāsa has mentioned this in *Anurāgavallī* and Narahari Cakravartī in *Bhakti-ratnākara*.[1]

From the colophon and *ātmaparicaya* (the account given by the author of himself), it seems to be quite clear that the book was written by Draviḍa Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, the son of Harivamśa and not by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī of the Gauḍīya Sampradāya. It is difficult to believe that in the face of such clear statement regarding authorship, both Manohara Dāsa and Narahari Cakravartī

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1 *Bh. R.* 1, 228

would attribute the work to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. It seems that after *Anurāgavallī* and *Bhaktiratnākara* were written, someone added the colophon and the *ātmaparicaya* to this work on account of the misunderstanding created by the name Draviḍa Gopāla Bhaṭṭa occurring in the second *śloka* of the work.

Apart from the testimony of *Anurāgavallī* and *Bhaktiratnākara*, a strong evidence in favour of the work having been written by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa is that the quotations of the *Purānas* in it have been drawn not directly from the *Purānas* but from such Gauḍīya works as *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu, Ujjvalanīlāmani, Padyāvali* and *Jagannātha Vallabha Nātaka.*

CHAPTER VII

Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

We know that the rivers Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī [1] met at Prayāga and the confluence of the three rivers was called Trivenī. The river Sarasvatī branched off a short way down and, flowing in a semi–circular course, met the Gangā again at Alīpur.[2] A new Trivenī was thus formed in Bengal. It is near this Trivenī that in *Paurānic* times the seven sons of Rājā Priyavrata practised *sādhanā* after accepting *sannyāsa*. Since then the place has been called Saptagrāma.

During the days of the Mohammedan rulers Saptagrāma was a very flourishing town. It was the residence of a large number of Europeans, whose ships lay anchored on the river Sarasvatī, laden with merchandise.

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1 It is now a dead river.

2 D.C. Sen: *Chaitanya and His Companions*. p.122

It was the most important port for the sea–going vessels in Bengal.[1] The Emperor of Gauḍa had leased the town and its adjoining villages to two influential Kāyastha Chiefs — Hiraṇya and Govardhana. "The condition was that they should pay a revenue of 12 lakhs of rupees a year and the Emperor would not interfere with the internal administration of the district. Under this new arrangement the annual income from the land alone rose to 20 lakhs, besides which the taxes on the exports, and imports, were a source of considerable additional income to the brothers."[2] Both the brothers were reputed not only for their wealth and valour, but also for their scholarship, god–fearing nature and charity. Many Brahmins of the district of Nadiyā depended on them for their livelihood.[3] Their court was a favourite resort of distinguished scholars.[4]

Hiraṇya had no issue. Raghunātha Dāsa was the only child of Govardhana. He was the only solace of the family, the only one on whom they had pinned the hope that he would maintain the wealth, the reputation and the royal tradition of the family. He was sent for his education to the house of Balarāma Ācārya, their devout and scholarly family priest, who lived in a nearby village, named Cāndapura. He began to study Sanskṛta and the *śāstras* under him. Raghunātha was at that time about 8 or 10 years old. It was evident even at that time that he was made differently from his father and uncle and that he would pursue a line different from

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1 D.C. Sen: *Chaitanya and His Companions*. p.122

2 *ibid*, p.121

3 *C.C.* 2, 16, 217-219

4 D.C. Sen: Op. Cit, p.123

the one they had chalked out for him. He was calm and quiet, seclusive and indifferent to dress, eating and drinking and everything else that attracted a boy of his age.[1] Balarāma Ācarya was a saintly person and his house was a regular meeting place for saints. Once the Mohammedan saint Thākura Haridāsa came from Benāpole to Cāndapura. Balarāma Ācārya received him cordially. He made a thatched cottage for him in a lonely place in Cāndapura, in which he began to live and do *japa* and *nāma–kīrtana*. He came to Balarāma's house everyday for *bhikṣā*.[2] Raghunātha respectfully made obeisance to him and received his blessings. He often went to his place, and circumambulated his *kuti* [3] listening to his ecstatic *kīrtana* and himself went into ecstasy.

It was the company of Thākura Haridāsa and his blessings that ultimately fructified in the shape of his meeting with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his mercy on him, as Kṛṣṇadasa Kaviraja has said in *Caitanya Caritamṛta*.[4]

The boy Raghunātha used to hear from his servants, maid–servants, relations and the distinguished persons who visited the court of his father, about the supernatural personality and *bhāva* of Śrī Caitanya. His picture was, therefore, already firmly printed on his mind. But the picture became alive, when, on account of the company and blessing of Haridāsa, a new current of *bhāva–bhakti* began to flow in his heart. He became

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1 *C.C.* 2, 16, 122

2 Food given in charity

3 Thatched cottage

4 *ibid.* 3, 3, 169

restless for his *darśana*. One day the news came from Navadvīpa that Nimāi Pandita (Śrī Caitanya) had taken *sannyāsa* from Keśava Bhāratī at Katavā and gone no one knows where. Like a sudden stroke of lightning the news benumbed the whole of Saptagrāma. Raghunātha thought that perhaps it would never be possible for him to have His *darśana* and he fell senseless on the ground.

After three days the news came that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had gone to the house of Advaitācārya in Śāntipura and was staying there. Crowds of people from Navadvīpa were going to Śāntipura for his *darśana*. Parties of people from Saptagrāma also began to leave for Śāntipura. A silver lining was visible in the clouds of despair and despondency hovering over the mind of Raghunātha. He became extremely restless to go to Śāntipura for the *darśana* of Mahāprabhu. Hiraṇya and Govardhana thought it would be imprudent to prevent him from going. They arranged to send him under the escort of some Brahmins, friends and a number of pike–men. On reaching Śāntipura Raghunātha saw that huge crowds of people were rushing towards the house of Advaitācārya, singing aloud the name of the Lord. Raghunātha also joined them. On reaching Advaitā-cārya's house he fell at the feet of Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu affectionately placed his foot upon his head and then lifted and embraced him. Both embraced and bathed each other in the tears of love that flowed from their eyes.

Everyone knew Raghunātha as the heir apparent of the ruler of Saptagrāma. Hiraṇya and Govardhana were intimate with Advaitācārya. Therefore Advaitācārya made proper arrangements for Raghunātha's stay in his own house. Raghunātha lived there happily for about a week and enjoyed the *darśana* and company of Mahā-

prabhu. By the grace of Advaitācārya everyday he got the *mahāprasāda* of Mahāprabhu to eat.[1]

During this period Mahāprabhu won the heart and soul of Raghunātha by giving him His company, His love and His *mahāprasāda* and then bade him go. Raghunātha could not bear His separation. He went back sobbing and weeping. Tears that now started flowing never stopped all his life.

Raghunātha Mad in love for Mahāprabhu

Raghunātha returned from Śāntipura, but his heart and soul remained tied to the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu with the bond of love. He could not forget even for a moment His exquisitely beautiful face, His love trances, such as he had never seen or heard and His repeatedly looking at him with eyes brimming with love. He always felt like flying to Him at Nīlācala.

He said to his parents and uncle with a heart full of distress, "You are my guardians, my well–wishers. If you want my happiness, kindly permit me to go to Nīlācala and surrender at the feet of Mahāprabhu, otherwise my soul will fly to Nīlācala, leaving only the body here."

Raghunātha's words struck them like a thunder bolt. They said in one voice with a start, "What do you say? What madness! Never say like that again."

Raghunātha was really mad. Though he was always obedient to his parents, it was impossible for him to obey them and stay at home. He tried several times to flee, but he was caught on the way and brought

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1 *C.C.* 2, 16, 226

back. There was no end to the anxiety of Raghunātha's mother. She lost her hunger and sleep. Hiraṇya and Govardhana were also always worried. They apprehended that Raghunātha might some day, somehow sneak out. They appointed several guards to keep a watch on him and gave them strict warning that he must in no circumstance be allowed to go out of Saptagrāma. The strongest chain with which a man can be tied to the world is woman. Raghunātha was now seventeen years old. His guardians thought that if he was married, his mind would change. So they married him to a very beautiful and accomplished girl. But the bond of marriage also proved futile.

Second Meeting with Mahāprabhu

After some time the news came to Saptagrāma that Mahāprabhu was going to Vṛndāvana. On His way He met Rūpa and Sanātana at Rāmakeli. At the advice of Sanātana He postponed His visit to Vṛndāvana. On His way back to Nīlācala He would now stay for a week with Advaitācārya at Śāntipura. Already people had started gathering at Śāntipura and the place had put on a festive look with dance and *kīrtāna* going on everywhere.

Raghunātha also became restless for the *darśana* of Mahāprabhu. If a man, who has been thirsty for long, suddenly finds that the sea of nectar has come flowing near him, how can he remain without drinking and quenching his thirst? Raghunātha also could not remain without quenching his thirst for the *darśana* of Mahāprabhu. He frankly and unhesitatingly told his father and uncle that he could not remain without seeing Mahāprabhu. There was again a problem for them. They could neither prevent Raghunātha from going, nor send him without fear of losing him. They sent him with a

number of bodyguards, servants and Brahmins. They also sent along with him a variety of things as offerings for the service of Mahāprabhu.

Raghunātha had been weeping in separation from Mahāprabhu now for four or five years. His love for Mahāprabhu had become much more intense. He saw that crowds of people were rushing towards Śāntipura dancing and singing in praise of Mahāprabhu. He also joined the crowd and dancing and singing with them reached Śāntipura. This time as soon as he saw Mahāprabhu, he fell at His feet and burst into tears. He tried to stop weeping but could not. Within his own mind he began to say to Mahāprabhu prayerfully, "Prabhu! somehow release me from the hands of the bodyguards and the watchmen and take me along with you to Nīlācala. It is now impossible for me to live in separation from You. I have drunk too much of the poison of wordly enjoyments. How much more would You make me drink? You have incarnated for the deliverance of the fallen souls. How long would You remain indifferent to a fallen soul like me?"

Mahāprabhu could peep into his heart. He heard his prayer, but did not say anything at the moment. Advaitācārya had made such arrangement for Raghunātha's stay that he could enjoy Mahāprabhu's company all the time. He also gave him the *mahāprasāda* of Mahāprabhu every day. Mahāprabhu knew that Raghunātha was his eternal associate and he had to come out of the world to assist Him in His *līlā*. But for some reason, best known to Him, He wanted him to stay in the world for some time more. One day He said, "Raghunātha! Do not be crazy. Be calm and go home. You cannot cross the ocean of the world by a leap. One has to swim across it slowly. You should go back and perform all your worldly duties without attachment

to the world and always keeping Kṛṣṇa in mind. Kṛṣṇa will soon be merciful to you."[1] Then Mahāprabhu took him aside and quietly whispered into his ear — "Raghunātha! You need not worry. Soon I will go to Vṛndāvana. When I return from there you come to Nīlācala by some ruse. What ruse or trick you will use, Kṛṣṇa will Himself inspire into your heart. Who can hold a person, who has the mercy of Kṛṣṇa?"[2]

Raghunātha took Mahāprabhu's advice to heart. He felt greatly relieved by his kind assurance. When he returned home his parents were surprised to see that he was a changed Raghunātha. He joyfully participated in the affairs of the family; talked smilingly with his parents and the servants and even tried to humour his wife by mirthful conversation. There was no end to the happiness of the parents to notice this change in him.

Hiraṇya and Govardhana thought that he must now be kept fully engaged in the wordly affairs so that he did not have the time to think of anything else. They entrusted to him the responsibility of the administration of the estate, collection of revenue and depositing the Sultāna's share into his treasury. Raghunātha began to run the affairs of the estate with great interest and skill.

The judicious Hiraṇya and Govardhana did one more good thing. They got Raghunātha initiated by their family guru Yadunandana Ācārya,[3] so that he might, according to his natural inclination, also perform *pūjā*[4] to keep his inner self satisfied. Yadunandana Ācārya was

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1 *C.C.* 2, 16, 237-239

2 *ibid.* 240-241

3 Kavikarṇapura: *Caitanya Candrodaya*, X, 3

4 Worship

a disciple of Advaitācārya. Initiation from him was regarded by Raghunātha as the first step of Kṛṣṇa's mercy on him, of which Mahāprabhu had already given a hint.

Calamity

In the year 1516 a calamity befell upon the family. The ex–governor of Saptagrāma had been a Muslim Amīra. He could not collect revenue from the people of Saptagrāma, because his behaviour towards them was unduly harsh. Whatever revenue he could collect, he usurped and gave only a small fraction to the Sultāna, under the plea that the people had revolted and were not paying taxes.

Hiraṇya and Govardhana had assured Sultāna Husain Shāh that if the governorship was entrusted to them, they would deposit 12 lakhs annually into the royal treasury, irrespective of the amount collected by them. Husain Shāh knew that they were rich and noble–minded and were highly respected by the people of Saptagrāma. They would have no difficulty in collecting revenue. So he made them the governors. The two brothers, on account of their gentle behaviour towards the people of Saptagrāma, had little difficulty in collecting taxes. They collected 20 lakhs, out of which they paid 12 lakhs to the Sultāna and saved 8 lakhs for themselves. Besides they supplemented their income by several lakhs from other sources. The Amīra, who naturally bore a grudge against them, poisoned the ears of Husain Shāh against them. He said that they earned a lot more than 12 lakhs, which they deposited in the treasury. Besides they had grown very powerful and might prove dangerous to the state.

Husain Shāh sent his army chief with a body of soldiers to arrest them. Hiraṇya and Govardhana had

their men in the capital, who kept them informed of all the developments there. This news also reached them before the arrival of the army. They fled and hid themselves elsewhere. The chieftain arrested Raghunātha and kept him in prison by the order of Husain Shāh.

Raghunātha was made to appear before Husain Shāh in his court several times. Everytime he asked him to disclose the whereabouts of his father and uncle and threatened to beat him, if he did not. But he could not beat him. Every time he tried to do so, he saw something in the face of Raghunātha which turned his mind.[1] One day Raghunātha gathered courage. With folded hands he said to the Sultāna, "You have been treating my father and uncle as your brothers. The brothers often fall out and make up again. I am your child just as I am the child of my father and my uncle. You are my guardian, I am your ward. It does not befit the guardian to scold and terrorize his ward for no fault of his. I need hardly say anything more, because you are yourself well–versed in the *śāstrās* and are regarded as a *pīra* (a holy man)."[2]

The words of Raghunātha melted the heart of the Sultāna. Tears coursed down his eyes and his long beard. He said to him, "Dear child! From today you are my god–son. You are released. But you go home and tell your uncle that it is not fair to usurp all the 8 lakhs, he saves. He should give me something out of it. I leave everything to you. You settle the matter as you like."[3]

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1 C.C. 3, 6, 22

2 *ibid.* 24-28

3 *ibid*, 29-33

Raghunātha went home. He told everything to his uncle and father, took them along with him to the Sultāna and the matter was settled for all times on their agreeing to pay some more revenue.

Meeting Nityānanda Prabhu

After some time Raghunātha got the happy news that Nityānanda Prabhu, the closest associate of Mahāprabhu, Who was regarded as virtually non–different from Him, had come to Pānihātī,[1] a part of Saptagrāma itself. With Him had come His associates Rāmadāsa, Gadādhara Dāsa, Purandara and others. Mahāprabhu had enjoined Him to go from door to door and bestow *Kṛṣṇa–prema* to the fallen souls of *Kaliyuga*. So He was going about distributing *Kṛṣṇa–prema*. This was effortless and natural for Him. For His eyes poured *prema–bhakti* spontaneously just as the clouds pour rain. He had only to look in a particular direction to make the current of *prema–bhakti* flow in it.[2] The person, upon whom He looked but once, was charged with a strong current of *bhakti* and began to shed tears of love. Trembling, sweating, horripilation and the other *sātvika bhāvas*, appeared on his body. He was filled with such spiritual power that even if he was a child, he could uproot big trees. He was so maddened by *Kṛṣṇa–prema* that he ran wild here and there and it was not possible even for hundreds of persons to hold him. His cries of "Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya! Jai Nityānanda!" rent the sky.[3]

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1 A place about four miles from Calcutta

2 *C. Bh.*, 3, 5, 313

3 *ibid*, 307-310, 362-365

Avadhūta Nityānanda's face was radiant with such supernatural *bhāva*, His words were so sweet and *kīrtana* so intoxicating that wherever He went, people were automatically drawn to Him. They were so entranced that they forgot themselves, their family and everything and began to dance and do *kīrtana* with Him. The *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas* (cymbals) sounded high to announce His victory over the hearts of people.

Raghunātha was overwhelmed with joy to hear this. He thought that the time had come for the fulfilment of the blessings of Mahāprabhu. Nityānanda had come to his own territory to deliver him from the bondage of *Māyā*. He decided to go at once and surrender himself at His feet.

This time he did not have any difficulty in obtaining the permission of his parents, because they no more had any apprehensions about him. He reached Pānihātī. Nityānanda Prabhu was at that time sitting on a platform under a banian tree on the bank of Ganges. On the ground were sitting numerous devotees, whose eyes were fixed on Him. His body radiated lustre like the rising sun. His eyes scintillated with bliss.

Raghunātha lay prostrate before Him at some distance. The people recognized him and said to Nityānanda, "The heir apparent of Saptagrāma has come."

Nityānanda had heard about him from Mahāprabhu. He was overjoyed to see him. He went near him, touched his head with His lotus feet to bless him and then said, holding him affectionately close to His heart, "Thief! You always keep away from Me. Today you are caught. You shall be punished."[1]

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1 *C. Bh.*, 3, 5, 50

What Nityānanda meant was that Mahāprabhu belonged to Him and a person, who tried to attain Him independently, without His permission was a thief. Raghunātha had tried twice to obtain the mercy of Mahāprabhu, but had failed, because he had not approached Him through Nityānanda. According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism Nityānanda is the *Guru–tattva* (Guru–principle) and Mahāprabhu's mercy can be obtained only through Him.

Daṅḍa–mahotsava (Festivity of Punishment)

Raghunātha was not only ready but eager to receive punishment, because he knew that Nityānanda was mercy personified and His punishment could not be anything except His mercy. He bowed down before Him and said happily, "Prabhu, punish me as You please. I am ready to receive the punishment."

Nityānanda said, "You must organize a grand feast and feed all the devotees with *dahī–ciḍā* (curd and *ciḍā*)[1]

Raghunātha was only too happy to hear about the punishment. He had dearth neither of money nor of men. Quickly he arranged for *ciḍā*, curd, milk, mollases and bananas in huge quantity. *Ciḍā* was divided into two parts. One was mixed with condensed milk, the other with curd. In each bananas and mollases were added in adequate proportion. The mixture was kept in thousands of earthen pots.

The news regarding the festival had already spread all round. Thousands of people of all castes, ranging from Brahmins to the lowest Cāndālas, assembled at

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1 Rice wetted, parched and flattened.

the spot. They sat round Nityānanda and His associates. Many could not find a place to sit. They climbed the banian tree or stood in knee–deep water in the Ganges. Each was served with two pots, one containing curd and *ciḍā* and the other containing milk and *ciḍā*. All kept the pots before them or held them in their hands and began to wait till Nityānanda gave them the signal to start eating.

On the platform below the banian tree two *āsanas*[1] were kept, one for Nityānanda and the other for Mahāprabhu. Nityānanda closed his eyes and invoked Mahāprabhu to grace the occasion by His presence. Mahāprabhu could not but accept the invitation of Nityānanda. He came. As soon as He came Nityānanda stood up.[2] He took Him round the devotees. As they went round Nityānanda took a particle from the pot of each devotee and put it into the mouth of Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu also took a particle from the pot of each devotee and smilingly put it in the mouth of Nityānanda. The associates of Nityānanda and all those, who had the spiritual eyes to see, enjoyed the scene. But for those, who were not so fortunate, the behaviour of Nityānanda remained a mistery.[3] At the end Nityānanda Prabhu went and sat down with Mahāprabhu on the platform. He looked round smilingly and asked everyone to commence eating. Everyone shouted, "Jai Nitāi–Gaura!" and started eating. Nityānanda gave His own and Mahāprabhu's *mahāprasāda* to Raghunātha. The *Daṇḍa–mahotsava* was over, but it left its sweet memory

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1 A small carpet or mat or anything to sit on.

2 *C.C.* 3, 6, 77-78

3 *ibid*, 78-82

for ever. Even now, the anniversary of *Daṇḍa–Mahotsava* is celebrated in Pānihātī each year on the thirteenth day of the moon in the month of Jeṣṭha (May–June).

At night the same day Nityānanda was invited for *prasāda* at the house of Rāghava Pandita. There also Mahāprabhu appeared in body and took *prasāda* with Nityānanda. Afterwards, Rāghava Pandita gave the *mahāprasāda* of both Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda to Raghunātha and said, "Take this *mahāprasāda* and be blest. The *mahāprasāda* will soon deliver you from bondage."[1]

Next morning, when, after taking His bath in the Ganges, Nityānanda Prabhu was sitting on the same platform, surrounded by devotees, Raghunātha made obeisance to Him and said with throat choked with emotion and tears streaming down the eyes, "Prabhu! I am a fallen creature, the lowliest of the lowly, yet I long for the mercy of Mahāprabhu, like a dwarf, who aspires to catch the moon. But I know that even though I am the most undeserving person on earth, I can get the mercy of Mahāprabhu, if You be kind to me. Kindly place Your foot on my head and bless so that I may attain the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu."

As he said this, he fell down at the feet of Nityānanda and began to weep. Nityānanda was moved. He said affectionately, "Raghunātha! I bless you with My heart. You will soon find shelter under the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu."

Nityānanda's blessings dispelled the clouds of despair and despondency from the heart of Raghunātha. He was filled with new courage and new hope and

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1 *C.C.* 3, 6, 123

started for home, this time with determination to fight to the finish the forces of *Māyā*.

Renunciation

On returning home Raghunātha did not go inside. He began to live in a temple outside the house. He had nothing to do with the affairs of the family and the estate. All the time he wept and shouted "Ha Gaura! Ha Nitai!" There was no end to the anxiety of his father and uncle to see this sudden resurgence of divine madness in him with redoubled vehemence. Their advice, cajoling and threatening were of no use. His mother said to his father, "Raghunātha has gone mad. He may run away. His running away will mean my death. So keep him bound by rope or chains."

The father replied, "What rope or chain can bind a person, who could not be bound by power and pelf similar to that of Indra and a wife beautiful like a nymph? Is his madness ordinary so that he may be bound? Nityānanda has made him drink the wine of *Gaura-prema*, which is a thousand times stronger than any other wine. It is not possible for him now to stay at home. We shall have to reconcile ourselves with the thought that it is not given to us by destiny that we should have a son.

Even then the number of guards keeping a watch over Raghunātha was increased and a closer watch was kept. Wherever he went a number of watchmen in disguise followed him. It was impossible for him to break their ring and escape. He was somehow biding his time in the hope that Mahāprabhu's blessing will fructify and Kṛṣṇa will show him the way.

One day he passed the whole night weeping and crying "Ha Gaura! Ha Gaura!". The watchmen themselves wept to see his condition and tried to console

him. About an hour before dawn Yadunandana Ācārya, the family guru, came to him and said, "Raghunātha! I am in great distress."

"What is the matter Gurudeva?" said Raghunātha. "Let me know. I shall do all I can to help you."

"The *pujārī* (priest) who used to serve the Śrī Vigraha at my house, has run away. I am too old to serve the deity. If you ask him to return and resume duty, he will have to obey. Let us go together to his house just now."

Raghunātha started going with him. The watchmen did not prevent, because they thought he was going with Gurudeva for some urgent work of his. On reaching the house of Yadunandana Ācārya, which was on the way, he said to him, "Gurudeva, you need not take the trouble of going with me. You go and rest at home. I shall presently bring the *pujārī* to you."

Ācārya returned home. Raghunātha felt happy like a bird out of cage. After sending the *pujārī* to Yadunandana Ācārya, he set out for Nīlācala. He did not go by the regular path, because he was afraid that his father's horsemen would pursue and catch him. He went through the forests, caring little for the wild beasts, snakes and scorpions, bushes and thorns and the *dacoits*. No risk could deter him, no fear could slacken his pace, because he had drunk deep of the wine of *Gaura–prema* and the intoxication had made him forget everything, except the lotus feet of the Lord. He covered the distance in 12 days, though the pilgrims normally took 18 days. During these 12 days he took food only on three days. On the other days he fasted.[1] He fasted

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1 *C.C.* 3, 6, 188

as well as feasted, fasted in body, feasted in spirit on the joy, occasioned by the thought that he was at last going to attain the feet of the Lord.

Surrender at the Feet of Mahāprabhu

Fatigued and famished Raghunātha reached Mahāprabhu and fell prostrate before Him. Mahāprabhu was sitting in a state of trance surrounded by the devotees. His associate Mukunda Dutta saw Raghunātha, reduced to a skeleton, lying before Mahāprabhu. He shouted in astonishment, "What?! Raghunātha, the son of the governor of Saptagrāma!" and drew the attention of Mahāprabhu towards him.

On seeing Raghunātha Mahāprabhu's face radiated with joy. He lifted him up and hugged him close to His heart. Both bathed each other with tears of joy. On seeing the meeting between the *bhakta* and Bhagavan all those present also began to shed tears.

One might ask why was Mahāprabhu so overwhelmed to see Raghunātha surrendering himself at His feet. Mahāprabhu is Mahāprabhu, the Lord of Lords, the Supreme Lord. Could there be any imperfection or want in Him on the fulfilment of which He felt so satisfied?

The answer is that Mahāprabhu is perfect, yet He has a feeling of imperfection, because He is the combined incarnation of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. Rādhā is *prema* personified. *Prema* is never satisfied with itself. It is eternally imperfect. It grows ever and ever more. The more it grows, the greater the imperfection it feels. The more it grows, the more it wants to multiply itself in diverse shapes and forms by embracing the fallen souls of the universe within its fold, by loving and being loved by each of them. It is therefore that Mahāprabhu goes from door to door distributing love and feels

overwhelmingly satisfied each time a soul surrenders itself to Him in love. Each surrendering soul is dear to Him, because it quenches, in its own measure, His evergrowing thirst for love.

After a short while Mahāprabhu said, caressing Raghunātha lovingly, "Raghunātha, see how merciful is Kṛṣṇa. At last He has brought about your release."

Raghunātha replied with eyes swimming in tears and voice choked with emotion, "Prabhu! I do not know about the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. I have directly felt Your mercy in my heart. It is Your mercy that has brought about my deliverance."

Then Mahāprabhu called Svarūpa Dāmodāra and, offering Raghunātha to him by hand, said "Svarūpa, I entrust Raghunātha to you. Treat him as your son."[1]

Svarūpa Dāmodāra was Mahāprabhu's most intimate associate and one who had the deepest knowledge and experience of *rasa*. Because Raghunātha was a devotee of very high capability, He felt satisfied after entrusting him to his care. Raghunātha started rendering private service to Mahāprabhu as the assistant of Svarūpa.

Beggar Raghunātha

Mahāprabhu asked Govinda, His attendant, to take care of Raghunātha and feed him well, because he had become too weak on account of the strain of the long journey and fasting for a number of days. Raghunātha took his food from Govinda for five days. After that he started going to Sinhadvāra,[2] where he stood for some

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1 *C.C.* 3, 6, 202

2 The outer gate of Jagannātha Temple.

time for *bhikṣā* like a beggar. He did not beg for anything from anyone, but accepted whatever people gave him to eat of their own. If on any day no one gave him anything he fasted.

One day Mahāprabhu asked Govinda: "Doesn't Raghunātha take his *prasāda* here these days?"

Govinda replied: "No, he goes to Simhadvāra and accepts whatever people give him without asking for anything."

"He does well", said Mahāprabhu. "For a *vairāgī*,[1] who depends on any particular person or wants to eat good things out of greed, does not attain Kṛṣṇa."

Precepts of Mahāprabhu

One day Raghunātha said to Svarūpa Dāmodara, "I have been here for so many days, but Mahāprabhu has not yet told me anything about *sādhana*. Kindly request Him on my behalf to tell me how I should proceed in *sādhana*." [2]

When Svarūpa Dāmodara said this to Mahāprabhu in Raghunātha's presence, He laughed and said, "Svarūpa will tell you everything about *sādhya*[3] and *sādhana*, because he knows more than Me. But if you want to listen from Me, I shall tell you everything in substance."

Then He said as follows:

"Do not listen or talk about worldly affairs. Do not eat or dress well. Do not seek honour. Always chant

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1 One who has renounced the world.

2 Religious practice.

3 The end to be achieved by *sādhana*.

the name of the Lord. In *smarana* (contemplation) always serve Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa in Vraja! [1]

Thus Mahāprabhu instructed Raghunātha in both, the external and internal aspects of *rāgānugā-sādhanā* — externally chanting the name, internally serving Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa in contemplation. He asked Svarūpa to explain to him everything in detail.

Gloom in Saptagrāma

After Raghunātha's renunciation clouds of gloom and distress gathered over the palace of Hiraṇya and Govardhana. Nothing could be heard there except the wail and cry of Raghunātha's young wife and his mother. Hiraṇya and Govardhana knew that Raghunātha had gone to Nīlācala and surrendered himself completely at the feet of Śrī Caitanya, after which there was no chance of his returning home. Śivānanda Sena, who was a close associate of Mahāprabhu and used to carry every year the devotees of Bengal to Nīlācala for the *darśana* of Mahāprabhu at his own expense, had just returned from Nīlācala. They sent a man to him to enquire about Raghunātha.

He said, "Raghunātha lives with Mahāprabhu and serves Him day and night under the guidance of Svarūpa Dāmodara. Who does not know Raghunātha? He is the life and soul of all the devotees of Mahāprabhu. He chants the name of the Lord all the time, caring little for food or clothing or anything else. At about 10 o'clock at night he goes and stands at the main gate of Jagannātha's temple. He lives on the scraps pilgrims

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1 *C.C.* 3, 6, 236-237

dole out to him at that time. If no one gives anything he fasts. His *vairāgya* (asceticism) is intense. No one can help weeping to see his *vairāgya*."

The messenger went back and reported everything to Hiraṇya and Govardhana. Their hearts broke. Raghunātha, who was brought–up like a prince was living like a recluse. No, he cannot bear this. He must be persuaded to give up the ascetiscism, they thought. Next time when Śivānanda Sena went to Nīlācala he sent with him a Brahmin cook and servant with four hundred rupees for Raghunātha so that he might live comfortably.

Raghunātha invites Mahāprabhu at his *kutī*

Raghunātha did not accept anything. But he started inviting Mahāprabhu for *prasāda* twice a month. He took only as much from the servants, who remained in Nīlācala with the money, as was necessary for entertaining Mahāprabhu.[1]

This continued for two years, after which he suddenly stopped inviting Mahāprabhu. After some time Mahāprabhu said to Svarūpa, "Svarūpa, Raghunātha is not inviting Me now. Why?"

Svarūpa knew Raghunātha's mind. He said, "Prabhu, Raghunātha has begun to think that inviting You with Your devotees every month gives him a place of honour amongst the devotees, which strengthens his egotism. Besides he knows that You do not like to eat the food prepared with provisions purchased out of the money of a worldly person, but You accept his invitation out of courtesy."

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1 According to the account given in *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* the two meals cost him only 2 *annas*, that is, one eighth of a rupee.

Mahāprabhu laughed and said, "Eating the food of a worldly minded man makes the mind impure. With impure mind *Kṛṣṇa–bhajana* is not possible. I could not decline Raghunātha's invitation out of courtesy. I am glad that he has discontinued it on his own.[1]

Further Intensification in *Vairāgya*

Raghunātha used to serve Mahāprabhu and Svarūpa Dāmodara throughout the day. At night he went and stood at Simhadvāra for *bhikṣā*. His *bhajana* was becoming more and more intense and so was his *vairāgya*. After some time he developed aversion to *ayācakavṛtti*.[2] He said to himself, "Is it proper to remain standing at Simhadvāra in the expectation of *bhikṣā*? Mahāprabhu says that the *sādhaka* should not depend on anyone. But there is complete dependance in this kind of *bhikṣā*. Even though I do not ask for anything from anyone, in my mind I think: 'This man is coming. He gave me *bhikṣā* yesterday, he may give again today. That other man who is coming, never gave me anything, he may give today. Yet another man is coming, he may give something. He gave, but hardly enough to satiate my hunger. I shall have to remain standing here for some time more.' Thus I continue to think about the passers–bye. Sometimes I get *bhikṣā* early, sometimes after a long time. During this period my mind remains occupied with the thought of *bhikṣā* and *bhajana* is not possible. What is the use of this kind of *ayācaka–vṛtti*? Is it not better to go and beg for food from a *kṣetra*,

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 6, 278-280

2 Depending on *bhikṣā*, without asking for anything from anyone.

where food is distributed to beggars at a particular time?"

Accordingly he gave up the practice of going to Simhadvāra for *bhikṣā*. He started begging from a *kṣetra*. One day Mahāprabhu, who remained generally absorbed in *mahābhava*, asked his devotees, "How is Raghunātha? Is he still on *ayācaka–vṛttī*?"

Someone said, "He has stopped going to Simha–dvāra. He sits by the side of beggars in a *kṣetra* and eats."

Mahāprabhu said, "He has done well. It is better to go and beg for food in a *kṣetra* than to go to Simhadvāra and remain standing there for long in the expectation that the passers–by will see and give *bhikṣā*. This is *veśyāvṛttī*".[1]

The sight of the heir–apparent of Saptagrāma eating at the *kṣetra* with beggars sent a shiver down the spine of the people of Purī. But this was not the end of Raghunātha's *vairāgya*. After sometime he began to think that the food distributed at the *kṣetra* was also contaminated, because it was financed by a worldly person. Besides here also he had to depend on the *kṣetra* and Mahāprabhu had said that dependance was an obstacle in *Kṛṣṇa–bhajana*. He discovered a new way of satisfying his hunger, which was free from these defects.

The *mahāprasāda* of Jagannātha was sold by shopkeepers near the temple of Jagannātha. The *mahāprasāda*, which could not be sold and became rotten was thrown by them before the cows near the temple. Some of it was eaten by them, some left,

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1 The mental attitude of a prostitute. *ibid*, 284

because of its bad smell. Raghunātha picked the *mahāprasāda* left by the cows. He washed it several times to remove the rotten external part and ate the inner portion by mixing some salt in it.[1]

Svarūpa kept a close watch over the activities of Raghunātha. When he came to know about this stage of his *vairāgya*, he felt happy and proud of him. One night he reached his *kutī*, when he had washed the *mahāprasāda*. He said, "Raghunātha! You eat this ambrosial food every day and never give it to me." As he said this he extended his hand, took a handful from the *prasāda* and put it in his mouth. Could there be a better way of appreciating the *vairāgya* of his god–son?

Omniscient Mahāprabhu knew everything. But in order to glorify his devotee he asked Svarūpa one day, "Svarūpa! How is your Raghu doing?"

With a throat choked with emotion Svarūpa narrated the story of Raghu's *vairāgya*. Mahāprabhu was pleased beyond measure to hear that. Tears of love and joy began to flow from his eyes. Immediately he went to the *kutī* of Raghunātha with Svarūpa. Raghunātha had just washed the *mahāprasāda*, mixed salt in it and kept it on a banana leaf for eating. Mahāprabhu saw the *mahāprasāda* and said delightfully to Raghunātha, "Raghunātha! How selfish you are! You eat such heavenly food every day and never offer it to me." So saying he took a morsel of the *prasāda* and put it into his mouth. He was quickly going to snacth another morsel, when Svarūpa held his hand and said, "Prabhu! This is not fit for you."[2]

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1 *C.C.* 3, 6, 315-318

2 *ibid*, 322-323

Mahāprabhu said, "No, No. Svarūpa, I take different kinds of *prasāda* every day, but never find such taste."

Raghunātha's *vairagya* was not *śuṣka* (dry) *vairāgya* or *vairāgya* for its own sake, which Mahāprabhu always condemned. It was not strained, but the natural outcome of his *Kṛṣṇa–prema*. Therefore Mahāprabhu was very happy with him and loved him with all his heart. He wanted to present something to him as a token of His love for him. He wondered what He could present to please him. There was nothing in the three worlds that could please him. He had, however, two small but valuable things. He thought, they would certainly make him feel happy and blest. They were a *Govardhana–śilā*[1] and *Guṅjā–mālā*,[2] which a devotee named Śaṅkarānanda Sarasvatī had brought from Vṛndāvana and given to Him. For three years He had served the *Govardhana–śilā* as Kṛṣṇa. At the time of *smaraṇa* (meditation on Kṛṣṇa) He wore the *Guṅjā–mālā* round His neck and the *śilā* He placed over His head, over His eyes or close to His heart. Both of them He bathed with the tears of His eyes. He presented them to Raghunātha and said, "You serve this *śilā* daily with water and *Tulasi–mañjarī*. The *śilā* will bestow *Kṛṣṇa–prema* upon you.[3]"

There was no end to Raghunātha's happiness on receiving these two things, which Mahāprabhu had bathed with His tears of love for three years. He thought[4]

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1 A piece of stone from the Govardhana hill. Govardhana and every part of it are regarded as identical with Kṛṣṇa and worshipped as such.

2 A garland of *Guṅja*. *Guṅja* is a red and black berry borne by a small shrub. It forms the smallest of a jeweller's weight and is commonly called *rattī*.

3 *C.C.* 3, 6, 288-297

4 *C.C.* 3, 6, 306

that by giving *Govardhana–śilā* Mahāprabhu had given him Kṛṣṇa and by giving the *Guṅja–mālā* He had given him the lotus–feet of Rādhā :

śilā diyā gosāiṅ smarpila govardhana ।
guṅjā–mālā diyā dila rādhikā–caraṇa ॥ [1]

(*C.C.*, 3,6,307)

Raghunātha began to serve the *śilā* lovingly by offering water and *tulasi* as Mahāprabhu had instructed.

Mahāprabhu had asked Raghunātha to serve the *śilā* by offering only water and *Tulasī–mañjarī*. Though it is true that the *Govardhana–śilā* is fully satisfied by this kind of service, Svarūpa asked Raghunātha to add to the offering some *khājā,*[2] which he asked Govinda to supply every day. Raghunātha thus served the *śilā* lovingly. It is said that at the time of service the *śilā* appeared to him as Kṛṣṇa.

ei mata raghunātha karena pūjana ।
pūjā kāle dekhe silāya vrajendranandana ॥

Sixteen Years in Nīlācala

Raghunātha pursued an incredibly hard line in *sādhanā*. *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* says that out of the twenty–four hours he spent twenty two and a half in *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa* and only an hour and a half in sleeping and eating.[3] The rules and regulations he had

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1 Viśvanātha Cakravartī says in his commentary on the above that by giving these two things to Raghunātha Mahāprabhu instructed him to do *bhajana* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇā. It was, therefore, that in later years he went and lived in Rādhākuṅḍa.

2 A sweetmeat

3 Some other saints of Vraja in more recent times are known to have slept only an hour or two. See the authors *"The Saints of Vraja"*

laid down for his *sādhanā* were inviolable. They were like a line deeply engraved on stone which could not be wiped off by any means —

ananta guṇa raghunāthera ke karibe lekhā ।
raghunāthera niyama jena pāṣāṇera rekhā ॥
sāḍe sāta prahara jāya jāhāra smaraṇe ।
sabe cāri daṅḍa āhāra nidrā kona dine ॥

(*C.C.*, 3, 6, 309-310)

Raghunātha lived in Nīlācala for sixteen years. During this period he saw the *līlā* of Mahāprabhu with his own eyes or heard about it from Svarūpa Dāmodara. During the day he remained with Mahāprabhu and saw everything himself. What happened at night he came to know from Svarūpa Dāmodara, who was Mahāprabhu's closest associate and remained with Him at night as long as He was awake. Later he passed on the treasure of the *līlā* he concealed in his heart to his disciple Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who in his turn bestowed that valuable gift to the society in the form of *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta*.

After sixteen years Mahāprabhu suddenly disappeared from the world. Svarūpa could not bear the separation. He also left his body and disappeared. How could Raghunātha live in the absence of both. He decided that he would go to Vṛndāvana, have the *darśana* of Rūpa–Sanātana and then commit suicide by jumping from the top of the Govardhana hill. He took with him the *Govardhana–śilā* and *Guṅjā–mālā* and started for Vṛndāvana.

In Vṛndāvana

On reaching Vṛndāvana he met Rūpa, Sanātana and the other Gosvāmins. When they came to know

about his determination to commit suicide they said to him, "Raghunātha! your decision to commit suicide is against the wishes of Mahāprabhu. He has indicated by giving you the *Govardhana–śilā* and *Guṅjā–mālā* that you should live in Vṛndāvana and practise *Vraja–rasa–sādhanā*. Besides you are the only direct observer and custodian of the *līlā* of Mahāprabhu in the state of *mahābhāva* during his last days. We long to hear about that *līlā* from you. If you commit suicide, we shall be deprived of that pleasure." Raghunātha Dāsa had to give up his resolve to commit suicide. He remained in Vṛndāvana for some time to enjoy the company of Rūpa and Sanātana.

Many people used to come to the *kutī* of Raghunātha Dāsa in Vṛndāvana to hear from him about the *Nīlācala–līlā* of Mahāprabhu. On account of his being the special favourite of Mahāprabhu and the sole observer of His *līlā* during His last days and also on account of his exemplary *vairāgya* and passionate devotion he began to be called a Gosvāmī and regarded as one of the six Gosvāmīns of Vṛndāvana. Among the people, who used to come to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. Kṛṣṇadāsa started living with him practically all the time and served him whenever he got the oportunity to serve. Some people think that he took initiation from him. There is however no doubt that Raghunātha Dāsa was his *śikṣā–guru*. He has himself said in *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* that he was one of his six *śikṣā–gurus*.[1]

In Vṛndāvana Raghunātha Dāsa was more intimate with Śrī Rūpa than with anyone else. In his life Rūpa

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1 *C.C.*, 1, 1, 36-37

had taken the place of Svarūpa Dāmodara. He used to hear from him the esoteric *madhura–līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa, just as he used to hear it from Svarūpa Dāmodara.

In Rādhākuṅḍa

After sometime Raghunātha Dāsa requested Rūpa Gosvāmī to permit him to go to Rādhākuṅḍa and pass the rest of his life in deep contemplation of the *madhura–līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa. Rūpa permited but said, "You must take Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja with you, because you will always be absorbed in the *līlā* and will have no outward consciousness. There must be some one to take care of you."

Raghunātha Dāsa went to Rādhākuṅḍa with Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. There is at the foot of Govardhana a place called Upaveśana–ghāta, where Mahāprabhu sat and spoke of the glory of Rādhākuṅḍa and Śyāmakuṅḍa. Raghunātha took shelter under a tree by the side of Upaveśana–ghāta.

Sanātana Gosvāmī at that time lived in Govardhana in a village called Baiṭhāna, near Cakreśvara Mahādeva. He went to see Raghunātha. He saw that Raghunātha was sitting under that tree in a state of deep meditation and a tiger was drinking water from the *kuṅḍa*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was standing behind him with bow and arrow in His hand to protect him from the tiger. When he regained outward consciousness he saw Sanātana Gosvāmī and fell prostrate before him in obeisance. Sanātana said, "Raghunātha! you will have to do one thing. Your life is precious, because you are one of the most beloved ones of Mahāprabhu and from your mouth flows the stream of the *līlā–rasa* of Mahāprabhu, which is going to pave the path of deliverance from *Māyā* of countless *jīvas*. It is our duty to protect your life. I will not let

you live under the tree. You know that this place is infested by wild animals. Since you live under the tree Kṛṣṇa has to protect you from the animals. Is it proper that you should give Him this trouble? I am going to arrange for a thatched cottage for you. You must live in that."

Raghunātha had to obey. Sanātana got a *kutī* made for him and he began to live in it.[1]

Renovation of Śyāmakuṅḍa and Rādhākuṅḍa

The place where Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's *kutī* was built is called Ariṣṭa–grāma. It is so called, because the demon Ariṣṭa, who once came to Vraja in the guise of a bull and started harassing the people of Vraja, was killed by Kṛṣṇa at this place. The story of the appearence of Rādhākuṅḍa and Śyāmakuṅḍa is connected with this episode.

After Kṛṣṇa had killed the bull, Rādhā said to Him jestingly, "Now You must keep away from us, because You have committed the sin of killing a bull. You cannot touch us until You have purified Yourself by bathing in the water of all the *tīrthas* (holy places)." Omnipotent Kṛṣṇa also said frolicsomely, "Why should I go to the *tīrthas*. They will themselves come to Me." He hit the ground with His foot and created a *kuṅḍa*, (pond) and enjoined all the holy *tīrthas* to come and fill the *kuṅḍa* with their water. The *tīrthas* came. They glorified Kṛṣṇa and filled the *kuṅḍa* with their water. The *kuṅḍa* was called Śyāmakuṅḍa. Kṛṣṇa bathed in the *kuṅḍa* and stood proudly before the *gopīs*.

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1 *Bhaktiratnākara*, 5/554-563

Rādhā said to the *gopīs*, "Kṛṣṇa is so proud of His *kuṅḍa*. Come, let us make a *kuṅḍa* even more beautiful than His." The *gopīs* then started digging the earth with their bangles and within a short time a beautiful *kuṅḍa*, called Rādhākuṅḍa was built by the side of Śyāmakuṅḍa. The *gopīs* were going to fill the *kuṅḍa* with the water of Mānasī Gaṅgā,[1] when the *tīrthas*, on the beckoning of Kṛṣṇa, glorified Rādhā and requested Her to be allowed to fill Her *kuṅḍa* with their water. On being permited by Her they broke the wall of Śyāmakuṅḍa facing Rādhākuṅḍa, so that the water of Śyāmakuṅḍa might flow into Rādhākuṅḍa.

In course of time the two *kuṅḍas* got slowly filled up and converted into shallow ground on which rice was grown. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in course of His *Vraja–parikramā*, rediscovered them. Raghunātha Dāsa prayed to the trees nearby to tell him about the exact location of the *kuṅḍas*. In a dream the trees told him about the exact location. Then he desired to dig and renovate the *kuṅḍas*. This was not an easy task. It entailed huge expenditure. Where was the money to come from? This anxiety continued to worry him and caused obstacle in his *bhajana*. With great difficulty he extricated himself from it and gave up the desire for the construction of the *kuṅḍas*.

But when a certain desire arises in the mind of a devotee even for a second, Kṛṣṇa cannot remain without fulfilling it. One day Raghunātha Dāsa was sitting on the Upaveśana–ghāta after circumambulating Govardhana, when a wealthy person came and said, "Are you Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī?"

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1 A lake in Govardhana

"Yes, I am Raghunātha, the *dāsa* (servant) of the Gosvāmīs."

"I have come to you by the order of Lord Badrī Nārāyaṇa."

"Badri Nārāyaṇa?!"

"Yes, Badrī Nārāyaṇa. I had promised to serve Badrī Nārāyaṇa well on the fulfilment of a certain desire. When the desire was fulfilled I went to Him with a huge sum of money to serve Him as He desired. But He asked me to spend only a small amount in His *sevā–pūjā* and said, 'You go to Ariṣṭa–grāma in Vraja, where My devotee Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī lives and spend the rest of the money in constructing Rādhākuṅḍa and Śyāmakuṅḍa as per his advice. So I have come to you directly from Badrīnātha and am ready to do as you advise.'"

The eyes of Raghunātha Dāsa began to swim in tears to realize how merciful the Lord was. Both the *kuṅḍas* were dug and beautifully built. Even today the devotees bathe in these *kuṅḍas* and earn the *puṇya* (religious merit of bathing) in all the *tīrthas*. Not only this, the *kuṅḍas* are regarded as identical with Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa Themselves and bathing in Them is regarded as a religious act, which brings Their mercy.

The *kutī* of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was very near Rādhākuṅḍa. Some other *mahātmās* built their *kutīs* near it so that they might live in his close proximity and be blessed by his company. In due course some temples were also built and the place developed into a town, called Rādhākuṅḍa.

Mānasī–sevā
(Service in meditation)

The *sādhanā* of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was already incredibly austere. It became even more austere

on his arrival in Vraja. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja thus gives a description of his daily routine in *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*:

"He did one lakh *japa* and one thousand *daṅḍavats* to the Lord every day. He spent one *prahara* (about three hours) in narrating the divine *līlā* of the Lord to the devotees. He bathed thrice in Rādhākuṅḍa. Besides this he was engaged day and night in *smaraṇa* (contemplation of the *līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa). Thus he spent seven and a half *praharas* in *sādhanā* and slept only for four *daṅḍas*.[1] Some times he did not sleep at all. He did not take any food or water. He took only two or three palas[2] whey."[3]

Raghunātha Dāsa used to do *mānasī–sevā* with his *antaścintita–mañjarī–deha* (spiritual *mañjarī*[4] form as conceived by him). He was *siddha* (accomplished) in this kind of *sādhanā*. This is clear from a particular episode. Once he developed indigestion. Śrī Viṭṭhala Nātha, the son of Śrīpāda Vallabhācārya had great regard for him. When he learnt about his indisposition, he came with two Āyurvedic doctors. The doctors felt his pulse and said, "The indigestion is due to rice mixed with milk, which he must have taken."

"Impossible", said Viṭṭhala Nātha, "He does not take anything except whey."

Raghunātha Dāsa looked at Viṭṭhala Nātha smilingly and said, "No, the doctors are correct."

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1 One *daṅḍa* is equal to 24 minutes

2 Eight *tolās* make a *pāla*

3 *C.C.*, 1, 10, 98-102

4 A special kind of *gopī* devoted to Rādhā primarily and to Kṛṣṇa secondarily because of His being the beloved of Rādhā.

Viṭṭhala Nātha understood that there was some mystery involved in it. When the doctors had gone, he enquired about the mystery. Raghunātha Dāsa replied, "In *mānasī–sevā* I had offered milk and rice to Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa and taken their *prasāda*."

Raghunātha Dāsa had the conceit of a *mañjarī–sakhī*, devoted exclusively to Rādhā. The intensity of his *mañjarī–bhāva* is indicated by another episode. A Vrajavāsi named Dāsa used to supply whey to him every day. As a rule he used to take as much whey as could be contained in a *donā*.[1] The Vrajavāsī thought that the quantity of whey he took was insufficient for his sustenance. He began to look for a tree whose leaves were much bigger, so that he could give him some more whey in a bigger *donā*. He found one such tree in Sakhīsthāli, the village where lived Candrāvalī, the leader of a group of *gopīs*, opposed to that of Rādhā in *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*. He presented whey to Raghunātha Dāsa in a *donā* made from the leaf of that tree. As soon as Raghunātha Dāsa saw the *donā*, he asked, "Where did you get this new leaf?"

"I had gone to Sakhīsthalī for pasturing cows and I brought it from there." replied the Vrajavāsi.

Raghunātha Dāsa was enraged. He threw away the *donā* and the whey. After some time he collected himself and said to the Vrajavāsi, "Look, Sakhīsthālī is the village of Candrāvalī."

How could Raghunātha Dāsa, who was exclusively devoted to Rādhārānī and served Her all the time as a *mañjarī*, accept anything from the village of Her opponent?

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1 A leaf turned into a cup

When the *sādhaka* reaches a high stage of *prema–sādhanā*, he lives in a *bhāva–jagat* (the world of *bhāva*) of his own. It is difficult to understand his behaviour. Sometimes even an insignificant thing causes such a wild reaction in him that one is simply mystified. Once Rūpa Gosvāmī gave Raghunātha Gosvāmī his drama *Lalīta Mādhava* to read. The description of Rādhā's *viraha* (feeling in separation) in the drama made him so full of grief that it became difficult for him to survive. Then Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote *Dānakeli–kaumudī*, a drama full of humour. He gave it to him to read and took back *Lalīta–mādhava*. The drama worked like an antidote by infusing in his mind a different *rasa* and he returned to normalcy. Rūpa Gosvāmī has indicated this both in the beginning and the end of the drama.

The last Days

Raghunātha Dāsa had lived in Rādhākuṅḍa practising rigourous *sādhanā* outwardly, but swimming in the ocean of the blissful *līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa internally, when one day he got the heart–breaking news that Sanātana Gosvāmī had passed away. Only after about a month he heard that Rūpa Gosvāmī also passed away. With the passing away of the two great divines, whom Raghunātha Dāsa respected as his gurus, his condition, which was already like that of a broken reed after the disapearance of Mahāprabhu and Svarūpa Dāmodara, became much worse. A description of his condition at this time, which is given by Narahari Cakravartī in *Bhaktiratnākara*, is as follows:

"Weeping and wailing he would cry, "Oh! Where have they gone — Svārupa, Sanātana and Rūpa?" and crying rolled on the ground with tears incessantly flowing from his eyes. He would not take for days together even

the meagre food he was used to. His frail body became so frail that it could be easily blown off by the wind. Yet he would not give up the routine of his *sādhanā* — his *japa, daṅḍavat* and *praṇāma*."[1]

Even in this condition the Lord kept Raghunātha Dāsa alive for many more years to serve as an ideal for the *sādhakas*. It is difficult to determine the exact date, when he left the body. But it can be safely assumed that he did so about 1595, on the ground that the writing of *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* is supposed to have been started about 1592 and it was written in his presence on the basis of the material provided by him.

It appears that he became blind in his old age and his *Danakelicintāmaṇi* was written when he had become blind.[2]

Raghunātha's humility

Apart from Raghunātha Gosvāmī's *vairāgya*, which was proverbial, the most important trait of his personality was his humility. His humility is apparent from the way in which he piteously described his ineligibility for the mercy of Mahāprabhu to Mā Jānahvā, the wife of Nityānanda Prabhu, when she came to Vṛndāvana. He said, "Mā! I am the most fallen creature on Earth. I was born in the house of worldly–minded people, always engaged in worldly pursuits. Though I had the opportunity of living in the proximity of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I did not serve Him at all. Still I yearn for His mercy. What quality have I on the basis of which

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1 *Bhaktiratnakara*, 6, 234-236.

2 *Vrajavilasa–stāva,* sc. 2

I may consider myself eligible for His mercy? I bow down my head with shame, when I think of this and I fear that He may not accept me. I passed all my life without *bhajana*. What *bhajana* can I do now? I only pray that I remember Him always and do not forget His lotus feet even for a moment."[1]

Humility is natural to *bhakti*. It is the ornament of *bhakti* and a true sign of the attainment of the mercy of the Lord. The more a devotee is advanced in *prema–bhakti*, the more he feels the lack of it and the more humble he is. His humility wipes off his egoism to such an extent that even after doing everything possible for the attainment of the mercy of the Lord, he feels that he has done nothing; even though he fully deserves His mercy he feels that he has nothing in him to make him eligible for it.

Works

Raghunātha Dāsa was well versed in Sanskṛta. He was also a good poet. His works are: *Stavāvalī, Dānakeli–cintāmaṇi* and *Muktā–caritam*.

Stavāvalī — Raghunātha Dāsa was usually absorbed in *līlā–smaraṇa*. When he regained outward consciousness and the *līlā* stopped, he tried to subdue his distress by writing *stotras* relating to his feeling. *stāvāvalī* is a collection of 29 such *stotras*.

Dānakeli–cintāmaṇi — The subject matter of *Dānakeli–cintāmaṇi* is similar to that of Rūpa Gosvami's

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1 *Prema–vilasa*, 16

Dānakeli–kaumudī. Here also Rādhā and Her *sakhīs* go to the sacrificial ground, where Bhāguri is performing a sacrifice for Vasudeva, with pitchers full of fresh ghee needed for the sacrifice. Kṛṣṇa, posing as a tax–collector, sits on the top of Govardhana with a number of other *gopas*. He stops Rādhā and the other *gopīs* and asks them to pay tax before they go. The *gopīs* do not recognize His authority to collect–tax. This is followed by a pretended love quarrel between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, involving railleries, repartees, youthful teasing and seemingly erotic demands on the part of Kṛṣṇa. Ultimately elderly Nandīmukhī appears on the scene. She arbitrates and settles the dispute amicably by arranging a meeting for payment by the *gopīs* in terms of lively enjoyment in a grove near Mānasī Gaṅgā.

The words and imagery used in the drama and in similar other works of Raghunātha Dāsa and the other Gosvāmins would naturally make an ordinary reader, who is not aquainted with the transcendental nature of *prema* or pure spiritual love and *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*, think that this is rank eroticism and doubt the piety of the Gosvāmīns. But even critics like S. K. De, who are never tired of ridiculing and even chastising the Gosvāmīns on this point, are compelled to admit that their piety is unquestionable. The following extract from De's *Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal*, in this connection is significant:

"With due deference to Vaiṣṇava sentiment, one must say that some of the dubious acts and jests, which are frank expressions of physical passion appear out of place in what is supposed to be the witty repartee of a polished and cultured society. However esoteric the sense may be, they are presented as literal facts, of which sex and sex alone supplies the incentive. It is extraordinary that such things should come from the

highly pious Gosvāmīs. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who must have known Raghunātha Dāsa quite intimately at Vṛndāvana, speaks of the severely ascetic days and nights the Gosvāmī spent in study and meditation, his dressing himself in rags, avoiding rich food and spending not even three or four hours in sleep or rest."[1]

This may be extraordinary for Dr. De. But is it not even more extraordinary that although he is fully convinced of the piety and asceticism of the Gosvāmins, he can still think that they indulge in eroticism in their writings? It is all the more extraordinary in view of the fact that he has thoroughly studied the works of the Gosvāmins, in which they explain the esoteric character of *Kṛṣṇa–līlā* and emphasise that it pertains to a plane entirely different from ours, that it is as different from sex as light is from darkness and that it cannot but be expressed in the language and imagery with which we are familiar on our mundane plane. But that is no reason why we should take them literally. It is rightly said that psychology is more foundational than philosophy. Psychological compulsions make some people see the higher truths in the light of the lower.

Muktā–Caritam — The work is written in prose and poetry, more in prose than in poetry. The theme is interesting. On the occasion of Dīpāvalī Kṛṣṇa wants to decorate his two cows Hansī and Harinī with pearls. He requests the *gopīs* to give Him some pearls from their ornaments. They refuse to oblige Him. Then He goes to His mother and says, "Mā, give Me some pearls. I shall sow them and grow a crop of pearls." The mother

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1 *Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal*, p. 468, footnote.

tries to dissuade Him by saying that the pearls do not grow on trees. But He does not listen. She is obliged to give Him some pearls. Kṛṣṇa sows the pearls. Then He goes to the *gopīs* and says, "You sprinkle milk every day in the field in which I have sown pearls. When the pearls grow you will have a share in the crop."

The *gopīs* ridicule the request and laugh it away. But by the inconceivable power of *Yogamāyā*, the *līlā–śakti* of the Lord, who always tries to support the *līlā* and bring it to a satisfactory conclusion, the pearls sprout within three days and soon grow into creepers, which bear pearls.

The *gopīs* wonder and become jealous of Kṛṣṇa. They decide to grow a crop of pearls even better than that of Kṛṣṇa. They bring pearls from their own ornaments without telling their parents and sow them and to make the soil better suited for the produce feed it with butter.

Kṛṣṇa and His friends come secretly one night. They remove the pearl plants and replace them with a crop of thorny creepers. There is no end to the distress of the *gopīs*, when they see thorns growing in the field instead of pearls. They are afraid of being chastised by their parents for foolishly spoiling their ornaments. They decide to purchase some pearls from Kṛṣṇa to avoid chastisement. They go to Kṛṣṇa and offer to buy pearls with gold. Kṛṣṇa wants payment in kind from each of them, to which they do not agree. A dispute ensues with long, sweet and witty exchanges of repartees and raileries. The love–quarrel goes on till Nāndimukhī comes and settles the dispute by standing security for payment.

Other works — Apart from the above works Raghunātha Dāsa has some *ślokas* and Bengali verses. Three of his *ślokas* are included in Rūpa Gosvāmī's

Padyāvali. Six Bengali verses have been quoted by Dr. Jānā in his *Vṛndāvanera Chaya Gosvāmī*.[1]

According to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Raghunātha Dāsa also wrote a *kaḍacā* (biographical account) of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.[2] But there is no information of this anywhere else.

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1 *Vṛndāvanera Chaya Gosvāmī*, p. 238–242

2 *C.C.*, 3, 16, 7

CHAPTER VIII

Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī

We know about Śri Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the author of *Śri Caitanya–Caritāmṛta*, just as much as he has himself written in *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* and hardly anything beyond that. We know that he was born in village Jhānaṭapur in district Vardhamān. The date of his birth is not known. Dr. D.C. Sen has written that he was born in 1517. His parents died when he was only 6 years old, leaving him under the care of his uncle Śyāmadāsa. Dr. Sen has not mentioned the source of his information. If Kṛṣṇadāsa was born in 1517 he must have seen Nityānaṅda Prabhu and Advaitācarya, if not Mahāprabhu. But it is clear from his writings that he did not have the *darśana* of anyone of the three *prabhus*.

He has mentioned an important episode, which changed the whole course of his life. The episode is as follows:

Once *aṣṭa–prahara–kīrtana* was arranged at his house, to which Nityānaṅda Prabhu's disciple Srī Mīna–ketana Rāmadāsa was invited. Srī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa was the very embodiment of divine love. He was

always love–intoxicated. His eyes always swam in tears. Anyone, who saw him, got intoxicated like him and began to shed tears. The *sātvika–bhāvas* always adorned his body. Sometimes he would have *kampa* (trembling of body), sometimes *stambha* (stupor), sometimes *kampa* in one part of the body and *stambha* in another.

As soon as he arrived at the house of Kṛṣṇadāsa everyone prostrated himself before him in obeisance. Intoxicated as he was, he struck some one with his flute, some one he slapped and sat on some one's back and then began to sing and dance like one who was mad.[1]

After the *aṣṭa–prahara-kīrtana* was over Kavirāja Gosvāmī's brother Śyāmānaṅda had an altercation with Rāmadāsa regarding the personality of Sri Nityānaṅda Prabhu. He became angry and left the place. This offense caused the doom of Śyāmānaṅda.[2]

Śyāmānaṅda believed in the divinity of Mahāprabhu, but he did not have much faith in Nityānaṅda. At the time of altercation Kavirāja Gosvāmī scolded Śyāmānaṅda and said, "Mahāprabhu and Nityānaṅda Prabhu are two manifestations of one and the same spiritual principle. To accept one and not the other is an offense. He must be a heretic and a hypocrite, who does so."

Kavirāja Gosvāmī writes, "I reprimanded my brother, therefore Nityānaṅda Prabhu was so pleased with me that He appeared before me in a dream at night. I fell at His feet. He planted His lotus foot on

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1 *C. C.*, 1, 5, 158-171

2 Gosvāmī does not write in what manner it caused his doom.

my head and said: 'Rise'. As I raised my head, I was surprised to see Him in the form of Śrī Balarāma."[1]

Nityānaṅda Prabhu said, "Kṛṣṇadāsa, you go to Vṛndāvana, there you will attain the desired end."

After thus enjoining Nityanaṅda Prabhu disappeared. As soon as the day dawned he started for Vṛndāvana.[2]

On reaching Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇadāsa surrendered himself at the feet of Rūpa and Sanātana. They were impressed by his *bhakti* and accepted him. He began to study the *śāstras* under their guidance. In *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* he mentions them as his *śikṣā–gurus* along with Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Raghunātha Dāsa and Jīva.[3]

Kṛṣṇadāsa soon became known not only as one, who had dived deep in *bhakti*, but whose knowledge of the *śastras* also was deep. His knowledge and *bhakti* are evident from his works. His most important works are *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta*, *Govinda–līlāmṛta*, and his *Sāraṅgaraṅgadā* commentary on Vilvamaṅgala's *Kṛṣṇakarṇāmṛta*.

Before *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* a number of treatises pertaining to the life of Mahāprabhu were written. Prominent among them were the *Kaḍacā* of Murārī Gupta, *Śrī Caitanya–Caritāmṛta Mahākāvayam* and *Caitanya–candrodaya Nātaka* of Kavikarṇapūra, *Śrī Caitanya–maṅgala* of Locanadāsa and *Śri Caitanya–bhāgavata* of Vṛndāvana Dāsa Thākura. But none of these satisfactorily described the last days of Mahāprabhu in Nīlācala. Therefore the devotees of Mahāprabhu were left dissat-

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1 *C. C.*, 1, 5, 180-183

2 *ibid*, 195-199

3 Op. Cit., 1,36-37

isfied and disappointed. One day some prominent devotees of Vṛndāvana, including Śrī Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī, Kāśīśvara Gosvāmī's disciple Govinda Gosvāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī's disciple Yādavācārya Gosvāmī, Mukuṅda Cakravartī, Śivānanda Cakravartī and Haridāsa, the *sevait* of Govinda Deva together requested Kṛṣṇadāsa to compile a biograbhy of Mahāprabhu, which described the *antya–līlā* (last days) of Mahāprabhu in detail.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja found himself in a dilemma. He was at that time too old. He has himself said in *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* that he could neither see nor hear, nor sit, nor move on account of old age. His hands trembled and mind was unsteady. On account of several diseases that afflicted him[1] it was impossible for him to write anything. But he could not at the same time disregard the wishes of the devotees. He did not know what to do. In utter helplessness he went to the temple of Govinda Deva. He fell prostrate before Him and requested for His guidance and command. At the same time a garland fell down from the neck of Govinda Deva. A *pujārī*, named Gosāiñ Dāsa, who was in the service of Govinda Deva, picked up the garland and threw it round the neck of Kṛṣṇadāsa. Kṛṣṇadāsa was happy to receive the garland, because he regarded it as Govinda Deva's explicit command for writing the work and His blessings for its successful completion. He started writing immediately in the temple itself.[2]

Regarding his writing of *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* Kṛṣṇadāsa has written, "It is not I, who writes, but Madana Mohana. He dictates and I write what He dictates, like

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1 *C.C.*, 3, 20, 93-94.

2 *C. C.*, 1, 8, 77

a parrot, who repeats what he is asked to repeat or like a doll that dances as the master makes it dance."[1]

It is no wonder, therefore, that *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* is not only the best biography of Srī Caitanya, but the most precious ornament, the crest–jewel of Bengali literature. It is also the essence of all that was written by the Gauḍīya Gosvāmīns before him. It is a marvel that in his old age, when he was a broken reed, completely crippled and incapacitated, he could, by the grace of Madana Mohana, produce a work that would always be highly acclaimed by the academicians and the laymen, the devotees and the non–devotees.

Opinions differ regarding the *dīkṣa-guru* of Kavirāja Gosvāmī. In *Caitanya–Caritāmṛta* he has mentioned Raghunātha as his *dīkṣā–guru*.[2] But he has not mentioned which Raghunātha, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa or Raghunātha Dāsa. Therefore some regard him as a disciple of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, some of Raghunātha Dāsa. Rādhā Govinda Nātha maintains that he was a disciple of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, because in the line of disciplic succession of Śrī Rūpa Kavirāja, a contemporary of Śrī Vīsvaṇātha Cakravartī, Kavirāja Gosvāmī is mentioned as the *parama–guru* (guru's guru) of Rūpa Kavirāja and the disciple of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa.

The exact span of life of Kavirāja Gosvāmī is not known, but it is certain that he lived till after 1608, because he signed as witness in the will (*Saṁkalpa–patrī*) of Śrī Jīva, which was executed on that date.[3]

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1 *C.C.*, 1, 8, 78-79.

2 *C.C.*, 3, 20, 97.

3 The *Saṁkalpa-patrī* of Śrī Jīva is preserved in the Vṛndāvana Research Institute, Vṛndāvana.

CHAPTER IX

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

The date of birth of Śrī Jīva is uncertain. Śrī Satishchandra Mitra infers from a line in *Bhakti-ratnākara,*[1] which suggests that he saw Mahāprabhu from the lap of his mother in Rāmakeli, when he was but a child, that he must have been two or three years old when Mahāprabhu visited Rāmakeli in 1514 and therefore he must have been born about the year 1511.[2]

Jīva was the only son of Vallabha, the younger brother of Rūpa. He was four or five years old when his father died. His uncles had already renounced the world. He neither inherited from them their position and power as ministers of the rich and extensive empire of King Husain Shāh, nor their wealth, but he did inherit from them their extraordinary intelligence and, as we shall see later, their *vairāgya* and devotion and the extensive empire of the Vaiṣṇava world, of which he was the uncrowned king for a number of decades.

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1 *Bh. R.*, 1, 638.

2 *Sapta Gosvāmī*, p. 204.

Early Signs of Devotion.

Jīva was handsome like his father and uncles. *Bhaktiratnākara* gives a beautiful description of his childhood. His constant companions were Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in the form of Śrī Murtis. In all the games he played They occupied the central position. He often retired with Them in seclusion and played alone with Them. Even in sleep he kept Them close to his heart and no one could take Them away from him.[1]

He used to listen to *Paurāṇika* stories from his mother and ask questions, which surprised her, not only because they showed his eagerness to know more and more about things transcendental, but because they exhibited the high level of insight and understanding from which alone they could spring.

He started going to school. Within a short time he acquired mastery over grammar and the other branches of Sanskṛta learning.[2] His teachers were surprised at his achievement and began to think that he was not an ordinary boy but a partial manifestation of some divine being, otherwise how could he make such rapid progress in learning at such an early age.[3]

Mercy of Gaura–Nitāi

Jīva applied himself to study with great devotion. But he sometimes wept to remember Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and forgot all about education. He was as passionately devoted to Gaura-Nitāi as to Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma.

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1 *Bh. R.*, 1, 724-725.

2 *ibid*, 639.

3 *ibid*, 643.

Sometimes he retired to a lonely place and made heart-rending appeals and entreaties to them. This was a cause of anxiety to his relations, who apprehended that he might soon renounce the world.[1]

One day he was so much overwhelmed with *bhāva* that he began to call aloud 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa–Caitanya!' and role on the ground. Thus crying and rolling he profusely shed tears and became unconscious.[2] That night he could not sleep. When for a short while he had a nap, he saw Kṛṣṇa–Balarāma in a dream. Shortly after Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma appeared as Gaura–Nitāi. He fell at Their feet and bathed Them in his tears. They blessed him by touching his head with Their feet and by embracing and soothing him by Their sweet words.[3] Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu with His own hands laid and surrendered him at the feet of Nityānanda. Nityānanda said, "May your devotion to the Lotus Feet of My Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga grow ever and ever more."[4]

Vairāgya and Renunciation

Ever since then the living images of Gaura–Nitāi were permanently installed in his heart. He could not for a moment think of anything else. He became totally indifferent to the world. Although his family had lost its old grandeur and opulence, it was sufficiently wealthy. But the wealth had no meaning for Jīva. He heard from his mother and others the story of the *vairāgya* and

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1 *Bh. R.*, 1, 643.

2 *ibid*, 698-700.

3 *ibid*, 734-735.

4 *ibid*, 736-737.

renunciation of his uncles and he felt automatically drawn towards them. His heart always pined for their *darśana* and service.

At the age of 16 or 17 he decided to go to Vṛndāvana. It was easier for him to go to Vṛndāvana from Navadvīpa. Navadvīpa was at that time the most important centre of learning. He went to Navadvīpa on the pretext of learning Vedānta. He first went on boat to his other house in Fatehābād. After staying there for a few days he started on foot for Navadvīpa with determination never to return home.

At the feet of Nityānaṅda Prabhu

On reaching Navadvīpa Jīva got the news that Nityānaṅda Prabhu had come from Khaḍadaha and was staying with Śrīvāsa Pandita. There was no end to his happiness. Had He mercifully come to Navadvīpa only to grace him, he thought. He rushed immediately to the house of Śrīvāsa and fell prostrate at the feet of Nityānaṅda.

Nityānaṅda was overwhelmed with *bhāva* on seeing the nephew of Rūpa-Sanātana lying at His feet. He began to dance with joy and touched his head with His foot to bless him.

Nityānaṅda Prabhu took Jīva along with Him and showed him all the places in Navadvīpa that were connected with the divine *līlā* of Mahāprabhu. After Jīva had seen them he said to Nityānaṅda Prabhu, "Prabhu! by Your infinite kindness I have had the *darśana* of the *līlā–sthalīs* of Mahāprabhu's *ādi–līlā*.[1] Now kindly permit

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1 *Līlā* relating to the early period of His life.

me to go to Nīlācala to see the places connected with His *antya–līlā*.[1] After returning from Nīlācala I would stay with You and serve You all my life. Kindly be merciful and accept me."

Nityānanda did not fail to recognize from the divine lustre on his face, his broad forehead and the *bhāva* in his eyes that he was the would-be leader of the Vaiṣṇavas. Therefore He said, "Dear child! The benign Lord has been pleased to assign to your family a permanent place in Vṛndāvana. You should lose no time in going there to help your uncles in fulfilling the tasks assigned to them by Mahāprabhu.[2] After them You will have to shoulder the heavy responsibility of leading the Vaiṣṇavas and laying down firmly the philosophical foundations of Mahāprabhu's religion of love. Therefore, before going to Vṛndāvana go to Kāśī and learn Vedānta from Śrī Madhusūdana Vācaspati".

Studying Vedānta from Madhusūdana Vācaspati in Kāśī.

Jīva went to Kāśī and began to study Vedānta from Madhusūdana Vācaspati. Madhusūdana Vācaspati had been the most favourite student of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. Sārvabhauma was universally recognized as the biggest scholar of Nyāya and Advaita Vedānta in the country. But he was converted into Vaiṣṇavism by Mahāprabhu. Since then he had started interpreting and teaching Vedānta from the point of view of *bhakti*. After learning Vedānta from him Madhusūdana Vācaspati

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1 *Līlā* relating to the last period of His life.

2 Bh. R. 1, 772.

had gone to Kāśī. In Kāśī he was regarded as the highest authority on Vedānta.

Madhusūdana Vācaspati was impressed by the extraordinary intelligence and caliber of Jīva. He taught him with great interest. Jīva was only nineteen years old, when he began to be recognized in Kaśi as the foremost *pandita* of Nyāya and Vedānta.[1]

In Vṛndāvana

After completing his study of Vedānta Jīva went to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndāvana was at that time at the hight of its glory. Every nook and corner of Vṛndāvana was overcharged with *bhakti*. Rūpa and Sanātana were whole-heartedly and tirelessly engaged in the task of installing Śrī Vigrahas, compiling *bhakti-śāstras* and discovering the holy places connected with the *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Kāśīśvara and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja had also arrived in Vṛndāvana and were assisting them in various ways.

Śrī Jīva was also sent by Nityānanda Prabhu to assist Rūpa–Sanātana. They were very happy to find him in their midst. They took him to the different *mahātmās* staying in Vṛndāvana, introduced him to them and made them give their blessings to him. He was loved by every one, because he was the youngest of them all and the nephew of Rūpa and Sanātana. He endeared himself to them all the more on account of his qualities of head and heart and his enthusiasm in *bhajana* and the service of the Vaiṣṇavas. Whether it

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1 *Bh. R.*, 1, 119.

was a gathering of *mahātmās* in which the *śāstras* were discussed or a religious festival or celebration of some kind, he was always seen in the forefront.

As advised by Sanātana Gosvāmī, he took initiation from Rūpa Gosvāmī and began to live with him and serve him. He collected for him the materials required for the service of the *vigrahas*, served *prasāda* to him and himself took his *prasāda* after he had eaten. He massaged his feet when he retired to sleep. When he sat down to write something, he collected the required books and writing materials, found out references from books, and helped in all other ways in which his help was required.

Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīpada Vallabhācārya

Bhaktiratnākara and *Premavilāsa* state that when Rūpa Gosvāmī was busy writing *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu digvijayī* (World–conqueror) Vallabha Bhaṭṭa came to see him. It is believed that this Vallabha Bhaṭṭa was no other than the famous Śrīpāda Vallabhācarya of the Vallabha Sampradāya.[1]

At that time Jīva Gosvāmī was sitting by the side of Śrī Rūpa and fanning him. Rūpa Gosvāmī received Vallabhācārya respectfully and gave him an *āsana* to sit. Vallabhācārya began to turn the pages of *Bhakti-*

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1 *Bhāratera Sādhaka*, Vol V, p. 165.
Some writers have doubted this on the ground of historical uncertainty regardirng the possibility of a meeting between Vallabhācārya and Jīva. But historically a meeting between them seems possible, because Vallābhācārya lived, for at least one year after Jīva's arrival in Vṛndāvana. Jīva arrived in Vṛndāvana in 1530, after staying in Kāśī for two years. Śrīpāda Vallabhācārya died, according to one account in 1531, while according to another account in 1533 (Dasgupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, Cambridge 1949, p. 372).

rasāmṛtasindhu. He objected to the use of the word *piśācī*, which means a ghost, in the following *śloka*:

"*bhukti-mukti-spṛhā yāvat piśāchī hṛdi vartate |*
tāvadbhakti sukhasyātra kathamabhyudayo bhaveta" ||

(*Bh. R. S.* 1,2,22)

"So long as the ghost of the desire for *mukti* (freedom from bondage) or *bhukti* (worldly enjoyment) remains in the heart, *bhakti–sukha* (happiness generated by *bhakti*) is not possible."

Vallabhācārya suggested that the word *piśācī* may be dropped from the first line of the *śloka*, which may be written as follows:

vyāpnoti hṛdayaṁ yāvad bhukti-mukti spṛhāgraha

Rūpa Gosvāmī accepted his suggestion out of respect for him and on account of his natural humility. But Jīva did not like this. He did not know who the guest was. He could not tolerate the audacity of the new-comer, who had the courage to find fault in the writing of a scholar like Śrī Rūpa. He became red with anger. But since Rūpa had accepted his suggestion, he could not say anything in his presence.

After some time, when Vallabhācārya went to Yamunā for bathing, he followed him. On the way he said, "Revered Sir, the change you suggested in *Bhakti–rasāmṛta-sindhu* is not correct. Gurudeva accepted it on account of humility."

Vallabhācārya was taken aback. He kept gazing at the young man for some time, then said, "Why, do you think it is proper to call *mukti* a *piśācī* — *mukti*, which is aspired for by many *sādhakas* and which puts an end to all suffering and brings about happiness? "

Jīva replied gently, "Ācārya! It may not be proper to call *mukti* a *piśācī*. But in that *śloka* it is not *mukti*

that has been called *piśācī*, but the desire for *mukti*. Desire of any kind has no place in the heart of a devotee. If desire enters the heart of the devotee, it sucks *bhakti-rasa* and keeps him always disturbed and restless, just as a man is always restless, if he is possessed by a ghost. It is only a devotee, who is always at peace, because he does not desire anything except the service of Kṛṣṇa. The word *piśācī* could have been avoided in the *śloka*, but without it the idea could not be expressed so forcefully. Therefore the use of the word is most appropriate."

Jīva went on saying this, while the Ācārya was again examining the *śloka* in his mind and was saying to himself, "The young man seems to be correct. It is the desire for *mukti* and not *mukti* itself, which has been called a *piśācī* in the *śloka*. My mind was so much agitated by the use of the word *piśācī* in the context of *mukti* that the word 'desire' altogether escaped my mind. He said to Jīva, "You are right. It is the desire for *mukti*, which has been called *piśācī* in the *śloka*. There is no doubt that for the *bhaktas* the desire for *mukti* is like *piśācī*."

Vallabhācārya took his bath in Yamunā, thinking all the time of the sharp and subtle intelligence of the young Jīva. After taking his bath he again went to Śrī Rūpa and said, "I have come again to enquire who that young man is, who was sitting by your side. Would you let me know?."[1]

Rūpa said, "He is my disciple and nephew. He came from Gauḍa only a few days back."

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1 *Bh. R.* 5, 1637

"He has extraordinary intelligence and promises to be a great Ācārya" said Vallabhācārya admiringly. After that he narrated how he had pointed out his mistake in the interpretation of the *śloka* and requested him not to make any change in it.

Punishment

Vallabhācārya went, but left Rūpa Gosvāmī greatly disturbed in his mind on account of what he had said admiringly about Jīva. When Jīva returned after his bath, he gave vent to his indignation against him by asking hin to go away from him. In the words of *Bhaktiratnākara*[1] *and Premavilāsa he said, "Bhaṭṭa Jī kindly came to me and in my own interest suggested a change in my writing. But you could not tolerate this simple thing and got red with rage. You do not deserve to live here. Go away from here and do not show me your face until you have conquered anger and made yourself fit for the life of a vairāgī.*"

It dawned upon Jīva that he was certainly filled with anger against the Ācārya and had thereby commited an offence against him and acted against the ideal of a *vairāgī*. The fire of penitence began to burn in his heart. In obedience to the command of the guru he left the place after making obeisance to him and went far away into the forest, sheding tears of penitence.

In the forest Jīva began to lead life of such austerity as beggars all description. He did not go for *bhikṣā*. If some one came from a far off village and gave him some thing to eat, he ate, otherwise he fasted or drank only the water of Yamunā. Sometimes the

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1 Bh. R. 5, 1641-1643

villagers gave him wheat. He crushed the wheat, mixed some water in it and drank.[1] For a long time he lived in the forest in this way, sometimes eating whatever he got, sometimes fasting. Sometimes he had to fast and fast for a number of days with the result that his body became a skeleton and it was difficult to recognize him. He had decided not to go out of the forest until he had conquered all his weaknesses and made himself an ideal *vairāgī* and devotee.

One day Sanātana Gosvāmī, when he was out in quest of Jīva, happened to come across him in the forest. He was very much aggrieved to see his condition. He decided to ask Rūpa to show mercy on him and call him back. He went to Rūpa, but instead of broaching the subject directly, he said "Rūpa, how far have gone with *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*?"

"I have gone pretty far. But the work would have been completed long before, if I had not asked Jīva to go away. I had to do so, because he committed some offence." replied Rūpa.

Sanātana Gosvāmī got the opportunity he had sought. He said, "I know everything. I have come after seeing him. His condition is miserable. Austerity, penance and destitution have made him a complete wreck. His life seems to hang by a thread. You have all your life followed Mahāprabhu's principle – *Jīve dayā nāme ruci* — Be kind towards every *jīva* (soul) and joyfully chant the Name of the Lord. Will your own Jīva remain deprived of your kindness?"

Rūpa took the elder brother's hint as his command. Immediately he sent someone to bring Jīva. The change

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1 *Bh. R.* 5, 1652

he had desired in him had already taken place. After receiving the mercy of the guru he began a new life of devotion and service.

Episodes like the above are often contrived by the Lord Himself to set up an example for the *jīvas* to follow. This episode also was perhaps similarly contrived. No one involved in the episode was to blame. Providence had desired Rūpa Gosvāmī to set up an ideal of humility by accepting the change in his writing suggested by the venerable guest, Jīva to set up an example of dedication to the guru, by trying to uphold his prestige and obeying his command, and Vallabhācārya to set up an example of magnanimity by inmediately yielding to the young man and admiring him for pointing out his mistake.

It is important in this connection to point out that Jīva Gosvāmī, while commenting upon the afore mentioned *śloka* in his commentary on *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, has also mentioned the line suggested by Vallabhācārya as an acceptable reading of the *śloka*.

Service of Rādhādāmodara

The story of Rādhādāmodara, as it appears in *Bhaktiratnākara* is as follows:

Rādhādāmodara first appeared in a dream to Rūpa Gosvāmī. He said to him, "You give Me to Jīva, whose loving service I keenly desire to enjoy." Rūpa Gosvāmī got a Śrī Mūrti made, which was exactly like the one he had seen in the dream and gave it to Jīva. This is corfirmed by a *śloka* of *Sadhana-dīpikā* which is quoted in *Bhaktiratnākara*.[1]

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1 Op. Cit, 4, 293.

Jīva Gosvāmī served Rādhādāmodara with all his heart and soul. Rādhādāmodara demanded from him various kinds of food to eat and he actually saw him eating with relish.[1] Once he called him and showed him His beautiful form, smiling and playing on the flute. As soon as Jīva saw it he became unconscious. When he regained consciousness there was no end to his happinesss and tears of love constantly flowed from his eyes.[2]

The present temple of Rādhādāmodara in Vṛndāvana was built in 1558; after Śrī Rūpa had passed away. We know this from a document preserved in Vṛndāvana Research Institute. According to this document the land for the temple was purchased in 1558 from a man named Āliṣā Chaudharī.

One of the rooms of the temple contained Jīva Gosvāmī's valuable collection of old books, of which unfortunately there is not the least trace now. Particular mention of the collection was made by Jīva Gosvāmī in his will, which is also preserved in the Vṛndāvana Research Institute. The will itself was found in that room.

Leadership of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya

After a period of about 12 or 13 years dark clouds of misfortune began to hover over the sky of Vṛndāvana. Sanātana Gosvāmī disappeared to join the *nitya–līlā* of Celestial Vṛndāvana. Rūpa and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī followed soon. Prabodhānaṇda Sarasvatī had already left the world. Lokanātha Gosvāmī, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī and

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1 *ibid*, 293

2 *ibid*, 294-296

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja were too old and were about to leave. Under these circumstances the responsibility of holding high the victory–flag of Mahāprabhu's religion of love, which Rūpa and Sanātana had unfolded, fell upon the shoulders of Śrī Jīva. He proved himself capable of it in all respects. The fame of his learning had already spread far and wide. Every writer and comentator had to depend on him for the recognition of his work in the Vaiṣṇava society. Whether it was with regard to a problem relating to the interpretation of the *śāstras* or spiritual discipline, his word was regarded as final.

Many *sādhakas* came to Vṛndāvana to be initiated into *bhakti*. Many came to study the *bhakti–śāstras*. They had all to surrender themselves at the feet of Śrī Jīva. Jīva extended his benedictory hand to them all. Thus he became the natural leader of the Vaiṣṇava society.

Śrī Jīva and Akbar

Growse has written that Emperor Akbar was so much attracted by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Gosvāmīs that he was induced to pay them a visit in Vṛndāvana in 1573.[1]

Some writers hold that during his visit Akbar met Sanātana, some hold that he met Jīva. We have already stated that it was not possible for him to meet Sanātana, because Sanātana had passed away long before 1573. The only Gauḍīya Gosvāmins, who were present at that time were Lokanātha, Bhūgarbha, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja

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1 *District Memories of Mathura*, 3rd Ed. p. 241
We have already quoted Growse in this connection in the chapter on Śrī Sanātana.

and Jīva. Since Jīva had already become famous as the leader of the Vaiṣṇavas in Vraja, it seems natural that Akbar should have met him as the representative of the Vaiṣṇava community in Vraja. A strong evidence in this connection is the *furmān* (royal edict), preserved in the Research Institute, Vṛndāvana, according to which Akbar had granted to Śrī Jīva 130 *bīghas* of land for the service of Śrī Govinda Deva, the deity installed by Rūpa.

Jīva and Mīrā Bāi

Jīva Gosvāmī's meeting with the princess devotee Mīrā Bāi is very well known. An account of this meeting is given in the commentary of *Bhaktamāla* by Priyādāsa. According to this account, when Mīrā Bāi sought an interview with Jīva Gosvāmī, he conveyed through his attendant that he could not meet her, because he was a *puruṣa* (male) and a *vairāgī* and the *śāstras* had forbidden meeting between a *vairāgī puruṣa* and *prakṛti* (female). Mīrā replied, "*śāstras* say that in Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa is the only *puruṣa*, all the rest are *prakṛti*. But now I know that there is at least one more *puruṣa* in Vṛndavana besides Kṛṣṇa". Jīva Gosvāmī was pleased to hear this and met her.

Some people believe that Mīrā took initiation from Jīva. There is nothing to support this, although a *samādhi* of Mīrā Bāi exists along side of the *samādhīs* of the Gauḍīya saints in what is populary known as *Causaṭha Mahanton–kī–samādhī*, near Ranga Jī's temple in Vṛndāvana.

Jīva and Mā Jānhavā

Bhaktiratnākara describes the meeting of Jīva Gosvāmī with Mā Jānhavā, the wife of Nityānanda

Prabhu. It is believed that Mā Jānhavā visited Vṛndāvana after the famous festival of Khetarī in or about the year 1576-77. Śrī Jīvā took her round and showed her all the holy places in Vraja. As desired by her he also read out to her *Vṛhadbhāgavatāmṛta* and some other works of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana. She was so overwhelmed with *bhāva* on hearing them that she could with great difficulty control herself.[1]

The Works of Śrī Jīva

Śrī Jīva was blessed not only with extraordinary intelligence but also with the opportunity of learning from the teachers of extraordinary ability and learning. He had, as it were, obtained from Rūpa-Sanātana their vast learning and knowledge of all the *śāstras* in heredity. While working as their assistant in the compilation of some of their most important works, he had grasped the real essence and spirit of their works, as no one else had done. But since Rūpa and Sanātana were busy all the time in discovering the *līlā–sthalīs* of Vṛndāvana, building temples, installing Śrī Vigrahas, writing the *rasa-śāstras* and works relating to rituals and the code of conduct for the Vaiṣṇavas, one of the most important works remained unfulfilled. That work related to the philosophical foundation of the religion of Śrī Caitanya. It was necessary for the propagation of Śrī Caitanya's universal religion of love that its philosophical foundation was securely laid. Rūpa and Sanātana entrusted the task to Śrī Jīva. The consummate skill and proficiency, with which Jīva completed the work by writing his

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1 *Bh.* R., 201-202

Saṁdarbhas is very well known. Besides the *Saṁdarbhas* he wrote a large number of other works. Some of them have not yet been published, some are out of print, some are lost. Some of the lost works we know only by their names as mentioned in the old treatises. Therefore a complete list of his works is not possible.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Adhikārī, a disciple of Śrī Jīva has left a list of his works, on the basis of which Narahari Cakravartī has presented a list in *Bhaktiratnākara*.[1]

Kṛṣṇadāsa has added to the list the word "etc.", which makes it clear that there are other works besides those mentioned in his list. Two obvious omissions in the list are:

(1) *Laghutoṣaṇi* and
(2) *Sarvasaṁvādinī*.

Satiśacandra Mitra has classified the works of Śrī Jīva on the basis of the aforementioned list as follows:

Vyākaraṇa (Grammar) — *Harināmāmṛta Vyākarana, Sūtra–Mālikā, Dhātusaṁgraha.*

Stava and Saṁgraha — *Kṛṣṇārccādīpikā, Gopālavirudāvalī, Mādhava–mahotsava, Saṁkalpa-kalpavṛkṣa, Bhāvārtha–campū, Rasāmṛta-śeṣa, Padma-purāṇokta, Śrī kṛṣṇa–padacinha, Śrī Rādhikā–karapada–cinha.*

Līlā — *Śrī Gopālacampū*

Tīkā (commentaries) — Commentaries on *Brahmasaṁhitā, Gopāla tāpinī–upaniṣad, Bhaktirasāmṛta–sindhu, Ujjvala–nīlamaṇi, Yogasārasvata; Agnipurāṇokta Śrī Gāyatri–vivṛtti.*

Saṁdarbha — *Tattva-saṁdarbha, Bhagavat–saṁdarbha, Paramātma–saṁdarbha, Śrīkṛṣṇa–saṁdar-*

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1 Op. Cit., 833-842

bha, Bhakti–saṁdarbha, Prīti–saṁdarbha, Sarvasaṁvādinī (this should not be regarded as an independant work, but a commentary on the first *Saṁdarbhas).*

We shall give a brief description of some of the more important works of Śrī Jīva.

Harināmāmṛta Vyākaraṇa — This is a wonderful book in the sense that in it the names of Śrī Hari have been strung together with the help of the *sūtras* in the form of a rosary in such a way that while studying it one has automatically to chant or remember them.

Tattva-saṁdarbha — In this *Saṁdarbha* Śrī Jīva discusses the *pramāṇas* or the sources of knowledge. He rejects all conventional sources of knowledge — *pratyakṣa* (Perception), *anumāna* (Inference) etc, except *śabda* (Testimony or Revelation), on the ground that they are defective and unreliable. Only *śabda pramāṇa* is reliable, because it consists of revealed words in the shape of Vedas, *Upaniṣads*, *Itihāsa* and the *Purāṇas*. Among these the highest place of authority is given to *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, because even after compiling the *Brahmasūtra* and the different *Purāṇas* Vyāsadeva was not satisfied until *Śrimad Bhāgavatam* was revealed to him in *samādhī*.

Śrī Jīva regards *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as Vyasadeva's own commentary on *Brahmasūtra* and therefore considers another commentary on it unnecessary.

Bhagavat Saṁdarbha — This *Saṁdarbha* describes the Bhagavat or *Para–brahma*. Bhagavat is *Advitīya* or the only reality that exists. All else that exists is the manifestation of His *Śaktis* (potencies). He has infinite *Śaktis*, of which three are the most important. They are *Svarūpa–śakti*, *Jīva-śakti* and *Māyā–śakti*. *Svarūpa-śakti* is also called *Aṅtaraṅga-śakti* or the Intrinsic Potency. It consitutes the intrinsic and perfect selfhood of the *Bhagavat* and is the cause of His *dhāma* (abode),

parikaras (associates) and *līlā*. As opposed to this *Māyā-śakti* is called *Bahiraṅgā* or External Potency. It is the cause of the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the phenomenal world. It is called external, because although based on the Bhagavat, as its substratum, it does not have any effect on His intrinsic Self. *Jīva-śakti* is called *Taṭasthā-śakti*, because it remains on the *taṭa* or border, as it were, between the *Svarūpa-śakti* and the *Māyā-śakti*. It is the *Śakti* from which the *jīvas* emanate. Being the product of the *Taṭasthā-śakti* the *jīvas* are connected with both the *Svarūpa-śakti* and *Māyā-śakti*, but are distinct from both.

Svarūpa-śakti has a threefold aspect as *saṁdhini*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī*, corresponding to the three essential ingredients of the spiritual body of the *Bhagavat — sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. The *Saṁdhini-śakti* corresponds to *sat*, *Saṁvit* to *cit* and *Hlādinī* to *ānanda*. By the *Saṁdhini-śakti* the Bhagavat maintains His own existence as well as the existence of other things. The *Saṁvit-śakti* is the power of knowledge that makes the Bhagavat omniscient and enables Him to impart knowledge to others. The *Hlādinī-śakti* is the energy of bliss. On account of this *śakti* the Bhagavat is bliss itself or *rasa*. He enjoys *rasa* and makes the devotees enjoy it. The essence of this *śakti* is *prema*. *Prema* in intensified form is *bhāva*. *Bhāva* in its perfect state is called *mahābhāva*. *Mahabhāva* finds its fullest manifestation in Śrī Rādhā, the divine consort or the counter whole of the Bhagavat or the personal absolute Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The Bhagavat has innumerable forms and manifests Himself in infinite ways to His devotees, according to their capacity and the different means of realization adopted by them. Still He manifests Himself in three definite grades as Brahman, Paramātma and Bhagavān, according as He is approached by the paths of *jñāna,*

yoga and *bhakti*. In Brahman the *Svarūpa–śakti* is manifested only to the extent to which it is necessary for its existence. Therefore Brahman is only *sat–rūpa* or a pure Being, without form and attributes. In Paramātma the *Svarūpa–śakti* is manifested more, than in Brahman. Therefore Paramātma has a form and function. In Bhagavān the *Svarūpa–śakti* is fully manifested. He has infinite forms. Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, Rāma and Nṛsinha are all His forms. They rank higher or lower in hierarchy according to the manifestation of *Svarūpa–śakti* in them in the shape of *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya*. But His Kṛṣṇa form is the highest, or the most perfect form. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān Himself. All other forms of the Bhagavat are His partial manifestations.

Paramātma-saṁdarbha — *Paramātma Saṁdarbha* deals with the concept of Paramātma. Paramātma is the Bhagavat in relation to *Jīva-śakti* and *Māyā-śakti*, from Whom emanate infinite *jīvas* and the phenomenal worlds. He creates the world and enters into it in the form of His partial manifest Viṣṇū. Paramātma is therefore no other than Viṣṇū, pervading and sustaning the entire universe. He has threefold manifestations as Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Saṁkarṣaṇa, Garbhodakaśāyī Puruṣa and Kṣīrodaśāyī Puruṣa. As Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī He rests in Kāraṇa–samudra or Virajā, which divides the spiritual *(cit)* from the phenomenal *(acit)* world, and by His glance at *prakṛti* initiates the entire process of creation. He is the immanent regulator of all the finite souls and the phenomenal worlds treated as a whole. After *mahāpralaya* or the total dissolution all the *jivas* rest in Him. He is also known as Mahāviṣṇu or Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Nārāyaṇa. As Garbhodakaśāyi He is the regulator of the totality of individual souls. As Kṣīrodaśāyī He is the immanent regulator of each individual soul.

Jīva and the world are related to Paramātma by the relation of *acintya–bhedābheda* (inconceivable identity in difference). *Jīva* is an infinitesimal part of Bhagavān, just as a spark is a part of fire. Being a manifestation of *Taṭasthā-śakti*, it is neither a part of *Svarūpa-śakti* nor of *Māyā–śakti*. But it is closely connected with both. The eternal function of *jīva* is to serve Bhagavān. But it has the freedom to serve Him or not. The *jīvas*, who choose to serve Bhagavān are eternally free from the influence of *Māyā*. They are called *nitya–mukta*. Those who do not choose to serve Bhagavān are eternally under the influence of *Māyā*. They are called *nitya–baddha*. Those, who are under the influence of *Māyā*, however, can release themselves from the bondage of *Māyā* by *bhakti*. When emancipated they become a part of *Svarūpa–śakti* and can never again come under the influence of *Māyā–śakti*.

The phenomenal world is a manifestation of *Māyā-śakti*. *Māyā–śakti* is called *Bahiraṅgā*, or external, because it has no influence over Bhagavān or the manifestations of His *Svarūpa-śakti*. It is externally related to Bhagavān in the same sense in which smoke is related to fire. Since, however, it is the *śakti* of Bhagavān, it is real and the phenomenal world, which is its manifestation is also real and not an illusion, as Śaṅkara maintains.

Sri-Kṛṣṇa-saṁdarbha — In this *Saṁdarbha* Jīva proves that Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān Himself and not an incarnation of Bhagavān and that the incarnations are all His partial manifestations. In this *Saṁdarbha* he also describes in detail the *dhāma*, *parikaras* and *līlā* of Bhagavān.

The *dhāma* or the abode, where Bhagavān resides is *Māyātīta* or above *Māyā*. But when Bhagavān appears on earth, the *dhāma* appears with Him. There are infinite

manifestations of *dhāma*, just as there are infinite manifestations of Bhagavān. For each manifestation of Bhagavān there is a corresponding manifestation of His *dhāma*. Since Kṛṣṇa is the highest manifestation of Bhagavān, His *dhāma* Vṛndāvana is the highest *dhāma*. The Celestial Vṛndāvana has its replica on earth in the form of the Geographical Vṛndāvana, which is known as its *prakaṭa–prakāśa* or manifest form. This appears as part of the phenomenal world on account of our coloured vision, but is in essence identical with its celestial counterpart. The devotees, who attain accomplishment *(siddhāvasthā)* in devotion are even today blessed with the vision of the divine *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, eternally going on here.

Whatever the form in which Bhagavān manifests Himself, He has with Him His *parikaras* or retinue with whom He is eternally engaged in divine *līlā*. The *parikaras* have a spiritual body like Him and resemble Him in divine qualities, temperament and dress, etc. The *parikaras* of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana are the *gopas* and *gopīs*. The *parikaras* are either *nitya-siddha* or *sādhana-siddha*. The *nitya-siddha parikaras* are the manifestations of the *Svarūpa-śakti* of Bhagavān and their presence in *dhāma* is beginningless. The *sādhana–siddha parikaras* are those who become *parikaras* on the accomplishment of thier devotion.

The *parikaras* serve Bhagavān according to the particular bond of relationship like parenthood or wife-hood, which obtains between them and Bhagavān. The relationship is neither due to birth nor an external ceremony like adoption or marriage. It is due to the particular kind of *bhāva* or devotional love a *parikara* has for Bhagavān.

Līlā is eternal. It becomes manifest to the phenomenal beings when Kṛṣṇa appears on earth. Thus

līlā is either manifest *(prakaṭa)* or ummanifest *(aprakaṭa)*. But this does not mean that there are two different kinds of *līlā*. It is the same *līlā*, which is called manifest, when it is visible to the phenomenal beings, and unmanifest, when it is not visible to them. There are, however, some important points of difference. In the *prakaṭa–līlā* there is an appearence of Kṛṣṇa's birth and death and He grows from infancy to tender youth, while in the *aprakaṭa–līlā* He is eternally young. The eternal state of budding youth is intrinsic to Kṛṣṇa, while the different stages, leading from infancy to early youth, are superimpositions brought about by *svarūpa–śakti*, so that Kṛṣṇa and His devotees may have a taste of different kinds of bliss (*rasa*) generated by them.

Bhakti-saṁdarbha — In this *Saṁdarbha* Śrī Jīva describes the nature, kinds and stages etc of *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is exclusive and intense loving attachment to the Lord. It is not phenomenal, but transcendental. It is the function of the *Hlādinī–śakti* of Bhagavān, which He implants in the heart of a pure devotee.

Bhakti is superior to *karma*, *jnāna* and *yoga*. *Karma*, *jnāna* and *yoga* depend on *bhakti* for the realization of their end. *Bhakti* does not depend on any other *sādhana*. *Karma*, *jnāna* and *yoga* are helpful to *bhakti* in the primary stages, because they are free from the desire of worldly objects, but they are impediments in the higher stages of *bhakti*, because they are not free from the desire of *mukti*. Bhagavān is attained by *bhakti*, not by any other means.

Bhakti is both *sādhana* (means) and *sādhya* (end). *sravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, *smaraṇa*, *arcana* etc are the sixty-four *aṅgas* or elements of *bhakti*. *Nāma–kīrtana* is the most important *aṅga*. No *aṅga* is fruitful without *Nāma–kīrtana*.

Bhakti is of two kinds — *vaidhī* and *rāgānugā*. *vaidhī–bhakti* is ritualistic, *rāgānugā* is spontaneous. *vaidhī–bhakti* is conditioned by the fear of transgression of the injunctions of the *śāstras*, *rāgānugā–bhakti* by love and the intense desire for the loving service of the Lord.

Sādhana is of two kinds — internal and external. Internal *sādhana* pertains to mind, external to body. In *rāgānugā–sādhana*, internal *sādhana* is prominent. It consists mainly in *līlā–smaraṇa* (contemplation of *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*), but in it the external *sādhanas* like *sravaṇa* and *kīrtana* are not neglected. They are helpful in internal *sādhana*.

Prīti–saṁdarbha — In this *Saṁdarbha* Jīva Gosvāmī establishes that *prīti* or *prema–bhakti* is the highest end to be achieved and not *mukti*, as ordinarily understood. *Mukti* in the real sense means the realisation of *prīti*, which involves *Bhagavat–sākṣāt–kāra* or direct perception of the Bhagavat, resulting in the *jīva's* regaining his proper or natural state of bliss as a part of the Bhagavat, Who Himself is bliss (*rasa*).

Prīti is realised through various stages called *rati*, *prema*, *praṇaya*, *māna*, *sneha*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *mahābhāva*. Jīva Gosvāmī describes each of these stages in detail and then goes on to describe the five different kinds of *prīti-rasa*.

The five different kinds of *prīti-rasa* are *śānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya*. Each succeeding one of these indicates a higher stage of realisation than the preceding, which is included in it. Thus *madhura-rasa* is the highest. *Madhura–rasa* is realised in Kṛṣṇa's sports with the *gopīs*, which have outward resemblance with ordinary sexual activity. But they must not be regarded as sexual. The fundamental difference between them and sexual activities is that the former are transcendental and aim entirely at contributing to the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while the latter are the

expression of the mundane and self–seeking love of the mundane world. The former are but the outward expression of the internal *bhāva* or *prema*. The *gopīs* do not even desire to obtain Śri Kṛṣṇa, for themselves, if such a desire in any way thwarts His happiness.

Similarly the *gopīs*, who were apparently married to other *gopas*, must not be regarded as *parakīyās* (married to others). They are Kṛṣṇa's own *(parama-svīyās)*. Their apparent relationship with the *gopas* is an illusion created by the Divine *Yogamāyā* to foster the intensity of their love by placing imaginary obstacles in their way and thus to enable them and Śrī Kṛṣṇa to relish a higher *rasa*. It is not the *gopīs*, who are *parakīyā*, but their *bhāva*.[1]

Sarvasaṁvādmī — This is not an independent treatise, but a supplement to the *Saṁdarbhas*. It clarifies some of the ideas, not so clear in the *Saṁdarbhas* and further testifies them by quoting from numerous *śāstras*. It is, therefore, regarded as even more important than the *Saṁdarbhas*.

Saṁkṣepa-vaiṣṇavatoṣanī — This is an abridged edition of Sanātana Gosvāmī's commentary on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* called *Vaiṣṇava–toṣanī,* later called *Vṛhad–Vaiṣṇava–toṣaṇī* to be distinguished from *Saṁkṣepa–vaiṣṇavatoṣanī*.

Krama-Saṁdarbha — This is Jīva Gosvāmī's commentary on the entire *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.*

Gopālacampū — *Gopālacampū* is an amplification of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. It includes not only the *Vṛndāvana–līlā*, but also the *Mathurā–līlā* and *Dvārakā–līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It also describes many other *līlās*,

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1 See the author's *The Philosophy and Religion of Śrī Caitanya* for a detailed description of the topics discussed in the *Saṁdarbhas*.

which it was not possible for Vyāsadeva to include in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, because its scope was limited by the time–limit of seven days during which it had to be delivered to Parīkṣit. It is divided into two parts. The first part (*pūrvārdha*) is devoted to *Vṛndāvana–līlā*, the second part (*uttarārdha*) to *Mathurā–līlā* and *Dvāraka–līlā*. This is the last work of Śrī Jīva. Its first part was completed in 1588 and the second in 1590.

Mādhava-mahotsava — This work deals with the *abhiṣeka* or consecration of Rādhā as the queen of Vṛndāvana (Vṛndāvaneśvarī). It is based on some indications of the *abhiṣaga* of Rādhā, found in the *Pātāla Khaṅda* of *Padma Purāṇa*, *Matsya Purāṇa* and *Vṛhadgautamīya Tantra* and was written at the behest of Śrī Rūpa. It is a poetical work of great literary importance. It was written in 1555.

With the completion of these works heaps of books were ready for the propagation of the Bhāgavat religion and the teachings of Mahāprabhu. But one deficiency was still felt. There was no complete biography of Mahāprabhu in Bengālī. Vrindāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura had written *Caitanya–bhāgavata,* which was widely acclaimed. But it had omitted the *antya līlā* (*līlā* relating to the last days) of Mahāprabhu. *Caitanya Maṅgala* of Locana Dāsa was not so well acclaimed. The only person, who was capable of writing a biography of Mahāprabhu, perfect in all respects, was Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who lived in Vṛndāvana. Jīva Gosvāmī and the other Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana made this request to him. With their blessings he started writing. In due course the book was written and named *Caitanya–caritāmṛta.*

With the compilation of *Caitanya–caritāmṛta* the stage was finally set for preaching. But it was necessary to find suitable persons for this great task. They must be devotees of the highest order, well versed in the

śāstras and willing to devote all their life to the holy cause. Three such persons were already staying in Vṛndāvana. They had learnt the *śāstras* from Śrī Jīva and were devotees. They were Śrīnivāsācārya Prabhu, Ṭhākura Narottama Dāsa and Śyāmānanda. They were so highly accomplished in devotion that they were regarded as the incarnations of Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Śrī Nityanaṅda Prabhu and Śrī Advaitācārya themselves.[1]

Śrī Jīva asked them, with the consent of Śrī Rūpa–Sanātana and the other Gosvāmīs to shoulder the responsibility of the great task of preaching in the East. They agreed. On an auspicious day the Gosvāmīs gathered before the temple of Govinda Deva to bid them farewell. Two bullock–carts were ready, one for the books and the other for Śrīnivāsācārya, Narottama Ṭhākura and Śyāmānanda. Ten armed men were also ready to escort them. The Gosvāmīs embraced Śrinivāsācārya, Narottama Ṭhākura and Śyāmānānda one by one, and bade them farewell with tears in their eyes and with all their blessings.

The party went by road via Agra and Etawah. From Etawah they went through the forest of Jhārakhaṅḍa and reached the outskirts of Viṣṇupura, the kingdom of Rājā Vīrahāmvīra. Vīrahāmvīra was a strange person. Although he was a king and a devotee and managed his kingdom well, outside his kingdom he indulged in loot and plunder. *Prema Vilāsa* says that during the day he read the *Purāṇas*, during the night committed robbery. He got the news that a little beyond the North-western border of his state a cart full of jewels

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1 *Prema Vilāsa,* Vilāsa 20.

was being carried under the escort of a number of armed men. He immediately ordered two hundred of his soldiers to go and bring the jewels without killing anyone.[1]

The next day, when Śrīnivāsācārya and his men were sleeping in village Gopālapura at night, the soldiers came and took away the box containing the books. The armed guards could not do anything against the soldiers, because they were so much out–numbered. There was no end to the grief of Śrīnivāsa, Narottama and Śyāmanānda. The books were their life and soul. Having lost them, they felt that life had gone out of them. They wept and did not know what to do. Śrīnivāsa conveyed the sad news to Śrī Jīva through a letter. The letter came like a bombshell and cast all the Gosvāmīs into gloom and despair. The worst affected was Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. He tried to commit suicide by drowning in Rādhākuṅda, but was taken out.[2]

Jīva Gosvāmī began to wonder what the *dacoits* would do with the books. He thought that the news was perhaps the harbinger of some *līlā* of the Lord, of which the mystery would be solved later. He began to wait for the next news.

Śrīnivāsa said to his two companions, "You have been asked to go and preach Vaiṣṇavism. So you must go to Gauḍa and start preaching instead of wasting your time here. I shall remain here and try to search out the

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1 *Prema-vilasa*, 13.

2 Nityānanda Dāsa writes in *Prema-Vilāsa* that Kṛṣṇadāsa died as soon as he plunged into Rādhākuṅda. Yadunanandana Dāsa writes in *Karṇānanda* that he did not die at that time. Yadunandana's view is correct, because Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's signature as witness is found in the will of Jīva Gosvāmī, which was executed in 1608. This proves that he lived till after the passing away of Srī Jīva.

books." Narottama and Śyāmānānda found themselves in a dilemma. They could neither leave Śrīnivāsa, who was so dear to them, alone, nor go against the wishes of the Gosvāmīns, who had asked them to go and preach. At the end they thought that it was the will of Mahāprabhu that they should go for the work, which was so dear to Him. They made obeisance at the feet of Śrīnivāsa and left with tears.

Śrīnivāsa began to roam about in search of books like one who had gone mad after losing what was even more precious to him than his self. He came to know from Kṛṣṇavallabha, a Brahmin of village Deulī that in the palace of Vīrahāmvīra *Bhāgavatam–pātha* (reading of *Bhāgavatam*) was held every evening. He took it as Mahāprabhu's indication of the path, which would lead to the discovery of the books. He went to the palace with Kṛṣṇavallabha to listen to the *pātha*. The *pātha* of the chapters relating to *rāsa–lila* was going on. The *pāṭhaka's* (reader's) interpretation of the *ślokas* was faulty. Śrīnivāsa could not refrain from pointing out the fault and giving the correct interpretation, which impressed Vīrahāmvīra. He asked him to do the *pātha*, from the next day.

Śrīnivāsa started the *pāṭha*, which went on for a number of days. His exposition of the text was so sweet and touching to the heart that it melted even the stony hearts of Vīrahāmvīra and his *dacoit* chiefs. After the *pāṭha* was over Vīrahāmvīra had some talks with Śrīnivāsa, in course of which the mystery of the theft of books was revealed. Vīrahāmvīra not only returned the books to him, but offered himself at his feet. He and many of his chiefs and other subjects took *mantra* from him and became his disciples. Śrīnivāsa sent the happy news to Śrī Jīva.

Śrī Jīva got the news he was waiting for. The news dispelled the clouds of despair and despondency that had gathered over the sky of Vṛndāvana.

The theft of the books proved a blessing in disguise. With the initiation of Vīrahāmvīra Vaiṣṇavaism took roots in Viṣṇupura. In every village temples were built in which the Śrī-Vigrahas of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya were installed. In every home *Gauḍīya–śāstras* began to be read. Śrī Satishcandra Mitra has written that even today no where the old manuscripts of *Caitanya–caritāmṛta* and other *Gauḍiya–śāstras* are found in such large numbers as in Viṣṇupura.

Śrīnivāsa went to Gauḍa with the books. He was now a *Rāja–guru* (the guru of a *Rājā*). Therefore there was no dearth of money. A grand festival was arranged in Khetari in which people from Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Āssam and Manipur participated. Preaching went on with great vigour and enthusiasm. Narottama preached mainly in Gauḍa, Āssam and Manipura, Śyāmānānda in Orissa. Contact was maintained with Śrī Jīva, who guided them from Vṛndāvana. He sent to them any new books that were written in Vṛndāvana . Any books that were written in Gauḍa were sent to him for approval. No book that was not approved by him, or revised according to the suggestions given by him, was recognized for preaching.

Jīva Gosvāmī had now completed all the work, which Mahāprabhu had assigned to Rūpa and Sanātana and which had remained unfulfilled by them. He could now leave his physical body and join them in Celestial Vṛndāvana in his *mañjarī–svarūpa*, which he did in 1608.[1]

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1 This was the year in which he signed his will.

CHAPTER X

Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

The sun rises and sets of its own. No one makes it do so. Similarly Śrī Bhagavān and His *dhāma* appear and disappear on earth on their own. What seems to be the historical reason for their appearance or disappearance is but an excuse for it. Vraja and the various holy places in Vraja disappeared at the will of Bhagavān and reappeared at His will. Bhagavān Himself in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu planned the rediscovery of Vraja and got His plan executed by His companions. He continued to help and guide them in the task either directly or indirectly through one of His manifestations. The most important role in this connection was played by His two special manifestations, namely Śrī Rādhāvinoda, the deity worshipped by Lokanātha Gosvāmī and Śrī Lāḍaleya Jī, the deity worshipped by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.

We have already described the role of Rādhāvinoda in the biography of Lokanātha Gosvāmī. Like Rādhāvinoda Lāḍaleya Jī also from time to time told Nārāyanaṇa Bhaṭṭa where a particular *tīrtha* (holy place) was located,

where a particular Śrī Mūrti was lying buried under ground or inside a pond. It was Lāḍaleya Jī, who asked Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa to go to Vraja and help Rūpa and Sanātana in the discovery of the *tīrthas*. The life-story of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa is, in a way, the story of Lāḍaleya Jī Himself. Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa was like a doll in His hands. He made him dance as He willed.

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was born in Madurāi (Mathurā Pattana), a city in South India on the day of Nṛsimha Caturdaśī. His father's name was Bhāskara and mother's Yaśomati. Bhāskara was a Bhṛguvaṁśī Dākṣiṇātya Brahmin and a follower of the Mādhva Sampradāya.

In his young age Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa lived with his learned uncle Śrī Śaṅkara, who looked after his education. Under his tutelage he became well versed in the *śastras*, when he was still young. Though he was a man of extraordinary intelligence and was very fond of learning, he also had strong inclination towards *bhakti* from the very beginning. Therefore as soon as his education was complete, he started on pilgrimage.

Appearance of Lāḍaleya Jī

Once, when he was bathing in river Godāvarī he had the *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādha. Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed to him the secret of his birth and said "You are My devotee Nārada. You are born with the special purpose of rediscovering the *līlā-sthalīs* (the places connected with *Kṛṣṇa-līlā*). Now go to Vraja and begin to work with all your heart and soul for the fulfilment of the purpose of your life." Śrī Kṛṣṇa also gave him a Śrī Mūrti of Bāla–Gopāla (child Kṛṣṇa) named Lāḍaleya Jī and said, "I give you this Śrī Mūrti of Bāla-Gopāla. Serve Him well. He will reveal to you all the secrets of

Vraja-līlā and guide you in the discovery of the *līlā-sthalīs*"[1]

Inmediately Bhaṭṭa Jī started for Vraja with Lāḍaleya Jī. He took two long years to reach Vraja. The reason was that Lāḍaleya Jī was too wilful and sportive. Throughout the journey He performed different kinds of *līlā*. If He liked a particular place in the course of the journey He insisted on staying there for some time and sporting as He wished. Wherever He found a solitary nook, He sat in the lap of Bhaṭṭa Jī and talked with him. But as soon as He saw someone coming He assumed the shape of Śrī Mūrti.[2]

When Bhaṭṭa Jī reached Vraja, he went to Rūpa and Sanātana and lay prostrate before them in obeisance. He surrendered himself completely at their feet. At that time they had both become old. Though they had done much to discover the *līlā-sthalīs*, much still remained to be done. They needed a capable and enthusiastic young man, sincerely devoted to the cause of *bhakti*, to whom they could safely entrust the work of completing the task. Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa was in every respect suitable for the work. Rūpa and Sanātana understood intuitively that he was particularly sent by Kṛṣna for that purpose. They lost no time in accepting him and taking necessary steps to equip him for his great task.

At their instance he took initiation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Brahmacāri. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Brahmacāri was a disciple of Gadādhara Pandita and the *sevāita* of Madana Mohana, the deity, installed by Sanātana Gosvāmī.

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1 *Śrī Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Caritāmṛta*, p. 24-27

2 ibid, 32-37

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa lived with him for some time to learn from him all about the doctrine of *bhakti* and the *rāsa-sādhanā* according to the Gauḍīya Sampradāya. After that he went to Rādhākuṅḍa and started the work of discovering the *tīrthas*.

It is difficult to say how long he lived in Rādhākuṅḍa . But in some of his works he has written that it was completed in Rādhākuṅḍa. We find it mentioned in *Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa* that it was completed in Saṁvat 1609 (1552 A.D.) in Rādhākuṅḍa. Therefore it seems certain that he lived in Rādhākuṅḍa at least till that date. After that he went to Uñcāgrāma, where he lived till the end. After going to Uncāgramā he married, as desired by his father, and had a son, whose name was Dāmodara. Throughout this period his discovery of the *tīrthas* continued.

Discovery of the Deities, *Tīrthas* and the forests etc.

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa discovered all the *tīrthas* and *līlā–sthalīs* mentioned in the *Vārāha Purāna*, which were not yet discovered. His *modus operandi* was simple. He went from village to village and meditated on Lāḍaleya Jī. Lādaleya Jī told him the spot where existed a *līla-sthalī* or where a Śrī Vigraha was lying hidden under ground.

Then Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa called the villagers and asked them to dig those places. Invariably the *līla–sthalī* or the Śrī Mūrtī sought for was discovered. Nābhā Dāsa has made a mention of this in his *Bhaktamāla*.[1]

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1 *Bhaktamāla*, Chappaya 87

Priyā Dāsa has also mentioned this in his comentary on *Bhaktamāla*.[1]

Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Caritāmṛta mentions that once some people from Mathurā were going to Prayāga for a bath in the Triveṇī.[2] Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa said, "Why are you going to Prayāga. Prayāga is here in Vraja, near Sakhī Giri. Come along. I will show you." He took them there, got the place dug and showed them Triveṇī flowing from Sakhī Giri up to the temple of Śrī Baladeva. The pilgrims bathed in the river.[3] This episode is also mentioned by Priyā Dāsa in his commentary.[4]

Continuing the episode *Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Caritāmṛta* says:

"At that time Prayāga, usually called *Prayāga–rāja* or the king of the *tīrthas*, came to Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa in the guise of a Brahmin and said, 'Why did you prevent the pilgrims from coming to me? Am I not the king of all the *tīrthas*?' A debate ensued between *Prayāga–rāja* and Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa. *Prayāga–rāja* quoted the *śāstras* that glorified Prayāga, Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa the *śāstras* that glorified Vraja. At the end Nārāyaṇā Bhaṭṭa said, 'You are no doubt the King of the *tīrthas*. But Brahmā made you the King of the *tīrthas*, not the King of the abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Vraja is the abode of Kṛṣṇā. It is non–different from Him. Therefore it is the King of the King of *tīrthas*?' At this *tīrtha–rāja* said, 'You are right. I know that you are Devarṣi Nārada. I entered into a debate

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1 *Bhaktirasa-bodhinī*, Kavitta 356

2 Confluence of three rivers, Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī in Prayāga.

3 *Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Caritāmṛta*, 72-75

4 *Bhaktirasa-bodhinī*, 356

with you, because I wanted to hear from you the glory of Vraja. Kindly forgive me for the offense.'[1]

It is since then that Triveṇī assumed the form of a *mūrti* and began to live in the temple of Baladeva Jī. Before assuming the form of Śrī Mūrti she said to Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, "At the time, when all the *tīrthas* had come to Rādhākuṇḍa at the call of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I had also come. Śrī Kṛṣṇa sent me here for the service of Śrī Baladeva. Ever since then I have been living here secretly. I appeared for a short while on account of your *bhakti*. But the time of my appearance has not yet come. Therefore I am disappearing."

In this way Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa discovered many *tīrthas* and Śrī Vigrahas. Important among the Śrī vigrahas discovered by him are Śrī Lāḍalī Jī of Barasānā, Baladau Jī of Uñcāgrāma, Saṁketa Devī Jī and Śrī Rādhāramana Jī of Saṁketa, Poḍhānatha Śeṣaśāyī, Badrīnātha, and Kāmeśvara Mahādeva of Śesaśāyī and Mahāvidyā, Dīrgha Viṣṇu, Mahāviṣṇu and Vārāha Bhagavān of Mathurā.

Important among the *tīrthas* discovered by him are Mānasīgaṅgā, Kusuma–sarovara, Govindakuṇḍa and Candra–sarovara in Govardhana; Pūtanākhāla, Bālakrīḍāsthala and Ramaṇavana in Gokula; Rāsasthalī in Vṛndāvana; Bhānukhora, Priyākuṇḍa (Pīlī-pokhara), Dānagarha, Mānagarha, Vīlāsagarha, Gahavaravana, Sānkarikhora in Barasānā; Dehakuṇḍa and Triveṇī in Uñcāgrāma; Gayākuṇḍa, Kāśīkuṇḍa, Vimalā–sarovara, Kurukṣetra, Pañca-tīrtha, Dharmakuṇḍa and Caurāsīkhambā in Kāmyavana. Apart from these he discovered Cīraghāta, Nandaghāta, Vihāravana, Caraṇa–pahāḍī and

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1 *Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Caritāmṛta*, 75-86.

many other *tīrthas*, which he has mentioned in *Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa.*

He also discovered the twelve *Vanas* (forests), twelve *Upavanas*, twelve *Prativanas*, twelve *Tapovanas*, twelve *Mokṣavanas*, twelve *Kāmavanas*, twelve *Artha-vanas*, twelve *Dharmavanas*, and twelve *Siddhavanas*, all of which he has mentioned in *Vraja-bhakti-vilāsa*, along with their presiding deities and their *mantras*.[1]

Vana-yātrā, *Vraja-yātrā* and *Rāsa-līlā.*

Bhaṭṭa Jī determined the boundary of Vraja. He also started the practice of circumambulating the *vanas* and Vraja and determined the time for the circumambulation of each. The time he determined for the circumambulation of Vraja was from Vaiśakha Kṛṣṇa Pratipadā to Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇimā and for the *vanas* from Bhādra Kṛṣṇāṣṭhami to Bhādra Pūrṇimā.

Bhaṭṭa Jī discovered the various places connected with the *rāsa-līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and mentioned them in *Vraja-bhakti-vilāsa*. He also constructed *rāsa-maṅdals* in those places. Those places are Rādhākuṅḍa, Śeragarha, Uñcāgrāma, Mayūra–kutī, Gahavaravana, Yāvala, Vihāravana, Kokilavana, Kadambavana, Svarṇavana, Prema–sarovara, Vṛndāvana, Karahelā, Pisāi and Parāsaulī.

It was with the financial help of Rājā Todaramala, the treasurer of Akbar, that Nārāyaṇa Bhatta was able to do this work. Todaramala had great regard for Bhaṭṭa Jī and he spent huge amount of money in the different projects initiated by him for the rejuvination of Vraja.

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1 *Vraja-bhakti-vilāsa*, Chaps. I, II.

He built the *rāsa–maṅdals* and rebuilt all the old ponds and temples and installed Śrī Vigrahas in the temples.

Another big contribution of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was *rāsa–līlānukaraṇa* or the dramatization of *rāsa–līlā*, which is regarded in Vraja till this day as a part of *bhakti–upāsana*, and is one of the main attractions for the devotees in Vraja. As Priyā Dāsa writes he was the first man to organize and enact *rāsa–līlā* perfomances in different places for the happiness of the *rasikas*.[1]

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's disciple[2] Śrī Vrajavallabha was of great assistance to him in making *rāsa–līlā* perfomances attractive and suitable for *bhakti–upāsanā* through dance and music. Nābhā Jī's *bhaktamāla* has a *Chappaya*[3] on Śrī Vrajavallabha, which indicates that he was a great devotee besides being highly proficient in dance and music.

Writing about Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's special contribution to Vraja Growse says "It was Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, who first established *Vraja-yātrā* and *rāsa–līlā* and it was from him that every lake and grove in the circuit of Vraja received a distinctive name"[4] He named every village, *Kuṅḍa* and *Kuñja* according to its connection with *Kṛṣṇa–līlā*.

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1 *Bhakti-rasa-bhodhinī*, 356.

2 That Vrajavallabha was a disciple of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa has been stated by Śrī Bālakarāma, one of the commentators on Nābhā Jī's *Bhaktamāla*. Nābhā Jī's *Chappaya* N° 88 also seems to lend support to this.

3 *Chappaya* N° 88.

4 *A District Memoir of Mathurā*, p. 75.

Works

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's contribution to the *bhakti*–literature of Vraja is also not small. He is said to have written 59 books, most of which are still unpublished.

His important works are the following:

Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa, Vraja–pradīpikā, Vrajotsavālhādinī, Vraja–prakāśa, Bhakti–bhuṣaṇa–saṁdarbha, Bhakti-viveka, Bhakti–rasa–taraṅgiṇī, Sādhana–dīpikā, Premāṅkura–nātaka, Vṛhat Vrajaguṇotsava and the *Rasikālhādini* commentary on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

Bhakti–rasa–taraṅgiṇī was published by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābā in 1947 and *Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa* in 1951. *Bhakti–rasa–taraṅginī* gives a detailed description of the different *bhakti-rasas* and the *sādhakas* qualified for them. *Vrajabhakti–vilāsa* describes in detail all the forests, *tīrthas*, *līlā-sthalīs* and *kuṇḍas*. Nowhere else we can find such detailed description of the holy places in Vraja. Growse has also recognized the importance of this work from the point of view of obtaining a detailed information about the different places in Vraja.[1]

In *Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa* Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa mentions *Vṛhat–vrajaguṇotsava*, a huge work comprising twenty-six thousand *ślokas*, composed by him. He says that just as *Vraja–bhakti–vilāsa* describes the different forests of Vraja with their presiding deities and the *tīrthas* included in them, this work describes the different villages, their presiding deities, *tīrthas* and the *Kṛṣṇa-līlās* with which they are connected.

But it is unfortunate that this important work has not yet been discovered.

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1 *A District Memoir of Mathurā*, p. 89

Similarly the other works of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa are either not discovered or not yet published.

According to Bābā Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa left the body on the Vāmana Jayantī day in 1643. His *samādhi* exists in Uñcāgrāma.

CHAPTER XI

Śrī Madhu Gosvāmī

The temple of Gopīnātha Jī is one of the seven most famous temples of the Caitanya Saṁpradāya in Vṛndāvana. Its deity was installed by Madhu Gosvāmī, a disciple of Gadādhara Pandita, one of the closest *pārṣadas* of Śrī Caitanya.[1] He was called Madhu Pandita, because he was also, like his guru, a great *pandita*. There was hardly any *śāstra*, which he had not studied. But the *śāstra* that had captured his heart most was *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. The reason for this was his guru's devotion to *Bhāgavatam*, which was proverbial. It is stated in *Bhakti–ratnākara* that Mahāprabhu used to hear *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from him. While he read the *Bhāgavatam* the flow of tears from his eyes used to be so profuse that he could not prevent them from falling on the *Bhāgavatam*. The constant spray of tears from his eyes wiped off the letters of the *Bhāgavatam*. *Bhakti–ratnākara* also states that when Śrī Śrīnivāsācārya, who

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1 *Bh. R.*, 13, 319.

is regarded as the *Āveṣa Avatāra* of Mahāprabhu, saw the copy of the *Bhāgavatam,* washed by the tears of Gadādhara Pandita, he was so overwhelmed with *bhāva* that he fell senseless on the ground.[1]

Madhu Pandita read *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* every day. Reading *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and listening always from his guru the *rūpa* (beauty), *guṇa* (atributes) and *līlā* (pastimes) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa he slowly developed a keen desire for the *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, standing cross-legged with body bent at three places, wearing a peacock feather on his crown, holding a flute close to his lips and smiling. He knew that Kṛṣṇa always lived in Vṛndāvana. He had read in the *śāstras* that he did not go even a single step out of Vṛndāvana – *vṛndāvana parityajya pādamekam na gacchati.* Therefore he started for Vṛndāvana in search of him .

What did he carry with him? Nothing, except the sweet memory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the tears of love in separation from Him. Does a pilgrim going to Vṛndāvana for the *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa need anything else? The love for Kṛṣṇa and the keen desire to see Him makes him forget thirst and hunger, fatigue and all the other trials and tribulations of the journey. He covers the long distance and reaches Vṛndāvana, without knowing how he reached. Thus Madhu Pandita reached Vṛndāvana.

On reaching Vṛndāvana he started his search for Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa may be there in that cluster of Kadamba trees, fragant with flowers, he thought. But he did not find Him there. He thought He might be behind the creepers, he saw at some distance. He did not find Him even there. Then he thought He might be hiding in some

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1 *Bh. R.,* 13, 276-277.

grove or cave or playing with His mates in some forest or dallying with the *gopīs* on the bank of Yamunā or on the foot of Govardhana hill. In this way he went from forest to forest, and grove to grove in search of Him. Not finding Him anywhere, he sat down sometimes in utter disappointment and began to weep and cry. Sometimes, when he heard the rustling sound of leaves of the forest, he thought He had heard his cry and was coming. Sometimes he seemed to hear the sweet sound of flute coming from a particular direction and thought He was calling him. He ran in that direction, but not finding Him again he fell senseless on the ground.

The son of Nanda is fond of the game of hide and seek, which He always plays with His devotee. The game continues long and He never appears before him. When He appears, He appears all of a sudden, without his seeking or calling Him, and relieves him of all his pain and suffering by giving him a warm embrace.

So one day, when it was raining and the Yamunā was in spate, He appeared suddenly. Madhu saw Him standing near Vaṁsī–baṭa in His usual *tribhaṅga* (bent at three places) form and smiling sweetly as He looked at him. He ran and locked Him in his arms. Kṛṣṇa also locked him in His arms. Each bathed the other in tears of love and joy.

But it is not Kṛṣṇa's wont to stay long anywhere. He tried to disengage Himself from the arms of Madhu. But why should Madhu leave Him after he had searched Him long and staked his life and *śakti* and everything else for Him? He said, "Prabhu! I shall not leave You. I cannot live without You. Either You stay with me or take me along with You wherever You go!!"

Kṛṣṇa, Who is always subservient to His devotee, had to say, "All right Madhu, I shall stay with you in the form of My Śrī Vigraha".

That very moment He assumed the form of the Śrī Vigraha called Gopīnātha and stayed with him.[1]

Madhu Pandita remained in Vṛndāvana with Gopīnātha Jī. He lived happily with Him, serving Him all the time with great affection. It is difficult to say how long he lived, but it is definite that he lived till after 1582, when Śrīnivāsācarya left for Bengal with books written by the Gosvāmīns of Vṛndāvana, because *Bhakti-ratnākara* says that Jīva Gosvāmī took Śrīnivāsa to him for his blessings before he left.[2]

Even today Madhu Pandita's Ṭhākura Śrī Gopīnātha Jī is worshipped in a temple near Nidhivana in Vṛndāvana. The temple was built by Śrī Rāyasila Shekhāvata, who was given extensive land and the title of *'darabārī'* by Akbar for repulsing an attack by the Afgāns. Growse thinks that perhaps this temple was built even before the temples of Govinda Deva and Madana-Mohana.[3]

The *samādhi* of Madhu Pandita exists close to the temple of Gopīnātha.

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1 *Bh. R.*, 478-479.
Bhakti-rasa-bodhini, 380.

2 *Bh. R.*, 431-432.

3 Growse: *A district Memoir of Mathurā*, p.253.

CHAPTER XII

Śrī Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

Śrī Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa was a South Indian Brahmin. He was a great devotee, a poet and a *Bhāgavatam–vaktā*[1] of repute. He always sung and contemplated the divine *līlā* of Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa. Jīva Gosvāmī had heard about him. He wished that he came and lived in Vṛndāvana.

Once he heard some one singing one of the famous songs of Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa of which the first line was

"*Sakhī haoṅ śyāma raṅga rangī* I

— O *Sakhī!* I am coloured *śyāma* through and-through."

'Śyāma' means blue colour. It is also one of the names of Kṛṣṇa, whose colour is blue. Therefore the real import of the line is :

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1 One who discourses on *Bhāgavatam*

'(One *gopī* saying to another) O *Sakhī!* I have dived deep in the ocean of *Kṛṣṇa–prema*.'

Jīva Gosvāmī was very much impressed by the song. As if in response to the song and with a view to attract Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa to Vṛndāvana, he composed the following *śloka* and sent it to him through two of his disciples:

"anārādhya rādhā-padāmbhojayugma anāśritya
vṛndāṭavīṁ tatpadāṅkām |
asaṁbhāṣya tadbhāva gambhīra cittān kutah
śyamasindhoh rasasyāvagāhah ||

— Without worshipping the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā, without taking shelter in Vṛndāvana, which bears the foot prints of Rādhā and without living in the company of the devotees of Vṛndāvana, who are drowned in *Śyāma–bhakti–rasa* is it possible for anyone to dive into the ocean of *Śyāma–rasa*?"

When the devotees reached the house of Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa, he was sitting outside his house near a well and cleaning his teeth with a *dātuna*.[1] The devotees asked him: "Where does Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa live?" Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa asked: "Where do you live?" They replied: "We live in *Vṛndāvana-dhāma*, the crest–jewel of all the *dhāmas*." As soon as Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa heard the name of Vṛndāvana, he was overwhelmed with emotion and fell senseless on the ground.[2]

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1 A twig of Neem-tree used for cleaning the teeth.

2 Prīyādāsa: *Bhaktirasabadhini* commentary on *Bhaktamāla*, Kavitta, 523.

Some one told the devotees, "He is Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa himself." The devotees then shouted in his ears, "We have brought for you a *śloka* regarding Vṛndāvana from Śrī Jīva". This brought him back to consciousness. With eagerness to read the *śloka* he sat up, and taking from them Jīva Gosvāmī's letter containing the *śloka,* began to read it. On reading the *śloka* he felt an irresistable attraction for Vṛndāvana and set out immediately for the holy *dhāma,* without even washing his mouth.

On reaching Vṛndāvāna, as soon as he saw Jīva Gosvāmī, tears began to flow from his eyes like a stream in spate and he became unconscious. When he regained consciousness Jīva Gosvāmī embraced him and asked him to sing his favourite song – *sakhī hauṅ śyāma raṅga rangī*. Gadādhara sang and Jīva listened and both began to swim in the ocean of *Kṛṣṇa–prema*.[1]

Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa stayed on in Vṛndāvana till the end. He took initiation from Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and studied many books under the guidance of Śrī Jīva. After that he virtually dived in the ocean of *Kṛṣṇa-prema*. His heart and soul and every pore of his body were filled with *Kṛṣṇa–prema*. He became famous as a *mahātmā*, who was always drowned in *rasa* and was a *Bhāgavatām–vaktā* of the highest order. After the passing away of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī in 1554, the responsibility of discoursing upon *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* every evening in the temple of Govinda Deva fell upon him. He filled the gap left by Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa to the entire satisfaction of all the *mahātmās* of Vṛndāvana.

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1 Prīyādāsa: *Bhaktirasabadhini* commentary on *Bhaktamāla*, Kavitta, 523.

Bhaṭṭa Jī's *kathā* (discourses on *Bhāgavatam*) used to be so inspiring and heart melting that they often compelled a man to withdraw himself completely from the world and surrender for ever at the feet of the Lord.

In this connection Prīyā Dāsa has mentioned an episode which is as follows:

One day Kalyāna Siṅha, a *Rājapūta*, who lived in Dhaurahara, a village situated between Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, happened to go to the temple of Govinda Jī, when Bhaṭṭa Jī's *kathā* was going on. He began to listen. He liked the *kathā* so much that he started listening every day. Slowly he developed complete *vairāgya* from the world. He would not even converse with his wife as he did before. His wife was alarmed. She was afraid that he might renounce the world. She thought of a device to slander and villify Bhaṭṭa Jī so that the mind of her husband might turn from him and his *kathā*. She called a young girl, who was pregnant and roamed about begging and said, "Take these twenty rupees and go to the temple of Govinda Jī at the time of *kathā*, tell Bhaṭṭa Jī before every one as I say." She agreed. She went to the temple immediately. After the *kathā* was over she said to Bhaṭṭa Jī before everyone, "Mahārāja! You have blessed me with your *prasāda* in the form of a child. Now kindly make some arrangement so that I may not have to beg." Everyone was taken aback. They understood that it was the device of some wicked person to malign Bhaṭṭa Jī. But when they saw Bhaṭṭa Jī speaking softly and sympathising with the girl, they were confounded. An astute person named Rādhāvallabha took the girl aside and said, "Tell me frankly what the truth is, otherwise you will suffer miserably." The girl was overawed. She confessed everything. Then Kalyāṇa Siṅha was very angry with his wife. He wanted to go and kill her with a sword. But Bhaṭṭa Jī calmed

him down by saying "She is not at fault. She has done no harm, but a favour to me."[1]

No wonder, for the saints like him regard praise as poison and blame as balm.

Nābhā Jī has in his *Bhaktamāla* called Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī *'Karunā–ke–ālaya'* or 'the very home of kindliness'. Prīyā Dāsa Jī has given the following example of his kindliness: Once a thief entered his house. He collected many things and tied them up in a bundle. But he could not lift the bundle because it was too heavy. Bhaṭṭa Jī was watching him from some where. He came and began to help him. The thief was surprised. He asked who he was. He replied that he was Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa. The thief had heard about Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa, but had not seen his house. He realized that he had committed an offense by trying to steal from the house of a saint. He left the bundle and apologized.

Bhaṭṭa Jī said, "No brother, you take it. For this is your livelihood. I shall get more next morning".

The thief was so much impressed by his kindliness that he gave up thieving and became his disciple.[2]

We do not know when Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was born and when he passed away, but we know that he lived till after 1608, because he signed as witness in the will of Jīva Gosvāmī executed in that year. The will is preserved in Research Institute, Vṛndāvana.

The descendants of Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa have been great scholars and *Bhagavatam–pāthakas*. Śrī Rasikottaṁsa, the author of *Prema–pattana* and Śrī Govarḍhana

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1 *Bhaktirasa-bodhini*, 529

2 ibid

Bhaṭṭa, the author of *Madhukeli–vallī* were both his descendants. His deity Śrī Rādhamohāna Jī is even now worshipped in Vṛndāvana by his descendants with great eclat.

Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa was a poet of distinction. His poems are few but of such high order that they are compared with the poems of Tulasīdāsa and Sūradāsa. He has sung mainly about the *madhura–līlās* of Rādhā–Govinda.

CHAPTER XIII

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Śri Viśvanātha Cakravartī was born in 1654 in a Rāḍhīya Brahmin family in Devagrāma, a village in district Murshidābād.[1] After receiving primary education in Devagrāma he went to Saidābād, where lived Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caraṇa Cakravartī, who was famous as a great scholar and devotee in the line of disciplic succession of Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura. He took initiation from his son Śrī Rādhāramaṇa and began to study the *bhakti-śāstras* under Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caraṇa.[2] He wrote several books while he was in Saidābād.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī was married at an early age. But he renounced the world when he was young and went to Vṛndāvana. In Vṛndāvana he took *veśa.* After *veśa* he was named Śrīharivallabha.[3]

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1 *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna*, Part III, p. 1370.

2 Viśvanātha Cakravartī has mentioned his *guru-paramparā* in *Saṅkalpa-Kalpadruma.*

3 According to some he never took *veśa.* This may be true, because he has always been known as Viśvanātha Cakravartī and not as Śrīharivallabha.

He was not only a great devotee, but a great scholar, philosopher and poet. His knowledge of *rasa-śāstra* was unequalled. He wrote many books, which were regarded as of no less importance than the works of the earlier Gosvāmīns of Vṛndāvana. Therefore he soon became the natural leader of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community of his time.

Beyond this very little is known about his life. But certain beliefs about him are common. It is believed that if it rained when he was writing some book in the open, not a single drop fell upon the book. It is also believed that *Siddha* Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābā of Govardhana once took a dive in Mānasī Gaṅga and came out after three or four days with all his works, untouched by water.

Another story that is prevalent about him relates to his conflict with the *panditas* of other *saṁpradāyas* with regard to the *parakīyā* doctrine of which he was an enthusiastic exponent. Once he had to enter into a debate with them on the subject and made them speechless by arguments and by quoting profusely in favour of the doctrine from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Padma Purāṇa*, *Sanat kumāra Saṁhita* and the other *śāstras*. The *panditas* felt humiliated. They hatched a plan to kill him. With this purpose one morning they went to the place, where he used to go for a morning stroll. They did not see him, but they saw a girl, who was picking flowers with her girl companions. They asked her, "Lālī, have you seen Cakravartī?"

The girl replied with a smile, "I did see him, but I do not know where he has disappeared."

The *panditas* were charmed by the lustre and beauty of her face and her graceful smile and demeanour. Out of curiosity they asked her again, "Lālī, whose daughter are you? Where do you live?

The girl said, "I am a *sahacarī* (companion) of Rādhāranī. She is just now in her father–in–law's house in Jāvata. She has sent me to pick flowers for Kṛṣṇa."

As soon as the girl said this she disappeared and the *panditas* saw in her place Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī himself. This was an eye opener to them. They realized that *parakīyā–bhāva* was real and Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī was *siddha* in the *upāsanā* of *parakīyā–bhāva*. They fell at his feet and apologized.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the author of Govinda Bhāṣya was a disciple of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī. He once infused his *śakti* in him and sent him to represent the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Saṁpradāya at the historic meeting called by Maharājā Jaisingh at Jaipur to ascertain whether the Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya was authentic. In that meeting he hoisted high the flag of the *saṁpradāya* by proving its authenticity.

A complete list of the large number of books written by Viśvanātha Cakravartī is not available. Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda has given a list of his works, which have so far been discovered. The list is as follows:

1. *Śri Vrajarītī–cintāmaṇi*
2. *Śrī Camatkāra–candrikā*
3. *Śrī Prema–sampuṭa*
4. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa–bhāvanāmṛta–mahākāvyaṁ*
5. *Śrī Bhakti–rasāmṛta–sindhu–bindu*
6. *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi–kiraṇaleśah*
7. *Śrī Bhāgavatāmṛta–kaṇā*
8. *Śrī Rāgavartma–candrikā*
9. *Śrī Aiśvarya–kadambanī*
10. *Śrī Mādhurya–kādambanī*
11. *Śrī Gauragaṇoddeśa–candrikā*
12. *Śrī Bhakti–rasāmṛta–sindhu–tīkā*
13. *Śrī Dānakeli–kaumudī–tīkā*

14. *Śrī Lalita-mādhava-nātaka-tīkā*
15. *Śrī Vidagdha-mādhava-nātaka-tīkā*
16. *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi-tikā (Ānanda-candrikā)*
17. *Śrī Haṁsa-dūta-tīkā*
18. *Śrī Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū-tīkā (Sukha-vartanī)*
19. *Śrī Alaṁkāra-Kaustubha-tīkā (Subodhini)*
20. *Śrī Gopāla-tāpīnī-tīkā*
21. *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā-tīkā*
22. *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā-tīkā*
23. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam-tīkā (Sārārtha-darśini)*
24. *Śrī Caitanya-Caritāmṛta-tīkā (incomplete)*
25. *Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā-tīkā*
26. *Śrī Kṣaṇadāgīta-cintāmaṇi*
27. *Śrī Stavāmṛta-laharīdhṛta-stotrāvalī*

Many regard Viśvanātha Cakravartī as the incarnation of Śrī Rūpa, because he wrote the commentaries of most of his works and simplified and abridged them. His most famous works, which are honoured by all *saṁpradāyas* are his commentaries on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Gītā.*

Viśvanātha Cakravartī's deity Gokulānanda is even today worshipped in the temple of Gokulānanda, near the temple of Rādhāramaṇa in Vṛndāvana. His *samādhi* also exists there by the side of the *samādhi* of Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī.

CHAPTER XIV

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was born in the fifth generation of the line of descendants of Śyāmānanda Prabhu in a village near Remunā in the Bāleśvara district of Orīssā some time in the early part of the nineteenth century.

After completing his study of Nyāya, Alaṁkāra and Vedanta, etc, he became a *sannyāsī* of the Madhva Saṁpradāya. Later he came in contact with Śrī Rādhā-dāmodara, the disciple of a disciple of Śrī Rasikānanda Murāri of the Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya. He studied the *Saṁdarbhas* of Jīva Gosvāmī under him. He was so much impressed by the philosophy and the *rasa* psychology of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava school that he was compelled to take initiation from Rādhādāmodara. His *guru-paramparā* is as follows:

Śrī Nityānaṁda Prabhu

Śrī Gaurīdāsa Pandita

Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya

Śrī Śyāmānanda

Śrī Rasikānanda

Śrī Nayanānanda

Śrī Rādhādāmodara

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

After sometime Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa went to Vṛndāvana. At that time Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī had become famous as the biggest Ācārya of the Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya. He began to study *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from him.

About the same time an agitation was going on in Jaipur regarding the right of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas for the worship of Śrī Govinda Deva. Govinda Deva had been taken to Jaipur on account of the oppression of Aurangazeb. His *sevā-pūjā* was done by the *pujārīs* of the Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya. The Vaiṣṇavas of the Śrī Saṁpradāya of Galitā gādī objected to this on two grounds. They said —

1. "There are only four recognized *saṁpradāyas* — Rāmānuja, Madhvācārya, Viṣṇu Svāmī and Nimbāditya. Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya or Caitanya Saṁpradāya is not a *saṁpradāya*. *Pujārīs* not belonging to a *Saṁpradāya* cannot worship Govinda Deva.

2. The Gauḍīya *pujārīs* give greater importance to Govinda Deva than to Nārāyaṇa. They regard Nārāyaṇa as a partial manifestation of Govinda and do the *ārati* of Nārāyaṇa after the *ārati* of Govinda, which is against the *śāstrās*."

The Mahārājā of Jaipur called a conference of the *panditas*, well versed in the *śastras*, to discuss the issue and declared that if the Gauḍīya *panditas* failed to prove

with the help of the *śāstras* that they constituted a *saṁpradāya* they would be deprived of the service of all Deities in Jaipur and Vṛndāvana.

The news caused a stir amongst the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in Vṛndāvana. They approached Viśvanātha Cakravartī and requested him to go to Jaipur to plead for the *saṁpradāya* and save it from denigration and dishonour. But Viśvanātha Cakravartī was too old. It was not possible for him to go to Jaipur. He asked his foremost disciple Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa to go and represent the *saṁpradāya* in the conference.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa attended the conference. In the discussion that followed the *panditas* could not stand before his arguments supported by the testimony of the *śāstras*. They had to admit that the philosophy of the Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya was well in keeping with the *śāstras*. Still they said that the *Gauḍīya Saṁpradāya* could not be recognized as an independent *saṁpradāya* until it produced commentaries *(bhāṣya)* on *Brahmasūtra, Upaniṣad* and *Gītā* according to its philosophy. For they said that each of the four recognized *saṁpradāyas* had its commentaries on these and it was only on the foundation of such commentaries that the edifice of a *saṁpradāya* could stand.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa argued that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu regarded *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as Śrī Vyāsa Deva's own commentary on his *Brahmasūtra* and therefore he did not think another commentary of *Brahmasūtra* was necessary. This argument was not accepted and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was given three months' time to produce all the three commentaries, which was impossible.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣāṇa went immediately from the site of the conference to the Temple of Govinda Deva. He fell prostrate before Govinda Jī and said prayerfully:

"Prabhu! The honour of Your own *saṁpradāya* is at stake. If You do not protect the honour of Your own *saṁpradāya*, who will? It is impossible for me to write all the three commentaries in three months. Do You really want to deprive us of Your service? What offense have we commited? Kindly ignore our offenses and be merciful."

At night Govinda Deva said to Vidyābhūṣaṇa in a dream: "Do not worry. Commence the commentaries. I shall help you."

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa started writing the commentary on *Brahmasūtra.* By Govinda's grace it was completed soon. At the end of the commentary he wrote a *śloka* which meant — "This commentary has been written by the command and with the help of Govinda Deva. Therefore it is named *Govinda-bhāṣya.*"

After that he wrote the commentaries on *Upaniṣad* and *Gītā*. All the commentaries were completed within the stipulated period. The *panditas* were surprised. They could not remain without eulogizing Vidyābhūṣaṇa. The Maharājā was also pleased. He gave him the name — Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. It was since then that he became known as Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. His name before that was Dāmodara. This is borne out by the fact that in all the works, which he wrote before *Govinda-bhāṣya*, he had written *'Damodara Vipra racita* — written by Dāmodara Vipra'.

When he returned from Jaipur the Gosvāmī of Śrīpāṭa Gopīvallabhapur appointed him the *mahanta* of the temple of Śrī Śyāmasundara in Vṛndāvana to look after the service of Śyāmasundara. Working as the *mahanta* of the temple he remained in Vṛndāvana till the end and wrote many books.

The following is the list of books written by him:

1. Śrī Govindabhāṣya, 2. Siddhāntaratna, 3. Vedāntasyamantakah, 4. Prameya–ratnāvalī, 5. Siddhānta–darpaṇa, 6. Sāhitya–kaumudī, 7. Kāvya–kaustubha, 8. Vyākaraṇa–kaumudī, 9. Padakaustubha, 10. Vaiṣṇa vānandinī (commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Daśama Skandha), 11. Gopāla–tāpanī–bhāṣya, 12. Īśādi-daśopaniṣad–bhāṣya, 13. Gītā–bhuṣaṇa–bhāṣya, 14. Śrī-viṣṇu–sahasranāma–bhāṣya. 15. Śrī–saṁkṣepa–bhāgavatāmṛta–tippaṇī, 16 Tattva–saṁdarbha–tīkā, 17. Stava-mālā–vibhūṣaṇa–bhāṣya, 18. Nātaka–candrikā–tīkā, 19. Chandakaustubha–bhāṣya, 20. Śrī Śyāmānanda–śataka–tīkā, 21. Śrī Govinda–bhāṣya–tīkā (Sūkṣmā), 22. Siddhānta–ratna–tīkā (Sūkṣmā), 23. Candraloka–tīkā, 24. Sāhitya–Kaumudī–tīkā.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa wrote his commentary on the *Stavamālā* of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in 1764, which shows that he lived till after that date.

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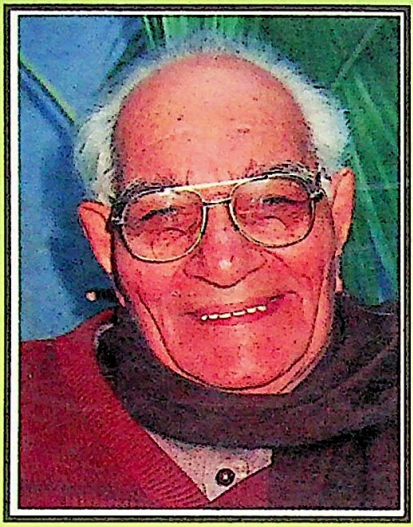

Born in 1909, Dr. O.B.L. Kapoor had strong leanings towards the Advaitic philosophy of Śaṅkara. In August 1931, when he was working as a research scholar in the University of Allahabad, he met his guru Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who pulled him out of his Advaitic moorings and initiated him into Bhakti. On his advice and under his close supervision he wrote a thesis on the Philosophy of Śrī Caitanya. The thesis was approved by the Allahabad University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Dr. Kapoor has the unique distinction of being the first Doctor of Philosophy of this prestigious University.

He worked as Research Fellow at the Indian Institute of Philosophy, D. Litt. Scholar, University of Allahabad, and Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, B.R. College, Agra till 1951, after which he joined U.P. Educational Service Class I and worked as Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy at the K.N. Govt. College, Gyanpur (Varanasi) and Principal, Govt. College, Gyanpur/Rampur till his retirement in 1967. Since 1967 he has been living in Vṛndāvana and writing books and articles in Hindi and English on topics relating to Bhakti. He has written more than 30 books and a large number of articles, published in different journals. His writings have been widely appreciated.