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BRAJABULI LITERATURE, ITS CONTENT AND  
LANGUAGE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BENGAL

by

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## ABSTRACT

The subject of this essay is the Vaiṣṇava literature of Medieval Bengal composed in the Brajabuli language. It is discussed in its three aspects: religion, literature and language. The songs, composed according to the conventions prescribed by the highest authority of the Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava school are primarily religious; and they are at the same time literary products some of them of great beauty. In them religious sentiment is expressed in terms of human emotion and passion. The language in which the poems are composed is used exclusively by the Vaiṣṇava poets of the Caitanya sect and has special features of its own. Therefore for a proper understanding of the works of the Vaiṣṇava poets, these three aspects must be all taken into consideration. The present essay is an attempt to do so.

A summary of the previous work on Brajabuli is given in Chapter I. A survey of the extant materials of Brajabuli and the materials on which the present work is based, is given in the second chapter. In Chapter III is given the etymology, history and interpretation of the word 'Brajabuli'. Chapter IV contains a summary of Brajabuli literature of the provinces other than Bengal. In Chapter V the development of Brajabuli literature of Bengal is discussed. Chapters VI, VII, and VIII introduce the religious aspects, each dealing with a separate topic: the history of the Kṛṣṇa legend, the Rasa aspect, and the story respectively. The form and style of the poems, like the



language, has peculiar features which are considered in Chapter IX. Chapter X contains a summary of the earlier theories on the origin of the Brajabuli language. Chapters XI, XII and XIII, contain linguistic analysis under three main heads: Noun, Pronoun and Verb. Chapter XIV contains an interpretation of the linguistic facts described in the preceeding three chapters.

BRAJABULI LITERATURE, ITS CONTENT AND  
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Abstract

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TRANSLITERATION.

a	(অ)	ā	(আ)	i	(ই)	ī	(ঈ)	u	(উ)	ū	(ঊ)
r	(ঋ)	e	(এ)	ai	(ঐ)	o	(ও)	au	(ঔ)		
k	(ক)	kh	(খ)	g	(গ)	gh	(ঘ)	ṅ	(ঙ)		
c	(চ)	ch	(ছ)	j	(জ)	jh	(ঝ)	ñ	(ঞ)		
t	(ট)	ṭh	(ঠ)	ḍ	(ড)	ḍh	(ঢ)	ṇ	(ণ)		
t	(ত)	th	(থ)	d	(দ)	dh	(ধ)	n	(ন)		
p	(প)	ph	(ফ)	v	(ব)	bh	(ভ)	m	(ম)		
y	(য)	r	(র)	l	(ল)	b	(ব)				
ś	(শ)	ṣ	(ষ)	s	(স)	h	(হ)				
r̄	(ড়)	ṛh	(ঢ়)								
m̄	(ং)	ṁ	(ঃ)	~	(ঁ)	ks̄	(ক্ষ)				

## CHAPTER I

### PREVIOUS WORK ON BRAJABULI

The discussion of previous work on Brajabuli may be conveniently treated under three headings: <sup>1</sup> linguistic, literary and religious, the first dealing with linguistic analysis already undertaken, the second with previous literary research and the third with the religious background and subject matter.

#### Linguistic

Previous observations on and analysis of Brajabuli have mainly been made incidentally in the introductions to other works. They are usually brief and by no means thorough and definitive. Only on one occasion has Brajabuli formed the entire subject matter and title of an article. This was in a ten page pamphlet of that name, Brajabuli, written by Sukumar Sen in 1926. On all other occasions the observations have been 'a few remarks in passing'. The first 'few remarks in passing' were made in the 19th century by a Brajabuli poet, Guruprasad Sengupta in the introduction to his collected poems Padacintāmanimāṭā (published 1876). The relevant section is quoted at length below:

"There is no dictionary or grammar of the Brajabol language, the lyrics of the great poets (mahājana) being its only source. In composing my lyrics I have followed the practice of my predecessors regarding pronunciation. In their works

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1. There is a possible fourth division comprising earlier theories about the origin of Brajabuli. This topic, however, is reserved for a later chapter where the subject is discussed in full.  
See pp. 153-178

the pronunciation of particular vowels varies in accordance with the needs of rhyme and versification, thus, for example, the 'i' of 'giralā' is sometimes pronounced long (dīrgha) and sometimes short (hrasva).

"The rules I was able to discover from my reading of the old lyrics are as follows:-

- (a) The 'e' of 'bhela' is to be pronounced as a short (hrasva) vowel in some cases and as a long (dīrgha) vowel in others.
- (b) Though in writing a word (śavda) may contain several long vowels (aksara), in reading only the last of these long vowels is pronounced so. e.g., in 'āgoralā', 'o' only is pronounced long, in 'ādihūnāna', only the penultimate vowel is long.
- (c) In the case of two separate words, if in writing the initial vowel of the first word is long and the final short and if the initial vowel of the following word is short, then in pronunciation the initial vowel of the first word will be short and the initial vowel of the following word heavy (guru).
- (d) The final long vowel 'i' of feminine words is often pronounced short, e.g., 'nārī' pronounced 'nāri'; 'kāminī' pronounced 'kāmini'.
- (e) 'āna' and 'māha' are sometimes short and sometimes long.

- (f) The final vowels occurring at the end of lines are not retained unless immediately preceded by a consonantal cluster e.g., 'yāba' pronounced 'yāb'; 'rāba' 'rāb' etc.
- (g) The 'ā' of 'nā' and 'nāhi' is either short or long. 'o', e.g. pāyala =
- (h) The 'y' of Brajabuli verbs should be pronounced/'pāola', 'yāyala': 'yāola' etc.
- (i) Final 'e' and 'ā', when occurring in the middle of a line is often pronounced short e.g. as in 'nirakhiyā', 'tuyā', 'bandhuyā', 'garime.'

These suggestions of Sengupta on the pronunciation of Brajabuli may be valuable for the light they shed on Brajabuli pronunciation in the 19th century but as a guide to the pronunciation of the lyrics of 16th, 17th and 18th century they are of doubtful value. Presumably they were based on the pronunciation of contemporary Brajabuli singers, for as Sengupta admits in the above extract there was at his time no authority or definitive work of reference in existence to which recourse might be had. The sole source of his knowledge were earlier lyrics.

Probably the first grammatical analysis was undertaken by Satish Candra Ray in a short essay entitled 'Padāvalīr Bhāṣā' in the fifth volume of the Padakalpataru. 'Padāvalīr Bhāṣā' means the language of the padas (vaiṣṇava songs written in Bengali and Brajabuli) but it is quite clear that his subject was Brajabuli.

His short analysis consists of five paragraphs and dealing with a specific topic: pronunciation, declension, conjugation, formative suffixes and compounds.

His comments on pronunciation are presumably based upon contemporary Brajabuli pronunciation, but since he edited the largest anthology, Padakalpataru, his comments are perhaps valuable. He comments that the heavy (guru) vowels ā, ī, ū, e, ai, o, au, and those preceding consonantal clusters are not invariably pronounced heavy. 'y' is pronounced as 'j' and the 'ch' of such words as 'kaichana' 'yaichana' is pronounced like the Hindi 's' or the English 's'.

In the declension of the noun he applied the principles of Sanskrit grammar, giving examples of the seven cases and their suffixes. He comments that the pronominal forms of Brajabuli are mainly derived from Bengali, Maithili, and Brajabhāṣā, though he traced the origin of some forms from Sanskrit e.g., 'hāma' from 'asmad', 'tuhi' from 'yusmad' etc.

In conjugation he sets out the suffixes for three persons and four tenses.

Ray's analysis is merely a very brief outline of the most salient features of the language. At about the same time Sukumar Sen issued his pamphlet on Brajabuli which was mentioned earlier. Though only ten pages it is the longest essay on the subject to date. Sen's essay is

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is both synchronic and diachronic. Synchronically he has set out nominal declensions in the familiar Sanskrit fashion, though distinguishing only six cases. The Verb he sets out in three tenses Past, Present and Future and three persons, First, Second and Third. He distinguishes two moods, Indicative and Passive, though a few examples of the Passive construction are given. Diachronically he has traced the origin of the case suffixes, pronominal forms, personal endings of verbal forms etc.

Both Ray's and Sen's analysis share two major defects. They both approached their analysis of Brajabuli simultaneously from the synchronic and diachronic points of view and also attempted to fit the linguistic facts of the Brajabuli language into the framework of Sanskrit grammar. They also confused various levels of analysis, i.e. to justify the grammatical categories they set up they were compelled to appeal to the Semantic level (the level of meaning). These defects are symptomatic of the time in which they wrote. Linguistic science has made rapid progress since then. The modern method of linguistic analysis of the London School is formal and if one might coin the word, 'monochronic' i.e. either synchronic (descriptive) or diachronic (historical) never both at the same time. Had Sen been using a formal approach he would not have fallen into the error of leaving the verbal root undefined. He leaves it unexplained whether the root is 'kar' or 'kara'. According

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to him the suffix of the First person Present tense is '-hū' and of the third person '-ai'. Since, however, the full verbal forms (with roots and suffixes together) are 'karahū' and 'karai' respectively, an unnecessary complex situation emerges, in which the root is either 'kara' or 'kar' dependent on the person.

Sen was also ignorant of another extremely useful technique when dealing with a language of this nature, namely, statistical counts of relative frequency of occurrence of certain forms. There are certain forms which occur with greater frequency than others. In analysing the language one should give greater prominence to the more frequently occurring forms. Sen fails to do this. He includes several forms in his analysis which have relatively low frequency of occurrence.

Pandit Sudhākar Jha wrote a short article on A brief analysis of the Non-Maithili elements of Brajabuli.<sup>1</sup> The two following quotations will illustrate his general theme:

"Maithili is the basic part [of Brajabuli] which Bengali or Assamese with oddments of Brajabhākhā forms the super-<sup>2</sup>structure."

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1. Proceedings and Transactions of the All-India Oriental Conference. 1943-44, Vol. VIII, (published in 1948) pp. 636-641.
  2. Ibid p. 636.

"we are not sure whether even these non-Maithili elements as stated above were brought in by the authors themselves or they were introduced there in by the non-Maithili scribes and editors.....Therefore on closer scrutiny it is just likely that the non-Maithili elements may further be diminished. It is, therefore, for students of Bengali, Maithili, Assamese and Oriya and Vaiṣṇavism to reconstruct the correct texts of the great writers of whose work we all are proud."<sup>1</sup>

The article is interesting as an illustration of the dogmatic bigotry that has surrounded Brajabuli even in recent years (1943-44) and of the naive desire of some scholars even now to purify texts. But as work of serious scholarship, it is too brief and its author's knowledge of his subject too small, for it to merit further consideration.

#### Literary

Establishing the authorship and date of composition of works of Brajabuli literature is difficult. The 'bhanitā' is one of the main sources of information. It invariably reveals the name of the author and occasionally that of his patron and teacher, but never the date of composition. Bhanitās, again, are not always absolutely reliable,

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1. Ibid p. 641

for it often happens that several poets choose to write under one name. A more reliable source of information is the Vaiṣṇava biographies and the theological and philosophical works. The Vaiṣṇava movement of Bengal is fairly well documented. A continuous history of the movement with the dates of major events and happenings emerges from this documentation. As most Brajabuli writers of note were in some way connected with one or other of the propagators of the movement, their works can be set in a chronological order and the evolutive pattern of the development of Brajabuli literature established with the aid of this ample documentation. This Sukumar Sen has done in his work, A History of Brajabuli Literature.<sup>1</sup> Most of the complex problems of disputed authorship are solved in its pages and this work owes much to it, as a source of historical information.

#### Religions.

The original scriptures of the Vaiṣṇava sect written by the 'gosvāmīs', more especially those by Rūpa-, Sanātana- and Jīva Gosvāmī and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's biography of Caitanya, forms the best basis for a thorough understanding of the Vaiṣṇava movement of Bengal.

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1. Calcutta University, 1935.

These works, however, are accessible only to those acquainted with Sanskrit. However, an admirable analysis of them is available in English, Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement in Bengal,<sup>1</sup> by S. K. De, and serves as an excellent introduction to the subject. A more thorough and perhaps definitive exposition of the faith is to be found in Bengali, Śrī Rādhār Kramabikāś-Darśane O Sāhitye.<sup>2</sup> This work traces the evolution of Rādhā (the principal character of Brajabuli literature) and of the Vaiṣṇava faith from the earliest available source to the later Vaiṣṇava religion of Caitanya. While following the course of Rādhā's evolution through philosophy and literature the author Sashibhusan Dasgupta has very precisely described the principle features of the Vaiṣṇavism as propagated by Caitanya.

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1. Published in Calcutta 1942.
  2. 2nd Edition, Calcutta, 1957.

## CHAPTER II

### MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR A STUDY OF

#### BRAJABULI

Brajabuli literature is the name of a branch of the medieval literature of north-east India, Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It is so named because it is written in the Brajabuli language. It consists entirely of short lyrical poems on the theme of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. So far as we know, these poems were composed singly, not in sequences, and the author's name is usually given in the bhanitā, which forms part of the final couplet. The ordering of the single poems in cantos was the later work of the anthologists, who collected and arranged the poems according to subject-matter and not according to the names of the authors, so that each canto in the anthologies consists of the work of many authors. No autograph copies of the poems have survived; neither is there any other evidence that they were written down by their authors at the time of composition, so that it can be presumed that they were composed and sung, and then handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition. One of the earlier anthologists<sup>1</sup> says that he wrote down the songs as he heard them sung. He makes no mention of manuscript material.

mātāra vātsalya āra Kṛṣṇera vālya līlā  
śuni paśu pākhi kānde gali yāya śilā

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1. Gokulānanda Sen, compiler of the largest anthology the 'Padakalpataru'. For further reference see pp 18-19

smyaka ki sādya tāra kona kona līlā  
 prācīna Vaiṣṇavagana yemata gāhilā  
 tāhā śuni kichu kichu ye haila saṁgraha  
 tāhā śuna bhaktagana kari anugraha

(when the songs of the boyhood games of Kṛṣṇa and of his mother's love for him are heard, birds and animals weep and stones melt. How powerful are these tales as they were sung by the old Vaiṣṇavas! When I heard them, I collected a number of them, and beg all devotees to listen to them.)

None of the poems are dated, and it is not known when exactly any of them were composed, but there is strong presumptive evidence that the period of composition began before the death of Caitanya in A.D. 1532, and continued through the 16th and 17th centuries, and on with declining originality and poetic power into the 18th and 19th. The anthologies in which the works of the earlier generations of the poets are collected date from the beginning of the 18th century. Sukumar Sen writes in his History of Brajabuli Literature that he was permitted to "glance at" a privately owned anthology manuscript in which he saw that the date A.D. 1653-54, but the manuscript is not available for verification, and Sen himself in a later work ignores his earlier remark and states that the earliest anthology can be dated A.D. 1704.

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1. The word 'devotee' has been generally accepted in India as the English translation of the word 'bhakta'
  2. published by Calcutta University, 1935, p.6.
  3. Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās 2nd Ed. vol. I 1948, p. 279, 665.

There are three main sources of material for a study of Brajabuli literature:

(i) The Vaisnava anthologies, (ii) Philosophical and Biographical works, (iii) Manuscripts which contain the writings of single poets.

I. ANTHOLOGIES The following is a list of known and published anthologies, stated chronologically.

(a) Kṣanadāgitacintāmaṇi:

This anthology was compiled in the very late 17th or early 18th century at Vṛndāvana by Viśvanātha Cakravartī, whose pen-name was Vallabha or Ḥari-Vallabha. The manuscript is incomplete and bears no date, but as the author is stated to have died about 1704 A.D. the date of compilation may be given as approximately 1700 A.D. It contains 300 poems, the work of 45 different poets.

(b) Gītagaṇḍōdaya:

This anthology was compiled early in the 18th century by Narahari Cakravartī, himself a Brajabuli poet who wrote under the pen-name of 'ghanaśyāmadāsa'. The manuscript is incomplete. The published portion contains 330 poems.

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1. Sukumar Sen, Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās, vol. I. p. 666

2. The exact date is not known. The poet in his short autobiographical poem has given the following information: He originally came from the east bank of the Ganges. The well-known Viśvanāth Cakravartī (mentioned above) was the guru of his father. He himself was known by two names 'narahari dāsa' and 'ghanaśyāma dāsa'. See Sukumar Sen, Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās, vol. I. pp. 656-657, 666-668.

(c) Padāmrtasamudra:

This anthology was compiled by Rādhāmohan Thākara who was one of the leading Brajabuli poets in the first half of the 18th century. The work contains 756 songs to each of which the compiler has added a commentary in Sanskrit.

(d) Padakalpataru:

This is the largest of the anthologies. It was compiled by Gokulānanda Sen. The exact date of its compilation is not known. Sukumar Sen suggests it was compiled towards the middle of the 18th century. <sup>1</sup> Its original name was 'Gītakalpataru', <sup>2</sup> which was later changed to 'Padakalpatara'. <sup>3</sup> It contains 3101 poems written in the Bengali and Brajabuli languages. The number of Brajabuli poems, included in the anthology, is approximately 2000.

The anthology Padakalpataru reproduces all the poems contained in the Padāmrtasamudra, mentioned in (c) above, together with a large number of others which Sen collected from singers in the course of various tours made for that purpose. The order of arrangement adopted is the same as that in the earlier collection. In a concluding poem

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1. Bāngālā Sāhityer Itihās: vol.I. p.669.
  2. "ei gītakalpataru nama kailū sāra" ("I decided Gītakalpataru as its name".) See. Satis Candra Ray Edt. Padakalpataru, vol.IV. rub. Bāngiya Sāhitya Parisat, 1915-1931 A.D., p. 262.
  3. "tina sahasra eka śatā eka pade lekha". ("...it [the anthology] is written in 3101 poems." Ibid. p.267.



Sen says,

śrī ācārya prabhuvamśa śrīrādhāmohana  
 ke kahite pāre tāra guṇera varṇana  
 grantha kaila padāmṛtasamudra ākhyāna  
 janamila āmāra lobha tāhā kari gāna  
 nānā paryatane pada saṅgraha kariyā  
 tāhāra yateka pada saba tāhā laiya  
 sei mula grantha anusāre ihiā kaila  
 prācīna prācīna pada yateka paila.

(Śrī Rādhāmohana [was born in] the family of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya-  
 prabhu. Who can describe his virtue? He made a book, Pradāmṛtasamudra,  
 by name. As I sang it, longing was born in me [to compile another]. I  
 collected poems in various tours which I made and took all the poems which  
 were in Rādhāmohana's work. I arranged the poems according to that  
 original and included the old poems which I was able to collect).<sup>1</sup>

(e) Kīrtanānanda was compiled by Gaurasundera Dāsa, who is believed  
 to be Gokulānanda's contemporary.<sup>2</sup> The approximate date of the compilation  
 of Kīrtanānanda is the middle of the 18th century. It contains 650 songs.

(f) Samkīrtanāmṛta<sup>3</sup> was compiled by Dīnavandhu Dāsa. It contains  
 491 songs.

(g) Padakalpalatikā is a modern anthology. It was compiled in 1849 A.D.

1. Padakalpatara: vol. IV. p. 264.  
 2. Sukumar Sen. Bāṅgāla Sāhityer Itihās. vol. I. p. 670.  
 3. Exact date of compilation is not known. Sukumar Sen suggests it was  
 compiled in the first half of the 18th century. See Ibid. p. 670.

by Gauramohana Das. It contains 350 poems, written in the late 18th and early 19th century poets.

(h) Gaurapadatarangini contains poems written on the life of Caitanya. It was published from the manuscript of Jagadvandhu Bhadra by the Bangiya Sāhitya Pariṣat in 1903 and later 1931.

(i) Three collections are known to exist in manuscript form: Padarasaśāra, Padaratnākara and Mukundānanda. They were compiled in the 19th century, and together contain some 4659 poems. Many of their poems are to be found in the published anthologies already mentioned, but such poems as are not known in any other source have been extracted by S.C.Ray, and published under the title Aprakāśita Padaratnāvalī, i.e. anthology of unpublished poems, as a supplement to the Padakalpataru, mentioned in (d) above, and therefore may be regarded as forming part of that book.

## II. PHILOSOPHICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS:

The majority of these works are Bengali translations from Sanskrit made in the 17th and 18th century. They contain a large number of Brajabuli poems added by the Bengali translators as illustrations. Certain of these poems are not known in any other source. For instance, one work mentioned below is the only known source of the compositions of two 18th century poets, Śaśiśekhara and Candraśekhara. The important works are the following:

(a) Śrīśrīrādhākṛṣṇarasakalpavallī:<sup>1</sup>

This is a work on Vaisnava poetics of the school of Rūpa Gosvāmī. It was written by Rāmagopāla Dāsa in 1673 A.D.

(b) Rasamañjarī:

This work was written by Pītāmbara Dāsa, son of the above mentioned Rāmagopāla Dāsa, in the late 17th century. The work is an amplification of a particular chapter of his father's work. In this work has been found what, according to Sukumar Sen, is the oldest known Brajabuli poem. It was written by Yaśorāja Khāna.<sup>2</sup> It is examined in greater detail in a later chapter.

(c) Bhaktiratnākara:

This work which is not a translation from Sanskrit was written in Bengali by Narahari Cakravarti,<sup>3</sup> It contains 314 poems the majority of which are his own composition. A number of them are to be found in the Padakalpataru and other anthologies. The exact date of the composition of Bhaktiratnākara is not known. Sukumar Sen believes it was written in the early 18th century.<sup>4</sup>

(d) Nāyikāratnamālā:<sup>5</sup>

According to Sukumar Sen, this work may have been written by the poets Saśīśekhara and Candrasekhara who lived in the second half of the

1. A description of it is given by Harekrishna Mukherjee in the journal of Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat. Volume XXVII, No.2. pp.99-124
2. See below pp. 70-73
3. The compiler of 'Gitacandrodaya', a Vaisnava anthology mentioned above.
4. Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās. vol. I p. 656.
5. History of Brajabuli literature: p. 10

18th century. It deals with the sixty four aspects of the nāyikā (heroine). It contains 45 poems by Candrasekhara and 14 by Sasisekhara, together with a small number written by other poets.

### III MANUSCRIPTS CONTAINING THE WORKS OF INDIVIDUAL POETS.

The manuscript situation generally is difficult. It is suspected that many more manuscripts exist than are available to scholars. Vaishnava writings are treasured and venerated by their owners, who are reluctant to show them to outsiders, and even in some cases to admit that they possess them. A considerable number however are held in the libraries of Calcutta and they include the works of Govindadāsa, Jñānadāsa, Vidyāpati, Locanadāsa and others of the principal poets. But the manuscripts do not add greatly to our knowledge, as a substantial proportion of the poems they contain are known from other sources, notably the anthologies.

It follows therefore that no study of Brajabuli literature can be based on the entire corpus of the literature, because the entire corpus is not known, neither can any estimate of its size be formed.

For the purpose of this essay note has been taken of all the material available in (I), (II) and (III) above, but it has been found sufficient to make a detailed study of the poems in the Padakalpataru, which is the largest and most representative of the anthologies though use has been made of material from all three sources for comparative purposes.

Much of the known material is repetitive in respect both of its content and language, which were controlled by rigid conventions, of

which more is said later. Nothing outside the Padakalpataru has been found which contradicts statements made on the basis of the poems published in that work, and for that reason it is held that conclusions drawn from them can be accepted as valid for Brajabuli literature as a whole as far as it is at present known.

Finally it must be borne in mind throughout this essay that the poems of the Padakalpataru were assembled during the 18th century, and that though their language is almost certainly archaic, it cannot be assumed to be the identical language of the composers. In a literary language like Brajabuli it is probable that the degree of linguistic change was not as great as in a colloquial language, but it is reasonable to suppose that some change did take place. Later generations of singers too must almost certainly have made some amendment in the language of the songs they sang. It is doubtful whether even the most conservative and faithful of them would transmit the songs in the identical form in which he received them. A poem known to have been composed in the 16th or early 17th centuries cannot therefore be regarded on the form we now have it as reflecting the condition of the language as it was then. It is wiser to assume for the purpose of linguistic examination that the language of the poems in the anthologies and other books is not earlier in any case than the late 17th or early 18th century.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NAME 'BRAJABULI'

The term Brajabuli is current in Bengal and in north and north-east India generally as the name of a particular language or dialect. As there are grounds to believe that the term was first used in Bengal, it may be that it was coined there. Its form is that of a two-word compound, 'Braja' (Vraja), usually accepted as a geographical place name, and '-buli' which means speech or language. The word Brajabuli which is a 'tatpuruṣa Samāsa', may, therefore, be interpreted literally as meaning 'the language of Braja'.

The second half of the compound, '-buli', does not present any complication. It is a common Bengali and north Indian word and its common variant '-bol' which also means speech, occur in early and middle Bengali texts,

i.e. Caryāpada<sup>1</sup> (c. 11-13th century), Śrīkrṣṇakīrtana<sup>2</sup> (c. 15-16th century). The origin of both the words can be traced back to the Middle Indo Aryan period.<sup>3</sup>

The interpretation of 'Braja', the first member of the compound Brajabuli is uncertain. The term appears to have geographical reference but in no case can precise location be inferred. Grierson states that the districts of Agra and Mathura in Saurasena were known as Braja;<sup>4</sup> but his definition of the name as the 'country of the cowpens' raises the doubt whether it was originally a geographical definition.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Edited by Haraprasad Sastri under the title Bauddhagāna o Dohā Baṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat, Calcutta, 1922. p.61.
  2. Edited by Basanta Ranjan Ray, and published by the Baṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat, Calcutta 1949. The term 'bol' occurs in eight places. See pp.8,9,10,12,15,22.
  3. S.K. Chatterjee gives the history of the word 'bol' as this: "N.B. bol (speech) EMB (SKK)bol-a OB.(caryā) bol-a MIA. boll-a". See The Origin and Development of the Bengali language, vol.II. p.1013
  4. Linguistic Survey of India, 1927. Vol.I. pt.I Introduction p.162-3.
  5. ".....in the earliest authorities for Krishna's adventures both Vraja and Gokula are used to denote not the definite localities now bearing those names, but any chance spot temporarily used for stalling cattle: inattention to this archaism has led to some confusion in assigning sites to the various legends". See F.S.Growse The Country of Braj. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal Vol XL part I, 1871 p.35. also see Nundo Lal Dey, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India 2nd Edition, London 1927.

The earliest mention of 'Braja' is in the Rigvedas<sup>1</sup>. It is glossed by Monier-Williams as a fold, stall, cow-pen, cattle-shed, enclosure or station of herdsmen.<sup>1</sup> Rigvedas also occurs in the Śrīmadbhāgavata and the various purānas where it is the name of a region in which dwelt Nanda and Yaśodā, the foster parents of Kṛṣṇa, and which was the scene of Kṛṣṇa's early life. It was in 'Braja' that the god was born to overthrow the demon Kansa; here too he defeated the serpent Kāliya, upheld the mountain Govardhana and sported with the gopīs, whose work would naturally be associated with cow-pens.

The term 'Brajabhākhā (or Bhāṣā) as the name of a dialect of western Hindi, spoken in Agra and Mathura, appears to confirm that 'Braja' has reference to a geographical area; but as this term is comparatively recent<sup>2</sup> it may well have taken its rise after the legendary district of Braja had been popularly accepted as belonging to a certain area in northern India. M. Dvivedi is of the opinion that the

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1. See Sir Monier Monier-Williams; A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Oxford 1899. p.1042.
  2. The earliest specimens of Bhajabhāsa, according to Dharendra Barma, date in the 14th century, though the first mention of the term Brajabhāsa was not known earlier than 18th century. See Dharendra Barma, Brajabhāsa, 1948, where the point is discussed in much greater detail.



name 'Brajabhāsā' did, in fact, derive from the name of a geographical region which is described in the purānas as part of Saurasena.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that the name 'Braja' does not appear in any ancient maps of northern India<sup>2</sup> provides further grounds for believing that it was a legendary name originally associated with Kṛṣṇa and his early life and that its application to a particular geographical region is comparatively modern.

A large number of compound words incorporating 'Braja' as their first element are frequently used in Brajabuli literature. Their connotation in the text suggests that a geographical interpretation of the word 'Braja' is hardly relevant. It seems more appropriate to interpret these words in the context of the Kṛṣṇa legend. Thus, 'Brajaraja' is not the title of a king of a place called 'Braja' but an epithet of Kṛṣṇa himself. Brajera rākhāla, similarly, is not any cow-herd of Braja but Kṛṣṇa himself and refers to the episodes in which Kṛṣṇa goes out to graze cattle with his friends. Braja-bāṣī is not any flute of Braja but Kṛṣṇa's own murali which

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1. See J.M.Dās, Bāṅgālā Bhāsār Abhidhān, Allahabad 1916, p.1163

2. See Dhirendra Barma, Brajabhāsā, 1948, where the point is discussed in much greater detail.

he played in the Kadamba grove. So too, Brajabāsi does not mean the inhabitants of Braja generally but refers to those who witnessed the sport of Kṛṣṇa; and Braja yuvati is not any young woman of Braja but an associate of Kṛṣṇa's sport.<sup>1</sup>

It therefore seems that the word 'Braja' has acquired a twofold meaning: (a) the legendary or allusive meaning which the word has inherited from the purānas and which seems to be the primary meaning. (b) a geographical or secondary meaning which is expressed in the term 'Brajabhākhā, the name of the language of a certain region in north India. In regard to 'Brajabuli' which is the language of the 'līlā' of Kṛṣṇa, it is the legendary or primary meaning of the term 'Braja' which seems relevant.

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1. Monier-Williams quotes occurrences where 'Braja' appears as the first member of a compound. All these are either epithets of Kṛṣṇa or related to 'paurānic Braja', which in the old texts is a place but without precise geographical location. The terms he quotes are:  
Brajakiśora: a young man of Braja, name of Kṛṣṇa (Matsya Purāna). Braja maṇḍala: the district of Braja (old lexicographers), Brajamohana: fascinator of Braja, name of Kṛṣṇa (old lexicographer), Braja vallabha: beloved in Braja (old lexicographer), Braja vara: best of Braja, name of Kṛṣṇa (Matsya Purāna). Braja-nātha: lord of the herds, name of Kṛṣṇa (the Mahābharata). Brajas-pati (formed ungrammatically according to the analogy of brhas-pati) 'lord of the cow-pen', name of Kṛṣṇa (Bhāgavata).  
 See Sanskrit-English Dictionary p.1042.

Though the two terms, 'Brajabuli' and 'Brajabhāṣā', are both susceptible of a literal translation - language of Braja, they have reference to quite different languages. The latter is the name of a current language spoken around Agra and Mathura, whereas the former is not a spoken language but the literary language of a group of songs whose subject is the Kṛṣṇa līlā.

The compound 'Brajabuli', as far as we know, at present, is comparatively recent, although both of its components, 'Braja' and '-buli', are old derivations. But the history of the language we now know as Brajabuli is much older than the historical use of its name. In the vaiṣṇava biographies and philosophical works written in the 16th - 17th centuries, where poems are quoted or inserted by the author himself, they are introduced by the expression 'tathahi padam' (now a 'pada'), without distinction of language which might be either Brajabuli or Bengali. The authors of these works, however, did not find it necessary to mention the specific names of the languages in which the inserted padas were written.

Brajabuli being a second language in parallel with a current local language, the poets had a choice of one

or the other and since many of the poets used both, one would naturally have expected them to have names for both. But there is no evidence available from the texts containing the Brajabuli poems or from any other source that the name 'Brajabuli' or any other name for that language was used in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, the period when most of the Brajabuli poems were written.

In the absence of evidence therefore we cannot determine whether the composers of the Brajabuli poems had a name for that language or not.

In Bengal, the term Brajabuli seems to have occurred first, according to Sukumar Sen,<sup>1</sup> in the writings of Īśvarcandra Gupta (1812-1858), a Bengali poet and journalist. Sen does not give any precise reference and the term, in fact, does not occur in Gupta's collected published works. There is, therefore, no way of knowing in what context Gupta used it. But as Sen interprets it, there is no doubt in his opinion that it stood as a name for the language.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās, vol.I. p.161

2. The matter has been referred back to Sen but he was unable to find the passage in which the term was used. Gupta may have used it in his writings published in his own journal Sanvād Prabhākara, copies of which are now extremely rare.

In the introduction to the collected poems<sup>1</sup> of a 19th century Brajabuli poet, Guruprasad Sengupta, we find the term 'Brajabol', a common variant of Brajabuli, used as the name of a language.

"These [poems] are written in Brajabol, i.e. the Kausiki language. Therefore to make them intelligible to most readers Bengali translations are given after each poem."

Sengupta's use of the term 'Brajabol' without historical explanation suggests that he inherited it and did not himself coin it. He defines the term as 'Kausikī bhāṣā', the meaning of which is not entirely clear. Dictionaries give two meanings of 'Kausikī' - (a) a name of the goddess Durgā, (b) the name of a river in Bihar.

(a) The first meaning seems unsuitable in the present context as Durgā was not the subject of poems written in the language.

(b) Kausikī, the modern variation of which is Kośī, is a river which originates from Nepal and flows down through Bihar ultimately meeting the Ganges. Kausikī, as the name of a river is found in the Sanskrit Mahābhārata<sup>2</sup> and also in one of its Bengali versions.

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1. Padacintāmanimālā (1876); (translated)  
2. Turner, Nepali Dictionary, 1931.

The phrase 'Kausikī bhāṣā' may therefore be interpreted as the language used in those districts through which the river Kausikī flows, Nepal, Morang, or Mithila. It is unlikely that Sengupta intended to convey that it was the Nepali language; it is more likely that he meant the phrase to mean the language of Mithila. If he did so mean he is in accord with many scholars, such as Grierson, Chatterjee, D.C. Sen etc. who are of the opinion that Brajabuli was an imitation of Maithilī.

In Assam another term is known. R.K. Medhi, an Assamese scholar, wrote an article entitled 'Brajāvali literature of Assam'.<sup>1</sup> The editor of the journal in which the article was published writes:

"He [the author] prefers to call this quaint and artificial language 'Brajāvali' but many others would call it 'Brajabuli'."<sup>2</sup>

According to Sukumar Sen the word 'Brajāvali' is used as the name of a language by a 16th century poet Mādhavadeva. Writing on the etymology of the word Sen makes the following statement.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Journal of the Assam Research Society, Gauhati. 1941. Vol. VIII No.4 pp.103-12.
  2. Ibid p.112
  3. Bicitra Sāhitya, vol.II p.54. (Translated).

"the name Brajabuli is of recent origin...but the history of the name is not recent. Mādhavadeva, disciple of Śaṅkaradeva, in the middle of the 16th century called the special language of the Vaiṣṇava padāvalī 'Brajāvalī.' Old Assamese words 'sonāvalī' and 'rūpāvalī' which were current in Bengal, have been transformed to 'sonālī' and 'rupālī'. According to this 'Brajāvalī' a probable word in old Bengali ought to have been changed to 'Brajālī, but through the influence of 'bulī', what was 'Brajāvalīboli' in the beginning and what ought to have become 'Brajālī bulī' became 'Brajabulī'."

This hypothesis, however, can hardly be accepted unless and until it is substantiated by further evidence.

The history and derivation of the term 'Brajāvalī' is not important to the present purpose. But it may be noted in passing that on the analogy of other words ending in -āvalī, e.g. padāvalī (collection of poems), gītāvalī (collection of songs), Candrāvalī (literally, cluster of moons but generally used either as the name of Rādhā or her rival), it may originally have meant a collection of poems on the 'Braja' theme and have been later adopted as the name of the language in which they were written.

In spite of the paucity and uncertainty of the historical references the term Brajabulī has been generally adopted not only in Bengal but other provinces of northern India. 'Brajāvalī' and 'Brajabolī' are not in current use.

## CHAPTER IV

### BRAJABULI LITERATURE IN PROVINCES OTHER THAN BENGAL

Brajabuli literature consists of poems composed in the Brajabuli language by various poets from Bengal, Assam, Nepal, Orissa, Vr̄ndāvana and Mithila. The contribution from Bengal, which had a continuous history of composition from the 16th to the 19th century is by far the largest. The material available from other parts of north eastern India is scanty and fragmentary.

#### Assam.

Assam is the second largest contributor, though only a small portion<sup>1</sup> of Assamese Brajabuli has yet been published. It consists of both prose and verse.

Prose: Though small in quantity, the prose is extremely important. Assamese Brajabuli prose is the only Brajabuli prose in existence. It occurs only in the dialogues of a certain kind of drama known as Añkiyā nāt. On the nature of Brajabuli prose Neog comments, "it is neither prosaic - being characterised by a poetical sonority - nor is it purely Assamese."<sup>2</sup>

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1. "Brajāvali literature of Assam is almost wholly contained in the manuscripts. Only the Baragits and a few plays have recently appeared in print." K. R. Medhi, History of Brajāvali Literature of Assam, Journal of Assam Research Society, vol. X. p. Gauhati, 1943.
  2. M. Neog, Śaṅkaradeva and his Predecessors, Gauhati, 1953, p. 58.



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Verse: The verse is of two kinds: (a) Baragit (the great song),  
 (b) Ankaragit (songs included in play).  
 (a) Baragit (the great songs).

Baragit poems may be divided into three classes (according to subject matter): those which contain

- (i) descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's beauty,
- (ii) descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's līlā, and,
- (iii) the philosophy of the Vaiṣṇava sect as outlined by Śaṅkaradeva.

Baragit songs were composed by various poets at different periods and later collected in manuscript anthologies. But we do not know when they were collected or how many of them in fact exist. In the Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Manuscripts <sup>2</sup> there is a description of a manuscript which contains 195 Baragits of which 40 are ascribed to Śaṅkaradeva, 154 to Mādhavadeva and 1 to Rāmacaraṇa. <sup>3</sup>

Most of the songs are known to us through modern collections but do not indicate the original manuscript collections from which they were taken.

A collection of Baragitspoems, claimed to be based on one manuscript, was published in 1887 by an anonymous editor <sup>4</sup> who comments as follows:

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1. There is a third kind of Brajabuli song which is called 'Bhaṭimā' (panegyric) but as it does not differ much from the Baragit it is not classified separately.
  2. Hemchandra Goswami, Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Manuscripts, University of Calcutta, 1930.
  3. Ibid. p.16. The date of the Ms. is given as 1500-1590 A.D., but the copy on which the description is based, was made in 1813 A.D.
  4. The title-page of this edition gives the information that the manuscript from which the songs are collected, was written by Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva, and that the songs are printed with the permission of the Vaiṣṇava Monastery situated at Āuni Āti.

"it cannot be ascertained when these songs were composed but it appears that they were composed by various poets at different periods and later collected in this anthology".<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that the editor was not able to identify the language of the songs, which is, of course, Brajabuli.

"The language of these songs is a peculiar mixture of Newari, Assamese, Kāmarūpi, Bengali, Hindusthānī, Brajabuli, Musalmānī and Oriyā".<sup>2</sup>

In Assam the composition of Brajabuli poems which were especially composed to be sung in the Vaiṣṇava centres (saṭra), seem to date from the first propagation of the Vaiṣṇava religion by Śaṅkaradeva, himself a Brajabuli poet and author of many works. There is no evidence that in Assam Brajabuli was known before Śaṅkaradeva, who was alive, it may be conjectured, in the first half of the 16th century.<sup>3</sup>

1. Baragit, published in 1887, p. 2 (translated)

2. Ibid.

3. There is a controversy about the date of Śaṅkaradeva. It is generally accepted, but without authentication, that he was born in 1449 A.D. and died in 1568 A.D., which means he lived an unusually long life, 119 years. See Neog, Śaṅkaradeva and his predecessors, Gauhati, 1953, p.49. B. K. Barua says Śaṅkaradeva died at the age of 120 in 1569 A.D. See. B. K. Barua, Studies in Early Assamese Literature, 1953, p.2, see also, S.K. Bhuyan, Studies in the Literature of Assam, 1956, p.6. Hemchandra Goswami, however, states that Śaṅkaradeva lived from 1461-1568, See Goswami, Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Manuscripts, p.1. Goswami's statement agrees with that of Rāmacarapa Thākura, Śaṅkaradeva's biographer who says that the saint died at Cooch Bihar at the age of 107 years, but does not give precise dates. See, Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Manuscripts. p. 157.

Because of the paucity of first-hand information one cannot be certain about the precise dates. It may, however, be assumed that Śaṅkaradeva's religious and literary activities did not begin until he was joined by Mādhavadeva in 1538 A.D. (See Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Manuscripts, p.1.) Most of his activities, which are relevant for the present study, therefore, took place in the middle of the 16th Century.

Sankaradeva played an important role in the social, religious and literary life of Assam. It was through his preaching that Assam, a stronghold of Tantricism, became a centre of the Vaiṣṇava religion, though this differs in detail from the Bengal Vaiṣṇavism as propagated by Caitanya.<sup>1</sup>

2.  
According to Assamese scholars, Sankaradeva, the first Brajabuli poet in Assam, composed his first Brajabuli song in 1481-93 A.D. during the period of his pilgrimage in North India. If the date is correct, Sankaradeva is the first Brajabuli poet in Assam and second in north east India generally. But the chronology of Sankaradeva's life and work is not settled; one cannot, therefore, be certain about the precise dates.

Sankaradeva and his disciple Mādhavadeva were the two most important composers of Baragīt and the songs attributed to them were sung in the Vaiṣṇava centres (satra) with great veneration.

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1. The points of difference are as follows: The Assamese school of Vaiṣṇavism does not centre round the amorous sport of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The modes of devotion into which Bengal Vaiṣṇavism is divided, i.e., dāsya (servile), sakhya (friendship), vātsalya (filial love), madhura (conjugal love), śānta (calm sentiment), do not correspond with those of Assamese school. In Assamese Vaiṣṇavism<sup>Kṛṣṇa</sup> figures as the master demanding love and veneration of the devotee as of a servant. See, Neog, The Bhakti Cycle of Assamese Lyrics: Baragīts and After, Journal of the University of Gauhati, Vol. I. No. I, 1950, p.p. 53-70.
  2. Neog, Bhakti Cycles of Assamese Lyrics, Journal of the University of Gauhati p.56.  
B. K. Barua, Studies in Early Assamese Literature, 1953, p.34.  
K. R. Medhi, History of Brajāvālī Literature of Assam, Journal of Assam Research Society, Vol. VIII, No. 4. Gauhati, 1941.

The number of songs composed by Śāṅkaradeva is in doubt.

There are 40 songs ascribed to him. Mādhavadeva is believed to have composed 154 songs.

After Śāṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva the Assam school of Vaiṣṇavism split into four different sects. The heads of these sects were also composers of Baragīts, but their songs are called simply 'git'. It appears that the works of the later poets were not as highly respected as those of Śāṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva. Neog gives the following information:

"While baragīts have their place in all satras of Assam, gīts of a later poet can have any formal use in the services only in those satras with which the poet himself is connected".<sup>1</sup>

The reason for this discrimination against 'gīts' may be that their composers never enjoyed the prestige and veneration accorded to Śāṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva and, unlike them, were never regarded as being of divine origin.

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1. Bhakti Cycles of Assamese Lyrics. p. 64. We know very little of the later composers for their works have not been published, but there is, evidence that they wrote in Brajabuli. See. *ibid.* pp. 64-70.

(b) Ankaragīts (songs included in plays)

B. K. Barua has published a collection of 15 Assamese plays of the type known as Ankiyā Nāṭ, written by Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhavadeva and Gopāladeva.<sup>1</sup> The language in which they are written is Brajabuli. Songs, known as Ankaragīts, are an important feature of these plays.

The subject matter of the plays is taken from the purāṇas, mainly the Bhāgavata. Like Baragīts Ankiyānāṭs were one of the means through which Śaṅkaradeva popularised the Vaiṣṇava religion in Assam. The plays which are performed in the nāmaghara (Vaiṣṇava temple) and attended by the followers of Vaiṣṇavism, were written by the heads of the Vaiṣṇava sect for religious purposes rather than for secular enjoyment.<sup>2</sup>

Śaṅkaradeva was first to write such plays in Assam; he was followed by Mādhavadeva and Gopāladeva.<sup>3</sup>

1. B. K. Barua, Ankiyā Nāṭ, Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Gauhati, 1940.
2. "It has been still customary with the ṣatrādhikāras of the monasteries to give tokens of their learning and religious zeal by first composing a drama before they are formally ordained as priests." Ibid. Introduction, p.ii.
3. They have the following plays attributed to them:
 

Śaṅkaradeva:	(i) <u>Rukmiṇi haraṇa</u>	(ii) <u>Keli gopāla</u>
	(iii) <u>Rāma vijaya</u>	(iv) <u>Patni prasāda</u>
	(v) <u>Pariāṭa haraṇa</u>	
Mādhavadeva	(i) <u>Araṇya bhañjana</u>	(ii) <u>Bhojan vvavahāra</u>
	(iii) <u>Bhūmī leṭovā</u>	(iv) <u>Bhuṣaṇa heroā</u>
Gopāladeva	(i) <u>Janma vātrā</u>	

Śaṅkaradeva was a man with wide literary range. He wrote two scholarly works in Sanskrit, the Bhaktipradīpa and the Bhaktiratnākara which deal with the theology, philosophy, ethics and religious doctrines of Assamese Vaiṣṇavism; translated the Rāmāyana and Bhāgavata into Assamese; and he was also the first to write the Brajabuli language in Assam. The problem why he should have chosen Brajabuli, a language hitherto unknown in the area, in preference to his mother tongue, Assamese, is still unsolved.

Assamese scholars are aware of this difficulty. Barua who published the Ankiyā Nāt, raised the problem without solving it.

He comments,

"It is difficult to guess why Śaṅkaradeva should have chosen this language as a medium of dramatic expression. He has written many books in pure Assamese. His sudden departure into this language seems to be an enigma. Was his choice of Maithili possibly influenced by his reading <sup>1</sup> Bidyāpati's works?"

Barua, does not recognise that the new language is Brajabuli not Maithili. This failure to realise the true identity of the language of Śaṅkaradeva's Baragīts and Ankaragīts has misled both Barua and Medhi into offering unsound solutions to the problem. Both of them <sup>2</sup> conjecture that Śaṅkaradeva was influenced by Vidyāpati's works in

1. Barua, Ankiyā Nāt. 1940.

2. See, Brajabuli Literature of Assam, Journal of Assam Research Society, Vol. X. p. 161

Maithili. Medhi goes further and suggests that Brajabuli was introduced into Assam through the contact "of the people of Kāmarupa with those of Videha" as well as through "the direct contact of Śaṅkaradeva with the speakers of Mithila".<sup>1</sup>

These suggestions, which, however, are not supported by any evidence, indicate that Assamese Brajabuli owes its existence to Mithila. But the problem why Śaṅkaradeva adopted Brajabuli instead of Assamese, is not solved by this suggestion. If the new language, known as Brajabuli, in which Śaṅkaradeva and his followers composed the songs and plays, is Maithili, as Barua and Medhi argue, why should Maithili be used in Assam by the Assamese? There is no evidence to prove that Maithili songs were sung in large numbers in Assam before or during Śaṅkaradeva's time.

Barua and Medhi both apply the same explanation of the introduction of Brajabuli into Assam as Grierson and Chatterjee applied to its introduction into Bengal. They are not, however, aware of the fallacy that Bengal and Assam are not comparable cases in this context.<sup>2</sup> Bengal and Mithila were so closely linked, during the time of Vidyāpati, that they could hardly be considered as two different provinces. Assam, being separated by the Brahmaputra, was never in close contact with Mithila. Besides, Bengal was already acquainted with the Kṛṣṇa legend so that Vidyāpati's poems on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme fell upon receptive and sympathetic ears.

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1. Brajāvalī Literature of Assam, Journal of Assam Research Society, vol. X p. 161
  2. It is not necessarily implied that Grierson and Chatterjee's explanation is accepted here. See p. 166

Assam on the other hand was antipathetic, owing to the strong Tantric movement that existed there. It is therefore unlikely that Vidyāpati's poems would have met with a favourable reception in Assam before Sankaradeva, who "stood square against the practices of Tantricism, of which Assam was then a veritable stronghold, and especially against blood sacrifices associated with all forms of Tantricism."<sup>1</sup>

Sankaradeva's preference for Brajabuli may be explained with reference to the nature of Assamese Brajabuli. A comment made by S. K. Bhuyan is valuable on this point.

"The diction of Assamese Vaiṣṇava literature was of a peculiar character. The structure and vocabulary were Assamese no doubt, but it gradually developed certain mannerisms tending towards an approach to the diction of other vernacular Vaiṣṇava literature. The dramas are avowedly written in the Brajabuli dialect, and the Vaiṣṇava songs had their characteristic outlandish tone... This literary diction, natural to the Assamese in the sense that their ears were attuned to it, has the advantage of being understood by the speakers of Bengali, Oriya and Hindi languages... Vaiṣṇava literature of Assam is cosmopolitan in character, and its meaning can be comprehended by all who speak languages allied to Assamese."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Neog, Itinerary of an Early Sixteenth Century Pilgrim from Assam in Northern and Southern India, The Journal of Oriental Research, Madras. vol. XIX, Pt. I, Sept. 1949. p. 14.
  2. Bhuyan, Studies in the Literature of Assam, pp 14-15



This "cosmopolitan character" is a feature of the Brajabuli language generally. Though few local forms do occur, Brajabuli is not a localised language. No matter where it is written, Brajabuli is intelligible in those regions of north and north eastern India that came under the sway of Vaiṣṇavism. It is indeed the language of the Bhakti movement. It seems therefore highly probable that Śaṅkaradeva in course of his pilgrimage observed that in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa Brajabuli was emerging as the language of the Vaiṣṇava cult and that it commanded great respect and veneration as a strictly sectarian language. Is it not probable then that Śaṅkaradeva introduced Brajabuli in Assam, as a sacred language of the Bhakti movement of which Śaṅkaradeva himself was an organiser and preacher?

Śaṅkaradeva met Caitanya<sup>1</sup> at Niṭācala in Orissa where Brajabuli poets of Bengal, contemporaneous with Caitanya, made frequent visits. It is not unlikely, therefore, that at Niṭācala Śaṅkaradeva first knew Brajabuli and having realised the sanctity of the language and its value as the medium of Vaiṣṇavism, he introduced it into Assam.<sup>2</sup>

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1. The biographers of Śaṅkaradeva describe the meeting between Caitanya and Śaṅkaradeva: See, Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss. Mss. nos. 132, 53. Neog, however, does not believe in such a meeting, although he does not give reason for his disbelief. See, Itinerary of an Early Sixteenth Century Pilgrim from Assam. Journal of Oriental Research, Madras. vol. XIX, Pt. I, 1949, p. 15-16.
  2. Bhuyān's comment on Śaṅkaradeva's pilgrimage adds support to this supposition. Bhuyan says, "In his two pilgrimages to Aryavarta and the Deccan, Śaṅkaradeva contacted the saints of his age, acquainted himself with the various schools of thought, different media of literary expression and diverse melodies, dance forms and song patterns, and subsequently adapted them to the Assamese soil for the edification of his own countrymen." Studies in the Literature of Assam. pp 6-7

Nepal.

The examples of Brajabuli writing in Nepal consist of a few plays and a number of songs included in Sanskrit dramas written in Nepal. The material, however, is scanty and much of it is known only from manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

Unpublished material:

In Nepal during the 17th and 18th century a large number of plays,<sup>2</sup> of the type known as Ankiyā Nāṭ in Assam, were written either by the members of the royal family of Bhātgāḍ or under their patronage, for a number of plays are attributed to the various members of the royal family.

Bagchi in his article, Nepāle Bhāṣā Nāṭak, reports that in The Nepal Durbar Library he saw the manuscript of a play which deals with the Kṛṣṇa legend. The manuscript bore no title but two names, Rāmacandra and Vīranārāyaṇa, were mentioned in the bhanitā. Bagchi assumes that the play was written during the reign of Trailokyamalla (1572-85),<sup>3</sup> but gives no evidence in support of his assumption.

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1. The following works give an account of the manuscripts containing materials of Brajabuli literature in Nepal.
    - (i) Bagchi, Nepāle Bhāṣā Nāṭak, Baṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣat Patrikā vol. xxxvi, No. 3. pp. 170-184.
    - (ii) C. Bendall, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, Cambridge, 1883.
    - (iii) Sastri, Catalogue of palm leaf manuscripts of Nepal Durbar Library, Calcutta, 1905, passim.
  2. See, Bagchi, Nepāle Bhāṣā Nāṭak
  3. Levi, Le Népal, vol. II. pp. 240-43.

Bagchi quotes a song from the manuscript and from the extract it appears that the language is Brajabuli. If the date of composition assumed by Bagchi is correct, then Brajabuli was in use in Nepal in the late 16th century and the play contains the earliest extant specimen of Brajabuli in Nepal.

The name of Jagajjyotirmalla (1617-1633)<sup>1</sup>, son of the above mentioned Trailokyamalla, occurs in the bhanitā of a play Haragaurī Vivāha Nāṭaka,<sup>2</sup> which contains fifty-five Brajabuli songs. Jagajjyotirmalla was also the author of two Sanskrit plays, Kuñjavihārīnāṭaka and Kuvalayāśvanāṭaka, which contain fifty more songs in Brajabuli. These fifty songs, originally included in the two Sanskrit plays, were later collected in a separate volume, Gītapāñcāśikā.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Levi. Le Népal. vol.II pp.240-43.
  2. See Bendall. Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts, p. 183
  3. Sastri, Catalogue of Palm Leaf Manuscripts of Nepal Durbar Library. p.16.

"iti mahārajādhirāja-śrīmacchri Jayajagajjyotirmalladeva viracita nānā bhāṣa-bhāva-rāga-tāla-rasasamanvitā gītapāñcāśikā-samāptā. Kuñjavihārīnāṭaka-kuvalayāśvanāṭaka nāmakan dvau... granthamadbye vinyasta tan cānenaiva rāñjā bhāṣayā viracitam."

Published Material

Nanigopal Banerjee in his work, Nepāle Bhāsā Nātak<sup>1</sup>, published four plays written in Nepal: Vidyāvīṭāpa by Kāśīnātha, Mahābhārata by Kṛṣnadeva, Rāmacaritra by Ganeśa, Mādhavānala Kāmakandalā by Dhanapati.

In the introduction to the published plays Banerjee comments that the texts of the plays had been transliterated by the Newar Scribes into Newari Script; consequently the language had been distorted to a certain extent. There is, however, no difficulty in identifying the language in most cases as Brajabuli, though a few of them are in Bengali.

The authorship of the plays is not absolutely certain. On the evidence of bhanitās<sup>2</sup> alone it would appear that Bhūpatīndramalla (died approximately in 1721)<sup>3</sup> is the author of Vidyāvīlāpa and Mahābhārata, and that Ranajīmalla (1722-1768)<sup>4</sup> is the author of Rāmacaritra and Mādhavānala Kāmakandalā. However, Banerjee attributes the plays to Kāśīnātha, Kṛṣnadeva, Ganeśa and Dhanapati whose names occur only in two songs in each play, namely, 'rāja varṇanā' and 'deśa varṇanā', which are respectively the sūtradhāra's description of the King and the states.

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1. Published by Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣat, Calcutta, 1921
  2. 'bhanitā' is the concluding lines of each song with the name of the author mentioned in it.
  3. Levi. Le Népal. Vol. II pp 240-3
  4. Ibid.

It is difficult to determine whether Bhūpatīndramalla and Ranajitmalla are the authors of the plays and Kāśīnāthā, Ganēśa, Kṛsnadeva, Dhanapati are the producers or whether the names of Bhūpatīndramalla and Ranajitmalla are mentioned as an expression of gratitude to the royal patrons.

Bagchi in his article, Nepālē Bhāṣā Nāṭak, argues that Bhūpatīndramalla and Ranajitmalla are the authors of the four plays. He bases his argument on two points: firstly, Bhūpatīndramalla and Ranajitmalla are mentioned in the 'bhanitā' throughout the plays while the names of others appear only in 'rāja varṇanā' and 'deśavarṇanā', and, secondly, that Bhūpatīndramalla and Ranajitmalla are mentioned in the 'bhanitā' of other works.

It therefore appears that the question of authorship hinges on the 'rāja varṇanā' and 'deśa varṇanā' songs. An example of 'rāja varṇanā' is given below in order to show its nature.

Rājavarṇanā śrī gauri co  
 raghukula - kamala - prakāśana bhūpe  
 abataru dinamanirūpe  
 nrpa bhūpatīndra malla madana - susaja  
 mahimāndala - surarāja  
 dānadharamaguna Karana samāna  
 ehana nrpativara na dekhala āna  
 drija kāśīnātha bakhāne mepu 3 \*

1. An unpublished Ms. under the title 'Bhāṣāsangīta', which contain 81 songs with Bhūpatīndramalla's name mentioned in the bhanitā as author of the songs, has been examined by Bagchi. Bhūpatīndra was also the author of/

It may be seen from the song, quoted above, that the 'raja Varṇanā' is a panegyric in honour of the King. Bagchi explains, "the Kings considered it immodest to describe their own personal and national glories", and therefore, the Kings did not reveal their authorship of the 'rājavarṇanā' and 'deśavarṇanā'. This view can be shown to be incorrect by quoting a few specimen 'bhanitā'.

- (i) nr̥pati śiromaṇi bhupatīndra bhāna. <sup>2</sup>
- (ii) bhaṇaya bhupatīndra bhūpa guṇamāna. <sup>3</sup>
- (iii) nr̥pa bhupatīndramalla kayala bakhāna <sup>4</sup>  
nītivinayaguna eha bhūpa jāna
- (iv) bhaṇa raṇajita nr̥pa avanika canda. <sup>5</sup>

It may be noted that the 'bhanitās' re-echo the eulogistic sentiment of the 'rājavarṇanā' and therefore, Bagchi's argument that modesty prevented the Kings from revealing their authorship of the 'rāja varṇanā' songs is not convincing.

This evidence of the 'bhanitās' and that of the concluding Sanskrit 'āśīrvāda ślokaḥ' in which 'saptāṅga rājyavṛddhi' (sevenfold increase of

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Mādhavānala and Rakminīparinaya. Raṇajitmalla according to Bagchi's information was the author of Uśāharāṇa nāṭaka, Andhakāsura vedhopākhyāna nāṭaka, Kṛṣṇa caritra nāṭaka, Madana carita kathā nāṭaka, Kelāsura vadho-pākhyāna nāṭaka, Rāmāyana nāṭaka. According to Bagchi, these plays were written in Brajabuli. See Bagchi Nepāl Bhāṣā Nāṭak, p. 179-181.

1. Ibid. p. 178 (translated)
2. See Banerjee, Nepāl Bhāṣā Nāṭak. p.5.
3. Ibid p. 17
4. Ibid p. 4
5. Ibid. ;.215
6. "Sriśrīśrī girinandini-carānārābinda-makarandāsavāda-lubdhā-madhupa-nepālābhūmandalākhaṇḍālamahārājādhīrāja-srī sri jaya bhūpatīndra malladevasya saptāṅgarājyavṛddhirastu" See Banerjee, Nepāl Bhāṣā Nāṭak. p 157

kingdom) is wished for the Kings, Bhūpatīndramalla and Raṇajitmalla, can be adduced to support Banerjee's attributing the plays to Kāśinātha, Kṛṣṇadeva, Gaṇeśa and Dhanapati.

From the published and unpublished materials of Brajabuli literature of Nepal it appears that Brajabuli was used in Nepal from the late 16th century to the middle of 18th century, i.e. from Trailokyamalla (1572-85) to Raṇajitmalla (1722-68).

How Brajabuli came into use in Nepal, where the Vaiṣṇava Bhakti movement was never strong, is not difficult to explain. It is clear from the published and unpublished evidence that Brajabuli was not used in Nepal as a sectarian language, for, with only two exceptions, none of the extant plays deals with the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa story. It follows that the language was not introduced there by members of the Vaiṣṇava sect. But there is evidence from the 13th-14th century Tirhutians and Bengalis settled in Nepal. <sup>1</sup> Sukumar Sen <sup>2</sup> suggests that a large number of Bengalis were living in Nepal from the 15th-18th century. Despite their individual occupational commitments, they were also engaged in literary activity, as is shown by a few Bengali works found in Nepal. e.g., Gopinandra Nāṭaka, <sup>3</sup> written in Bengali, Rāmacaritra <sup>4</sup> of Gaṇeśa, written in two languages, Bengali and Brajabuli. It is, therefore, almost certain that Brajabuli reached Nepal through the agency of the Bengalis and Tirhutians who went to Nepal and settled there.

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1. Colonel Kirkpatrick, An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal, London, 1811, pp. 26  
2. Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās, vol. I. 2nd Ed. p. 397  
3. Bendall, Catalogue, p. 83-4.  
4. Banerjee, Nepalē Bhāṣā Nāṭak.

Orissa.

Contrary to expectation the amount of Brajabuli literature in Orissa is small despite the fact that the situation in Orissa in the 16th century was particularly propitious for the spread of Brajabuli. The King, Pratāparudra<sup>1</sup> (1504-32) was a convert of Caitanya and Caitanya spent the last eighteen years of his life in Orissa.<sup>2</sup> Close liason was maintained between Nilācala in Orissa and Navadvīpa in Bengal, where Nittānanda was in control. A continuous interchange of visits took place between the two centres, - some of them being of a personal nature. This intercourse is described in detail in all the biographies of Caitanya.<sup>3</sup>

Wherever Caitanya went he was surrounded by hosts of disciples who night and day sang 'Kirtana' (Vaiṣṇava songs). These songs were enchanting. Pratāparudra fell beneath their spell during the 'Ratha' (chariot) festival. And it is not unnatural that their enchantment

1. "In February 1510 A.D. Caitanya came to Puri and stopped for two months. At that time Prataparudra had gone to the south and was fighting with Krishna Ray who had just then come to the throne of Vidyānagare. Wandering in the south after a year Caitanya came back to Puri. There at the time of the Ratha festival the King and the preacher met, and according to the biographer, Prataparudra was converted and became a devoted disciple. Several of the King's officers also became Caitanya's disciples, among whom the most prominent was Rāmananda Ray, for sometime Governor of Rājmahandri." M. M. Chakrabarty, Inscription of Kapilandradeva, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. LXLX. Calcutta, 1900.
2. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Atul Krishna Goswami Ed. p. 162-
3. niṭācala haite śacire dekhite  
āise jagadānanda.  
(Jagadānanda comes from Nilācala to see Śacī (mother of Caitanya). See. Gaurapada Tarāṅgini. 2nd. Ed. p. 267.



should have inspired the local disciples of Caitanya to compose lyrics in the same mode and medium, Brajabuli. Unfortunately, however, the Brajabuli literature of Orissa is still unsifted. Nevertheless we have evidence of five 16th century Oriya poets, namely Rāmānanda Rāya, Mādhavī Dāsa, Murāri Māhiti, Campati Rāya, and Jagannātha Māhiti, and three 17th century poets: Dāmōdara Dāsa, Canda Devī, and Yādupati Dāsa.

Rāya Rāmānanda:

Rāya Rāmānanda is reputed to be the earliest Oriya Brajabuli poet. He was a contemporary of both Prātāparudra and Caitanya. His meeting with Caitanya is described in detail in most of the biographies of Caitanya. Several poems in Brajabuli have been attributed to him. Some are to be found in the Padāmṛta Samudra and one bearing his bhanitā is contained in the Padakalpataru. Sen attributes this to him.

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1. Mention is made of Prātāparudra in a famous poem of Rāmānanda's (Padakalpataru no: 1844) "varddhana rudra narādhipa māna Rāmānanda Rāya Kavi bhāna," which Rādhāmohana Thakura, the compiler of Padāmṛta Samudra, interprets in his Sanskrit commentary as, "śrī Prātāparudra mahārajena varddhitamānah kavirbhanati". see Padāmṛta samudra, Edt. Ramnarain Vidyāratna 2nd Ed. Beherampore.
  2. Padakalpataru, song no: 2844
  3. Sukumar Sen. A. History of Brajabuli Literature p. 28.
  4. Recently a collection of poems bearing the 'bhanitā' Rāya Rāmānanda has been published. The editor has tried to identify the author of the poems (written in Bengali) with the Rāya Rāmānanda we have been considering. see Priya Ranjan Sen. Edt. Rāya Rāmānanda bhanitā-yukta padāvalī, Calcutta, 1945.

### Mādhavī Dāsa and Murārī Māhiti

Mādhavī Dāsa and Murārī Māhiti were both Oriya disciples of Caitanya,<sup>1</sup> the former being also the sister of Śikhi,<sup>1</sup> disciple of Caitanya. Two poems bearing the 'bhanitas' of Mādhavī and Murārī and composed in Brajabuli are to be found in the Padakalpataru.<sup>2</sup>

The ten poems bearing the 'bhanitā' campati in the Padakalpataru were composed by an Oriya poet whose full name, according to Rādhāmohana Thākura,<sup>4</sup> was Campati Rāya.<sup>ti</sup> The language of Campati's poems can scarcely be differentiated from that of the Bengali Brajabuli poets except for the occurrence of the word 'Paira' in one of his poems. This, according to Rādhāmohana Thākura,<sup>5</sup> is an Oriya word.

### Jagannātha Māhiti.

Whilst describing Caitanya's activities at Nilācala, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, Caitanya's famous biographer, mentions the name of Jagannātha Māhiti.<sup>6</sup> Jagannātha Māhiti may have been the full name of the composer of the four poems in the Padakalpataru bearing the 'bhanitā' of Jagannātha Dāsa,<sup>7</sup> since 'Dāsa', which means servant, was an appellation commonly adopted by the Vaisnava poets.

1. "mādhavī devī śikhi māhitira bhāgini" (Mādhavi Devi, sister of Śikhi Māhiti), See Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Atul Kṛṣṇa Goswami Edition) p. 44.
2. Songs Nos. 775 and 776.
3. Songs Nos. 480, 482, 531, 532, 538, 725, 1658, 1664, 1674, 1744.
4. "Śrī gauracandrabhaktah Śrī prataparudra mahārājasya mahāpātrah campali rāya nāmā mahābhāgavata āsit sa eva gītakartā": (There was a devoted Vaisnava, Campati Rāya by name; he was 'mahāpātra' of the King Pratāparūdra; great devotee of Gauracandra; he was the author of the song) See Rādhāmohana Thākura, Padāmṛta Samudra, p. 194.
5. "apakvanārikelam utkaladeśiyaiḥ paira iti bhāsayā ucyate." (The word paira means green coconut in the Oriya language) *ibid* p.194.
6. "Jagannātha māhiti haiyāche vrajeśvari" (Jagannātha māhita has become [has taken the role of] Vrajeśvari). See Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Goswami ed) p.167.
7. Songs nos. 633, 1216, 1323, 1554

The works of the foregoing five poets indicate that Brajabuli was in vogue in the first half of the 16th century in Orissa, but for the post-Caitanya period (i.e. after Caitanya's death in 1533) little material is available, though according to Jayakanta Misra,<sup>1</sup> three poets, composing their works in Oriya Brajabuli, lived in the 17th century. They are Rāya Dāmodaradāsa, Canda Devī and Yadupati Dāsa.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless the total known volume of Brajabuli literature in Orissa remains small. This may be accounted for by the fact that Brajabuli was too closely associated with Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. In the early days of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism in Orissa conditions were promising for the establishment of a strong centre of the faith at Nīlacala and the foundation of a tradition of Brajabuli literature. But we must never lose sight of the persuasive influence of Caitanya's personality. He was a living inspiration to the poets of Orissa. After his death when the power of his compelling personality was withdrawn the Bengal Vaiṣṇavism in Orissa declined. There was no one left to give active and life to it. The literature too quietly ran dry. This decline was perhaps hastened to by the counter-attraction of an Oriya form of Vaiṣṇavism, Pañcasakhā sampradāya, which probably drew away former adherents of the Bengal Vaiṣṇava sect.

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1. Jayakanta Misra, A history of Maithili Literature, vol. I. p. 181. Allahabad. 1949.

2. "the first two flourished in the court of Rāmacandra Deva I, the Gajapati King of Puri, and the last in the court of the Orissa ruler Narasimhadeva." Ibid.

### Vṛndāvana.

Vṛndāvana is important in the Vaiṣṇava world both mythologically and historically: mythologically it was the scene of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā; historically it was assigned to Rūpa - and Sanātana Goṣvāmī by Caitanya, as the place where they were to compose the philosophical and theological works of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. Eventually, after Caitanya's death, Vṛndāvana became the centre of the theologians (goṣvāmī) mainly through the association and activity of the six goṣvāmīs (sara goṣvāmī), i.e. Rūpa -, Sanātana-, Jīva and Goṣvāmī, Raghunātha Dāsa, Raghunātha - and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, who, with their disciples, resided at Vṛndāvana. The chief work of the six goṣvāmīs was to compose in Sanskrit the doctrine of the Vaiṣṇava religion, as propagated by Caitanya. These Sanskrit works of the six goṣvāmīs exerted great influence on the literary works of the Vaiṣṇava poets of Bengal who regarded them as the highest doctrine of the Bengal Vaiṣṇava religion.

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1. Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Vasumati Edition) p. 229-239.

Close contact between Vr̥ndāvāna and Bengal was maintained. The evidence of two letters, <sup>1</sup> written by Jīva Gosvāmī to Govindadāsa Kavirāja, would seem to indicate that Brajabuli poets sent their works from Bengal to Vr̥ndāvāna either for formal approval from the highest authority of the faith or for critical appreciation. The letters strike a friendly note. Jīva Gosvāmī expresses his sincere enjoyment of the works submitted and the hope that more will be submitted later. The extract from the 'Bhakti ratnākara' (A history of the Vaisnava movement in the 17th century) given below throws further light upon this relationship between Govindadāsa Kavirāja and the six gosvāmīs. Apparently it was they who bestowed the title "Kavirāja" upon

1. The two letters are as follows:

- (a) "tatra yanmayi sneham vidhāya śrīmanti gītāni prasthāpitāni tena tu atīva maṅgalasamgatoesmi". (The works which you have so affectionately sent me, have given unspeakable pleasure.) Patrikā 3. Bhaktiratnākara, Caturdaśa tarāṅga.
- (b) "Samprati yat śrīkr̥ṣṇavarṇanāmayasvīyāni gītāni prasthāpitāni pūrvamapi yaṅi tairamṛtairiva tr̥ptā vartāmahe, punarapi nūtantattadāśyā muhuraphyatr̥ptiṅca labhāmahe, tasmāttatra ca dayāvadhānam kartavyam". The following information may be obtained from this letter: "The songs dealing with Kṛṣṇa have also been sent to me recently. As I obtain great pleasure from your works please continue this practice of sending poems."  
(quoted from Sukumar Sen's Bicitra Sāhitya, Vol I. p. 142.

1  
him.

The gōsvāmīs did not confine themselves to theological works. They possessed creative ability of their own and composed Vaisṇava<sup>2</sup> lyrics in Sanskrit, which were compiled under the title Paḍyāvālī by Rūpa Gōṣvāmī. One would expect that the poetic atmosphere of Vṛndāvana would have been extremely favourable for the original composition of Brajabuli works owing to the constant flow of Brajabuli lyrics from Bengal, and the ever increasing throng of disciples who centred round the gōsvāmīs. Surprisingly, therefore, the evidence for Brajabuli composition at Vṛndāvana is small. There was a perceptible influence of Brajabuli on the language of Caitanya Caritāmṛta, written at Vṛndāvana in Bengali by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, yet there are only two compositions in Brajabuli. They were composed by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and were included in the Padakalpataru. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, one of the sara

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1. govinda śrīrāmacendrānūja bhaktimaya  
sarvaśastre vidyā kavi save praśamsaya  
śrījīva-lokanātha-ādi Vṛndāvane  
paramānandita yāra gītāmṛta pāne  
kavirāja khyāti save dilena tathāi  
kata ślāghā kaila śloke vrajastha gosāñi  
(Govinda is the younger brother of the devoted (vaisṇava) Rāmcandra. He is acquainted with the various scriptures, praised by everyone as poet. At Vṛndāvana Sri Jīva-Lokanātha etc., are exceedingly pleased to drink the nectar of his songs. They gave him the title 'kavirāja' there. How the Gosvāmīs of Vraja praised his songs!)
- Bhaktiratnākara (2nd. Edition). p. 31. (Here quoted from Sukumar Sen, Bicitra Sāhitya, vol. II. p. 141.)
2. Edited by S.K.De, Dacca, 1934.

gosvāmī, was a south Indian. Accounts of his life are given in a long poem<sup>1</sup> included in the Padakalpatan, and also in most of the biographies of Caitanya, especially and at greater length in 'Bhaktirtnākara'.

### Mithilā.

Discussion of the Brajabuli literature of Mithilā is fraught with complexity owing to the refusal of Maithil scholars to acknowledge the autonomy of the language we call Brajabuli, they claim rather that it is a type of Maithilī resulting from the attempts of non-Maithil poets to imitate the language of Vidyāpati and Umāpati. The question is discussed in much greater detail in a later chapter where it is suggested that Vidyāpati and Umāpati may have composed their songs in Brajabuli.<sup>2</sup>

Vidyāpati came to be a name commanding great respect and prestige and many poets adopted it as a pseudonym. The exact number of songs written by each of these poets is unknown and perhaps may never be known. What is important for our purpose is that the language of all the works bearing the name 'Vidyāpati' is the same, the one we call Brajabuli.

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1. Perhaps because of the fact that Caitanya is said to have appreciated his songs. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in his biography of Caitanya says: "Svarūpa gāya vidyāpati gita govinda gīti" (Svarūpa [a disciple of Caitanya] sings the songs of Vidyāpati which deal with Govinda). See: Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Atul Krishna Gosvāmī Edition) p. 367
  2. See below. M 166-174

Umāpati composed fifty songs in this same language. They were incorporated in a Sanskrit play, Pārijata Harana.<sup>1</sup>

The dates of Vidyāpati and Umāpati are not certain, although various speculations have been made by different scholars. It is, however, generally accepted that Umāpati lived in the 14th century and Vidyāpati in the 15th.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Grierson, ... The Pārijāta-Harāṇa of Umāpati Upādhyāya. in The Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, vol. III, pt. I. 1917.
  2. Ibid.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE BRAJABULI LITERATURE OF BENGAL

Brajabuli literature composed by the poets of Bengal may conveniently be divided into two broad sections: the first and main section, which is the subject of our consideration here, may properly be called 'Gaurīya Brajabuli'.<sup>1</sup> On the analogy of the term 'Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism', the term 'Gaurīya Brajabuli' is designed to indicate the compositions of those poets who were closely associated with the 'Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava religion' and composed poems according to the Vaiṣṇava doctrines, expounded by the six goṣvāmīs (ṣara goṣvāmī) of Vṛndavana. The second section of Brajabuli literature of Bengal, which falls beyond the scope of the present study, is the work of the English-educated poets of the 19th and 20th Century, who did not follow the Vaiṣṇava doctrines and used the language and the subject-matter purely as a literary exercise. These later poets are not necessarily Vaiṣṇava by religion and are not called 'mahājana' (great man), a term exclusively used for the Gaurīya Brajabuli poets. The term 'Gaurīya Brajabuli' is, therefore, used to exclude the work of these later poets, which, strictly speaking, forms part of the Brajabuli literature of Bengal, and to denote the work of the mahājana only.

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1. The term Gaurīya is derived from Gaura. This is a geographical term denoting certain geographical region. However, Gaurīya is in no way intended to refer to this region. It refers rather to a specific sect of the Vaiṣṇava religion namely that propagated by Caitanya and his followers, 'Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism'. 'Gaurīya Brajabuli' is, therefore, the language of the lyrics in which the doctrines of this sect was followed.

Brajabuli literature in the provinces other than Bengal, as we have noticed above, is scanty and of a fragmentary nature and has no continuous history. Judged from the literary point of view the merit of the specimens extant is negligible. The literary fame of a Vidyāpati is, of course, well known from the time of Caitanya and there was a poet of that name in Mithila; but the true identity of Vidyāpati is uncertain. The Baragīts and Ankiyagīts of Assam which may be regarded as kinds of panegyrics, are more religious than literary. The specimens from Vr̄ndāvana and Orissa are too small to give any impression of their literary merit. The plays from Nepal, although otherwise extremely valuable, do not possess high literary quality. The extant specimens, therefore, are less important as works of literature, than as indicators of the extent of the popularity of Brajabuli over the north and north eastern region of India.

In Bengal, however, the volume of literature composed in Brajabuli is considerable and its literary value is beyond dispute. Gaurīya Brajabuli, in fact, contains some of the best specimens of Vernacular lyrical poetry in India. Brajabuli (including the works of the later poets) in Bengal was not used sporadically; it has a continuous history from the early 16th century down to the late 19th century. Following the development of the Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava movement, Gaurīya Brajabuli literature reached its height during the 16th - 17th century and although, with the decline of the Vaiṣṇava movement in the 18th century, the popularity of Brajabuli waned

considerably, its use as a poetic language of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend continued uninterruptedly until the late 19th century. Even its current use, though very rare, is not absolutely unknown. The two languages, Brajabuli and Bengali, as they were cultivated side by side, were influenced by each other. From the 16th century onwards there is hardly any poet in Bengali literature who is completely free from the influence of Brajabuli. Although not a spoken language of the region, the Bengali poets have displayed such skill and power in using Brajabuli that it appears as though they were using their own mother tongue. As a poetic language, the superiority of Brajabuli over Bengali was accepted by some even at the beginning of the present century; and the extent to which Brajabuli has influenced the language of Bengali poetry is conspicuous. The Gaurīya Brajabuli poets with their language and subject-matter created a poetic atmosphere that tempted the English-educated poets to adopt the language and the theme long after Vaiṣṇavism ceased to be a strong movement in the country.

The remarkable development of Gaurīya Brajabuli and its tremendous popularity are due to two factors, the first being the personal influence of Caitanya (1486-1533 A.D.) and his Vaiṣṇava Bhakti movement and, the second being favourable political conditions in Bengal at that time. These two factors not only enriched Gaurīya Brajabuli literature but strongly inspired the cultivation of art, literature and learning in general, for which this particular period (16th century) in the history of medieval Bengal is renowned.

Caitanya was an extraordinary personality. He must have possessed great powers of leadership in order to have attracted so large a following, a great intellect to have expounded such subtle philosophies, and deep humanity for the suffering of mankind and, in addition, that unfathomable depth of insight and mystic knowledge that makes a man a saint. He was at once visionary and practical, and a socially conscious man. It is a mistake to assume that he was merely extraordinarily sensitive and emotional. There was this other stronger and deeper side to his nature and it was this that exerted such persuasive influence over his fellow men.<sup>1</sup> Since he was such a man, it is not surprising that non-Vaiṣṇava poets venerated him in their works (attention is drawn here to the 'Caitanya Vandana' poems included in the non-Vaiṣṇavite works of Bengali literature of the post-Caitanya period). One can, therefore, imagine the effect that such a personality would have created on his own Vaiṣṇava followers, who were not only attracted to him as a person but as the leader of a sect to which they were dedicated.

1. Many contemporary and later writers stressed these qualities of Caitanya. Information concerning his life is to be found both in a number of biographies most of them in Bengali but some in Sanskrit, written during a period starting in Caitanya's life time and continuing into the late 18th century, and also in numerous short Brajabuli and Bengali poems composed over a similar length of time. Some of the important biographies may be mentioned here: (i) Kṛṣṇacaitanyacaritāmṛta (in Sanskrit) of Murāri Gupta. (ii) Caitanyacaritāmṛta (in Sanskrit) of Kavikaranapūra (iii) Caitanyabhāgavata (in Bengali) of Vrṇḍavana Dāsa, (iv) Caitanyamaṅgala (in Bengali) of Locana Dāsa (v) Caitanyacaritāmṛta (in Bengali) of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. The short poems on Caitanya i.e. gauracandrikā, were collected in one volume by Jagadbandhu Bhadra under the title Gaurapadatarāṅginī and published from Bangiya Sahitya Parisat, Calcutta. Two modern biographies, based on the original biographies, were written in English. (i) J.N. Sarkar Caitanya's Life and Teaching 3rd Ed. Calcutta 1932. (ii) N.K. Sanyal Sṛīkṛṣṇacaitanya, Vol. I, Madras 1933.

The appeal was irresistible; they deified him even in his life time.

The political conditions of the time aided Caitanya in his mission.

A historian's comment on this period may be quoted here:

"Thus was a new dynasty [The Husain Sāhī Dynasty 1493-1538 A.D.] established under whose enlightened rule the creative genius of the Bengali people reached its zenith. It was a period in which the vernacular found its due recognition as the literary medium through which the repressed intellect of Bengal was to find its release. It was a period of unparalleled architectural activity, peace and prosperity, and of great military conquests. Finally, it was a period which witnessed an afflorescence of the Bengali mind symbolised by the lord Gauranga [Caitanya], by whose message of love and forgiveness the whole of Eastern India was carried off its feet. The Bengali mind burst its bounds and found its voice in the sweet lyricism of the cult of Rādhā and Krishna, in the emotional intensity of a resurgent Vaiṣṇavism, and in poetry and song, social toleration and religious fervour, the exuberance of life continued unabated for the next hundred and fifty years." 1

The founder of the Husain Sāhī dynasty, Alāuddīn Husain Sāha (1493-1519 A.D.) is even now remembered in Bengal as a good ruler; and his period 'Husen Sāhār āmol' is known as a period of peace, prosperity and happiness. Such was his popularity that "his Hindu subjects compared him to the incarnation of Krishna." 2 Blochman says, "the name of Husain Shāh, the good, is still remembered from the frontiers of Orissa to the Brahmaputra." 3 There are a number of works in Bengali literature which contain a laudatory mention of Husain Sāha. 4

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1. Jadunath Sarkar Edt. The History of Bengal, Vol. II. Dacca 1948, pp.143-44.
  2. Ibid p.151.
  3. H. Blochman, Geography and History of Bengal, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. XLII, Pt. I. 1873. p.291.
  4. See Sukumar Sen. Bangalā Sahityer Itihās, Vol. I. p.227 also see Sukumar Sen. Edt. Manasa Vijaya of Bipradas Pipilai, Asiatic Society of Bengal.

The period of "peace and prosperity", ushered in by the dynasty of Husain Śāha, was exceedingly favourable to the literature associated with Caitanya's Vaiṣṇava movement, and to vernacular literature in general. During this period the vernacular literature received royal patronage. There is evidence that the Pathan-Afghan rulers commissioned poets to translate the Hindu scriptures into Bengali and encouraged literary activity in the vernacular.

Mālādhara Basu, who translated the Bhāgavata into Bengali, was given the title 'guṇarāja khāna'.<sup>1</sup> The date of Mālādhara Basu's work (1473-1481)<sup>2</sup> suggests that the title was given by Ruknuddin Barbak<sup>3</sup> (1459-1474 A.D.) of the Iliyās Śāhis. The earliest extant translation of the Mahābhārata, Pāṇḍava Vijaya Pañcālikā, contains a laudatory mention of the name Husain Śāha. The translator, Kavīndra Parameśvara, mentions that he was commissioned by Parāgal Khāna, 'senāpati' (general) of Husain Śāha and provincial governor of 'Cāṭigrāma' (Chittagong), to translate the Sanskrit Mahābhārata into Bengali.<sup>4</sup>

More particularly from our point of view Brajabuli poets also were encouraged by the award of titles by the ruling powers. The earliest known Brajabuli poet is believed to have received the title 'Yaśorāja Khāna' from King Husain Śāha, to whom the poet pays tribute. Rāmānanda

1. See Sukumar Sen. Bāṅgālā Sahityer Itihās, Vol.I. p.108.

2. See Sukumar Sen. Bicitra Sahitya, Vol.I. p.48.

3. See Sarkar, History of Bengal, Vol.II. p.133

4. See Sukumar Sen. Bāṅgālā Sahityer Itihās. Vol.I p.227

Basu, grandson of the above mentioned Mālādhara who bore the title 'gunarāja khāna', was himself a Brajabuli poet. His title 'Satyarāja Khāna' was perhaps awarded by one of the kings. 'Kavirañjana', who wrote a considerable number of Brajabuli poems, was patronised by Nasiruddin Abul Muzzaffar Sāha (1519-32 A.D.), one of the Iliyās Śāhi Kings.<sup>1</sup>

All these advantages - the direct personal influence of Caitanya, the period of peace and stability, and royal patronage - were, it should be noted, peculiar to Bengal, and account for the remarkable growth of Gaurīya Brajabuli.

The history of Gaurīya Brajabuli literature may not be divided into stages on linguistic grounds, as Brajabuli was not a spoken language but a written one, retaining a more or less static form throughout the long period of its use. The division may, however, be possible on the basis of the history of the Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava movement which exhibits three distinct stages in its development: (a) Caitanya period (1486-1533 A.D.), (b) the Post-Caitanya period (C.1533-1650 A.D.), (c) the period of decline (C. 1650 - ).

(a) Caitanya period:

The lifetime of Caitanya (1486-1533 A.D.) constitutes the initial stage in the development of the Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava movement, for which

1. See Sarkar, History of Bengal, Vol.II p.159

Caitanya was the main source of inspiration. But his contribution to the actual propagation and consolidation of the faith is slight. All his time and energies were consumed in travel, meditation and his all-absorbing love for kṛṣṇa. He had none left for the more mundane tasks of composing doctrinal texts or organising the adherents of his faith into a strong unit. These tasks were performed with great devotion and efficiency by the 'Ṣaragoṣvāmī' of Vṛndāvana and the Vaiṣṇava 'mahāntas' of Bengal during the next stage, the post-Caitanya period.

(b) Post-Caitanya period

The period of the rise of the Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism began immediately after the death of Caitanya and continued until the first half of the 17th century. During Caitanya's life-time a centre of Vaiṣṇavism had been created at Navadvīpa, birth-place of Caitanya and the scene of his early life. It is from here that Nityānanda, who was believed to be the incarnation of Balarāma, had propagated the faith during Caitanya's absence. Now after his death other centres were set up and from there the mahāntas, Narottama, Śrīnivāsa and Śyāmānanda spread the faith, Narottama to the north and east Bengal, Śrīnivāsa to the south-west Bengal and Śyāmānanda in the Medinipur district and on the Orissa frontiers. Meanwhile at Vṛndāvana the formulation of the theological and philosophical doctrines of the sect was undertaken by the Ṣaragoṣvāmīs, who gave theological and philosophical support to Caitanya's realisation.



of Rādhā-kṛṣṇa legend. Their doctrinal texts, Rūpa Goṣvāmī's Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu, Ujjvalanilamaṇi and Jīva Goṣvāmī's Sarasandarbhā (i.e. Tattva-, Bhāgavata-, Srīkṛṣṇa-, Bhakti-, and Pṛīti Sandarbha) which contain Caitanya's interpretation of the kṛṣṇa legend, became the basis of Vaiṣṇava theology. Although composed in Sanskrit, the works enjoyed a wide circulation in Bengali translations and adaptations,<sup>1</sup> which made Caitanya's faith, hitherto confined to his intimate followers, accessible to all Vaiṣṇavas. They did much to popularise and consolidate the position of the sect. Through the efforts of the 'mahāntas' and the 'Saragoṣvāmīs' the Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava movement, therefore, reached the height of its popularity during the post-Caitanya period.

(c) The period of decline:

After such a remarkable rise, the signs of decline of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism became visible towards the second half of the 17th century. The reasons for its decline are many. Firstly, the favourable political conditions, which greatly fostered its growth, were changed by the transfer of power from the hands of sovereign Pathan-Afghan Sultans to the Mughals of Delhi. Secondly, as a historian comments, "it [Vaiṣṇavism] relaxed the fibres of the national character in the field of action, though it undoubtedly prompted holy living and noble thinking."<sup>2</sup> The changed political situation perhaps demanded from the nation strength and

1. See Sukumar Sen. Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās Vol. I pp.315-323.

2. Sarkar. History of Bengal, Vol. II p.223

energy instead of love and devotion. Thirdly, Caitanya's interpretation of the erotic story of love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa was too subtle and delicate, and susceptible to degeneration. During the time of Caitanya and for some time after his death whilst his memory was fresh and vivid in the minds of his followers, Caitanya's interpretation was explained in terms of his personal life. With the passing of time, however, the personal influence of Caitanya faded and eventually the original erotic background of the cult, which had been sublimated by Caitanya, became once more prominent in the actual practice of the Vaiṣṇavism. The influence of the traditional Tantric practice of Bengal, which had also contributed to the making of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism was considerable. The decadence of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism became complete when a new sect, Tantric Vaiṣṇavism or the Sahajiyā Cult<sup>1</sup> was formed, although the tradition of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava religion was still maintained by a small number of people who adhered to the original faith. The extent to which the new Tantric Vaiṣṇavism enjoyed popularity is evident from the volume of works<sup>2</sup> composed on the philosophy of the cult during this period. This degenerate form of Vaiṣṇavism, the Sahajiyā Cult,

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1. Manindramohan Basu published a detailed account of the philosophy and literature of the Sahajiyā Cult of Bengal, claimed to be based mainly on unpublished manuscripts. See, Manindramohan Basu, The Post-Caitanya Sahajiyā Cult of Bengal, University of Calcutta, 1930.

2. A large number of philosophical work relating with the Tantric Vaiṣṇavism is available in manuscript form. Sukumar Sen. in his history of Bengali literature has given a long list of such works. See, Sukumar Sen. Bāṅalā Sāhityer Itihas, Vol.I pp. 415-424.

largely contributed towards the decline of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism. To those who are not acquainted with Caitanya's life and teaching, and the doctrines of the Ṣaragoṣvāmī, Vaiṣṇavism, through its association with the Tantric practices, has become a despised sect.

Following the stages of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava movement the history of Gaurīya Brajabuli literature may be divided into three stages: the first, being the experimental stage, the second, the period of its perfection, the third, the period of decline.

(i) The first stage

On two grounds it may be assumed that the history of Gaurīya Brajabuli begins during the time of Caitanya (1486-1533 A.D.). Firstly, there is no extant specimen which can be proved to have been composed before Caitanya. Secondly, pre-Caitanya Bengali literature, even the Vaiṣṇavite works of Caṇḍidāsa's Srīkrṣṇakīrtana and Mālādhara Basu's Srīkrṣṇavijaya, exhibit no influence of the Brajabuli language, whilst the post-Caitanya Vaiṣṇavite and non-Vaiṣṇavite texts are considerably influenced by it. Two conclusions may be drawn from this evidence: either Brajabuli was unknown in Bengal before Caitanya or if it was known, it was not sufficiently established to influence Bengali. Whichever may be the case, on the evidence of extant specimens, the use of Brajabuli in Bengal began during the time of Caitanya. The first stage, therefore, consists of the works of those poets who were contemporary to Caitanya.

A poem attributed to 'yaśorājakhāna' is supposed to be the earliest specimen of Gaurīya Brajabuli. The evidence for the antiquity of the poem is the name of the King Husain Śāha mentioned in the bhanitā:

Śrīyuta husana                      jagata bhūṣana  
Soha e rasa jāna  
pañca gaureśvara      bhogapurandara  
bhane yaśorājakhāna

(Husana [Husain Śāha] endowed with beauty is the ornament of the world. He knows about this emotion ('rasa'), Yaśorājakhāna says that [Husain] is the lord of five Gaurīs and rivals Purandara [=Indra] in prosperity)

'Yaśorājakhāna' was perhaps not the actual name of the poet but a title conferred by the King of Gaura, Husain Śāha, to whom the poet paid tribute, just as the titles, 'guṇarājakhāna' and 'Satyarājakhāna' were awarded to Mālādhara Basu and Rāmānanda Basu respectively.

Yaśorajakhāna's poem is known from a single source, a work of Vaiṣṇava poetics, Rasamañjarī,<sup>2</sup> written by Pītāmbara Dāsa towards the end of the 17th century. The term 'Yaśorājakhāna', however, occurs in another work, Rasakalpavallī<sup>3</sup> (also a work on Vaiṣṇava poetics), written

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1. Quoted from Sukumar Sen's Bāngālā Sāhityer Itihas, Vol.I. p.203  
2. Edited by Nagendranath Gupta, published from Bangiya Sāhitya Parisat, Calcutta 1900.  
3. The work is unpublished. A detailed description of three manuscripts of the work is, however, available. Harekrishna Mukherjee in an article ŚrīŚrīRādhā Krsnarakalpavallī, published in the Bangiya Sāhitya Parisat Patrikā, Vol. XXXVII, No.2. pp.99-124, first gave a description of the Calcutta University manuscript. In another of his articles published in the same journal Vol. XXXVIII, No.3. the same author gave a comparative analysis of the two manuscripts Calcutta University manuscript and Ratan Library, Suri, manuscript. Nalini Kanta Bhattasali published an account of the Dacca Museum manuscript in Bangiya Sāhitya Parisat Patrikā Vol. XXXVIII, No.2. pp. 145-149.

by Rāmagopāla Dāsa, father of Pītāmbara Dasa mentioned above.

Four manuscripts are available of this unpublished work, Rasakalpavallī (the full name being ŚrīŚrīRādhāKṛṣṇanarasakalpavallī), Calcutta University Manuscript and Baṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat Manuscript. <sup>Dacca Museum Manuscript and Ratan Library Manuscript.</sup> There are three variant readings of the line in which the term 'Yaśorājakhāna' occurs.

Calcutta University manuscript reads,

Dāmodra Kavivara Cirāñjīva sulocana

Jasarākḥā āra Śrī Kavirañjana

In the Dacca Museum and Ratan library manuscripts the term Jasarākḥā of Calcutta University manuscript appears as Yaśorājakhāna; they read as follows:

Yaśorājakhāna Dāmodara mahākavi

Kavirañjana ādi sabe rājasebī

In the Baṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat manuscript the term yaśorājakhāna is found as Jasamantarājakhāna.<sup>1</sup>

It therefore appears that until the text of Rasakalpavallī, is established, it is not possible to know whether the first Gaurīya Brajabuli poet was called 'Yaśorājakhāna', 'Yasamantarājakhāna' or 'Jasarakḥā'. The term 'Yaśorājakhāna' is, however, generally accepted.

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1. Bāṅgālā Prācīn Puthir Bibaran, Baṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat Patrikā, vol. XXXIII. No.4 p.172

Sukumar Sen says that 'Yaśorājakhāna' was the title of Dāmodara.<sup>1</sup> The argument in support of his conjecture is this: since the two names 'Jaśorājakhāna' and 'Dāmodara' occur consecutively in the manuscript<sup>2</sup> in the same sentence, one forms the impression that they refer to the same person.<sup>3</sup> Sen's argument can hardly be regarded as conclusive. Although 'Yaśorājakhāna' occurs immediately before 'Dāmodara', it does not necessarily imply that the two terms are interchangeable. It would, therefore, be unwise to rely entirely on the arrangement of the words in this case. Although little is known about 'Yaśorājakhāna', the name 'Dāmodara' occurs in many Vaiṣṇava biographies, especially Bhaktiratnākara, and nowhere is he referred to as 'Yaśorājakhāna'. Govindadāsa Kavirāja, a well known poet of Gaurīya Brajabuli, was the grandson (daughter's son) of Dāmodara. In one of his Sanskrit verses,<sup>4</sup> Govindadāsa speaks highly of his grandfather without referring to such a title. When the king conferred a title upon a poet, the poet usually preferred to use the title

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1. "Many people of the Vaidya community from Śrīkhaṇḍa (Burdwan) used to work in the Court of Gaura. One of them was mahākavi Dāmodara who received the title 'Yaśorājakhāna' from the Court." (Translated). See Sukumar Sen. Madhya yuger Bāṅgālā o Bāṅgālī, Visvabhāratī, 1945. p.16.
  2. It is clear Sen refers to Dacca Museum and Ratan Library manuscripts; the readings of the Calcutta University and Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣat manuscripts are, however, different.
  3. Sukumar Sen. Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās, vol.I. p.204.
  4. See Sukumar Sen. Govindadāsa Kavirāja, Sāhitya Pariṣat Patrikā, Vol. XXXVI Pt. 2. p.71

rather than his own name out of respect for the king. In course of time such titles became more familiar than the poets' own names. Nevertheless Dāmodara is never referred to as 'Yaśorājakhāna'.

It thus appears that until new information provides conclusive proof, it is not possible to establish biographical details of the first poet of Gaurīya Brajabuli. It may, however, be presumed that he lived sometime during the period of 1493-1519 A.D. during the reign of Alauddin Husain Śāha. Yaśorājakhāna's description of Husain as 'pañca Gaureśvara bhoga purandara' suggests that he wrote his poem possibly towards the last part of Husain's reign when he was acknowledged as a good ruler in the country. Thus Yaśorājakhāna may have composed his poem approximately between the years 1510 and 1518 A.D. which also marks the beginning of Gaurīya Brajabuli literature.

The following poets are known to have composed poems in Brajabuli during this period.<sup>1</sup>

- (i) Yaśorājakhāna .....1
- (ii) Murārī Gupta .....2
- (iii) Naraharidāsa Sarkāra .....1
- (iv) Vāsudeva Ghoṣa .....12
- (v) Mādhava Ghoṣa .....3

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1. The numbers given after the name of the poets indicate the number of Brajabuli poems composed by each of them.

- (vi) Rāmananda Basu .....1  
 (vii) Raghunātha Dasa .....2  
 (viii) Vamśī Vadana Dāsa .....5

The number of poets who used Brajabuli at this stage, is small, as also is the number of poems composed by them. The sum total of 27 poems were composed by not more than 8 poets during the period of 47 years. The number of Vaiṣṇava poems in Bengali during the same period is, however, more than 200. Vāsudeva Ghosa who composed 12 poems in Brajabuli, composed 75 in Bengali. On the basis of the proportion of poems composed during this period it is to be assumed that the use of Brajabuli at this stage was not common, and that even while dealing with the Vaiṣṇava theme Brajabuli was not given preference to Bengali. The period may, therefore, be called the preparatory stage since Brajabuli was in a sense being used experimentally.

(ii) Second stage: 1533-1600

The second stage begins after Caitanya's death and continues until the end of the 16th century. During this period Gaurīya Brajabuli reached its zenith both in terms of quantity of poetic output and quality of literary value. At this stage short Brajabuli poems began to be incorporated in longer Bengali works, and so widely was Brajabuli now used that it began to influence the local language, Bengali. The poets during this period became more skilful and adept in their command over



Brajabuli compositions. The two factors directly responsible for the exuberant growth of Brajabuli literature during this period are the spiritual influence of Caitanya and the spread of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism.

After his death Caitanya's influence was radiated more widely than ever before by his followers and their numerous biographies. His influence on the poets of the time was of a spiritual rather than a personal nature. Deified during his own lifetime he was now almost a legendary figure, embodying within himself both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, but more especially Rādhā. Her profound love for Kṛṣṇa and intense desire for union with him were personified in Caitanya, the final phase of whose life was almost a re-enactment of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā. This phase of his life was greatly accentuated by the poets of the post-Caitanya period. Whilst composing poems on Rādhā's love they had a model, Caitanya, who had infused life and breath into the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā and made it a vital, pulsating drama, which captured the heart of all. If, then, the lyrics of this period ring true in sincerity and verisimilitude, it is not so much due to the imagination of the poets as to that of the "living god" who inspired them, Caitanya. So completely did Caitanya become identified with Rādhā, that an additional stream of poetry running parallel with that of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā emerged, namely the Gauracandrikā. It duplicated each principal

emotion (rasa) of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā and was so greatly venerated that the various sections of it had to precede the corresponding sections of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā in Kīrtana and in the various collections of Vaiṣṇava poems. The reason for this is that 'Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā' was viewed through 'Caitanya līlā'.

During this period Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism was propagated, as noticed above, almost all over Bengal through the agency of Narottama, Śrīnivāsa and Śyāmānanda. These three Vaiṣṇava mahāntas were the spiritual guides of almost all the important Brajabuli poets of this period. The following is the list of the disciples of Narottama, Śrīnivāsa and Śyāmānanda. All these disciples were Brajabuli poets of repute.

Disciples of Śrīnivāsa.

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) Rāmacandra Kavirāja    | (2) Govindadāsa Kavirāja |
| (3) Govindadāsa Cakravarti | (4) Dviija Haridāsa      |
| (5) Rādhāvallabha Dāsa     | (6) Vallabha Dāsa        |
| (7) Prasāda Dāsa           | (8) Vrajanandana         |
| (9) Śyāmādāsa              | (10) Yadunandana Dāsa    |
| (11) Maṭhura Dāsa          | (12) Giridhara Dāsa      |
| (13) Gokulānanda           | (14) Vanśīdāsa           |
| (15) Dharanī               | (16) Tulsīrāma Dāsa      |
| (17) Raghunātha Dāsa       | (18) Caitanya Dāsa       |
| (19) Jayakṛṣṇa Dāsa        |                          |

Disciples of Narottama

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| (1) Rāya Vasanta     | (2) Nṛsinha Dāsa  |
| (3) Rāghavendra Rāya | (4) Vallabha Dāsa |
| (5) Jānakī Vallabha  | (6) Śivarāma Dāsa |
| (7) Gosvāmī Dāsa     | (8) Vihārī Dāsa   |

Disciples of Syāmananda

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Rasikānanda      | (2) Gopivallabha Dāsa |
| (3) Govarddhana Dāsa | (4) Kīśorī Dāsa       |
| (5) Syāmapriyā       |                       |

From the galaxy of Brajabuli poets, of this period, four stand out as the foremost, Jñānadāsa, Govindadāsa, Valarāmadāsa, Kaviśekhara. Their works constitute the climax in the development of Brajabuli literature. Each was a master in one particular type of poem, Jñānadāsa in ākṣepānurāga, Govindadāsa in abhisāra, Valarāmadāsa in the poems of Vātsalya rasa, Kaviśekhara in abhisāra. The two greatest, however, - great even when considered in the light of Bengali literature as a whole - were Jñānadāsa<sup>1</sup> and Govindadāsa.<sup>2</sup> One hundred and eighty six poems are included in the Padakalpataru with the bhanitā of Jñānadāsa; out of

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1. Born c.1530 A.D. See Sen, A History of Brajabuli Literature, p.67

2. c.1535-1613 A.D. Ibid, p.105.

this a hundred and five are in Brajabuli, the rest in Bengali. Four hundred and sixty poems are attributed to Govindadāsa Kavirāja and all of them in Brajabuli. Govindadāsa Kavirāja is not known to have written in Bengali.<sup>1</sup> As stated above both were masters in different types of poetry: Jñānadāsa in the more emotional type of the ākṣepānurāga and Govindadāsa in the primarily descriptive poetry of the abhisāra. Both types of poetry brought out the best in each poet, in Jñānadāsa his sincerity and his compassion, with Rādhā in her sufferings, and Govindadāsa his mastery of poetic imagery and his appreciation of the beauty of words as pure sound. Govindadāsa's sound classical background<sup>2</sup> aided him in the formation of his style. Govindadāsa's own comment on his own works explains the nature of his poetic style:

rasanā rocana

Śravaṇa vilāsa

racai rucira pada Govindadāsa.

(Govindadāsa composes beautiful poems which please the tongue and delight the ears).

Govindadāsa's excellence is in the careful choice of word and sound. The outward craftsmanship, although a distinct feature of his poems, is not the only merit of his works. His language is direct and its appeal is sincere. With the exception of Mukundarāma, there is no other poet in this period of Bengali literature who so successfully combined outward ornamentation with sincerity of feeling in his poetry.

1. A few Bengali poems, however, exist with the bhaṇitā Govindadāsa and Govindadāsiyā. These poems are believed to be written by Govindadāsa Cakravartī. See Sukumar Sen. A History of Brajabuli Literature p.135.

2. See Sukumar Sen. Govindadāsa Kavirāja, Vicitra Sāhitya, vol. I p138

### The Third Stage 1600-1800

This stage may be subdivided into two periods. The early period covers the 17th century and the later period the 18th century.

The early period begins with Ghanāśyāmadāsa, grandson of Govindadāsa Kavirāja. Compared with the previous stage the literary output of this period is, by no means, small. A considerable number of Brajabuli poems were composed by Ghanāśyāmadāsa, Rādhānōhana Thākura, Narahari Cakravartī, Yadunandana Dāsa, Gopāla Dāsa, Harivallabha and Dīnabandhu Dāsa. Their works, however, are much inferior to those of their predecessors in terms of literary merit.

In the later period of the third stage the continuity of Brajabuli literature was maintained by a group of poets but with a progressive decline of poetic merit. In the hands of these poets, Brajabuli had its poorest treatment since they merely played with words and metres reproducing the time-worn stereotyped story and the conventional phrases and images used by their predecessors. Poetry at this stage became mechanical through the influence of Vaiṣṇava poetics. The poets composed poems as if with their eyes fixed on the Vaiṣṇava rasaśāstra i.e. Rupa Gosvāmī's Ujjvalanīlamāni and Bhaktirasāmrtasindhu. Candrasēkhara and Saśīśekhara, the two important poets of this period made several experiments to improve the quality of the Brajabuli poems by introducing new metres, suitable for Kīrtana. Attempts were also made by the poets of this period to

compose macaronic poems, using the Sanskrit and Brajabuli languages.<sup>1</sup> But all this experimentation and word-spinning was in vain. Once Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism, its source of inspiration, was exhausted, nothing could revive the spirit of Brajabuli literature. The complete breakdown of the tradition of Brajabuli literature is illustrated by two trends which now emerge. Now for the first time Brajabuli is divorced from Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism and used to elaborate non-Vaiṣṇavite themes. Bhārat Candra Rāya was the first to use the language in this way in a few poems in Annadamaṅgala. For the first time, too, poets whose Vaiṣṇavism is suspect began to compose works on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā in Brajabuli, a group of Muslim poets from east Bengal.<sup>1</sup> They are, however, generally accepted as Vaiṣṇavite because of their adoption of the Vaiṣṇava theme. As if conscious that Brajabuli literature was

1. An example of a macaronic poem is quoted here:

Rādhā-Kaṣṭham śyāmaladhāmā

Uddhava-Hari kinkara hāma Uddhava-nāmā

Rādhā-Adya Hariḥ sa kṛtra

Uddhava-Madhupuri vasai brajajanamitra

Rādhā-Kurute kim madhunagare

Uddhava-Kaṁsaka paksa dalana kari bihare

punapuna puchai gori Candrasekhara Kahe preṁabihārī.

quoted from Sukumar Sen's Bāṅgalā Sahityer Itihās, Vol. I. p.663.

2. A manuscript containing the poems on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa story written in the Brajabuli language by the Muslim poets, was found in Chittagong. The manuscript contains the poems of Saiyad Mrtuza, Manowārā, Amāua, Mir Faijulla, Sekh Kavir, Ebadulla, Ālimaddin, Muhamad Hāmīr. See Sukumar Sen. Bāṅgalā Sahityer Itihās, Vol. I. p.451. The works of three Muslim poets are included in the Padakalpataru; the poets are Nāsīr Māmud (song no.1329), Sālā Beg (nos.1542, 2742, 2972), Saiyad Martuza [=Mrtuza] (song no.2957). For details see Sukumar Sen. A History of Brajabuli Literature, pp.461-464; also see, Jatindra mohan Bhattacharya, Bāṅgalār Vaiṣṇava Bhavapanna Musalman Kavi

now at an end, compilers set to work collecting and categorising the works of the Brajabuli poets in accordance with the 'rasa' system laid down by Rūpa Gosvāmī in his Ujjvalanilamānī. The first of these anthologies was compiled by Viśanātha Cakravartī under the title, Kṣanadāgītacintāmaṇī about the beginning of the 18th century.

The decline of Brajabuli literature at this stage was inevitable and natural. A language having its existence only in texts and without any fresh source of inspiration is likely to become stale and stereotyped. The language had elaborated one particular theme for a very long time, and the theme was becoming threadbare. So many poets, from so many diverse angles, had approached the Rādā-Kṛṣṇa līlā, that refreshingly original approach was now absolutely impossible. Spontaneity also was impossible, due to the increasingly prevalent tendency on the part of the poets to remain faithful to the Vaiṣṇava theological works. Poetry, at this stage, became almost commentary on the theological works.

There were other reasons, too. With the collapse of the Pathan-Afghan kings and the loss of Bengali sovereignty to the Mughal Empire the bond between ruler and subject was broken, royal patronage<sup>1</sup> had come

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1. Bengali literature, as it lost prestige in the Court, was patronised by some feudatory kings. Rameśvara Bhaṭṭācārya, author of Śivayana, was patronised by Rama Simha and Yaśomanta Simha, king of Karnagara. Kṛṣṇacandra Rāja, king of Navadvīpa, was the patron of Bharat Candra Rāja, author of Annadāmaṅgala.

at an end and the individuality of Bengali culture was threatened. Bengal was now ruled by the chancellors and secretaries deputed to Bengal in regular official succession. These deputed officers had no sympathy and regard for the culture and literature of the state, but were mainly concerned with the administration, law and peace, and collection of revenue. The high offices were occupied by the non-Bengalis sent from the capital. Gradually, Persian culture infiltrated, local languages were mostly replaced by Persian in courts and high offices. The imperial, social, administrative and economic change threatened the growth of local languages and literature in general.<sup>1</sup> With the change of background and perspective a force more virile and bracing to mind and sinew than the mollifying and tender influence of Vaiṣṇavism was perhaps felt necessary. Such a force was <sup>Sāktaism</sup> the worship of Śakti, the goddess of strength and power, and once more she held sway in the land, infusing as of old strength and energy into the Hindu mind, and preserving its individuality under foreign domination. Consequently, we find, in the 18th century, a large number of Śākta poets headed by Rāmaprasāda Sen. Thus, Vaiṣṇavism and Brajabuli literature were replaced by Śāktaism and Śākta lyrics, though the flow of Brajabuli poems never completely ran dry till the middle of the 19th century.<sup>2</sup>

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1. See Sarkar, The History of Bengal. vol. II p. 223.

2. There was an attempt to revive Brajabuli composition by the English-educated poets of the 19th century, the last poet of note being Rabīndra nath Thākur.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUBJECT MATTER OF BRAJABULI LITERATURE.

A

#### History of the Kṛṣṇa legend

The history of the literary treatment of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend, which forms the subject matter of the Brajabuli poems, falls chronologically into two sections, pre-Caitanya and post-Caitanya. Caitanya was born in 1486 A.D. and died in 1532 A.D. After his death his interpretation of the legend was codified into a theology by a school of teachers at Vṛndāvana which was founded by his disciples. The Brajabuli poems of Bengal belong to the post-Caitanya section.

A number of Brajabuli poems are concerned with Caitanya and with the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend as interpreted by him. In the Padak-alpataru and the other anthologies, in which poems of various composers are arranged according to a conventional scheme, the Caitanya poems serve as introductions to groups of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poems. In the Kīrtana, that is, a performance in which a number of these songs are sung, the Caitanya poems, known technically as gauracandrikā, were and still are sung before the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poems. The subject matter of the gauracandrikā is the same in each case as that of the corresponding Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poems it precedes. For example, a group of poems on the pūrvarāga (the awakening of love) are preceded by a gauracandrikā, on the same subject. Thus by reason of this rule of arrangement, which is strictly

observed by the Kīrtaniyās (singers of Kīrtana), and the anthologists, the anthologies consist of two parallel streams, one based on Caitanya and the other on the /legend of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The origin of this arrangement must be sought in the history of the evolution of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend in the literature of north India.

The pre-Caitanya Vaiṣṇava legend derives from two different sources, paurāṇic and non-paurāṇic.

The paurāṇic legend is found in a number of different purāṇas, which deal with the story of Kṛṣṇa's life and his divine activities, namely, the Harivaṃśa, Viṣṇupurāṇa, Padmāpurāṇa, Brahmavaivartapurāṇa and Śrīmadbhāgavatapurāṇa. The most important of these is the Bhāgavatapurāṇa which is regarded as the basic scripture of Caitanya's religion. Its main purpose is the glorification of Bhakti and Kṛṣṇa-līlā. The Bhāgavata, as contrasted with Harivaṃśa and Viṣṇupurāṇa, does not deal with the whole story of the life of Kṛṣṇa but confines itself principally to the God's boyhood and youth. It does, however, describe, though briefly, the Kṛṣṇa-gopī episodes in which the affection of the Braja-gopīs towards the youthful Kṛṣṇa is described in terms of the intensely personal and emotional Bhakti, which was to become the distinguishing feature of Caitanya's religion. For our purposes, however, it is extremely important to note that the Kṛṣṇa-gopī episodes in the Bhāgavata are very brief in comparison with the extended treatment they were to receive at the hands of the Brajabuli poets. In the Kṛṣṇa-gopī episodes, as presented in the Bhāgavata, Kṛṣṇa is the dominating personality. The gopīs who are portrayed as an individually

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1. Only in five chapters, commonly known as rāsapañcādyāya, of the 10th Skandha (canto).

undifferentiated group, accentuate Kṛṣṇa's central position; they do not at any point detract from it. It is true that there is a principal gopī but she is a shadowy person in comparison with the important and fully developed personality of Rādhā as she is presented in later Vaisnava literature.

The non-paurāṇic legend differs in several very important respects from that of the purāṇas. In the first place Rādhā has not only been introduced but has advanced to a measure of importance as a character in the legend which in some poems is equal to that of Kṛṣṇa's and in others actually exceeds it. Though references are made to the divine origin and power of Kṛṣṇa, it is the human aspect of his character which is more strongly stressed in the poems which derive from the non-paurāṇic sources. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are in the main presented as two human lovers. The form and the characterisation of the non-paurāṇic legend suggest that its origin will probably be found in popular folk lore, possibly in some early love story. Whatever its origin, however, this aspect of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa story is early, as is made clear by its adoption as the main theme of the Gītagovinda,<sup>1</sup> which is the earliest considerable poetic work on the subject. The next important work on the legend is the Srīkṛṣṇa-Kīrtana<sup>2</sup> of Baru Candīdāsa which also is pre-Caitanya. In it the theme is in the main similar to that of Gītagovinda.

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1. A Sanskrit work of Jayadeva who is believed to have lived in the 12th century.
  2. A Bengali narrative, with the bhanitā of Candīdāsa. The incomplete manuscript does not bear the date of its composition. It is commonly presumed that it was composed in the 14-15th century.

Both these poems were known to Caitanya who developed the theme as presented by them and used it as a basis for his own personal worship. It must be noted, however, that Caitanya's interpretation of the legend is that of a religious mystic whereas the same legend in the two earlier poems emphasises the secular rather than the religious elements.

The earliest known work produced in Bengal which treats the non-paurāṇic Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend is the Kavīndravacanasaṁuccaya,<sup>1</sup> a 12th century anthology of Sanskrit poems. The treatment of the subject is sketchy. The importance of these groups of poems lies almost entirely in the fact that it constitutes proof that the legend was known to the poets other than Jayadeva, to whom we owe the first known full treatment of the theme. It has been claimed that Jayadeva is indebted to the Brahmavaiivartapurāṇa. But it is doubtful whether any part of his poem shows the marks of that influence, with the possible exception of the opening stanza. It differs substantially from the Bhāgavata in characterisation and episodic arrangement.<sup>2</sup> In spite of its secular nature it has in the eyes of many Vaiṣṇavas become an object of veneration as deeply held as was the Bhāgavata, as a result of the high esteem accorded to it by Caitanya. It must be stressed that the religious importance attached by later thinkers to the Gītagovinda derives wholly from the interpretation placed on it by Caitanya and

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1. Edited by F. W. Thomas from Asiatic Society of Bengal. The poets whose works are included in this collection are believed to have lived in the 11th-12th century. See Sukumar Sen, Bāṅgāta Sāhityer Itihās, vol. I. p.23
  2. Jayadeva, of course, describes the Rāsa dance for which he may be indebted to the Bhāgavata; but it should also be pointed out that in the Gītagovinda Jayadeva describes Vasanta (spring) Rāsa, whereas in the

his followers. In the early stanzas Jayadeva claims for his work a religious as well as a secular character.

yadi harismaraṇe sarasaṃ mano

yadi vilāsakalāsu Kutūhalam

Madhurakomalakāntapadāvalīṃ

Śṛṇu tadā Jayadeva sarasvatim <sup>1</sup>

("If thy soul be delighted with the remembrance of Heri [Hari], or sensible to the raptures of love, listen to the voice of Jayadeva, whose notes are both sweet and brilliant.") <sup>2</sup>

The religious motive, however, is not brought out in the body of the work. It is clear that the poet was fascinated by the sensuous potentialities of the theme, and it is to the development of these that the greater part of the poem is devoted.

The Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana, the major pre-Caitanya work in Bengali on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme, has much in common with the Gītagovinda. Both appear to have been based on a popular love-story and both had at the outset a religious purpose, which in the course of composition was <sup>3</sup> completely overshadowed by the human love story of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Bhāgavata it is autumnal (śārada) Rāsa. In the Bhāgavata, the gopīs were jealous of the principal gopī whilst in the Gītagovinda Rādhā is jealous of the gopīs.

1. Gītagovinda, (Mukherjee's Ed.) Canto. I. Sloka. 3.

2. William Jones' translation. See. The Works of Sir William Jones, vol IV. London 1807, p. 236.

3. The religious purpose of the Gītagovinda is clearly indicated by the inclusion of the Dāśāvatāra stotra in the beginning of the poem. Finally the poet worships Kṛṣṇa, who was incarnated in ten different forms, in these words: daśākṛtikṛte Kṛṣṇāya tubhyaṃ namaḥ.

In the introduction to the Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana two themes are mentioned. One of these ostensibly the main one, relates to the preservation of creation by the destruction of the demon Kāṁsa by Kṛṣṇa. The details are briefly as follows: the gods pleaded with Brahmā to save creation from the violence of the demon king Kāṁsa. Brahmā referred them to Nārāyaṇa, who presented them with two hairs, a black one and a white one, from which were to be born from the womb of Daivakī the two destroyers of Kāṁsa, Halī and Vanamātī. In consequence Valarāma and Kṛṣṇa were born. The second theme, to which a one-line mention is devoted, concerns the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa līlā. This one line contains the information that Lakṣmī was to be incarnated as Rādhā, for the enjoyment of Kṛṣṇa. In the body of the poem nothing further is heard of Kṛṣṇa's mission to kill Kāṁsa for which he was incarnated, or of Valarāma, who was to have been his help-mate. The subsidiary theme now takes precedence and is elaborated in great detail. The līlā, as presented by Baru Candidāsa, the author of Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana, bears no resemblance to a divine līlā. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are portrayed not so much as deities but as humans, in spite of the fact that retrospective

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1. Edited by Basanta Ranjan Ray from Baṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣat, Calcutta. References are given to the 4th Edition, 1949.
  2. See Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana, janmakhaṇḍa pp 2-4.
  3. Kāhṇānīra sambhoga kāraṇe  
Laksika bulila devāgane  
Rādhā prthivīta kāra avatāra  
thira haṁ sākala samsāra  
tekāraṇe Padumā udāre  
upajila sāgarera ghare.  
Ibid. p.3.

interpretation of the poem by followers of Caitanya prefers to see in these two characters only their divine qualities. Kṛṣṇa indeed uses his divine origin and hers as a weapon by which to coerce Rādhā into accepting his advances. His behaviour, however, suggests little of the god. Rādhā is very much the woman reluctant to accept his approaches and coquetish and passionate by turn. It is the art of the poet rather than any divine attribute in them which prevents the story of the relationship between them from sinking to the sensual if not the sordid; for Rādhā is quite definitely a married woman. There is a marked difference between Rādhā and the Braja-gopī of the Bhāgavata. The attitude of the gopīs to Kṛṣṇa is one of Bhakti whereas Rādhā in yielding to his persuasion seems to be actuated by much more physical impulses.

Before Caitanya also there lived a Maithil poet whose name by common consent is Vidyāpati. Little is known of his life or his work, except that his lyrics on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme were known to Caitanya, who regarded him as being equal in importance with Jayadeva and Caṇḍidāsa. <sup>1</sup>

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1. Prākṛtapaṅgala, an anthology of Prākṛta poems, compiled in the 14th century, contain a few short poems on Kṛṣṇa's Brajalīlā, based on a secular theme. One particular poem, included in this anthology, describes the naukā-līlā (sport on boat), a popular theme of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend. The poem may be quoted here:

are re bāhihi kāma nāva  
chori dagamago kugai na dehi  
tuhā ekhanai santāra dei  
jo cāhasi so lehi

See Prākṛtapaṅgala Edited by Cadromohan Ghose and published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Calcutta, 1900-1902.

These two streams then, the paurānic and the non-paurānic, were current in Bengal already in somewhat mixed form before the advent of Caitanya. It was his interpretation of them and personal mystical experiences which led finally to the merging of the two streams into one and the creation of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism. Though the two streams thus merged form the main basis of his theological thought, S. K. De suggests that there must have been a third influence at work in the formation of this particular form of Vaiṣṇavism, namely Hindu and Buddhist Tantricism.

"Whether Buddhist, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva or Śākta it [Tantra] implied in its essence a mystic worship of Śakti or Female energy, exalted in conjunction with the Male energy in the universe..... Its bipolar system of thought and culture, for instance, must have considerably influenced and shaped the bipolar conception of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which Bengal Vaiṣṇavism developed and which is certainly one of its distinguishing features."

Caitanya developed his composite religious synthesis from these three streams, the paurānic, the non-paurānic, and Tantric. The paurānic stream supplies the emotional bond between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the extremely personal and intense affection, which is termed rāgānugā bhakti. The non-paurānic stream supplies the elaborate līlā and highly developed personalities of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, while from the

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1. S. K. De, Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal from Sanskrit and Bengali sources. Calcutta, 1942, p. 21



Tantric stream comes the parakiyā bhāva, that is the type of relationship which existed between a lover and a married woman.

Through Caitanya's life and teaching the erotic aspect as presented in the non-paurāṇic literature is sublimated into Bhakti. Kṛṣṇa is the supreme deity (sarvakāraṇakāraṇam),<sup>1</sup> possessing three energies (śakti), the first generating existence (sambit),<sup>2</sup> the second consciousness (sandhinī), and the third joy (hlādinī). Hlādinī is the energy<sup>3</sup> by which he generates joy both for himself and for his devotees. The supreme essence of hlādinī is prema,<sup>4</sup> which is essentially mahābhāva, of which Rādhā is the embodiment. Rādhā is the active principle of hlādinī, the āśraya; Kṛṣṇa is the passive principle, the Viśaya. As a consequence of her being the active principle Rādhā, as presented by the followers of Caitanya, achieves a pre-eminence which exceeds that of Kṛṣṇa himself.

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1. iśvaraḥ paramaḥ Kṛṣṇa saccidānanda vigrahaḥ  
anādirādirgovindah sarvakāraṇakāraṇam  
quoted in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Basumatī Edition)  
p. 13, from Bṛhamasamhitā.
  2. Saccit ānandamaya Kṛṣṇera svarūpa  
ataeva svarūpaśaktiḥ haya tinarūpa  
ānandāmsē hlādinī sadamśe sandhinī  
cidamśe sambit yāre jñāna kare māni  
See Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Basumatī Ed. p. 142.
  3. Kṛṣṇake āhlāde tāte nāma āhlādinī  
sei śaktidvāre sukha āsvāde āpani  
sukharūpa Kṛṣṇa kare sukha āsvādana  
bhaktagane śukha dite hlādinī kāraṇa Ibid. p. 142.
  4. hlādinirā sāra amśa tāra prema nāma  
premera parama sāra mahābhāva jāni  
sei mahābhāverūpā Rādhāthākuraṇī  
Ibid. p. 142.

In Caitanya's Vaiṣṇavism the Sakhis, i.e., friends of Rādhā, play an important role. They must not be confused with the gopīs of the Bhāgavata. The Bhāgavata gopīs considered themselves as being in a position of equality with the principal gopī and expressed keen disappointment when Kṛṣṇa withdrew with her from the Rāsa dance into the grove and entertained intense jealousy of her enviable position as Kṛṣṇa's favourite. <sup>1</sup> The conception of Sakhī first emerges in the Gītagovinda, where they exist side by side with gopīs. They are Rādhā's confidantes and true friends acting as her mediators with Kṛṣṇa. They enable Rādhā to maintain her dignity and modesty when she first experiences pangs of jealousy at the sight of Kṛṣṇa dancing with the Gopīs.

Viharatī vane Rādhā sādharānapraṇaye Harau

vigalitanijotkarṣādīrṣyāvaśena gatanyataḥ <sup>2</sup>

(Rādhā, seeing Kṛṣṇa sporting in the forest with the other gopīs, felt that her superior status was lost and out of jealousy went away).

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1. When Kṛṣṇa disappeared from the Rāsa dance the gopīs began to trace his path following the foot-prints and found Kṛṣṇa's foot-marks intermixed with those of a gopī. Having found this, the gopīs were distressed and spoke thus: "These foot-prints of that damsel who has gone with Kṛṣṇa are creating great misery in us. For she alone, stealing the treasure of the milkwoman, is drinking in secret the nectar dropping from the lips of Achyuta". The Srīmadbhāgavata, translated into English prose from the original Sanskrit text, by J. M. Sanyal, Vol. IV, 2nd Edition. p. 127.
  2. Gītagovinda, Canto II. Mukherjee Edition p. 33.

It is the Sakhīs who are charged with the duty of bringing Kṛṣṇa to Rādhā, and by so acting maintain the lady's dignified position.

sakhi he keśimathanamudāram  
1  
ramaya mayā saha...

("Bring, O friend, that vanquisher of the demon Keśi [keśi] to sport with me.")  
2

It is the Sakhīs too who communicate Rādhā's love to her lord thus preserving her modesty.

yamunātīra-vāñīra-nikuñje mandamāsthitam  
prāha premabhārodbhrāntam Mādhavam Rādhā-Sakhī  
nindati candanamindukiraṇamanuvindati khedamadhīram  
3  
vyālanīlayamilanena gaḷalamiva kalyati malaya-samīram

("The damsel, commissioned by Rādhā, found the disconsolate God under an arbour of spreading vāñīras by the side of Yamunā; where, presenting herself gracefully before him, she thus described the affliction of his beloved: she despises essence of sandal-wood, and even by moon-light sits brooding over her gloomy sorrow; she declares the gale of Malaya to be venom, and the sandal trees, through which it has breathed, to have been haunt of serpents.  
4  
Thus, O Mādhava, is she afflicted in thy absence with the pain...")

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1. Ibid. p. 38.
  2. See The Works of Sir William Jones, vol. IV. p. 241
  3. Gītāgovinda, Canto IV, Mukherjee Edition, p. 54.
  4. The Works of Sir William Jones, vol. IV, p. 245.

Kṛṣṇa also avails himself of the services of the sakhīs.  
He requests them to escort Rādhā to him.

ahamiha nivasāmi yāhi Rādhāmanunaya  
1  
madvacanena cānayethāh

('Here have I chosen my abode: go quickly to Rādhā; soothe her  
2  
with my message, and conduct her hither')

The sakhīs, however, return with the news that Rādhā is so  
enervated by her overwhelming love that she is unable to walk and  
that Kṛṣṇa must come to her.

atha tām gantumāśktām ciramanuraktām latāgrhe drstvā  
3  
taccaritam Govinde manasijamande sakhī prāha

('But the solicitous maid, perceiving that Rādhā was unable, through  
debility, to move from her arbour of flowery creepers, returned to  
Govinda, who was himself disordered with love, and thus described her  
4  
situation).

The sakhīs play an important role in the theology and literature  
5  
of Gaurīya Vaiṣṇavism. Without them the līlā cannot take place. They  
are completely self-less in their love. They are in no way jealous of  
Rādhā (unlike the Bhāgavata gopīs), but rather eager to further her  
enjoyment of Kṛṣṇa. The happiness they experience at the sight of

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1. Gītagovinda, Canto V, Mukherjee Edition p66.  
2. The works of Sir William Jones, vol. IV, pp. 247-48  
3. Gītagovinda, Canto VI, Mukherjee Edition p. 78  
4. The works of Sir William Jones, vol. IV. p.250  
5. sakhī binu ei līlā puṣṭi nāhi haya.  
Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja; Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Basumati ed.) p. 144.

the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa exceeds by 'ten million' times any happiness they might have enjoyed had any of them been in Rādhā's place. It is their role to enjoy by watching. The essence of Rādhā is love of Kṛṣṇa. She is likened to a creeper which moulding its shape to that of a tree grants all its desire. The sakhīs are the foliage of the creeper, its flowers and leaves. When the creeper is sprinkled with the nectar of Kṛṣṇa-līlā, the enjoyment passes through the creeper to the foliage. In the view of Caitanya the Vaisṇavas ought to follow the way of the sakhīs, that is to say, a true devotee should travel the path of rāgānugā experiencing the joy peculiar to the sakhīs and then only will he realise Kṛṣṇa in his heart. A Vaisṇava poet, who verbally arranges the līlā in his poem, therefore, withdraws himself from the actual celebration, and clearly regards himself as a spectator, as the following quotations indicate: 'Govindadāsa remains nearby', 'Jānādāsa pleases his eyes watching them enjoying', 'Mānādāsa watches the sport with great pleasure'.

1. Kṛṣṇa saha nijalīlāya nāhi sakhīra mana  
Kṛṣṇa saha Rādhikāya līlā ye karāya  
nijakeli haite tāte koti sukha pāya Ibid p. 144
2. Rādhāra svarūpa Kṛṣṇapremekalpalatā  
Sakhīgana haya tāra pallāva pūspa pātā  
Kṛṣṇalīlāmṛte yadi latāke siñcāya  
nija sukha haite pallavādyera koti sukha haya Ibid p. 145
3. In Caitanya's time gopī and sakhī were synonymous. Though historically their meanings differ, as shown above.
4. Sei gopibhāvāmṛte yāra lobha haya  
veda dharma sarva tyaji sei Kṛṣṇere bhajaya  
rāgānugā mārgē tāre bhaje yei jana  
sei jana pāya Braje Brajendra nandana  
Ibid. p. 145.

Caitanya's interpretation of the legend was codified by the Vaisnava school of Vr̥ndāvana of which the six gosvāmīs, e.g., Raghunātha Dāsa, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Sanātana, Rūpa, and Jīva Gosvāmī, were the leading figures. All the gosvāmīs, with the exception of Jīva, met Caitanya and attended the discussions on theology and philosophy which Caitanya held from time to time with his intimate circle. Of the six gosvāmīs, Rūpa and Sanātana were especially instructed by Caitanya to live at Vr̥ndāvana and compose various śāstric works for the sect. This they did with great care and sustained labour. Jīva Gosvāmī, nephew of Rūpa and Sanātana, was not initiated into Vaisnavism by Caitanya himself but received careful training in the Bhakti-śāstra from his uncles. It was he who composed the six treatises known as ṣarasandarbhā which, in fact, supply the theological basis of Vaisnavism. Jīva Gosvāmī became the principal exponent of the Vaisnava doctrines and it was chiefly through him and his two uncles that Vr̥ndāvana became established as an academic centre of Gaurīya Vaisnavism after the death of Caitanya. The doctrinal works on theology, philosophy, metaphysics, ritualism, and ethics, written by the six gosvāmīs at Vr̥ndāvana were accepted as authoritative both at Vr̥ndāvana and Navadvīpa, the birth-place in Bengal of Caitanya. Judgments passed at Vr̥ndāvana on literary and doctrinal works were considered to be the highest recommendation.

Caitanya who is the fountain-head of the Gaurīya Vaisnava religion did not himself write any doctrinal matter for the sect except a few Sanskrit verses known as śikṣāṣṭaka śloka. But his personal life and religious experiences have directly inspired his followers and disciples in the task of forming and developing the sect. Caitanya's contribution to it was his personal life which even during his own life time, gave rise to another cult, in which he was the central figure and which was parallel in conception to the Kṛṣṇa cult. These two cults are not only inter-related but also interdependent. Without reference to the Caitanya Cult the essence of the Kṛṣṇa Cult as interpreted by him cannot be understood.

Although there is a divergence of opinion between the Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa schools as to whether Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa himself or an avatāra (incarnation) of Kṛṣṇa, both schools accept the belief that Caitanya contains within himself a dual personality, being the embodiment of both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. A Sanskrit śloka attributed to Sanātana clearly expresses this dual personality of Caitanya.

Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-pranaya vikritir hlādinī-śaktir asmād  
 ekātmanāvapi bhuvī pūrā deha-bhedam gatam tau .  
 Caitanyākhaṁ prakāṣam adhunā tad-dvayaṁ caikamāptam  
 Rādhābhāva-dyuti-suvalitam naumi (Kṛṣṇa-svarupam)

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1. Caitanyacaritāmṛta (Basumatī Ed) p. 2.

(...."since the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is an expression of the blissful divine attribute (Hlāḍini Śakti), it divided itself formerly in this world, in spite of its essential identity, into two forms, but the two have now attained a unity, called Caitanya, which is identical with Kṛṣṇa but which is diversified by the brightness of the state of Rādhā" 1)

The theory that Caitanya was born with the attributes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is also clearly stated in another śloka: 2)

Śrīrādhāyāḥ pranayamahimā kīdriśo vānyaiivā

-svādyo yenādbhutamadhurimā kīdriśo vā madiyah

saukhyāncāsyā madanubhavataḥ kīdrisaṁ beti lobhā-

-ttadbhāvādhyah समयानि सासिग्रभसिन्धौ हरिन्दुः

( How great is Rādhā's love for me; what is the pleasure

she derives from her love; how great is the joy she has

from my loving her? Since Kṛṣṇa wished to know these three

things, Caitanya was born in the womb of Sācī as Kṛṣṇa with

the attributes of Rādhā).

Accordingly Caitanya is described as dark internally and fair externally, a poetic image that is further developed in a statement that internally he assumes the attributes of Kṛṣṇa and externally those of

- 
1. See S.K.De, Vaisnava Faith and Movement p.239
  2. Caitanyacaritamṛta p.2.



Rādhā. This whole notion is not inconsistent with Caitanya's actual complexion, (described as fair, gaura, nor with the interpretation placed upon his life and religious experiences, since the statement that externally he assumes the attributes of Rādhā, naturally infers that in his external life the qualities of Rādhā will be most readily observable. Thus to the Brajabuli poets Caitanya appeared to be mainly endowed with the attributes of Rādhā and to express her intense yearning for Kṛṣṇa. Mirrored in his life the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa becomes intelligible to all, to both poets and people generally. Thus the convention was established that the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa had to be viewed through and introduced by the life of Caitanya. This convention explains why the gauracandrikā poems were sung before the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poems in the Kīrtana recitals.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SUBJECT MATTER OF BRAJABULI LITERATURE

B.

#### The Rasa Aspect

The subject of Brajabuli literature is known technically as Brajalīlā or KṛṣṇaRādhālīlā. It is indebted for its material to the 10th skanda of the Bhāgavatapurāna, though much subsidiary material which deals with various aspects of Kṛṣṇa's relationship with Rādhā has come from other sources.

There are long narrative poems in Bengali, known as Kṛṣṇamaṅgalakāvya, which treat of the same theme. They are substantially adaptations or translations of parts of the Bhāgavata. In them the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa story is elaborated in considerable detail. In the Brajabuli poems on the other hand the story element is very slight. It is true that if one reads a number of the poems in the order in which they have been arranged in the anthologies one may detect a certain succession of incidents, which has some suggestion of a story; but the intention of the poets was not to tell a story, but to present a series of emotional states through which the principal characters pass.

The total framework of which these single emotions form part is known as Bhaktirasa; and it is with the presentation of the Bhaktirasa that the Vaiṣṇava theologians and the Brajabuli poets were concerned.

The word rasa is a technical term in Sanskrit poetics. It is usually translated emotion. The concept of rasa is fundamental to an understanding of Brajabuli poetry. The Vaiṣṇava rhetoricians, chief of whom was Rūpa Goṣvāmī, took over the general theory from Sanskrit poetics, and evolved from it a theological system within which they stated their doctrine. This system is known as Vaiṣṇava rasa, or more usually as Bhaktirasa. Once stated it was accepted as the sole orthodox Vaiṣṇava theology, and was rigidly imposed upon teachers and poets alike. The early poets sent their poems to Vṛndāvana for examination and approval. It was adhered to also by the anthologists in their arrangement of the collected poems. It is the principal feature of the anthologies that the poems in them are ordered not according to the incidents or circumstances they describe, but according to the rasas which inform

them. The nature of Brajabuli poetry cannot therefore be understood without a knowledge of the complex theories which make up the Vaiṣṇava or the Bhakti-rasa.<sup>1</sup>

In seeking a framework in which to build up the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā into a coherent theology, the Vaiṣṇava rhetoricians analysed in great detail their characters, the circumstances in which they met, and their physical and psychological reactions to one another. Bhakti-rasa was analysed into various categories and sub-categories, the individual items of which were related to one another in a most intricate system of cross classification. Each least part was assigned a place and function in the whole.

The primary analysis of Bhaktirasa is into four elements, known technically as bhava: (a) Excitant (vibhāva); (b) Ensuant (anubhāva); (c) Auxiliary (vyābhīcarībhāva); (d) Dominant (sthāyībhāva). The first three subserve the fourth, which is also known as Kṛṣṇarati (love for Kṛṣṇa).

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1. This exposition is based on Rūpa Goṣvāmī's Ujjvalanīl-amanīh, Edited by Mahāmahopādhyāya Pāṇḍit Durgaprasād and Wasudeva Laxman Sastri Pansikar. Kāvya-mālā Series 95. 2nd Ed. Bombay 1932.

- (a) Excitant. This element or bhava may be defined as that which excites the Dominant (sthāyībhāva). The Excitant in its turn is subdivided into two sub-elements: Substantial (ālambana)<sup>1</sup> and Enhancing (uddīpana).<sup>2</sup> Kṛṣṇa and his beloved ones (vallabhāḥ) constitute the Substantial, while the Enhancing is that which enhances the emotions generated within the Substantial. It includes the physical beauty of the principal characters, and the places, times and circumstances which are favourable to the stimulation and consummation of the Dominant.
- (b) Ensuant.<sup>3</sup> This element consists of all that which immediately follows the stimulation of the Dominant, and helps to sustain and further intensify it. It includes dancing, rolling on the ground, singing, and, as the climax approaches, final abandonment and ecstatic union.
- (c) Auxiliary.<sup>4</sup> This element consists of those states which come as an aftermath, or possibly in reaction to, the consummation of Kṛṣṇarati. It includes despondency (visāda), depression (dainya) and brooding (cintā).

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1. 'asminnālambanāḥ proktā Kṛṣṇastasya ca vallabhāḥ Ujjvalanīlamaniḥ. Ibid p.5

2. 'Uddīpanā vibhāvā harestadīyapriyānām ca Kathitā gunanāmacaritamandanāsamvāndhinastatasthāśca. Ibid p.238. There are 81 kinds of Enhancing Excitant

3. and 4. See following page.

(d) Dominant. This element permeates and is the ground of the other three, by which it is in turn aroused (Excitant), intensified (Ensuant) and continued (Auxiliary).

Bhaktirasa is not confined solely to the emotions which exist and develop between the hero and the heroine. It embraces too, and this is the basis of Vaisnavism as a popular religion, those which are awakened in the minds of the onlookers, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā, (bhakta). Being Bhaktirasa these emotions also are analysable into the four categories of elements set out above.

At another level of analysis Bhaktirasa is described as having five aspects: (i) Śānta, (ii) Prīta, (iii) Preya, (iv) Vātsalya and (v) Madhura or Ujjvala. Each separate aspect is Bhaktirasa, and is therefore capable of analysis into the four categories of elements, Excitant, Ensuant, Auxiliary, Dominant. The fifth aspect, Madhurarasa, which is known also as Bhaktirasaraja, king of Bhaktirasa,

3. The Ensuant is of 50 kinds. See Ibid pp.299-318.

4. The Auxiliary Feeling is of 90 kinds. See Ibid pp.342-388.

is by far the most important to a study of the Brajabuli poems. The other four are hardly represented at all, and may in consequence be ignored here.

Madhurarasa, as an aspect of Bhaktirasa, is particularly concerned with the description of the physical attributes of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā (Excitant), their behaviour, gestures and the other external manifestations of their emotions (Ensuant), the type of emotion which succeeds the climax (Auxiliary), and the contribution which in their several ways they make to the all-pervading emotional condition (Dominant). A complete analysis is not necessary here, but attention may be called to certain items in Madhurarasa which have particular relevance to the Brajabuli poems. These consist of certain preponderant features in the presentation of the hero (nāyaka) and the heroine (nāyikā) and of the nature of their relationship and the circumstances in which it develops.

Kṛṣṇa is said to have 25 attributes as a lover. He is, in particular, presented not as a husband (pati) or as one seeking marriage, but as a paramour (upapati), one seeking union with a woman who is the wife of another. In this respect Madhurarasa can be equated

with Parakiyarāsa, a subject which is prominent in the early Tantric literature of Bengal.

Rādhā, according to circumstances or the stage reached in her relationship with Kṛṣṇa, may be (i) mugdha (artless), (ii) madhya (youthful), or (iii) pragalbhā (mature). As youthful or mature, she may be (i) dhīrā (self-possessed), (ii) adhīrā (not self-possessed), or (iii) dhīrādhīrā (partially self-possessed). These aspects of her emotional condition are by convention associated with a fixed set of circumstances or incidents, according to which she may be one of the following.

- (a) abhisārikā, one who goes forth to meet her lover by assignation.
- (b) vāsakasajjā, one who adorns herself in anticipation of her lover's coming;
- (c) utkanthitā, one who is anxious because of her lover's involuntary absence;
- (d) vipralabdhā, one who is deceived because her lover has proved unfaithful;
- (e) khaṇḍitā, one who is outraged because her lover bears the marks of infidelity on his person;
- (f) kalahāntarītā, one who is separated from her lover as a result of a quarrel;



- (g) proṣitabhartrkā, one who pines for her lover who has gone away from her;
- (h) svādhīnabhartrkā, one who has her lover under absolute control.

Nor does this table exhaust the possibilities of analysis. Madhurarasa is further distinguished as (i) sambhoga (love-in-union) and (ii) vipralambha (love-in-separation). Both of these aspects are in their turn sub-divided as follows, taking the latter first, as that is the order in which the two are presented in the poems.

- (i) vipralambha. (a) purvarāga, the awakening of love;
- (b) māna, resentment as a bar to the realisation of love;
- (c) premavaicitya, the apprehension of love caused by excess of love, even when the beloved is present;
- (d) pravāsa, the condition of the woman's mind when her lover has gone abroad.

- (ii) sambhoga. (a) samkṣipta (brief union), which occurs after purvarāga. It is associated with (i) vālyā (childish sport,) (ii) gostha (the tending of cattle), (iii) godoha (the milking of cattle), (iv) mitha sangama (secret meeting).
- (b) samkīrṇa (union with mixed feelings), which occurs after māna. It is associated with (i) rāsālīlā (the rāsa dance), (ii) naukālīlā (water sport), (iii) kunjalīlā (bower sport), (iv) dānalīlā (tax collecting sport), (v) vamśīcaurya (the stealing of the flute).
- (c) sampanna, (physical union), which occurs after premavaicitya. It is associated with (i) sudūrāt darśana (seeing the other from a distance), (ii) dola (the swing festival), (iii) holi (the spring festival), (iv) nidrā (sleep).
- (d) samrddhimāna, (complete love-in-union). It occurs after pravāsa. It is associated with (i) svapna (dream),

- (ii) jalpana (incoherent talk),  
 (iii) svādhina (unfettered exercise  
 of one's own will).

Thus was the rasaśāstra adapted to the teaching of the post-Caitanya theologians, and from it were derived the conventions which controlled the writing of the poems we are now considering. Every shade of emotion, every incident was converted into the manifestation of a rasa, and every poem was concerned with the exposition of only one rasa. There is no example of a poem containing two rasas.

In such a complex analysis it is not surprising that difficulties of definition arise. The rasas as defined in the vaiṣṇava canon are kept distinct, and in the poems the rule, as has been noted, is one poem, one rasa; nevertheless it is impossible to ascertain at times which aspect of the rasa as analysed is intended. When Radha is abhisārikā, for instance, there seems no possibility of distinguishing the Substantial aspect of the Excitant from the Enhancing aspect. It may be that the bhakta would not be aware of confusion, a

qualification one should in fairness make when considering an esoteric faith, but to the uninitiated the confusion remains.

The orthodox canon was inflexible. It permitted no change. It precluded too, both for thinkers and poets, all possibility of originality. Once the treatment of the theme had lost its first freshness, decadence was bound to set in rapidly. It did. Creative power soon gave place to verbal ingenuity, and even that soon reached the limits of what was aesthetically acceptable. Later Brajabuli poetry was for this reason stereotyped and without merit or interest.

The next chapter is concerned with a statement of the incidents which occur in the poems. It must however be borne in mind that these incidents are not stages in a story, even though when presented in a summary they seem to be capable of being so interpreted. They are aspects of the elements, of the bhaktirasa, in which chronology plays no part. The bhakta was only aware of the rasa in each poem; he had no interest in "what was going to happen next".

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUBJECT MATTER OF BRAJABULI LITERATURE

#### C. The Story

(1) PURVARĀGA (awakening of Love).

Both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa experience a pūrvarāga<sup>1</sup> consisting of two parts, the first prior to their actual meeting and the second during their meeting prior to union (sambhoga).

Pūrvarāga is the first awakening of love. It may be awakened either by hearing<sup>2</sup> or seeing the beloved. The beloved may be heard or heard about in four ways: description of bhāta (bhātera varṇanā), from the messenger (dūtī), from the friends (sakhī), from the songs (gīta). The beloved may be seen in two ways: either in person (sāksāddarśanam), in a picture (citrapaṭedarśanam), or in a dream (svapne).<sup>3</sup>

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1. In the Ujjvalanilamaṇi of Rūpa Goṣvāmī, pūrvarāga is defined as follows:

ratiryā saṅgamātpūrvaṃ darśanaśravaṇādijā

tayorūnmīlati prājñaiḥ purvarāgaḥ sa ucyate.

See Ujjvalanilamaṇi Kāvya-mālā.95, Bombay 1932, p.502.

2. In the Ujjvalanilamaṇi, darśana is given before śravaṇa. The order has been reversed above because in the Brajabuli literature Rādhā's infatuation is first aroused through her sense of hearing, when she hears the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute, actual seeing him comes later.
3. Though Rūpa Goṣvāmī states that the beloved's image may be seen in a dream, there are no poems containing instances of this.

Rādhā's pūrvarāga.

Even before there is any mention of her infatuation for Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā's friends realise that something is troubling her. She is restless, listless and neglectful of her appearance. She often sighs and gazes towards the Kadamba grove. She shuns company and seeks solitude. Her gaze is fixed on the blue of the sky and the peacock's throat and the black of her own streaming hair. She does not eat and she wears a piece of red cloth like a yoginī. Her friends wonder what can be the matter with her.

- 
1. sadāi cañcala      basana-añcala  
    sambarana nāhi kare
  2. mana ucāṭana      niśvāsa saghana  
    Kadamba kānane cāya
  3. basiyā birale      thākaye ekale
  4. cāhe meghapāne nā cale nayanatāra
  5. eka diṭha kari      mayūra-mayurī-  
    kañṭha kare nirakhane
  6. birati āhāre      rāṅgābāsa pare  
    yemati yoginī pāra

When pressed for an explanation she tries to explain. She has become obsessed with a man she has never even seen. It all started the day she heard the flute playing in the <sup>1</sup> Kadamba grove, such sweet enchanting music it was. Then the next day she overheard a bhāṭa <sup>2</sup> describe Kṛṣṇa and on the day <sup>3</sup> after that her friend happened to mention his name again and the singers <sup>4</sup> sang about him. Since then she has been able to think of no one else. But she is married. How could she possibly be falling in love with him? Thus there has arisen in the mind of Rādhā a conflict between the impulse to love and the pressure of <sup>5</sup> society and this is the root of her distress.

- 
1. pahile śunilū aparūpa dhvani  
kadambakānana haite
  2. tāra para dine bhāṭera barnane  
śuni camakita cīte
  3. āra eka dina mora prāṇa-sakhi  
kahile yāhara nāma
  4. guṇi-gaṇa-gāne śunilū śravane  
tāhara e guṇa-gāma
  5. sahaje abalā tāhe kula-bālā  
guru-jana-jālā ghare  
se hena nāgare āraṭi bārḥaye  
kemane parāna dhare

Even while her mind is still distressed at its own incapacity to solve her dilemma, she catches her first glimpse of Kṛṣṇa. He is extraordinarily handsome, with a face that exceeds even the beauty of the moon in exquisite loveliness.<sup>1</sup> His complexion is the colour of fresh clouds<sup>2</sup> and the side-long glances which dart from his two large eyes are the very flower arrows of madana. He holds a flute in his mouth, and when he speaks, he smiles sweetly.

The next day she sees him in a drawing brought to her by one of her friends. Rādhā recognizes him instantly as the man she saw on the bank of the yamuna, the very man who stole her heart.<sup>3</sup> After explaining this to her friends she swoons and tears stream from her eyes like the stream of the mandākinī.<sup>4</sup>

Rādhā's condition bewilders her friend, who rushes out in search of Kṛṣṇa to tell him of the love Rādhā bears him. So deep is her love for Kṛṣṇa that she ignores her husband.<sup>5</sup> She refuses to sleep with him and will not even let him touch her.<sup>6</sup> She pays no attention

1. jini bidhuvara      vadana sundara
2. nava jaladhara    barāṇa cikāṇa kālā
3. eta kahī mūrachi paraye
4. mandākinī pārā      kata śata dhārā  
o dūṭi nayāne bahe
5. patikara paraśe mānaye jañjāla
6. śvāmika śayana mandire nāhi ūṭhai



to the words of her elders, but listens only for the sound of  
 Kṛṣṇa's flute. Since Kṛṣṇa's complexion is dark, dark has  
 become her favourite colour. She speaks of none other and  
 wears only dark clothes. The people around her are cruel so  
 she longs to be with him, and the flame of separation consumes  
 her. Her once red lips have paled. she has lost all pride  
 in her appearance and her uncombed hair flaps over her breasts  
 like a whisk over the peaks of the Sumeru mountain.

But Kṛṣṇa is unmoved by the plight of Rādhā. He scoffs and  
 says that in his opinion accepting a married woman is like accepting  
 a burning fire. Besides, he is deeply religious. Why should  
 he sin, especially when such a sin would anger his friends?

Thus her friends return. Rādhā can tell from her face that  
 Kṛṣṇa has refused her and she resolves upon death. She consoles  
 her friends. They have been very helpful and considerate. It

1. gurujana vacana śunai nāhi śunai
2. murali-nisana śravaṇa bhari pibai
3. locane śyāmara vacanahi śyāmara  
     śyāmara cāru nicola  
     śyamara hāra hrdaye mani śyāmara  
     śyāmara sakhi kani kōra
4. jārala biraha]ānale tori
5. aruna adhara vāndhula phula  
     pāṇḍura bhai gela dhutura tula.
6. phuyala kavari urahi lola  
     sumeru upare cāmara dola
8. paranāri-ghrahana dahana sama tāpa
9. tāhe yadi sangi saba dekhe laba dokha  
     jāgara dure rahu sapanahi rokha

was because of her own ill-starred destiny. They must not be unhappy on her account. She has one last wish, that they might keep her body in Vr̄ndāvana. Should she ever even in death, scent the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa, her desire would be satisfied.<sup>1</sup> The friends, however, express the wish that one day she might enjoy the company of Kṛṣṇa and promise to make such effort that Rādhā will be in the arms of Kṛṣṇa.<sup>2</sup>

For some unknown reason Kṛṣṇa now not only relents but also falls madly in love with Rādhā. He reproaches himself for the off-hand manner in which he rebuffed Rādhā's friend. The fire of love, even more intense due to the efforts of heartless madana, sweeps through him and he is greatly relieved when Rādhā's friends approach him a second time. He anxiously enquires after Rādhā and insists that they disregard what he said before<sup>3</sup> and bring Rādhā to him.<sup>4</sup>

- 
1. iha Vr̄ndāvane deha upekhaba  
mrta tanu rākhabi hāmāra dhru  
kabahū śyāma-tanu- parimāla pāyaba  
tabahū manoratha pūra
  2. yatana karaba hāma soi  
kānu yaiche tuyā baśa hoi  
tabahū saphala dina mora  
yaba tuhū śutabi kānuka kora
  3. hāma kayalū parihāsa
  4. ataye gamana karu tai  
turitahi ānabi rai

The friends happily return. But before the inexperienced Rādhā can go to meet him, she must receive careful instructions from her friends. She should sit on the edge of his bed, and if he leans forward to look at her, she must turn away her head. When he tries to touch her, she must remove his hands, and when he enjoins her to speak to him, she must remain silent.<sup>1</sup>

The friends now go to inform Kṛṣṇa of Rādhā's arrival in the grove (kuñja). Kṛṣṇa hurries to meet her. When they meet, Rādhā trembles in trepidation, she cannot speak; her voice is choked with rising emotion.<sup>2</sup> Her friends now come forward to assist her and request Kṛṣṇa to be as gentle as sandal paste with her, since she does not know how to make love.<sup>3</sup> Having given this advice they withdraw to observe the lovers from a distance.<sup>4</sup>

It is their first meeting. Consequently it is difficult for Kṛṣṇa to induce her to talk to him, let alone make love.<sup>5</sup>

- 
1. pahilahi baithabi śayanaka sīma  
heraite piyā mukha morabi gīma  
paraśite duhī karē thelabi pāni
  2. tharahari kāpaye gadagada bhāsa  
lāje bacana nāhi kare parakāśa
  3. tuhī hoyabi candana sama śīta  
kabahū nā jānai surataki rīta
  4. eta kahi saba sakhi rahala chāpāi  
duhīkara keli-daraśakā<sup>1</sup>śe
  5. pahilahi rādhā mādharma meli  
paricaya dulaha dūre rahu keli

When he begs her to converse with him, she bows her head and scribbles on the ground with her toe nails.<sup>1</sup> Kṛṣṇa is now anxious to touch her garments but when he tries Rādhā walks forward a few steps. Then as Kṛṣṇa stretches out his hands to touch her feet, she stops him and their hands meet. Rādhā smiles coyly and covers her face.<sup>2</sup> This is their first realisation of mutual love (vilāsa) and Kṛṣṇa perceives the gentle touch of her hand and her sweet smile.

Kṛṣṇa's pūrvarāga:

Subala discerns that his friend Kṛṣṇa is troubled. He asks the reason for his brooding and Kṛṣṇa tries to explain. On the day that the snake Kāliya was killed, hundreds of young girls from Braja assembled on the bank of the river Kāliṅdī under the shade of Kadamba trees.<sup>3</sup> From that crowd of young girls a particular one<sup>4</sup> has become an obsession with Kṛṣṇa and since then sleep has not come to his eyes because of the smoke of love.

- 
1. anunaya karaite abanata-bayani  
cakita bilokane nakhe likhu dharani
  2. hāsi daraśi mukha āgorali gori
  3. Kālidamana dina māha  
Kāliṅdi-kula Kadambaka chāha  
kata śata braja-naba-bālā
  4. tahī puna manamohini eka nārī  
so rahu majhu mane paithi
  5. manasija-dhūme ghūma nāhi diṭhi

But Rādhā, after her first meeting with Kṛṣṇa, appears to have had a change of heart. She does not consider herself capable of associating with young men any more, and confesses her absolute ignorance of the ways of love.<sup>1</sup> Besides, she is not only inexperienced, but also afraid of scandal.<sup>2</sup>

When Rādhā thus expresses her unwillingness to associate with young men, her friends try gently to coax her. They say Rādhā should not be afraid of Kṛṣṇa before he has even touched her.<sup>3</sup> Kṛṣṇa is an experienced lover very gentle and kind. Rādhā will come to realise this at the time of actual contact. She must not hesitate any longer. Thus coaxed by her friends, Rādhā dresses herself properly and goes to the bank of Kāḷindī<sup>5</sup> where Kṛṣṇa anxiously awaits her.

1. nā jāni prema-rasa nāhi ratiraṅga  
kemane milaba hāma supurukha saṅga
2. tohāri bacane yadi karaba pirīta  
hāma śiśu-mati tāhe apayaśa-bhīta
3. dūrahī tāka paraśa bine aba tuhū  
mandire bhaya abagāi
4. bidagadhā rasika śiromani nāgara  
daraśe bujhabī byabahāra
5. aparupa kuñja kuñire naba nāgara  
patha heri ākula parāna

While Rādhā is experiencing the first awakening of love,<sup>1</sup> she leaves the house at night to meet Kṛṣṇa as abhisārikā. She is no longer afraid of meeting him. She has completely overcome her uneasiness at going out to meet him in the grove at night. She goes out in the spring (vasanta), the winter (hima), the monsoon (varsā), and all the seasons (sarvakāla).

In the spring when she goes to abhisāra on a bright night, she dresses completely in white so that she may not be seen in the moon-light. She adorns her hair with Kunda flower, wears a necklace of pearls, smears her body with sandal paste and wraps herself in white garments.

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1. In Ujjvalanilamāni, Rūpa Goṣvāmī defines abhisārikā as follows:

yābhisārayate kāntaṃ svayaṃ vābhisāratyapi  
 sā jyaitsnī tāmasī yānayogyaveṣābhisārikā  
 lajjayā sāṅgalīnaiva niḥśavdākhilamaṇḍanā  
 kṛtāvagunṭhā snigdheikasakhiyuktā priyaṃ vrajet

See Ujjvalanilamāni Kāvya-mālā. 95, Bombay 1932, p. 133.

In the month of pausa when the cold wind blows violently, everyone shivers and remains indoors. Rādhā spies her chance and off she goes, leaving her comfortable bed, hiding behind a piece of white cloth. So deep is her love for Kṛṣṇa that she is oblivious to the dangers of frost-bite or the thorns of the road to her feet.

During the monsoon dark clouds black out the sky. In the pitch darkness of night one cannot see one's hand before one's face but śyāma like the moon arises in the mind of Rādhā.<sup>1</sup> She decides to go to abhisāra. She asks her friends to smear her body with mṛgamada,<sup>2</sup> and dress her in blue garments. Having done so, the friends go to see if the elders are still awake.<sup>3</sup> Rādhā wonders if she will find her way to the grove. The night is extremely dark; sporadic flashes of lightning illuminate her paths. Rādhā, swathed in blue garments, walks slowly on to her meeting with her beloved.

Rādhā now goes to abhisāra in all seasons. She wears noiseless ornaments, covers her face with a piece of cloth and is accompanied by a friend.

- 
- 1. ambare dambara bharu nava meha  
bāhire timire nā heri nija deha  
antare uyala śyāmara indu
  - 2. mṛgamade tanu anulepaha mora  
tāhī pahirāyaha nīla nicola
  - 3. gurujana abahū ghumalā kiye jāgi

In all the different seasons, when Rādhā goes out to abhisāra, she passes through four stages, for which Sanskrit names are used.

(a) Vāsakasajjā

She prepares the bed, decorates the grove, makes all the necessary arrangements for spending the night and awaits Kṛṣṇa's arrival.

(b) Utkanṭhitā

Rādhā expresses her impatience at having to wait for Kṛṣṇa.

(c) Vipralabdhā

Rādhā is frustrated by her lover's not coming.

(d) Khanditā

Having spent the night with another woman, Kṛṣṇa comes to the grove in the early morning bearing visible signs of his infidelity.

Vāsakasajjā

For Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment Rādhā prepares betel nut with scent and camphor, decorates the bed with flowers, lights a bright lamp and

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places it nearby. The lovely grove is arrayed in true splendour.

In anticipation of union with Kṛṣṇa, unspeakable joy surges through

her. <sup>1</sup> In the grove the bees are intoxicated by the heady fragrance

of the flowers; and such a night as this she will spend in the arms of

Hari. She has nothing more to ask from God except that she might

remain conscious at the time of union. <sup>3</sup>

### Utkanṭhitā

As time passes and the night wears on, Rādhā becomes anxious and restless. She wonders if the troublesome journey and the preparations she has made specially for Kṛṣṇa are all going to be wasted. She feels slighted. In winter it is cold and in the shelter, built of creepers on the bank of the yamuna, the cold is even more intense. It is difficult to refrain from shivering when the cold wind blows. It is not only the physical discomfort that troubles Rādhā, but also the mental discomfort due to opposition that stands as a shut <sup>4</sup> door between herself and her love, and the watchful eyes of the elders piercing as a road full of thorns. Is Kṛṣṇa going to slight her, who has experienced so much discomfort and made so many sacrifices for the sake solely spending the night with him?

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1. sakhi he kahana nā yāya ānanda

2. kusumita-mauli rasālaka parimale  
bhramara bhramari rahu bhora

3. bihi pāye lāgi māgi niba eka bara  
cetana rahu majhu deha

4. kulavati gaurava kethina kapāta

Vipralabdā

The night has almost come to an end. Rādhā by now has despaired of meeting Kṛṣṇa. She looks at the road in bitter disappointment, tears roll down her cheeks; her lips are dry; deep sighs measure out the extremity of her despair.<sup>1</sup> She has been awake all night and now the blue of the early morning sky is first becoming visible. She gazes at it for it resembles the complexion of Kṛṣṇa. She asks her friends, who are still hopeful about Kṛṣṇa's coming, to throw away the betel-nut, sandal paste, scent and presents.<sup>2</sup> What is Rādhā to do now? For Kṛṣṇa she has sacrificed her good name and chastity and now he ignores her.

Khanditā

In the early morning Kṛṣṇa appears in the grove bearing visible marks of his infidelity all over his body and exposes himself to a bitter tirade of questions from Rādhā. "Who is this artful lady who has won your affection and smothered you in her cosmetics?",

- 
1. pantha nehāri      bāri jharu locane  
    adhara nirasa ghana śvāsa
  2. tāmbula candana gandhū upahāra  
    dūrahī dāraha yāmuna pāra  
    kiśalaya śeja mani-mānika māla  
    jala māhā dāraha sabahū jañjala

1  
 Rādhā asks. The lips of Mādhava are discoloured by the añjana  
 of her eyes and on his eyes are smears of betel-nut. The sandal  
 paste on Kṛṣṇa's body, too, bears smudges of her vermilion.  
 2  
 What wretched woman would so much as touch him now?  
 3

Kṛṣṇa has his own story ready, but his glib explanations and  
 ardent protestations fail to convince Rādhā who is seriously  
 offended. She is adamant. Having found her so, Kṛṣṇa rolls on  
 the ground in self-abasement touching her feet and begging forgiveness,  
 but Rādhā remains unmoved. Kṛṣṇa's declaration that he loves no one  
 else, does not induce Rādhā to relent. She is implacable. Thus  
 failing to placate her Kṛṣṇa withdraws. No sooner does he do so and  
 Rādhā, who had remained so relentless and implacable, begins to view  
 the situation more calmly and her mind becomes full of compassion for  
 Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā's friends now join her and reproach her for scorning  
 Kṛṣṇa who came to her in preference to many other gopīs.

1. śuna mādhava kona kalāvati soi  
 prema-hema gahi āpana rānga dei  
 ehen sājāyali toi
2. nayanaka añjana adara bhela rañjita  
 nahanahī tāmbula dāga
3. kona gonāri tohe aba paraśaba

(2) Māna

The friends, who are the counsellors of Rādhā, come to the decision that Kṛṣṇa, being the lord of many (vahu vallabha), is unlikely to be attached solely to Rādhā, unless she professes anger and indifference. They, therefore, ask Rādhā, who at heart is incapable of being harsh towards Kṛṣṇa, to reject any proposal of reconciliation with him. The friends teach her how to simulate anger and then they go to Kṛṣṇa to inform him of Rādhā's anger against him.

Having heard this, Kṛṣṇa rushes to Rādhā with sweet words and promises. But apparently unyielding, Rādhā carefully maintains the semblance of anger inculcated in her by the friends. Eventually Kṛṣṇa too resorts to trickery. As Rādhā enters the grove, Kṛṣṇa follows her, dressed as a woman. A friend introduces him to Rādhā as a woman from Mathura. Having heard this, Rādhā embraces the woman. Immediately he enters her arms his identity is betrayed; and Rādhā's feigned anger is powerless against his physical presence and she relents.

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māna may either have some specific cause (sahetu māna) or be groundless (nirhetu māna).

The following are the specific causes of māna:

(i) The sound of the flute (vaṅśīdhvani śravaṇa)

Rādhā is infuriated when she hears Kṛṣṇa playing the song 'Rādhā Candrāvalita vimalamukhi', on his flute. The literal meaning of the song is either Rādhā's face is more beautiful than the moon or Rādhā (as a star) is encircled by the moon and her face is beautiful. Rādhā, however, ignores the meaning of the song and is infuriated because it contains the name of Candrāvalī, her rival.

(ii) Slip of tongue (vākya skhalana).

Kṛṣṇa offends Rādhā, while complimenting her upon her beauty with the phrases which again contain the name Candrāvalī.

(iii) Dream (svapnadarśana)

Rādhā dreams that Kṛṣṇa is with the other gopīs and becomes offended.

Groundless māna (nirhetu) may arise even from a reflection. Rādhā sees her own reflection on Kṛṣṇa's mirror-like body and misinterprets her own reflection as that of another woman and so she accuses Kṛṣṇa of infidelity.

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(3) Premavaicitya

The very intensity of her love has by this stage placed Rādhā in a most critical condition of nervous tension. The range of her emotional sensitivity is now at its greatest and her emotional balance at its most delicate. The least thing can send her either soaring towards ecstasy or plunging to despair.

She and Kṛṣṇa have, at the moment, achieved a remarkable harmony. They sleep peacefully side by side in a close embrace, They look like two jewels, set in gold.<sup>1</sup> Rādhā has so completely identified herself with Kṛṣṇa that she is absolutely unaware of her present condition and even while lying in Kṛṣṇa's arms, she pines for union with him,<sup>2</sup> as though she were searching for precious things everywhere,<sup>3</sup> and all the time they were in her own person. Even during this period of emotional harmony, suspicion arises in Rādhā's mind. She suspects that Kṛṣṇa no longer loves her. The intense ardour noticeable at the beginning has now left him. She

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1. śyāmaka kore yatane dhani sūtala  
bhuje bhuje bandhana nibira alingana  
janu kāñcana mani jora

2. korahi śyāma camaki dhani bolata  
kabe mohe mīlaba kāna

3. ācaraka hema ācale rahu yaichana  
khōji phirata āna thāñi.

has suffered much; sacrificed her caste, good name and chastity, and ignored the harsh words of her elders; and in return, Kṛṣṇa has denied her his love. Kṛṣṇa, however, stubbornly protests his loyalty and the undiminished ardour of his love but fails to convince Rādhā of it. She begins to remonstrate, against every person, including herself, and everything responsible for wreaking such havoc in her life, against Kṛṣṇa, his flute, his friends, the messenger, the god, Kandarpa, the elders, even love itself.

Kṛṣṇa, being the main instigator of her misfortune, is subjected to a bitter tirade of recrimination. The charges are not specified beyond the fact that Kṛṣṇa is a deceiver. The love and affection in evidence at the beginning is gone. <sup>1</sup> For his sake, she <sup>2</sup> scorned convention and society and now he has forsaken her.

Kṛṣṇa's flute has played not an insignificant part in the affair. It was the flute that first arrested Rādhā's attention. She condemns it as the destroyer of religion, for because of its musical enchantment she has lost her caste, good name and respectability. <sup>3</sup>

1. pahilahi yata tuhū ārati kela  
so aba durahi dūre rahi gela
2. tuyā lagi kula psila tejilū hāma  
nā jāni ki abahū āchaye parināma
3. tora svare gela more jāti kula māna  
kata nā sahība pāpa lokera gañjana

Rādhā does not spare herself. Her own conduct is also reprehensible since she brought disgrace upon herself, her noble birth, her good name and blighted her marriage. Thus, Rādhā condemns everyone who has played a part in her love-affair.

One feels that her remonstrations against Kṛṣṇa and his love are more apparent than real since immediately afterwards she goes out to meet Kṛṣṇa.<sup>1</sup> Kṛṣṇa, who obviously attributes little importance to what Rādhā says, when excited, waits in the appointed place as usual for her. He seems to be becoming impatient while waiting there because the night is short and Rādhā is fearful. He prays that his beloved will arrive safely for there are snakes on the way.<sup>2</sup>

After the emotional crisis Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa celebrate various sports and dances of which Rāsa līlā, Dāna līlā and Naukā līlā, are important.

### Rāsa līlā

In the autumn when the forest is full of flowers and the night is bright with moon-light, Kṛṣṇa plays his flute. The sound of the flute distracts the attention of the women of Braja from their domestic duties. They desert their houses, families, husbands,

- 
1. kānu anurāge hrdaye bhela kātara  
rahai nā pārai gehe
  2. rayani choṭi ati bhīru ramanī  
kati khane āsba kuṭjarā-gaminī



and children and rush to the forest in search of Kṛṣṇa. In their desperate hurry they pay no heed to dress, their hair streams down unbraided, their clothes disarranged, their eyes unadorned with añjana. Kṛṣṇa smiles at the sight of their arrival and asks the reason for their coming, <sup>1</sup> since the night is dark and they should be sleeping happily with their husbands. His taunting words bring tears to their eyes. But they know Kṛṣṇa is only pretending and ask him, "Why do you say this?" The sound of his muralī has drawn them out of their houses putting an end to their caste and chastity. Now why is he pretending to be religious? <sup>2</sup> Does a religious person steal the garments of unmarried girls? They have given their souls to him and cannot forsake him. <sup>3</sup> Kṛṣṇa is highly delighted to find that so many young women of Braja, <sup>and he</sup> celebrates the great autumnal dance. While dancing with Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa takes her aside, gently leading her by the hand, which mortally offends the rest. They sit on the bank of the Kālinḍī brooding over their misfortune since Kṛṣṇa has deserted them. Kṛṣṇa, however, re-appears to their great joy.

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1. galita-lalita kabari-bandha  
kāṇe dhāṣṭā yubatibrnda  
mandire kiye parala danda  
berhala bipatha bāhini
  2. bhāṅgala kula-śīla muralika sāṇe  
kiṅkarigana janu keṣe dhari āṇe  
aba kaha kapata dharamayuta bola  
dhārmika harāye kumāri-nicola
  3. śuni nanda-nandana haraṣita bhela

Dāna līlā

The women of Gokula decide to invite Jarati, an old woman of the village, to accompany them in their journey to the Govardhana mountain. It is said that the wish of a girl who offers ghee and curd to the mountain comes true. Rādhā is delighted to join the party as she expects to meet Kṛṣṇa on the way. While the gopīs dress themselves and prepare the baskets with ghee and curd, Kṛṣṇa goes on ahead posing as a tax collector. As Rādhā and her friends come walking along the road, Kṛṣṇa, in the guise of a tax collector, demands taxes from them, greatly embarrassing them by his continuous pressing. The gopīs then ask Jarati (also called Barāi) to settle the matter. But Kṛṣṇa is more interested in talking to the beautiful women than settling the matter of taxes. Being an old woman, Barāi finds it objectionable that a young man should praise the girls' beauty. She objects most violently and tries to frighten Kṛṣṇa away by referring to Kaṇsa, King of the region, but with little success. When Rādhā starts to move on, Kṛṣṇa stretches out his hand to stop her, on the pretext of examining her basket and her ornaments with a view to imposing tax on them. Rādhā was powerless to resist though she did try to frighten him away with the name of the King. But Kṛṣṇa not in the least afraid, declares his love for her, instead of imposing taxes on her, and makes her sit by his side. Barāi and the other gopīs spy their chance of escape and go away, leaving Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to enjoy each other's company with the utmost delight.

Nankā-līlā

The gopīs come to the bank of the Kālīndī with their baskets. The river is full to overflowing due to the monsoons. The gopīs are wondering how they are to get across the river, when Kṛṣṇa appears dressed as a boatman and agrees to take them across. After embarking Rādhā realises that the boatman is none other than Kṛṣṇa. In mid-stream when strong winds frighten the gopīs Kṛṣṇa approaches Rādhā and holds her by her garments, ostensibly to give her confidence. But the rest of the gopīs have by now lost confidence in Kṛṣṇa as a boatman and jump into the river, leaving Kṛṣṇa alone with Rādhā.

1

Having enjoyed sporting with Rādhā and the gopīs, Kṛṣṇa has now to go to Mathura leaving Rādhā and the gopīs behind in Braja.

(4) Pravāsa (away from home)

There are two types of pravāsa:

- (a) adūrapravāsa (a short distance away from home)
- (b) sudūrapravāsa: (a long distance away from home)

adūrapravāsa is Kṛṣṇa's temporary absence which Rādhā has already experienced on two occasions: e.g. kāliyadamana (the suppression of the snake kāliya) and Nandamokṣa (the release of Nanda)

- 
1. The other līlās celebrated by Kṛṣṇa in association with the gopīs are: vasanta līlā, hori līlā, snāna līlā, jhulana līlā, abhiṣeka līlā, etc.

Kāliyadamana

The serpent, Kāli, used to dwell in the lake Kāliṅḍī. The waters of the lake had become so heavily poisoned through its dwelling there that it was no longer safe for birds to fly over it. People might even die through going near to its banks. Kṛṣṇa decides to kill the serpent to rid the people of Braja of such a constant source of danger. He jumps into its waters. At the sight of his temerity the cow-herds faint. The news spreads like lightning and the people of Braja come to the lake fully believing that Kṛṣṇa has been killed by the snake. Rādhā rolls on the ground in the extremity of grief at the news. She strikes her head, tears her hair and weeps inconsolably. At last Kṛṣṇa emerges from the lake, having vanquished the serpent, to the great relief and joy of Rādhā and the people of Braja.

Nāṇdamokṣa

Once, whilst he was taking his bath in the river, Nāṇḍa, father of Kṛṣṇa, was taken to the court of Varuṇa, God of the Waters. When Kṛṣṇa heard this, he jumped into the waters to fetch him back. At this Rādhā and other gopīs were sorely afflicted with anguish and foreboding.

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Sudūra pravāsa:

On the two occasions of Kṛṣṇa's temporary absence, Rādhā's grief may have been intense, but at least it was short-lived. But when Kṛṣṇa goes to Mathurā, the prolonged empty days of waiting are almost beyond her endurance.

Sudūra pravāsa causes three kinds of viraha (separation) e.g., bhāvi viraha, bhavan viraha, and bhūta viraha.

Bhāvi Viraha.

A messenger arrives from Mathurā to fetch Kṛṣṇa. The sight of the messenger almost breaks Rādhā's heart, for though the news of Kṛṣṇa's departure has been kept secret, it, as it were, revealed to Rādhā certain physical reflexes which her body experiences: her eyes fill with tears and her left eye twitches. Her mind is troubled: The whole of Braja seems to grieve at Kṛṣṇa's impending departure - in the grove the bees are silent and the śuka-sarī quietly weep. The journey was arranged to take place in the early morning. Rādhā longs that the night might last for ever and the dawn never come. She asks her friends to pray to the gogini, that she might eternally detain the lord of night and the moon and stars in the sky.

Bhavan viraha

Rādhā's prayer is not answered. The moon sets, the eastern horizon grows red, at the cruel rise to the sun. Heartless Akrūra, although not cruel by name, is deaf to their pleading and takes Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā. He and Kṛṣṇa take their seats on the chariot. How can

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1. yogini-carāṇa śaraṇa kari sādha  
bāndhaha yāmini-nāthi  
nakhatara cānda bekata rahu ambare  
yaiche nahata parabhāte

Rādhā prevent them from going? She weeps, rolls on the ground, walks in front of the chariot in desperation and gazes at Kṛṣṇa, her eyes streaming with tears.

Bhūta viraha

Kṛṣṇa has gone to Mathurā. Rādhā is left behind in Braja, which is so full of memories of him. Rādhā cannot even for a moment turn her mind from the thought of Kṛṣṇa. She cannot sleep; the memory of her past happiness prevents her. She often runs to the bank of the Kālindī, her friends being powerless to stop her. She rushes about like a wild elephant. Her body is enfeebled and she faints.

Rādhā suffers from the sorrows of separation throughout all the seasons:

(a) Vasantasamayocita viraha

It is spring. New flowers are out in the grove. The cuckoo sings sweet songs, the bee hums in the gardens. The south wind blows gently but since Rādhā's beloved has not returned, the moon and sandal-paste burn her more intensely than flames.

(b) Griṣmakālocita viraha

After spring comes summer. The fires of separation burn Rādhā more than the scorching sun of summer. Her body melts like a doll of salt in her own perspiration. It is already four months since Kṛṣṇa left. Even her friends find it difficult to console Rādhā now.

(c) Varṣākālocita Viraha

The sight of the new clouds in the sky make the peacock dance. The monsoon has appeared like a King to punish Rādhā. At night, it rains

heavily, with uninterrupted music; the peacocks dance in the lightning flashes; the frogs are happy at the arrival of the rainy season, and Rādhā must spend such a night without Kṛṣṇa.

(d) Śarāṅkālocita viraha

The autumn has come. The moon grows brighter. The lotuses are in bloom. Rādhā faints at the recollection of her days with Kṛṣṇa.

(e) Śiṅkālocita viraha

The arrival of the winter completes the year of Rādhā's separation. She had expected to meet Kṛṣṇa in the month of āghana, but her expectation has not been fulfilled. She is impervious to cold, as the flames of separation turns winter to summer for her. Who would believe that cold winds could burn her body even in mid-winter?

Finally Kṛṣṇa returns to Braja. The whole countryside is aware of his presence. The people are filled with joy; the birds sing, the bees are busy again, and the trees become green with new leaves; but to the women, and in particular to Rādhā, it brings new life and an end to the prolonged state of listlessness into which his departure had plunged them.

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In current usage a single Brajabuli poem is known as a pada, and a collection of such poems as a padāvalī. These terms however are not exclusively appropriated to Vaiṣṇava lyrics, nor is it known whether at any time they were. Today they designate lyrics of both the Vaiṣṇava and Śākta schools, and the term vaiṣṇava padāvalī is employed to distinguish our poems from the others. At an earlier stage in the history of literature pada meant couplet. In the 16th century, when the authors of the biographies Caitanya-caritāmṛta and Caitanyabhāgavata used the term, they illustrated it by quoting two lines only. This earlier usage is retained in the term dhruvapada, abbreviated in the manuscripts to dhru, which is the name of a couplet with particular function.

Each pada contains one dhruvapada. Its function is to state the theme of the poem. In kirtana, that is the recital of vaiṣṇava padāvalī, the dhruvapada is repeated like a refrain after each couplet. The conventional position of the dhruvapada, which is recorded only once in the text, is after the first couplet, though there are instances in which this convention is not observed.

The final couplet of each pada is called the bhanitā, so named because it declares the name of the composer. Mention in it is sometimes made also of the patron and the spiritual guide of the composer.

In the manuscripts each pada has prefixed to it the name of a musical mode, or rāga, in which it could be sung: e.g. rāmakeli,

dhānaśī, tirothā, bhūpālī, imana, mallāra, gāndhāra, paṭamañjarī,  
kāmōda, māyūra, etc. The number of different rāgas, which hitherto  
have not been fully classified, is immense. In some instances,  
not all, the rāga notation is accompanied by the name of the  
time measure, or tāla: thus, māyūra rāga maṇḍala tāla maṅgala  
rāga kandarapa tāla. The precise connection between the individual  
pada and the rāga and tāla prefixed to it is not known. There  
is no evidence by which it can be determined whether it was the  
composers, the later singers or even the anthologists who were  
responsible for the musical notation. The existence of variant  
rāga readings, e.g. paṭamañjarī rāga in one manuscript and dhānaśī  
rāga for the same poem in another, suggests that the rāga-pada was  
not fixed, but that one pada could be sung to one or more rāgas.  
There are consequently grounds for believing that in some instances  
at any rate the rāga notations as we have them today do not date  
back to the poets but were attached to the padas at some later  
stage in their history. Similarly as no precise rāga-pada  
relationship can be established, it would appear that the metrical  
form of a pada is independent of the musical mode to which it was  
sung. It is probable that the singers having made up their own  
repertoire of padas, selected the rāgas and tālas in which they  
wished to sing them, and that the anthologists recorded the modes  
as they heard them. The reason for the variant rāga readings is  
almost certainly to be sought in the fact that different schools of singers

had their own private musical traditions. In Bengal, it is known that kirtana parties in different parts of the region employed their own sets of rāgas.

For these reasons we are permitted to analyse the form of the padas without reference to the musical modes in which they were sung.

The poems are composed in couplets, and they are generally short. The average length is between 12 and 16 caranas, though there are a few longer poems the length of which is as much as 30 caranas. In certain styles of couplet the carana is the equivalent of the English term 'line', but in others it is printed as two lines. In the manuscripts, where length of the written line is determined by the width of the paper not by verse form, the caranas and couplets are marked off by two simple punctuation devices. The first half-unit of the couplet, that is the first carana, is marked off by a single down stroke (|), and the second half-unit, that is the end of the couplet, by a double down stroke (||). In the printed editions the poems are set out according to their form, in metrical lines; and as this practice can be justified by the manuscript system of punctuation, it is followed here, as follows.

- (i) ambare dāmbara bharu naba meha |  
bāhire timire nā heri nija deha ||
- (ii) rāika aiche daśā heri exa sakhi  
turitahi karala payāna |  
nirajane nijagana sañe yāhā mādhaba  
yāi milāla soi thāma ||

Example (i) is a simple couplet. In this style of couplet, the terms 'line' and carana are synonymous. The first carana ends at the single down stroke, and the second at the double down stroke. Each carana is divided metrically into two parts by means of a caesura, the technical term for which is yati. Each of these parts is known as a parva. Example (ii) contains a tripadi couplet, so called because the caranas are divided into three metrical sections, which are also known as parvas. It will be observed that the caranas here are printed on two lines, the first two parvas, separated by a space, ~~on~~ one line, and the third parva on the second line.

The metrical division of the couplet into caranas corresponds with sentence structure. The correspondences are of two types: (a) as in the two couplets quoted above, where each carana consists of what is grammatically a complete sentence; and (b) as the two examples quoted below, where the first carana consists of a subordinate, and the second of a main clause, the two together forming a complete sentence.

(i) dhabalima eka basane tanu goi |  
 calaliha kufje lakhai nai koi ||  
 (covering the body with white cloth [she] went to  
 the grove [there was] no one to watch her)

(ii) sunaite aichana sahacari bata |  
 madhurima hāsi gori tanu mora ||  
 (having heard such words from [her] friend Gori  
 smiling sweetly swings her body)

Exceptions do exist, but they are extremely rare.

The metrical structures of the poems are mātrāvṛtta, that is to say they are based on syllabic length measured in mātrās. Ordinarily the length of a short syllable is one mātrā, and that of a long syllable two mātrās; but this system is not rigidly applied, and there are many cases in which a short syllable has to be scanned as two mātrās and a long syllable as one mātrā. The rhythmic patterns developed by the poem as a whole very often override considerations of the quantity inherent in isolated syllables. Consequently though there are many lines which it seems impossible to scan by an arithmetical count of mātrās per line, there are in fact few difficulties which are not resolved by reading the whole poem aloud. The rhythm of the whole in most cases leaves no doubt about the quantity of individual syllables. The lover of poetry will hardly cavil that this should be so.

The length of couplets varies considerably from poem to poem, but within a poem variation of couplet length is unusual. The following quotations illustrate the couplets which are most frequently used.

(i) kusumita kuñje |  
alikulā guñje ||  
rasamati sañge |  
rasamaya rañge ||

This is shortest couplet used. It consists of 16 mātrās, divided 4+4, 4+4. It will be observed that the caranās are divided into two lesser units, each consisting of four mātrās.

(ii) priya sahaçari kari sañga |  
basana bhūšana pari aṅga ||

This couplet contains 24 mātrās, divided 6+6, 6+6.

(iii) pahila samāgama rādhā kāna |  
mohana dūrahī duhī guna gāna ||

(iv) aichana bacana kahala yaba kāna |  
braja ramanigana sajala nayāna ||

These two couplets each contain 30 mātrās, divided respectively 8+7, 8+7, and 7+8, and 8+7.

These four examples are simple couplets. The next three are tripadī couplets.

(v) gopi-paṭala kuca maṇḍala  
lampaṭa kara kampaṇā |  
balayā mani bhūṣana bani  
kaṅkana tāhe jaṅkanā ||

This couplet contains 44 mātrās, divided 6+6+10, 6+6+10. The third parva of the second carana cannot be scanned in isolation. The rhythm of the whole however makes it clear that the mātrā sequence is: 2+1+1 1+1 2+1+1. This sequence agrees mātrā by mātrā with that of the third parva of the first carana.

(vi) kula-mariyāda kapāṭa udghāṭalū  
tāhe ki kāṭhaki bādḥā |  
nija mariyāda sindhu saṅe paṅralū  
tāhe ki tatini agādḥā ||

This couplet contains 58 mātrās, divided 7+10+12, 7+10+12. It will be observed that the word tāhe in the third parva of the second carana contains four mātrās, whereas the same word in the previous couplet was scanned as two. The four mātrā scansion here is correct because it is a feature of the tripadī couplet that in each carana the third parva is longer than either the first or second.

(vii) śarada-canda pabana manda bipine bharala kusuma gandha  
phulla mallikā mālati yuthi matta madhukara bhorani |  
herata rāti aichana bhāti syāma mohana madane māti  
murali gāna pañcama tāna kulabati cita corani ||

This is the longest form of the couplet used. It contains 96 mātrās. Its scansion is difficult, but the normal division of mātrās is 12+12+24, 12+12+24. The first two parvas are usually regular, but the position of the caesura in the third parvas may vary, giving mātrā divisions within the parva of 13+11 and 14+10 as variants of the normal 12+12.

Longer parvas may be divided by a secondary caesura into lesser units, known technically as parvāngas. The parvāngas in the first and second parvas in (vii) fall regularly into groups of six mātrās each, e.g. śarada-canda (1+1+1+2+1), herata rāti (2+1+1+2+1). The rhythm of the parvāngas in the first two parvas of the second carana, which taken in isolation must be scanned erroneously (2+1+1+2+1), (2+1+1+2+1); and (2+1+2+1+1), (1+1+2+2+1), giving a total for the two parvas of 28 mātrās as against the metrical norm of 24.

The two caranas of the couplet, whether of the simple or tripadi type, are bound together by an end rime, the employment of which is universal. It is this universal application of end rime which justifies the classification of tripadi padas, to use the term pada in its earlier connotation, as a couplet, rather than as a quatrain, which the convention of printing tripadis in four lines would seem to support. End rimes are very seldom single rimes,

they are usually double, e.g. bāti-rāti, or triple, e.g. keśini-beśini, and even in places quadruple, e.g. bhaṅgini re-raṅgini re.

- |       |                                      |   |
|-------|--------------------------------------|---|
| (i)   | sunaita aichana sahaçari bāta        | a |
|       | mādhurima hāsi gori tanu mora        | a |
| (ii)  | kājara-ruci-hara rayani biśāla       | a |
|       | tachu para abhisāra karu braja bālā  | a |
| (iii) | naba abhisārini kuñjahi bhitala      |   |
|       | o naba nāgara saṅga                  | a |
|       | pantha-ghatita dukha sabahu dure geo |   |
|       | bārhala manobhaba raṅga              | a |

In some poems, chiefly those composed in tripadi couplets, the syllables at the end of the parvas may rime, thus producing an occasional internal rime pattern within the framework of the end rime pattern, which as has been said, is universal. In using such internal rimes sporadically Brajabuli Vaisnava poems differ markedly from those in Bengali, where internal rimes of this type are universal. These internal or parva rimes may be used to bind together the first two parvas in a carana, and also to bind corresponding parvas in the first and second caranas of a couplet. The following examples illustrate both usages.

- |      |                                      |      |
|------|--------------------------------------|------|
| (i)  | sindura-taruna aruna-ruci rañjita    | a    |
|      | bhāli sudhākarā kāti                 | b    |
|      | so ghana cikura timira ghana cumbita | a    |
|      | iha ati aparūpa bhāti                | b    |
| (ii) | kuñcita-kesini nirupama beśini       | aa   |
|      | rasa-ābeśini bhaṅgini re             | (a)b |
|      | adhara suraṅjini aṅga tarāṅgini      | cc   |
|      | saṅgini naba naba raṅgini re         | (c)b |



- |       |  |    |
|-------|--|----|
| (iii) | sabahū milita yamunā-tīra añjali puri piyata nīra      | aa |
|       | baithala tahī tarura chāya bīca nanda-nandanā          | b  |
|       | nabina-nirada-barana joti nāsāye lalake jhalake moti   | cc |
|       | ure bilambita kadamba māla bhāle tilaka candanā        | b  |
| (iv)  | kiye aparupa jhulana keli syāma-hrdaye hrdaya meli     | aa |
|       | rādhā rahu lāgi  | b  |
|       | aparupa rupa ke dība tula indibara mājhi campaka phula | cc |
|       | naba naba anurāgi                                      | b  |

All forms of rime have a musical function, but these two types have in addition a clearly defined metrical purpose, in that they mark the end respectively of caranā and couplet, and of parvas. There is however in these poems another use to which rime is put which has very little metrical function and belongs almost wholly to the sphere of decoration by sound repetition, in much the same way as do such similar sound devices as assonance and alliteration. Sparingly used such rimes can add to the musical quality of a poem, but it must be admitted that some of our poets have carried their use to extremes, and reduced the dignified and pleasing practice of riming to tedious jingle. Attention may be drawn to the three -eśini rimes and the five -āngini rimes in the couplet quoted at (v) above.

Vaiṣṇava poems written in Brajabuli have a distinctive style of their own. This style was born of and conditioned by the purpose they were intended to serve, namely the creation of an emotional atmosphere most conducive to the worship of the two-person deity Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā. To the modern reader, who reads silently poems which were composed to be sung, many of the poems may seem

obscure and fanciful; but such criticism seems irrelevant to the convinced worshipper, who is unaware of the obscurity and who sees in some of the excess of decoration which offends modern taste only the suggestion of an emotion which is too subtle for literal expression. Esoteric literature is by definition beyond the criticism of the uninitiated. These poems were composed and sung by initiates and heard by devotees, who had heard them many times before and were familiar with all the situations in which the divine characters participated. They knew all the persons, episodes and scenes by heart. There was nothing new for them in the movements of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā and the supporting persons, nor in the scenes by the Yamunā, in the forest, the grazing grounds or the city. The cloud, forest and river images they were well familiar with, as they were with the vocabulary by which they were described. Mental comprehension of words and sentences for this reason played little part in their enjoyment of the songs, provided the words flowed together with the rāgās to which they were sung. In such a context a charge of verbal obscurity has little meaning. The purpose of words was to sound well as they were sung, and in combination with other words to evoke an aura of colour, which uniting with sound gave to the audience the emotional experience they sought. It follows therefore that intellectual comprehension played a small part in the total experience of appreciation. This must not be taken to imply that single words and groups of words were without meaning, but

that they were used in a context in which that part of meaning which appealed to the mind only was subservient to a fuller meaning which was felt by the emotions. Yet the words were not nonsense. They can be understood by the modern reader, though the devotee still claims that his understanding is only superficial. An objective examination of certain features of the style of the poems is bound to expose itself to such condemnation. Nevertheless some critical comment must be attempted.

It was B.K.Barua who first drew attention to the musical quality of the language.<sup>1</sup> This is achieved by the use of vowels. It may be said that all syllables are open, consisting of vowels along (V), or consonants followed by vowels (CV). Closed vowels are almost non-existent. This has been brought about by pronouncing the vowel which is inherent in all consonants in the devanāgari syllabary and by breaking up consonants clusters, either by simplifying them to single consonants or by inserting a vowel between the consonants which compose them. By this means words are given their maximum sonant quality.

A few examples will suffice:

- (a) Pronunciation of the inherent vowel.

Examples: yatana (yatan), māna (mān), lāja (lāj)  
 bacana (bacan), mora (mor), hāmāra (hāmār).

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1. See page p 165

(b) Simplification and breaking up of consonant clusters.

Examples: mugdhā (mugdhā), piriti (prīti), parāṇa (prāṇa)  
yatana (yatna), ratana (ratna), tiritha (tīrtha)  
lābani (lāvanya), biśoyāsa (viśvāsa), āśoyāsa (āśvāsa)  
sarabasa (sarvasya), śuna (śūnya), suriya (sūrya)  
niramala (nirmala), beyādhi (vyādhi), bhina (bhinna).

(c) Consonant clusters which consist of homorganic nasal plus consonant are not broken up.

Examples: ambara, ḍambara, sambara, gambhīra, mañju, bañjula,  
kuñja, puñja, añjan, gañjana, bhañjana, khañjana,  
rañjana, mañjira, rañjita, kuñjita, bañjita, sañcita,  
siñcita.

Secondly, very great play, sometimes, excessive, is made of various repetitive devices. Of these rime, both end and internal rime, have been referred to above. Alliteration is common. It is of two kinds: first, the repetition in initial and medial positions of the same consonant; secondly, the repetition of consonants which belong to the same articulation group in the devanāgarī syllabary; such as (a) p....p....p....etc., and (b) p....ph....b....bh....m.... Double alliterations too are very frequent.

(i) kubalaya-kundala-kusuma-kalebara  
kālīma-kānti-kalola  
komala keli-kadamba-karambita  
kundala-kānta-kapola

This is an example of alliteration run wild. There are 14 repetitions of initial k; and in addition there are no fewer than



Examples continued:

- (c) kanaya-śatabāna-kānti-kalebara-kirana-jita-kamalādhike
- (d) braja-jana-bhāba-bibhābita-antara
- (e) kālindi-kemala-kalita-kara-kīśalaya
- (f) bahubidha-baidagadhi-binoda-bisārada
- (g) kulabati-yubati-barata-bhaya-bhañjana

Many of these phrases are virtually a succession of sounds. The semantic content of the individual words and the grammatical relationship between them is subservient even at times to the extent of appearing irrelevant. There are many that the foreign student would be ill-advised to attempt to translate.

It need hardly be pointed that use of these various devices, whether of repetitions or word compounds as musical phrases is found to excess most frequently in the works of the later poets, when originality had declined and true religious emotion had given place to a sort of spurious sentiment which was expressed by means of technical ingenuity, when creative power had been replaced by repetition and art by artistry.

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CHAPTER X

THEORIES ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE  
BRAJABULI LANGUAGE

The first attempted identification of Brajabuli comes from Guruprasad Sengupta in the introduction to his collected poems, Padacintāmanimālā, published in 1876. He speaks of it as Kauśikī Bhāṣā, meaning possibly Maithili. The first important observation, however, comes from Grierson, who was engaged at the time in editing a chrestomathy of the Maithili language (1881-82) and trying to determine the extent to which Vidyāpati influenced Bengali poets. An incidental observation of his made at this time needs to be quoted in full, because of the impact it was to have on the thinking of later scholars.

".....songs purporting to be by Bidyāpati have become as well known in Bangālī households as the Bible is in an English one. And now a curious circumstance arose - unparalleled, I believe, in the history of literature. To a Bangālī, Bidyāpati wrote in a different and strange, though cognate language, and

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1. See above p. From the ancient times the river Kauśikī is regarded as one of the boundary lines of Mithilā. In the Mithilākhanda of Vrhat Viṣṇupurāna the boundary of Mithilā is described as follows:

gaṅgāhimavatirmadhye nadī pañcadeśāntara  
kauśikīntu samārabhyā gaṅḍakimadhigamya vai

See Syam Narain Singha, History of Tirhut, Calcutta, 1922, p.2. Singha quotes the description of the same boundary by a modern poet: "gaṅgā vahati dakṣiṇa diśi pūrva kauśikī dhāra".. See Ibid p.2.

his words were hard "to be understood of the people": so at first a few of his hymns were twisted and contorted, lengthened out and curtailed, in the procrustean bed of the Bangālī language and metre, into a kind of bastard language neither Bangālī nor Maithilī. But this was not all, - a host of imitators sprung up, - notably one Basanta Rāy of Jessore, who wrote under the name of Bidyāpati, in this bastard language, songs which in their form bore a considerable resemblance to the matter of our poet, but which almost entirely wanted the polish and felicity of expression of the old master singer. These songs gradually took a form more and more Bangālī, and the latest can hardly, as far as the form of the language goes, be distinguished from the antique Bangālī of Chandī Dās and the Bidyā Sundar: they thus naturally became more popular amongst the Bangālī people than the real songs of Bidyāpati, and speedily crowded out the latter from their memories".<sup>1</sup>

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1. George Grierson, An Introduction To The Maithilī Language of North Bihār containing A Grammar, Christomathy Vocabulary, Pt. II Calcutta 1882. pp.34-35.



Almost the whole of the reasoning of the above quotation can be shown to have been based on inadequate information and possibly faulty understanding, but for present purposes the important fact that emerges is that, in Grierson's view, Brajabuli resulted from the attempts of various Bengali poets to imitate the language and style of the Vidyāpati of Mithilā. This observation of Grierson is historically important, because it formed the basis of much later speculation and was accepted by almost all scholars, until recently, without demur.

Dines Candra Sen, the literary historian, who was a contemporary of Grierson, had little to say on this subject, and that little was somewhat confused. In one place he states that Brajabuli was "the language of the Br̥j̥jis, a Kṣātra tribe of Mithila"<sup>1</sup>; and in another that it resulted from "the interfusion of Maithili and Bengali"<sup>2</sup>. Neither of these opinions is supported by any new evidence, and in respect of his second statement at any rate he may be held to have supported Grierson's viewpoint.

S.C.Ray, the editor of the Padakalpataru, also takes up the position indicated by Grierson. In the 5th volume

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1. Dinesh Chandra Sen, Bāṅgabhāṣā O Sāhitya, 3rd Ed. Calcutta 1901, p.226.
  2. Ibid p.246.

of the Padakalpataru, he divided the language of the Vaisṇava lyrics into three categories: (a) predominantly Maithili, (b) a mixture of Maithili and Bengali, and (c) Bengali. He claimed that his second category was the language known as Brajabuli, a view which accords with that of Grierson. He did however dispose of two misconceptions, first, he stated that Brajabuli and Brajabhāṣā were not synonymous terms but the names of two different languages. Secondly, he pointed out that D.C.Sen was wrong in identifying Brajabuli as the Language of the Br̥jjis. According to him the word Br̥jji occurs only in Pali, and there is no mention anywhere that the Bihar tribe which bore that name had a separate language. The fact that some Hindi speakers pronounce Brajabuli as 'Br̥jbuli' ought not, he said, to be interpreted as supporting Sen's statement. The similarity of form between the words 'Br̥jbuli' and 'Br̥jji' was in his view purely coincidental. In this way he disposed of Sen's first point while agreeing with his second which was the same as Grierson's.

Thus Grierson's passing observation was taken up and supported by subsequent scholars, and in the writings of Suniti Kumar Chatterji it advanced to the stature of a theory

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of origin. He re-stated Grierson's view more concisely and then went on to elaborate it.

"These [songs of Vidyāpati] exerted a tremendous influence on the Vaiṣṇava Lyric of Bengal. They spread into Bengal, and were admired and imitated by Bengali poets from the sixteenth century downwards, and the attempts of the people of Bengal to preserve the Maithil language, without studying it properly, led to the development of a curious poetic jargon, a mixed Maithili and Bengali with a few Western Hindi forms, which was widely used in Bengal in composing poems of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This mixed dialect came to be called Brajabuli"<sup>1</sup>

Then to show how it was that Bengali students first came to be acquainted with the works of Vidyāpati, he sketches the historical background of the period.

"For a long time after the conquest of Magadha and Bengal, Mithilā retains her independence,.... and the first flood of Turk invasion did not pass over her, wrecking the ancient intellectual life... the Maithil Brahmins were renowned for their Sanskrit learning, and right down to the 16th century, Mithila

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1. S.K.Chatterji, Origin and Development of the Bengali Language vol 1., p.103.

used to be the resort of students from Bengal and other parts of Eastern India"<sup>1</sup>

Chatterji's line of reasoning was followed at first by Sukumar Sen, who added further detail in support of it.

"Sanskrit students, especially in Nyāya and Smṛti, had to resort to Mithilā. When they returned home they brought with them, along with their Sanskrit learning, popular vernacular songs, mostly dealing with love in a conventional way, that was current in Mithilā. These songs were the composition of Vidyāpati and his predecessors, and, because of the exquisite lyric charm and the approach of music of an exotic dialect, soon became immensely popular among the cultivated community. Very soon the Bengal scholars with a poetic turn of mind began to compose songs on the model of imported lyrics."<sup>2</sup>

It was not until 1946 that the Vidyāpati theory was opposed. It was challenged in that year by Manindra Mohan Basu<sup>3</sup> who advanced two arguments. He contended that if Brajabuli had in fact originated in the 16th Century as a

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1. Origin and Development of the Bengali Language vol.1.p.102
  1. Origin and Development of the Bengali Language vol.1.p 1-2
  2. Sukumar Sen, A History of Brajabuli Literature pp. 1-2
  3. Bāṅgālā Sāhitya, Calcutta 1946. pp. 143-156

result of attempts in Bengal to imitate Vidyāpati, two things would have happened which did not happen: (i) Brajabuli would have remained uniform in all the regions in which it was used for lyrical composition and, (ii) it would have taken a number of years for it to spread from Bengal to the other regions. He pointed out that Brajabuli in each region exhibited differences peculiar to that region, there being no standard form of the language which won universal acceptance. Moreover, in his view, Brajabuli appeared almost simultaneously in a number of regions. In support of this statement he cites the fact that Rāmānanda sang a Brajabuli lyric to Caitanya as far south as the river Godāvarī, near Madras, as early as 1511-12 A.D. It is hard to explain how Brajabuli spread so far so quickly, if it originated in Bengal through the attempts of students to imitate Vidyāpati in the early 16th Century. Basu's arguments as arguments are not convincing, but he was right to call the validity of the Vidyāpati theory into question.

Having made this point, Basu goes on to present a hypothesis of his own. He draws attention to the long tradition in India of lyrical composition in artificial languages. By 'artificial' he means presumably literary languages., which differed from the spoken languages used in

the area of composition. He cites as an analogy the language of the Gāthās, which resulted from the "fusion of Sanskrit and Prakrit". There are instances of the use of this language as late as the 17th Century. His hypothesis is that Brajabuli may have originated as a literary language in the same way as did the Gāthā language. He argued that it was probably created from the cognate languages of Maithili, Bengali, Assamese and Oriya for the purpose of literary composition and to obtain popularity with a wider audience than a regional language could have won. It was, he said, as sound a hypothesis as the other, because it could just as easily be demonstrated that the grammatical forms of Brajabuli were derived from Prakrit Apabhraṃśa as that they came from Maithili, by way of Vidyāpati. His conclusion may contain something of the truth, but it cannot be held that he has proved his right to hold it, in the absence of a detailed analysis of the language.

The next scholar to oppose the Vidyāpati theory was Sukumar Sen,<sup>1</sup> who in a later work entirely recanted his previously held opinions. In an article entitled Brajabulir Kāhinī,<sup>2</sup> he puts forward the following arguments. The origin of Brajabuli cannot be ascribed to attempts to imitate Vidyāpati.

1. Sen first opposed Grierson-Chatterji theory when he published Bidyāpati Goṣṭhī in 1947, See Bidyāpati Goṣṭhī p.48
2. Bicitra Sahitya Vol.II.,pp. 53-73.

Had such been the case the influence of Vidyāpati's alleged language, Maithili, would have had a much more marked influence on the early Brajabuli of Bengal than in fact it did. The similarity of between Brajabuli and Maithili has been exaggerated, as is obvious from a comparison between Brajabuli text of Umāpati's Pārijataharana and Jyotirīśvara's Varnaratnākara, a prose work in Maithili, edited by S.K.Chatterji and Babuya Misra. His point here seems to be that the Vidyāpati origin of Brajabuli has not been proved.

Sen suggests that Brajabuli derived from an Apabhraṃśa language named Avahaṭṭa, and that later it was influenced simultaneously by Bengali and Maithili.

"The theme of Vaiṣṇava poetry is Kṛṣṇa-līlā, especially Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā. This theme is not the sole property of either Bengal or Mithilā. It came through inheritance. From the 7th-13th Century lyrics related to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā were popular and current in Sanskrit and Prakrit almost all over India, especially in eastern India. During this period a literary language on the basis of different spoken languages, was current from Gujrat in the west to Kamarupa in the east. This language is known in different names, e.g. Prakrit, Apabhraṃśa, Avahaṭṭa, Deśī, Bhāṣā, modern Apabhraṃśa etc. The

genesis of Vaiṣṇava lyrics is found in Avahaṭṭa.  
And Brajabuli, too, evolved from Avahaṭṭa."<sup>1</sup>

Sen's statement is considerably strengthened by his drawing attention to the fact that the language of two poems known to have been written in Avahaṭṭa by an early poet named Vidyāpati, exhibits close resemblance to Brajabuli. These two poems, which bear the titles Kīrtilatā and Kīrtipatākā contain Vidyāpati bhanitās.<sup>2</sup>

Finally the contributions of two Assamese scholars, K.R. Medhi and B.K.Barua, to the solution of the problem of the origin of Brajabuli need to be mentioned. In stating that Brajabuli as used in Assam resulted from cultural and personal contacts between Bihar and Assam, Medhi appears to accept the Vidyāpati theory, but he insists that there must somewhere have been a spoken basis from which the literary language evolved.

"....Brajāvalī must have been based on some spoken dialect, for no artificial language is known to have been created out of nothing. The Vedic language, supposed by some to have been an artificial and highly developed language, is based on a spoken

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1. Bicitrasāhitya, Vol. II. p.58
  2. Precise dates of the composition of the two works are unknown. From the arguments of scholars it appears that they were written either in the 14th or 15th Century. See Subhadra Jhā, Vidyāpati Gīti Samgraha, pp.46-48



dialect....The oldest form of vernacular, known as Pāli, was derived from the Vedic stage and developed by the side of Sanskrit....So is evidently the case with Brajāvalī.<sup>1</sup>

He locates this spoken language in the area where the events described in the Vaiṣṇava lyrics took place, namely Mathurā-Vṛndāvana.

"The principal seat of Kṛṣṇa worship was in Mathurā-Vṛndāvana (Braja) where the līlā or sports of Kṛṣṇa had taken place. The place and its language are sacred to the Vaiṣṇavas. Thus, there are grounds in supporting that Brajāvalī is based on the ancient dialect of Mathurā-Vṛndāvana included in the western Hindi language of madhyadeśa."<sup>2</sup>

The main point which he wishes to establish however is that there is a peculiar type of Assamese Brajabuli which differs from the Brajabuli of other provinces. In this connection he quotes two poems from Bihari Lal's Sat-sai, which are alleged to contain forms which occur in no other

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1. K.R.Medhi, "The Brajāvalī Literature of Assam" in The Journal of the Assam Research Society, vol.VIII.No.4.pp 108-109.
  2. Ibid.pp.111-112

variety of Brajabuli. The Sat-sai poems seem however to be written in Brajabhāṣā, from which it must be concluded that Medhi saw no difference between Brajabuli and Brajabhāṣā.

Baruā holds similar views.<sup>1</sup> Assamese Brajabuli was born of cultural contacts between Bihar and Assam, which led local poets to imitate Vidyāpati.

"These [the Aṅkīya Nāts and Baragīts] were written in an artificial speech called Brajabuli, a mixed Maithilī-Assamese language. Such a literary medium was in vogue among the medieval Vaiṣṇavite poets of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa..."<sup>2</sup>

Baruā makes one new and valuable point. He was the first to draw attention to certain characteristics in the Brajabuli language which in his view rendered it a particularly apt medium for the composition of songs. In this particular quality in the language he sees the reason why so many poets were tempted to compose in it rather than in their mother tongue. The question he is trying to solve is why Saṅkaradeva wrote in Brajabuli rather than in Assamese.

"It is difficult to guess why Saṅkaradeva made a departure from the popular language of his poems and chose Brajabuli for his devotional lyrics and

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1. "Though originally sprung from the Maithili, Brajabuli may be called a sub-Assamese language.." See Aspects of Early Assamese Literature. p.124
  2. Baruā, Studies in Early Assamese Literature p.34.

and plays....It should be noted that Brajabuli, as a language had lesser use of compound consonants, a preponderance of vowels and alliterative expressions and those phonetic traits may be said to make it a more suitable medium for lyric compositions."<sup>1</sup>

To summarise, then, from the work of scholars up to the present time, two theories concerning the history of the Brajabuli language have emerged: (i) the earlier hypothesis that Brajabuli was a form of Maithili and owed its currency to the attempts of poets in north-east India to imitate the writings of a pre-16th Century poet named Vidyāpati; (ii) a later suggestion by Sukumar Sen that it was a literary language based on some form of Apabhraṃśa, probably Avahaṭṭa, which developed in much the same way as Vedic, Sanskrit and Pali had done in the past. There is insufficient factual evidence to warrant attempt to write a detailed history of the growth and development of the Brajabuli language, but what has been given already permits a critical examination of these two theories, and may justify certain limited suggestions which carry the matter somewhat further than they have done.

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1. Ibid. pp. 34-35

(1) The Vidyāpati Theory

This theory clearly hinges on Vidyāpati, the poems he wrote and the language he used. Brajabuli literature, as has been shown, dates roughly from the early 16th century, and to have been the model of this literature Vidyāpati must have lived before that time, probably not later than the 15th century. That there was a poet of that name who lived in or before the 15th century is known from an authenticated statement of Caitanya. He told his disciples that he owed much of his inspiration to the works of Jayadeva, Vidyāpati and Caṇḍidāsa. Jayadeva is certainly the 12th century author of the Gītagovinda, a Sanskrit poem on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Caṇḍidāsa, is almost certainly the same person as Barū Caṇḍidāsa, the author of the Srīkṛṣṇakīrtana a Bengali work on the same theme. All that can be said for certain of Vidyāpati is that he wrote on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme, and that he may have written in Maithili. Nevertheless if we ignore for the time being the fact that less is known of Vidyāpati than of the other two, it cannot be claimed that he is more than one of a triumvirate of poets of whom Caitanya made special mention. His rank is not more than equal with theirs, and his language, even if

it were Maithili, was no more the proper language of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme than were Sanskrit and Bengali. Any claim for Vidyāpati which purports to rest on the authority of Caitanya is therefore equally appropriate to Jayadeva and Caṇḍisāsa.

It is true that Govindadāsa, one of the principal poets of the 17th Century, acknowledged Vidyāpati as his guru, but this cannot be pressed far, as the adoption of the name Caṇḍidāsa in the bhanitās of many later poems is evidence that the standing of the latter in this respect was in no way inferior to that of Vidyāpati.

It may be that in the course of the centuries a tradition regarding Vidyāpati had grown up in north-east India, and that this tradition was communicated to Grierson, who saw no reason to question it even though he could have had very little evidence by which to prove it. A popular tradition cannot be ignored, nor must it too easily be assumed that it is without any foundation in fact; but it is still true that Grierson's interpretation of it is not the only one possible.

It is in a sense unfortunate that the Vidyāpati theory as we now know it should have been first suggested by Grierson, as there is no doubt that his unquestioned genius

and established status as a scholar have lent to it an aura of prestige which it might never have attained had it come from another source. Yet in fairness to Grierson it must be conceded that he made no more than a passing reference to the subject and that he had no grounds for believing that he had not been fully informed. It is unfortunate too that Grierson's theory should have been supported by S.K.Chatterji, the acknowledged guru of many recent scholars, whose standing in his own country appears to have given to the theory the character of a doctrine which may not be challenged.

Very little was known of medieval Bengali literature until the end of the 19th century, when as a result of searches organised by Haraprasad Sastri and D.C.Sen a systematic collection of manuscripts was commenced. These collections contain most of the material which is necessary for our present subject. It was not available to Grierson at the time he expressed his views in Vidyāpati theory. The general ignorance of the time is reflected in Grierson's coupling together of "Caṇḍidāsa and the Bidyāsundara," the former being the name of several poets, not one, and the latter the names of two characters in a popular legend. It is not clear whether Grierson was aware of this.

Nevertheless as the clauses of Grierson's statement have won wide acceptance it is necessary to examine them one by one.

"These songs gradually took a form more and more Bengali, and the latest can hardly, so far as the form of the language goes, be distinguished from the antique Bengali of Caṇḍidāsa and the Bidyāsundara". This seems to imply that poets first wrote in either Maithili, the supposed language of Vidyāpati, or Brajabuli, and in the course of time tended more and more to use Bengali. There is no historical support for such view. From the beginning of this literary period, that is from early 16th Century, Brajabuli and Bengali were written in parallel. Some poets, notably Jñānadāsa, wrote poems on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme in both languages. Moreover there is no evidence that Brajabuli as language of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poems was in the course of time supplanted by Bengali. Brajabuli continued to be used as a separate language right down to the 19th century.

"A host of imitators sprang up, notably one Basanta Ray of Jessore, who wrote under the name of Vidyāpati." This is a very vague statement. The phrase "a host of imitators" has little meaning unless supported by a list

of names, and the only one Grierson is able to furnish is that of Basanta Ray. The bhanitās of a few poems contain the <sup>name</sup> /Raya Basanta. He may be the same person as Basanta Ray, but he is hardly a 'notable' poet. Only 29 poems with this bhanitā are known as against 425 by Govindadāsa, 105 by Jñānadāsa, and 185 by Rādhāmohana. It is possible that Raya Basanta had a local reputation in the Jessore district of Bengal, and that Grierson was given his name when on tour in that area. There is no evidence that he ever used the title Vidyāpati either as a pseudonym or instead of his own. It is significant that Grierson did not know of Govindadāsa, who would have been lent considerably more credibility to his thesis, for he was a 'notable' poet, he claimed Vidyāpati as his guru, and he wrote exclusively in Brajabuli.

Grierson's literary judgment cannot be accepted. "Songs which in their form bore a considerable resemblance to the matter of our poet, but which almost entirely wanted the polish and felicity of expression of the old master singer." De gustibus non est disputandum, but clearly Grierson had not the evidence on which to base such opinion. His omission to mention the names of the greatest of the Vaiṣṇava poets, Govindadāsa, Jñānadāsa, Rayasekhara, etc., can



only be interpreted to mean that he had not heard of them. Of Vidyāpati he knew but 82 poems with that bhanitā, and it is far from certain that any of them can be ascribed to the "old master singer." Vidyāpati, "the old master singer", has clearly become a cult, and words like "felicity" and "polish" are terms in the language used to give expression to that cult. But who was this Vidyāpati? We must conclude that Grierson did not know.

An initial difficulty in considering the word 'Vidyāpati' rised from the strong suspicion that it was in origin an epithet, a title of distinction, rather than a personal name. It was a common practice in India for the ruler to bestow on meritorious poets a title, which in deference to their patron the poets used instead of their personal name. In these circumstances personal names could easily be lost, and as the same title could be bestowed by the court at different times on different authors, the identity of these authors became lost. The confusion caused by this uncertainty was further increased by another practice which was common throughout the medieval period, that by which later poets sought to gain distinction for their own writings by inserting a distinguished name or title instead of their own in the bhanitās. For this

reason alone any theory of origin which is based on names only requires very cautious scrutiny.

The first recorded use of the name Vidyāpati belongs to the 12th century, when it was used by an author at the court of Karnadeva. The works of this poet are included in a collection of Sanskrit poems known as Saduktikarnāmṛta. But of him it must be said that he wrote in Sanskrit and not about the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme.<sup>1</sup>

The confusion which surrounds any attempt to probe the identities lying behind the name Vidyāpati can be illustrated mentioning three 16th Century poets, Kaviśekhara, Kavirañjana and Campati. Campati certainly used the bhanita Vidyāpati, but he is known now to have been an Oriya. Of the other two it must be admitted that their names, Kaviśekhara and Kavirañjana, look extremely like epithets rather than personal names. Kavirañjana was a post-Caitanya poet from Bengal, and tradition has it that he was also known as 'choṭa Vidyāpati'. It is unlikely therefore that he could have been the "old master singer."<sup>2</sup>

1. See Sukumar Sen, Vidyāpati Gosthī, p.5.

2. gītesu vidyapativadvilasah  
ślokesu sāksāt kavikālidāsah  
rūpesū nirbhatsitapanāvānah  
srīrañjanah sarvakalānidhānah  
choṭa vidyāpati bali yāhār kheyāti  
yāhāra kavitaḡāne ghucaye durgati.

See Sukumar Sen, Bāngalā Sahityer Itihās, vol.I. p.220

Kaviśekhara, who also was a post-Caitanya poet from Bengal, has to his credit a bewildering range of bhanitās, Rāyaśekhara, Kaviśekhara, Nava Kaviśekhara, Śekhara, Nṛpa Kaviśekhara. His identification with Vidyāpati appears to rest on a postscript to one of his Kaviśekhara bhanitā, "iti Vidyāpatiḥ"<sup>1</sup>. The poem containing this bhanitā is found in the collection known as Rāgataranginī. We know more about this poet than about most because of autobiographical references in a long Bengali poem named, Gopālavijaya, which, as its name conveys, is a narrative poem on the Kṛṣṇa theme. Nevertheless, the poems of these three men are included by editors in their collections of Vidyāpati poems, along with those of others in which a Vidyāpati bhanitā has been found, and they are all by implication credited to the 'original' Vidyāpati.

The only conclusion possible is that there was a poet named Vidyāpati in the pre-Caitanya era. The evidence for him is the statement of Caitanya himself. That he was a poet of merit may be conceded, as also that he wrote poems on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme, but it cannot with certainty

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1. Subhadra Jhā Ed. The Songs of Vidyāpati p. 58.

be known that he is the author of any of the poems which by tradition are credited to him. For this reason any theory about the history of Brajabuli which postulates that it developed from the attempts of Bengali and other poets to imitate Vidyāpati must be regarded as not proven.

(2) The Avahatta theory.

Nevertheless, even if there were evidence to substantiate the Vidyāpati theory, it would not suffice to clear up the basic problem of the origin of Brajabuli. It would not go beyond throwing light on the history of the development and use of Brajabuli during the period of its currency in Bengal, that is between the 16th and 18th Century. The situation at present is that not enough is known of Brajabuli as a language to support any definite theory of origin. S.K.Chatterji and Sukumar Sen have indicated the direction in which a solution may be sought, but neither has provided a linguistic analysis which alone can serve as a basis for comparison between Brajabuli and earlier language from which it may be derived.

M. Basu's contribution is very slight. He does little more than disagree with the Vidyāpati theory. He has no theory of his own to put forward. It may be accepted that

he was right in his view that Brajabuli is a literary language comparable in that respect with other literary languages known to have been current in India. Nor is there reason to object to his statement that Brajabuli owed its popularity to the fact that it was 'more widely intelligible' than the provincial dialects of the time. His suggestion that it was deliberately created from existing spoken languages in order to achieve this wider currency seems naive, and in any case is not proved. Yet it is strange that Basu who wrote at such length on the subject of literary languages, should have been unaware of the fact that the earliest known use of Brajabuli was in certain lyrics in a Sanskrit play named *Parijāta-harāṇa* by *Umāpati*, which was written or supposed to have been written in the 15th Century. Basu's work is marked by the absence of tangible evidence of any kind, though in this he is not alone.

One fact however concerning Brajabuli is established, namely that it was written in north-east India, in a wide area which included Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa. As the modern languages in this region appear to be derived from *Māgadhī Apabhraṃśa*, it is at least possible that Brajabuli has a similar origin. Yet neither S.K.Chatterji nor Sukumar Sen accept this possibility. Chatterji rejects

it. He holds the view that Māgadhī Prakrit from which the north-easter Apabhraṃśa sprang was a 'despised language', unsuitable for literary composition, and in any case not used for this purpose. According to him the contemporary literary language of the region was not Māgadhī but Sāurasenī Apabhraṃsa.

8 "Saurasenī was the polite language of the day when people employed a vernacular, and in the Apabhraṃśa period, eastern poets employed the Sāurasenī Apabhraṃśa, to the exclusion of their local 'patois'. This tradition, that of writing in a western, Saurasenī, literary speech was continued in the East down to middle and late NIA [New Indo Aryan] times, even after the eastern languages had come into their own.... During 9th-12th Centuries, through the prestige of North Indian Rajput princely houses, in whose courts dialects akin to this late form of Saurasenī were spoken, and whose bards cultivated it, the western or Saurasenī Apabhraṃśa became current all over Aryan India, from Gujrat and Western Punjab to Bengal; probably as a lingua franca, and certainly as a polite language, as a bardic speech which alone was regarded as suitable for poetry of all sorts. Pro-

professional bards, 'bhāṭas' in other parts of India had to learn this dialect as well as Sanskrit and Prakrit, and compose in it. In the first century after the development of NIA, the Saurasenī Apabhraṃśa continued to be used, but it yielded more and more to the local dialects in the various parts of India, and ultimately, by the middle of the 15th Century, it was no longer, or very sparingly used, other vernaculars like Maithili, Awadhī, and Rajasthani having asserted themselves.<sup>1</sup>

In this statement Chatterji does not mention Brajabuli, but it seems reasonable to conclude that he would not disagree with the theory that the origin of Brajabuli may be found in some form of Saurasenī Apabhraṃśa, which like Brajabuli was on his own showing a literary language in use in the same area, though at an earlier period.

Sen appears to hold this view too, but he is more definite. He states explicitly that Brajabuli developed from Avahaṭṭa, which according to him was, along with Bhāṣā and Deśī, one of the names used for Saurasenī Apabhraṃśa. There unfortunately he stops. He has not attempted a description of Avahaṭṭa. It is possible that he is right, but until a full linguistic analysis of Brajabuli and Avahaṭṭa has been made, and the relation between them

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established by detailed comparison, it is unwise to do more than note what he has said pending further examination.

This essay is not concerned with Avahaṭṭa or any other Apabhraṃśa, and without a linguistic examination of them further speculation on the actual source of the Brajabuli language is likely to be unprofitable. The following three chapters however are devoted to an analysis of the forms of the noun, pronoun and verb in Brajabuli, and may be found to contain material of use as a basis of comparison when similar analysis has been carried out for the earlier languages.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE GRAMMAR OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE POEMS

#### A. Noun.

In Brajabuli closed syllables are very rare indeed, and in no case does a closed syllable occur as a word final. It follows from this that all nominal forms end in a vowel. The following vowel endings are found: a, ā, i, ī, and u; but nouns ending in the inherent vowel a far outnumber those ending in other vowels noted. A test check of 100 poems chosen at random shows that approximately 81 per cent of the nouns counted end in a. The distribution is given below in a footnote.<sup>1</sup> In the following list a number of common nouns are given by way of illustration.

#### Noun ending in a:

bayana (face)	Kara (hand)
marama (heart)	dheyāna (meditation)
śara (arrow)	ṭhāma (place)
bacana (word)	surata (love)
aṅga (body)	śeja (bed)
pantha (road)	rokha (anger)

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#### 1. Total occurrences of nominal forms: 1015

Nominal forms ending in a : 828

Nominal forms ending in ā : 28

Nominal forms ending in i : 117

Nominal forms ending in ī ; 7

Nominal forms ending in u ; 35

It must however be mentioned that the figures for the forms ending in -i and -u are slightly exaggerated as they include three words, rāi (Rādhā), sakhi (friend) and Kānu (Kṛṣṇa), which, being the names of the three principal persons of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa story, occur very frequently. If these three words are counted only as 3 separate occurrences, the proportion of nominal forms ending in a would be nearly 90% of the total occurrences.

Noun ending in a: (contd)

neha (love)	hāta (hand)
darāpana (mirror)	ura (chest)
antara (heart)	sohāga (affection)
beyāja (delay)	kuñja (grove)

Noun ending in ā :

bālā (girl)	mālā (garland)
dehā (body)	lehā (love)
bādhā (opposition)	līlā (sport)
hiyā (heart)	

Noun ending in i:

dhani (fortunate girl)	niśi (night)
ākhi (eyes)	yāmini (night)
kāmini (woman)	rati (love)
rayani (night)	nāgari (woman)
pati (husband)	pāni (hand)
bahuri (wife)	piriti (love)
bihi (god)	dīthi (eyes)

Noun ending in ī:

nārī (woman)	bānī (word)
ramanī (woman)	seyānī (mature girl)
nalīnī (lotus)	mahī (earth)
sākhī (witness)	

Noun ending in u :

bāhu (arm)	bhāñu (eyebrows)
ghiu (ghee)	jiu (life)
dhenā (cow)	dhanu (bow)

Plurality

There is no plural inflection in Brajabuli. Plurality is expressed by means of a number of nouns which are semantically collective. These collective nouns appended to a noun form nominal phrases which convey plurality. Thus, sahacari gaṇa, which may be literally translated 'friend number' i.e. 'a number of friends' is semantically equivalent to the English inflected plural 'friends'. The following plural formations occur.

(i) <u>gaṇa</u>	2805. sahaçari gaṇa (friends)	2805 go gaṇa (cows)
	2805. gopa gaṇa (cow boys)	2716 naṭini gaṇa (dancers)
	2687. dāsa gaṇa (servants)	2627. dāsī gaṇa (maid servant)
	579. guṇa gaṇa (virtues)	600. sakhi gaṇa (friends)
	2431. nāgarī gaṇa (ladies)	2422. ramani gaṇa (women)
	2885. jana gaṇa (men)	2805. badhu gaṇa (wives)

(ii) samāja

2490. raṅgini samāja (women)	2716 naṭini samāja (dancers)
2434. taruni samāja (women)	2496. sakhi samāja (friends).

(iii) kula

2734. alaka kula (locks of hair)  
 1043. pañāra kula (corals)      2687. guru kula (elders)  
 176. bhakata kula (devotees)      2489. ali kula (bees)  
 1260. taru kula (trees)      1262. kusuma kula (flowers)

(iv) br̄nda

171. sakhi br̄nda (friends)      1255. yubati br̄nda (women)

(v) nikara

467. yubati nikara (women)

(vi) puñja

1259. kusuma puñja (flowers)      1266. jalada puñja (clouds)

(vii) caya

640. dukha caya (miseries)

(viii) jāla

1261. madukara jāla (bees)

Plurality is also expressed by the use of the word sabhe, which means all. This word may precede or follow a noun, e.g.

3071. sakhi sabhe (friends)      2643. sabhe sakhi

Numeral adjectives serve a similar function e.g.

59. nayana dau (two eyes)      227. cattdike (in four directions)

It is to be noted however that in all cases the form of the noun is the same whether it is used in a singular or plural context.

Gender

On the whole it is true to say that there are no formal

categories of gender in Brajabuli. There are one or two examples in which a noun ending in a and another noun of a similar base but ending in ā or ī stand to one another in the relation of masculine and feminine, e.g. mugdha (enchanted man) mugdḥā (enchanted woman) nāgara (city boy) nāgarī (city girl). As these however are very rare indeed we are at liberty to regard them as exceptional.

Certain nouns ending in -ā, -ī, -ī, -ini, connote natural feminine gender e.g.,

(i) -ā

1086. nayanā (girl with eyes) 1086. daśanā (girl with teeth)

(ii) -ī

1065. yaubani (young girl) 1087. sunayani (girl with lovely eyes)

(iii) -ī

1065. gamanī (girl who is going) 115. seyānī (mature girl)

(iv) -ini

58. mānini (angry girl) 573. camakini (startled girl)

573. mucakini (smiling girl) 574. kopini (angry girl)

220. mugadhini (enchanted girl) 2664. bihārini (girl who enjoys)

2710. binodini (girl who delights)

1065. mohini (girl who enchants) 550. caturini (clever girl).

As however there are other nouns ending in ā, ī, and ī which connote natural masculine gender, it would be incorrect to regard them as feminine endings. There are no nouns ending in -ini which connote natural masculine gender, so it can be argued that -ini is a feminine suffix.

In spite of these few exceptions, which do indeed introduce

an element of uncertainty into the whole picture, it is clearly impossible to claim that regular formal categories of gender can be set up for Brajabuli.<sup>1</sup>

### Case

The noun may be classified in two main categories in respect of Case, Direct, i.e. without inflection, and Oblique, i.e. with inflection. The Oblique category is sub-divided into four sub-categories or Cases according to the form of the inflection. Nominal forms of the Direct category far outnumber those of the Oblique category. Taking the same nouns which were counted above, 774 are Direct and 241 are Oblique.

The Oblique cases are as follows:

- (i) Those carrying an inflection which is characterised by the phoneme k; -ka; -ki; ke; -kara.
- (ii) those carrying an inflection which is characterised by the phoneme h; -hi; -hī.
- (iii) those which have the inflection e<sup>2</sup>
- (iv) those carrying an inflection which is characterised by the phoneme m; māha, māhā, me.

- 
1. The position is somewhat similar as regards gender considered as a category of concord between noun and verb. There is an a/i alternation in 3rd person verbal ending of the past tense, the ea being associated in general with masculine nouns and the -i with feminine nouns, but this distinction is by no means universally maintained. See below chap. p.
  2. It should be noted that when the inflection ee is added to the nouns ending in -a, the final -a is dropped. In the case of nouns ending in ā, e.g. sithā, a semi vowel (Y) is inserted, e.g. sithā + e = sithāye, nāsā + e = nāsāye.

On the basis of this analysis it may be claimed that the Noun in Brajabuli has five Cases - one Direct and four Oblique. A few other inflections do occur sporadically, but they are so few in number that they can be classed as exceptional.

It is a feature of the Brajabuli language that it is not possible to establish any correlation between Case form and grammatical function. A limited number of grammatical function will suffice to illustrate: verbal subject, verbal object, location including 'place where' and 'motion towards', relationship of possession, instrumental and agentive relationship. The Direct Case forms serve four of these functions, verbal subject, verbal object, possession and location. e.g.

(i) Subject.

987. bāri ki bārai nīla nicola: does the blue garment stops the rain.

227. hāsa marama parakāśai : smile reveals the mind.

223. nāha karaye anurodha: the lord requests.

96. kāpaye durabala dehā : the feeble body trembles.

82. anānga āgorala ānga : the bodyless [the god of love] captures the body.

91. jharai nayāna : the eyes flow [with tears].

56. ghuma nāhi dīṭhi : [there is] no sleep in the eyes.

70. maramaka bedana badana kahai : the face tells the misery of the heart.

73. majhu mana jvalata : my mind burns

423. badana malina bhela : the face became pale.

424. arunima bhela nayāna : the eyes became red.

634. pulaka bharala saba ānga : pleasure occupied the whole body.

(ii) Object

794. pulaka nā tejai anga : pleasure does not leave the body.
695. madana kusuma-sara hānala : Cupid shot flower-arrows.
435. tuhū hrdaye prema-taru nōpali : you planted the tree of love in your heart.
436. hari hāra pindhāyala : Hari made to wear garland
436. nāha bāhu dhari sādhalā : the lord made a request holding [my] hand.
437. dharali tuhū māna-bhujānga : you held the serpent of anger
439. nāha upekhi tuhū bañcabi kāhuka sānga : With whom will you live ignoring the lord.
449. hari pāni pasārai : hari spreads [his] hands.
451. dārūna bihi dukha dela : the cruel god gave [me] pain.
461. kānu mochai lora : Kānu wipes the tears.
470. kātara dithe majhu mukha herasi : you are watching my face with a sad glance.
481. sakhi he kāhe kahasi katubhāsa : O friend why do you say harsh words
744. gobindadāsa pantha daraśāyata : Gobindadāsa shows the way

(iii) Locative

430. hāma yāyaba kona thama : to which place shall I go?
430. mādhaba dharani lotāi : mādhaba rolls on the ground.
115. gori basati patigeha : Gori lives in the house of [her] husband
486. khiti-tala nakhe likhai rāi : Rāi scribbles on the ground with her nail.
39. rāi tohe mana māna : Rāi remembers you in her mind.
46. hāma paithaba kālindi bāri : I shall enter into the water of Kalindī



48. śubhākhane āyala kuñja : [she] came into the grove in an auspicious moment.
49. pailahi baithabi śāyanaka sīma : First [you] will sit on the edge of [his] bed.
100. baithaye hari-pariyāṅka : [she] sits on the bed of Hari
330. āyala saṅketa gṣhā : [she] came to the appointed house.
779. sabahū upekhi bana paithaba : having ignored everyone [I] shall enter into the forest
995. duhū parabeśala kuñja-kuṭīra : both entered into the house of the grove
548. tuhū sūtali pariyāṅka : you slept on the bed

## (iv) Possessive.

745. rādhā-mādhava keli-bilāsa : the love-sport of Rādhā and Madhava.
695. ki kahaba rajani ananda : what shall [I] say of the pleasure of the night.
39. murali nisāna srabani bhari pibai : she drinks filling her ears with the sound of the flute
39. gurujanay bacana : the words of the elders.
39. marama abhilāṣa : desire of the heart
55. sahadara bānī : the word of the companion.
56. biraha biyādhi : the disease of separation
62. sahadari kore : in the lap of the companion.
65. Kālindī tīrahī : on the bank of Kālindī
73. kulabati lāja : the shyness of the caste lady
74. śrutimūle : on the root of ear.
74. makara ākāra : shape of a fish

The Oblique Case forms with inflection -e also serve four grammatical functions, verbal subject, verbal object, instrumental and locative. e.g.,

(i) Subject

28. bhujāṅgame daviśāla majhu mana : snake bit my mind.
90. tohāri carāṇe kahe gobindadāse : Gobindadāsa reports at your feet
94. pulake bharaye gāta : pleasure fills the body.
200. kāñcana-kamala pabane ulatāyala : the wind turned the golden lotus upside down.
246. ninde bharala saba deha : sleep covered the whole body.
274. jaladhare cānda āgorala : clouds covered the moon.
346. bhujage bharala patha : snakes filled the way.
361. himakara-kirāṇe gamana abarodhala : the moon-light stopped going.
389. bhujage kātala tanu : the snake bit the body.
968. aichana tohāri sohāge : such love is yours

(ii) Locative

234. hāmāri hrdaye jalu āgi : fire burns in my mind
330. nikuñja-mandire śeja bichāyai : [she] spreads the bed in the house of the grove
344. gagane garaje ghana : clouds roar in the sky
356. aruna nayane dhāra bahe : tears flow in the red eyes.
374. calī yāha so dhani thāme : go to the place of that fortunate girl
402. nija mandire dhani gamana karala : the fortunate girl went to her own house
404. kusumita-kānane jāgalu tuyā lāgi : [I] awoke for you in the flower garden
409. diṭhi-pañkaje kāmīni-adharaka rāga : on the lotus-eyes is the colour of the lips [of] women.
998. dina<sup>h</sup>ū milala duhū kufje : in the day both met in the grove.

(iii) Instrumental and Agentive relationship

245. dūdhaka paraśe pañāra dhabala bhela : red became white by the touch of milk
326. dhabalima eka basane tanu goi : having covered the body with a piece of white cloth
332. nayane dhani nirakhaye : the fortunate girl looks with [her] eyes
342. mrgamade tanu anulepaha mora : smear my body with mask
343. nīla basane dhani saba tanu jhāpi : the fortunate girl covers the body with blue clothes
377. rokhe āyala dhani āpanaka bāsa : because of anger the fortunate girl came to her own place.
389. dhani-mukha mochala bāse : [he] wiped the face of the fortunate girl with cloth
406. hrdaya pāsāna bacane anumāniye : [I] guess through [your] words that [your] heart is [made of] stone.
416. anale dagadha bhela aṅga : the body became burnt by fire
626. saurabhe māti bhramarakula dhāyala : the bees are running being intoxicated by the fragrance
996. daraśane mīṭala biraha duranta : the terrible separation was satisfied by sight
1001. karayuge nayana mundi calu bhābini : the emotional girl goes covering the eyes with both hands
1028. saṅge calu madhukara makaranda pānaki lobhe : the bee accompanies through the greed of drinking honey
53. surata-tiyāse dhayala pahū pāni : the lord held the hand with the desire of love

(iv) Object

208. alikula kamale berhala : bees encircled the lotus
227. sajanī ki phala parijane bāci : friend, what is the use of  
deceiving the elders?
251. nā kara sakhi mohe anurodhe : friend, do not make request to me
274. trsita cakora naba jaladhare mīlāla : thirsty Cakora bird met  
new clouds
332. rāi kānane abalokai : Rāi looks at the forest
358. aṅge anaṅga nāhi teja : the body does not leave the body
39. patikara paraśe mānaye jañjāla : [she] considering the touch  
of [her] husband defiling
612. caranahi neyala ratana-nupure : [she] took the golden nupura  
on her feet.

The Oblique Case forms with the inflection -hi and -hī serve two grammatical functions, instrumental and locative e.g.,

(i) Locative

273. kuñjahī bhetala kāna : [she] met kāna in the grove
303. nayanahi ananda lora : tears of joy [are] in the eyes
2493. śayanahi luthai hāra : the garland rolls on the bed
2445. gotahi karala payāna : [He] went to the pasture-land
544. raika nikatahī karala payāna : [He] went near to Rāi
65. Kālinḍi tīrahi geli : [she] went to the bank of Kālinḍi
99. kuñjahi karala payāna : [He] went to the grove
156. kabari urahi lotāyata : the hair rolls on the chest
159. nayanahi baha nīra : tears flow in the eyes.
169. manahi karaye anutapa : [He] laments in his mind
164. śabada kānahi paithala : sound enters into the ears.

(ii) Instrumental

2483. karahi cibuka dharai : [He] holds [her] chin with [his] hand
2593. bāma bhujahī basane mukha jhāpai : [She] hides her face drawing the garment with [her] left hand
615. lājahi mukha nāhi tolaye : [she] does not raise [her] face because of shyness
527. karahi kara bārabi : [you] will stop [his] hand with [your] hand
101. bhitahī kāpai rai : Rāi trembles through fear
136. kānahi śunata : [she] hears with her ears
157. ghāmahi bhigala kalebara : the body became wet with sweat
157. nīrahī śicita bhutala : the ground is sprinkled with tears
159. śabadahi bujhiye : [she] realises through noise
173. nayanahi nirakhaye daśadiśa : [she] looks all direction with [her] eyes

Only the Oblique Case forms ending in -ka etc., and māha etc., serve a single grammatical function, the former being possessive and the latter locative. e.g.

-k- group(i) -ka

138. nayanaka nīra (tears of eyes)
315. birahaka bedana (pain of separation)
667. basanaka bāya (wind of garment)
770. adharaka dāga (mark of lip)

254. gīmaka hāra (garland for neck)  
 625. bacanaka kauśala (trick of word)  
 2776. kusumaka hāra (garland of flower)  
 1049. amiyāka lobha (greed of drink)  
 666. piyāka piriti (love of the beloved)  
 1017. dutika upadeśa (advice of the messenger)  
 399. bahurika pāni (hand of the wife)  
 2690. pahuka carita (behaviour of lord)  
 2442. bhāṅuka dhanuyā (bow of eyebrow)

(ii) -ki

623. daibaki gati (course of destiny)  
 297. pānaki lobha (greed of drink)  
 51. suratiki rīta (way of love)  
 298. panthaki dukha (misery of the road)  
 440. śokaki kūpa (well of lament)  
 444. premakrīta (way of love)  
 2446. rājaki rāja (king of king)  
 196. piritiki rīta (way of love)

(iii) -ke

100. rūpake kūpa : (well of beauty)  
 106. kaṭūke gauraba (glory of waste)  
 2872. nandinike śobhā (beauty of daughter)  
 2872. benike lābaṇi (grace of hair)

(iv) -kara

156. dinakara dupara (middle of day)  
 456. pahukara hāri (defeat of lord)  
 196. patikara paraśa (touch of husband)

me

- jalame (in water)                      kulame (on the bank)

māha / mähā

56. kālindi damana dina māha : on the day of the suppression of the snake Kalindi  
 84. mana mähā manasija : love [is] in [my] mind  
 47. hrdaya mähā : in the heart  
 108. mana mähā bacana racana kari : having prepared speech in mind.

The conclusion to be drawn from these examples seems to be that though the distinction of case form by inflection does at times correlate with grammatical function in respect of syntactical relationships within the sentence, it does so so infrequently and so inconsistently that it must be deemed not to be necessary for the expression of these relationships. Two factors are relevant, the wide range of grammatical functions served by the Direct Case forms, and the great preponderance of Direct Case nouns over those in the Oblique Cases. There are so few functions that cannot be and are not served by uninflected nouns that it appears that the use of inflected forms was prompted by considerations other than those of grammar. It is true that for the modern reader the absence of inflections in certain places make some

of the sentences difficult to construe, but that consideration did not, as far as we can see, weigh heavily in the mind of the authors at the time of composition, and must for that reason be adjudged irrelevant. Nominal inflections therefore play a largely incidental role in the grammatical structure of the sentence in the Brajabuli poems.

### Postpositions

Syntactical relationships of various kinds are made between nouns and other words in the sentence by means of a group of words known as postpositions. With the exception of bine (without), the postpositions are nominal or verbal in form: (a) nominal, sañe (with or from), para (on), pāśa (at the side); (b) verbal, lāgi (for the sake of). The position of the postposition is immediately after the noun.

#### (i) sañe

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1289. sakhi sañe (with friend)     | 1600. mathurā sañe (from Mathurā) |
| 1380. hari sañe (with Hari)        | 1325. dūra sañe (from a distance) |
| 590. mandira sañe (from the house) | 1003. ghara sañe (with the house) |

#### (ii) lāgi

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 225. bindu lāgi (for a drop)   | 579. paraśa lāgi (for a touch) |
| 964. sukha lāgi (for pleasure) | 996. kāmini lāgi (for woman)   |

#### (iii) para

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1052. pitha para (on the back) | 207. kamala para (on the lotus) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|

#### (iv) pāśa

- |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 221. hari pāśa (near Hari)    | 88. dhani pāśa (near the girl) |
| 48. nāgara pāśa (near Nāgara) |                                |



(v) bine

- 65. paraśana bine (without a touch)
- 589. sakhini bine (without friend)

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GRAMMAR OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE POEMS

#### B. Pronoun.

The analysis of the Pronoun is more complex than that of the Noun because of the large number of pronominal forms which are used in our texts. The Personal Pronoun, which is considered first, presents a total of no fewer than 52 different forms. Of these, 15 are 1st person, 12 2nd person and 25 3rd person.

The pronouns of the 1st person can be classified in two groups on formal criteria: (a) those which have an initial h-, hāma, hāme, hāmāri, hāmāra; and (b) those which have an initial m-, mo, ma, muni, moya, mohe, more, moi, mujhe, mori, mōra, majhu. A certain number of both the h and m forms are found to be in free variation in certain identical grammatical contexts. As there are three such types of context within which free variation is possible, there is justification for classifying the forms in three groups or Cases, as follows.

	(a) <u>h</u> forms	(b) <u>m</u> forms
Case I (Nominative)	hāma	1. mo. 2. ma 3. muñi
Case II (Accusative)	hāme	1. moya 2. mohe 3. more 4. moi, 5. mujhe

Case III (Genitive)	(a) <u>h</u> forms	(b) <u>m</u> forms
	1. hāmāri	1. mori
	2. hāmāra	2. mōra
		3. majhu

Although all the above 15 words are represented in our texts, the frequency of their occurrence varies. In the Nominative Case hāma is found more frequently than are the three m forms. In the Accusative Case it is the m forms which occur more frequently; while in the Genitive Case, h and m forms are fairly equally represented. Of these the following occur very frequently: hāma, mōhe, hāmāri and majhu. The following occur fairly frequently: mōya, mujhe, more, mōra; while the remainder are rare.

Though the classification of h and m forms separately has morphological and historical justification, it appears that the double classification has no validity when tested against the syntactical functions of the two sets in the Brajabuli poems. In Hindi h forms pronouns are plural, and m forms pronouns singular, but in Brajabuli there are no grounds for correlating these formal differences with number or with any other grammatical concord category. In effect, in Nominative Case contexts the author can at will choose any one of 4 forms, in Accusative Case contexts any one of 6, and in Genitive Case contexts any one of 5. Only the division of the forms into Case categories seems to have validity on internal grounds, but within these Case groups the only observable criterion of selection is one of personal preference, dictated by considerations of

euphony and metre.

Case I (Nominative)

(a) h forms.

64. hāma ki bolaba toya (what shall I tell you)
111. hāma nāhi jāni (I do not know)
64. hāma śiśumati (I am childish)
28. hāma pekhalū gorā (I saw Gorā)
46. hāma boli (I say)
46. hāma paithaba Kālindi bāri (I shall enter into the water of Kālindi)
48. hāma kayala parihāsa (I joked)
51. hāma saba yai (we go)
430. hāma yāyaba kona thāma (where shall I go)
610. hāma baithalū (I sat)
49. hāma dayaba upadeśa (I shall give advice)
46. yatana karaba hāma (I shall try sincerely)
47. ki karaba aba hāma (what shall I do now)
68. āju hāma ki pekhalū (what did I see today)
365. āju rajani hāma kaichē bañcaba (How shall I spend the night)
111. hāma nāhi yāyaba kānu thāma (I shall not go to Kanu's place)
186. hāma aba karabe payāna (I shall disappear now)
186. hāma aba yāiye raika thāma (I now go to Rāi)

Case I (Nominative)(b) m- forms.(i) mo

320. kahala mo toya (I told you)

250. pucha mo toya (I ask you)

(ii) ma

435. kahala ma toya (I told you)

437. kahala ma khala jana dokhala kāna (I told [that] bad people  
accused kāna)(iii) muñi

442. muñi eta pāpini (I am so full of sin)

567. kāhāñ muñi (where am I?)

Case II (Accusative)(a) h forms

374. mādhāba kāhe kāndāyasi hāme (Mādhāba, why do you make me cry?)

193. hāme heri bihasali thori ([she] smiled a little after seeing me)

259. hāme daraśāite beśa karu ([she] dresses herself in order to show me)

259. hāme herāite tanu jhāpa ([she] covers her body to see me)

477. dhani hāme nā heraba (the girl will not see me)

Case II (Accusative)(b) m forms(i) moya

247. bacana nā kahabi moya (do not say words to me)

43. kahali moya ([you] told me)

387. nāgini kātaba moya (serpent will bite me)

(i) moya (contd)

212. sudhāmukhi milaba moya (the beautiful one will meet me)  
 412. kāhe upekhasi moya (why do you ignore me?)  
 213. bāni kahali tuhū moya (you told me words)  
 428. kāhe tuhū dagadhasi moya (why do you burn me?)  
 389. tuhū nā paraśa moya (you do not touch me)  
 456. kāhe katara diṭhe cāhasi moya (why do [you] look at me with  
 mournful looks)  
 472. puna sādhasi moya ([you] request me again)

(ii) mohe

58. mohe heri sakhi karu kora (having seen me [she] embraces a friend)  
 211. kaiche milaba mohe so dhani (how will that girl meet me?)  
 387. mohe heri sambaru rokha (having seen me withdraw your anger)  
 45. sunāha mohe upekhalā (the good lord ignored me)  
 424. tuhū mohe paribādasi (you abuse me)  
 406. mohe deyabi āda ānga (you will give me half of your body)  
 367. mohe bañcala kāna (Kāna deceived me)  
 375. tuhū yadi abhimāne mohe upekhasi (if you ignore me through anger)  
 234. jānalū bihi mohe bāma ([I] realise the god is unfavourable to me)  
 234. Kānu mohe bijuri sama lāgi (Kānu appears to me like lightning)  
 376. tuhū mohe parhāyali (you taught me)  
 438. bihi mohe dārūna bhela (the god became terrible to me)  
 431. mohe upekhi rai kaiche yāyaba (how will Rāi go ignoring me?)  
 251. nā kara sakhi mohe anurodhe (friend, do not request me)  
 365. mohe bihi bañcala (the god deceived me)

(iii) mujhe

386. tuhū mujhe bolasi (you are telling me)
196. cañcala nayane mujhe heri sundari phiri gela (the beautiful girl  
went away having seen  
me with restless eyes)
199. mujhe heri sundari cali yāya (having seen me the beautiful girl  
goes away)
334. so mujhe biparita bhela (he became unfavourable to me)
434. minati mujhe kela ([he] requested me)
442. nāha geo mujhe chāri (the lord went leaving me behind)
532. so mujhe kayalahi apamāna (he insulted me)

(iv) more

725. se more karala kora (he embraced me)

(v) moi

6. lāgai moi ([it] appears to me)

CASE III (Genitive)

(a) h forms

(i) hāmāra

375. bidaraye antara hāmāra (my mind pierces through)
442. nikasaye jibana hāmāra (my mind bursts out)

(ii) hāmāri

47. hāmāri niṭhurapanā (my cruelty)
65. hāmāri bacana (my words)
1094. hāmāri pāya (my feet)
234. hāmāri hrdaye (in my mind)
375. hāmāri marāma (my mind)
255. hāmāri sapatī (my swear)

309. marama hāmāri (my mind)  
 337. hāmāri paranāma (my salute)  
 416. bacana hāmāri (my words)

(b) m forms

(i) mora

28. antara kāṣpaye mora (my heart trembles)  
 192. maramahi daṅśala mora ([he] bit in my mind)  
 212. saphala jibana taba hoyaba mora (my life will then be successful)  
 249. pulake purala tanu mora (joy filled my body)  
 250. jiu mora kāpa (my life trembles)  
 342. tanu anulepaha mora (smear my body)  
 431. tanu tirpita karu mora (satisfy my body)  
 404. kātara antara nā karaha mora (do not make my life distressed)  
 423. badana malina bhēla mora (my face became pale)

(ii) mori

85. paithali mana māhā mori ([he] entered into my mind)  
 85. bāna phuṭala hiye mori (arrow pierced through my heart.)  
 199. sarabasa leyali mori ([he] took my everything)  
 211. cita corāyali mori ([he] stole my mind)

(iii) majhu

362. hr̥daye jvalata majhu āgi (fire burns in my mind)  
 251. hr̥daya uṭhala majhu kāpi (my mind trembled)  
 246. majhu hr̥dayaka mājha (in my mind)  
 246. majhu ninde bharala deha (my body was filled by sleep)





Of these, tuhū, tohe, tuya occur frequently; toya, tora tori, tohāri, fairly frequently; and the remainder are rare. The following examples show how the poets employed the Case variants which were available to them.

Case I Nominative

(i) tuhū

65. tuhū nā karabi (you should not do)
156. tuhū samujhaha (you realise)
39. tuhū ārādhali (you worshipped)
28. tuhū jānasi (you know)
39. kāhā tuhū ārādhali Kāna. (when did you worship Kāna?)
40. kīye tuhū mohini jāna (what charm do you know?)
45. tuhū kāhe birasa badana (why is your face dry?)
45. kara tuhū para upakāra (you do service to others)
51. tuhū hoyabi candana sama śīta (you should become as cold as sandal paste)
61. kabe tuhū daśana dekhāyali (when did you show your teeth?)
65. saṃśaya tuhū nā karabi (you do not hesitate)
1076. tuhū yadi karasi upāya (if you make an opening)
705. tuhū bheli (you became)

97. tuhū bari hr̥daya pāṣāṇa (you are very cruel in heart)
222. tuhū bhukhila madhukara (you are [a] hungry bee)
309. kānu marama tuhū jāna (you know the mind of kānu)
368. tuhū sama murukha jagate nāhi āna (There is not a foolish person  
like you)
375. tuhū bine āna nāhi jāni (I do not know anyone else except you)
- (ii) to
1373. to bari seyāna (you [are] very clever)
- (iii) tu
530. tu bari kathina deha (your body is very hard)

Case II Accusative

- (i) toya
41. hāma bolaba toya (I shall tell you)
726. kahaba toya ([I] shall tell you)
64. hāma aba ki bolaba toya (What shall I tell you now?)
71. puna puna puchiye toya (I ask you again and again)
178. tiri-badha lāgaba toya (the sin of killing a woman will be upon you)
212. e sakhi nibedana toya (O Friend, I report to you)
320. kara jori kahala mo toya (I told you with my hands folded)
412. mānini kara jore kahi puna toya (O angry one, I tell you again with  
my hands folded)
250. e sakhi pucha mo toya (O friend, I ask you again)
435. taikhane kahala ma toya (I hold you then)
456. mādhaba sādhalā toya (Madhaba requested me)
457. sakhi nibedana toya (friend, I report to you.)
509. svarūpa kahala toya (I hold you the truth)

(ii) tohe

49. hāma deyaba tohe upadeśa (I shall give you advice)
51. tohe sōpalū iha bāla-carita ([I] give you this child-like [girl])
39. rāi tohe mana māna (Rāi thinks of you in her mind)
56. tohe kaho subala sāngāti (I tell you my friend, Subala,)
84. hāmāri sapathi tohe kaha kathirūpa (my swear upon you, tell, how is  
[her] beauty)
93. tohe anuratha bhela śyāmaracanda (Syama became interested in you)
95. Jñāna kahaye tohe sāra (Jñāna tells you the truth)
126. tohe heri so ākula bhai gela (she became bewildered having seen you)
416. dhika rahu yo dhani tohe anurāga (Fie on her who loves you)
127. kakhana dekhala tohe śyāmara (when did Syamara see you?)
186. milaya tohe Kāna (Kāna meets you)
188. tohe hāma ki kahaba āra (what more shall I tell you?)
196. maramaka bedana tohe parakāśala ([I] expose the pain of my heart  
to you)
229. bahu parasāda tohe kayala anaṅga (the bodyless made you many favours)
230. tohe sakhigaṇe puchala (the friends asked you)
244. tohe āmāri bahu sebā (my many services to you)
319. mādhaba tohe ki bolaba āna (Mādhaba, what shall [I] tell you?)
337. aichana samaye milaba tohe rāi (Syāma, Rāi will meet you?)
371. kona gohāra aba tohe paraśaba (What wretched woman will touch you?)
375. tohe bimukha dekhi ([I] see you disturbed)
387. tohe chāri hāma yadi paraśaba koya (If I touch anyone except you)
395. heraithe tohe lāja mohe hoyata (shame befalls me to look at you)
416. tohe nā uyuāya ([it] does not fit you)
437. tohe samujhāyaba koi (who will make you understand?)

CASE III Genitive(i) tuyā

39. tuyā murali (your flute)  
 55. tuyā mukha (your face)  
 127. tuyā rūpa (your beauty)  
 222. tuyā pāye (at your feet)  
 39. tuyā mañjira (your mañjira)  
 42. tuyā murali-dhani (sound of your flute)  
 90. tuyā birahānāle (the fire of your separation)  
 90. tuyā rasa āśe (expectation of your love)  
 227. tuyā hāsa (your smile)  
 232. tuyā dehā (your body)  
 285. tuyā anurāge (your love)  
 320. tuyā ṭhāmā (at your place)  
 373. tuyā anugata (your subservient)  
 375. tuyā āśoyāse (for the desire of you)

(ii) tori

170. biraha-jvara tori (the fever of separation of you)  
 93. kahalahi nāmahi tori (we said the name of you)  
 90. nirmai murati tori (makes the image of you)  
 41. biraha-ānāle tori (the fire of separation of you)  
 470. nirakhi badana tori (looks at the face of yours)

(iii) tora

61. janama dhani tora (your life is fortunate)

(iii) tora (contd)

217. pantha herata tora ([he] looks at your way)  
 431. yaśa gāyaba tora ([I] shall sing your praise)  
 478. kathina mana tora (your heart is terrible)  
 510. kare dhari tora ([I] hold your hand)  
 511. śarana lailū tora ([I] take your refuge)

(iv) tohāri

256. tohāri punye (because of your virtue)  
 285. tohāri dāraśe (at the sight of you)  
 375. tohāri caraṇa (at your feet)  
 384. tohāri bilāsa (your pleasure)  
 393. tohāri bacana (your speech)  
 306. tohāri guṇa (your virtue)  
 315. murati tohari (your image)  
 336. gamana tohāri (your going)  
 336. tohāri sandeśa (your news)  
 365. tohāri suncha (your love)  
 368. tohāri bayāna (your face)  
 605. tohāri marama-dukha (your mental unhappiness)  
 589. tohāri sakhini (your friend)  
 588. tohāri sohāgi (your love)  
 46. puraba tohāri (your desire)  
 90. tohāri carane (at your feet)  
 41. tohāri nāma (your name)

(v) tuhūka

230. tuhūka manoratha (your desire)

(vi) tere

398. tera badhu (your wife)

(vii) tuyāka

506. tuyāka pirita (your love)

The Pronoun of the 3rd Person is divisible into three sets which are formally distinguishable: (a) those which have an initial s or t; (b) those which have an initial front vowel e or i; (c) those which have an initial back vowel o or u. They can be ordered in paradigms as follows:

Case I

Nominative

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. <u>so</u>   | 1. <u>o</u>   |
| 2. <u>soi</u>  | 2. <u>ohi</u> |
| 3. <u>se</u>   | 3. <u>uha</u> |
| 4. <u>seha</u> | 4. <u>e</u>   |

Case II

Accusative

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. <u>tāya</u> | 1. <u>iha</u> |
| 2. <u>tāhe</u> |               |
| 3. <u>tāi</u>  |               |

Case III

Genitive

- |                  |
|------------------|
| 1. <u>tāka</u>   |
| 2. <u>tākara</u> |
| 3. <u>tachu</u>  |

1. The joint classification of s and t forms is justified on comparative grounds: cf. Bengali se/take; Nepali so/tyasko.

## Case I.

(i) so

56. so rahu majhu mane (he remains in my mind)  
 61. so tuyā bhābe bhora (she is immersed in your thought)  
 126. so ākula bhai gela (she became restless)  
 399. so kachu nāhi jāna (she does not know anything)  
 324. so mujhe biparita bhela (became hostile to me)  
 334. so nāhi daraśana dela (he did not show himself)  
 433. so tāpini jaga māha (she is distressed in the world)  
 436. so nāhī pahiraīū (she did not wear)  
 532. so mujhe kayalahī apamāna (she insulted me)  
 548. so bhigi āola (he came wet)

(ii) soi

64. āliṅgana deyaba soi (he will embrace)  
 237. tuhū mugadhini soi lubadha (you are enchanted he is greedy)  
 437. athira bhela soi (he became restless)  
 362. nā carhala soi (he did not let go)  
 374. soi pūraba tuyā kāma (he will satisfy your desire)  
 383. nirabadhi antare soi (he is in your mind all the time)  
 405. soi bhasama sama bhela (he became like ashes)  
 416. soi puraba tuyā hiya-abhilāsa (he will fulfill the desire of your heart)  
 426. soi karata abamāna (he insults)  
 529. soi kachu nāhi bolala (he does not say anything)  
 538. soi puje pāca-bāna (she worships the god of love)



(iii) se

204. cita nayana majhu duhū se corāyali (she stole both my mind and eyes)
667. se mora śramajala ācare mochai (she wipes my sweat with her garment)
669. se jāne o rasarānga (she knows he [is] Rasarāja)

(iv) seha

126. tuyā mukha daraśana pāola seha (he got the sight of your face)
519. katiḥū geli bali muruchali seha (she fainted having said where is [he] gone?)
519. tuyā āge dhūli lotāyāi seha (he rolls on the dust in front of you)
733. piche piche geo seha (he goes behind [her])

(v) o

1050. o ki śyāma (is he śyāma?)
1061. o kalankita (is he full of sin?)
732. o dharu (he holds)
648. o madhukararāja (he [is] the King of bees)
648. o nabajaladhara aṅga (he [has] a body like the new clouds)
732. o dharu ācara ora (he holds the end of the garment)

(vi) ohi

588. ohi mānāyata (he requests)

(vii) uha

763. uha rahata udāsa (he remains indifferent)
1077. tachu sukhe sukhi uha (he is pleased with her happiness)
193. ko uha jāna (who knows him?)

(viii) e

100. e ati goṅāri (she [is] rustic)  
 602. e kula-bālā (she [is] caste woman)  
 1022. e saba guṇahi garīma (she [is] superior in all virtue)  
 1373. e gajagāmini (she walks like an elephant)

(ix) eha

126. kachu nā bujhala eha (she did not understand anything)

Case II

Accusative

(i) tāya

417. caraṇe thełasi tāya ([you] push him with [your] feet)  
 230. kaichane gopabi tāya (how will [you] hide him?)  
 42. tuhū milaha tāya (you meet him)  
 456. hāma ki kahaba tāya (what shall I tell you?)  
 469. hāma upekhālū tāya (I ignored him)  
 474. hāma milaba tāya (I shall meet him)

(ii) tāhe

314. t̄she sanebādaba gobindadāsa (Gobindadāsa will inform him)  
 398. tahe heri (having seen him)  
 407. tejala tāhe ([she] ignored him)  
 441. tuhū yadi tāhe lākha gāri deyasi (if you abuse him million times)  
 472. tāhe emana bebahāra (such treatment to you)  
 490. tāhe upekhabi (you will ignore him)  
 529. bahuta yatana kari tāhe mānāyabi (request him with great care)  
 540. tuhū tāhe bheli udāsa (you became indifferent to him)

(iii) tāi

499. kare dhari doti mānāyai tāi (the messenger requested her holding her hand)
502. kataye bujhāyaba tāi (how much will you explain to him?)

Case III  
Genitive(i) tāka

64. aiche naha tāka bilāsa (such is not his pleasure)
177. tāka kalyāṇa (his good)
234. taka parasa (his touch)
439. taka māna (her anger)
545. tāka samukha (in front of him)

(ii) tākara

460. āyala tākara sātha ([she] came with his company)
466. tākara tāpa (her fever)
470. tākara bacana (his words)
48. tākara biraha-hutāśa (his fire of separation)
196. tākara piritiki riti (the way of his love)
233. tākara carana (his feet)
406. tākara dambha (his show off)
398. tākara bacana (her words)
409. tākara geha (to her house)

(iii) tachu

500. tachu antara (his heart)
186. tachu pāśa (near his side)

(iii) tachu (contd)

234. tachu pāye (at his feet)

284. tachu preme (in his love)

398. tachu ṭhāme (to his place)

522. tachu bhaya (his fear)

535. tachu mājha (her waist)

The s/t forms exceed in number that of the other two sets taken together. Of the s/t forms, the Nominative forms are almost equally represented, as are the Accusative forms. Whereas of the Genitive forms tachu is the most common; tā, tāka, tākara are fairly frequent and have almost equal distribution. The form tahnika occurs only once.

There is no evidence whereby the e/i forms and the o/u forms can be correlated respectively with categories of 'near' and 'far'; nor in respect of meaning does either seem to differ from the s/t forms.

### Relative Pronouns

All Relative pronouns have an initial y-. The following paradigm may be set up.

Case I  
Nominative

1. yo

2. ye

3. yoi

Case II  
Accusative

1. yāhē

Case III  
Genitive

1. yāka
2. yākara
3. yachu

Of the three Genitive forms, yachu is most frequent;  
yāka and yākara are almost equally represented.

Case I  
Nominative

(i) yo

455. yo aichana mati dela (he who gave [you] such advice)  
71. yo tuyā dukhe dukhāyata (he who suffers from your misfortune)  
433. kānuka dokhe yo dhani rokhai (she who angers through Kānu's fault)  
234. yo hari herai (she who looks at Hari)  
520. yo jana bañcaye (he who deprives)  
540. yo jana tuyā guṇe bhora (he who is immerged in your virtue)

(ii) ye

516. kāli damana karala ye jana (he who killed the serpent Kāli)  
528. ye kahe śyāma nāma (he who says the name) of syama)

(iii) yoi

520. nāhe samīpe anukūla hoyata yoi (she who is bewildered in front of the lord)

Case II  
Accusative

(i) yāhe

466. daiba bimukha yāhe hoyata (whom the god is unfavourable)

Case III  
Genitive

(i) yāka

491. yāka śayana (whose bed)

(ii) yākara

467. yubati nikara mājke yākara bāsa (whose living is in the company  
of women)

231. yākara kāhini śunasi kāne (whose story you hear with [your]  
ears)

304. yākara chāya (whose shadow)

304. yākara carana (whose feet)

(iii) yachu

467. yachu abhilāsa (whose desire)

470. yachu guṇe (because of whose virtue)

491. yachu jībana (whose life)

517. yachu carane (at whose feet)

704. yachu mukha (whose face)

Interrogative Pronoun

All the forms of this pronoun have initial k-. The following paradigm may be set up:

Case I  
Nominative

1. ko
2. koi
3. ke
4. kona

Case II  
Accusative

1. kā
2. kāha

Case III  
Genitive

1. kākara

Case I  
Nominative

(i) ko

174. ko achu bedana sahai (who bears such pain?)  
 43. ko karu pāpa (who commits sin?)  
 56. ko jāne kaichana biraha-beyādhi (who knows how is the disease of separation?)  
 73. ko kahe kāma ānānga (who says Kāma is bodyless?)  
 89. ko kahe ārati ora (who says the limit of her unhappiness?)  
 200. ko dei dārūna bādḥā (who gives such opposition?)  
 231. ko pātiyāyaba ithe (who will believe this?)  
 233. ko jāne kaiche rasa-keli (who knows how is love?)  
 634. ko karu anubhaba (who feels?)  
 716. ko bāhirāyata (who comes out?)

(ii) koi

302. koi pujala (who worshipped?)  
 561. tohe piriti karu koi (who makes love with you?)  
 437. tohe samujhāyaba koi (who will make you understand?)

(iii) ke

193. ke uha jāna (who knows that?)  
 241. ke jane etahū kalā (who knows so much tricks?)  
 1000. ke jāne kaichana tohāri sineha (Who knows how is your love?)  
 1045. ke bujhibe (who will understand?)

(iv) kona

380. kona kayala iha kãja (who did this?)

717. kona etahũ dukha dela (who gave so much pain?)

Case III

Genitive (i) kākara

548. kākara aŋgane ko nãca (who dances in whose court?)



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE GRAMMAR OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE POEMS

#### C. Verb.

The verbal forms in our Brajabuli texts are analysable in respect of their formal structure into two mutually exclusive categories, Finite and Non-Finite. Those forms which include in their structure formal exponents of Personal Concord are Finite, those which do not are Non-Finite.

To describe Finite verbs it is necessary to set up three categories: (i) Tense - there are four tenses, Present, which is divisible into two sub-categories, Indicative and Imperative, Past, Future and Continuative, (ii) Person - there are three persons, 1st, 2nd and 3rd; (iii) Gender - there are two genders, Masculine and Feminine. The exponents of these three categories are to be found in the second and third of the three components which make up the total structure of a Finite verb, namely the root, the tense morpheme and the personal ending. Take for example the Finite Verbal form karali, the structural components of which are (i) kar- (root), (ii) -al- (tense morpheme), (iii) -i (personal ending).

#### Root

Verbal Roots, which are common to both Finite and Non-Finite verbal forms, are of two kinds: Normal, which is the minimal distinctive component of a verb, and Extended, which is made up of a Normal Root



Normal Open Roots, whether of the structure V or CV, end in the following vowels only.

- ā : ā- (come) 1713. ā-oi. gā- (sing) 207. gā-oye.  
 cā- (want) 170. cā-i. pā- (get) 207. pā-oye.  
 bā- (blow) 2861. bā-oye. yā- (go) 1620. yā-oi.
- ī : khī (diminish), 171. khī-yata. jī (live) 256. jī-yalū.
- i : ji- (live) 1839. ji-yaba
- ū : ū- (arise) 59. ū-yala
- e : de- (give). 858. de-osi, le- (take) 75. le-u.  
 ne- (take) 728. ne-la.
- o : ro- (cry) 1683. ro-yata, kho- (destroy) 336. kho-yala.  
 go- (hide) 2513. go-i, to- (look for), 1718. to-yata.  
 jo- (see) 1919. jo-yata. tho- (keep) 1583. tho-yalū.  
 so- (sleep) 1836. so-yata. ho- (be) 51. ho-yabī.

No open roots ending in -a, or in the diphthongs -ai and -au occur.

The number of closed roots is large. Forms with the following final consonants occur.

- k : jhalak- (flash) 21. jhalak-e, mucak- (smile, 205. mucak-i.  
 camak- (startle) 39. camak-ai, dāk- (call), 4. dāk-ai.
- kh : lekh- (write), 176. lekh-i, nirakh- (see) 56. nirakh-aye.  
 rākh- (keep) 1602. rākh-au, upekh- (ignore) 443. upekh-alū.  
 barikh- (rain) 4. barikh-ala, dekh- (see) 121. dekh-ō.

- g : mäg- (beg) 3018. mäg-ai, jäg- (wake) 62. jäg-ata.  
bhäg- (move) 240. bhägata, bhig- (wet) 548. bhig-ata,  
teyäg- (give up) 163. teyäg-alū.
- c : nac- (dance) 157. nāc-aye, birac- (make) 315. birac-ai.  
bec- (sell) 361. bec-alū, yāc- (beg) 1152. yāc-aye.
- ch : puch- (ask) 156. puch-ata, muruch- (faint) 97. muruch-aye,  
moch- (wipe) 389. moch-ata
- j : upaj- (grow) 52. upaj-ala, khōj- (look for) 576. khōj-alū  
tiyāj- (give up) 1896. tiyāj-ala.
- jh : bujh- (understand) 95. bujh-aye, rījh- (please) 483.  
-ṭ : ulaṭ- (turn upside down) 496. ulaṭ-ala, ghaṭ- (happen)  
506. ghaṭ-ala. ṭuṭ- (break) 782. ṭuṭ-ala.
- th : paith- (enter) 164. paith-ata, baith- (sit) 217. baith-  
ala.  
uṭh- (get up) 56. uṭh-aye
- ṇ : bhaṇ- (say) 1922. bhaṇ-aba.
- t : jit (win) 76. jit-ala, śut- (sleep) 1523. śut-ala.
- th : gāth- (make garland) 283. gāth-ai.
- d : nigad- (speak) 170. nigad-ai, nibed- (report) 1833. nibed-  
alū.  
ched- (pierce) 150. ched-ala.
- dh : bādh- (oppose) 985. bādh-aye, bodh- (console) 490. bodh-  
ali,  
rodh- (shut) 139. rodh-aye, dagadh- (burn) 184. dagadh-e.
- n : jān- (know) 28. jān-asi, ban- (make) 452. ban-i.
- p : jap- (recite) 199. jap-ata, jhāp- (hide) 227. jhāp-asi,  
bilap- (lament) 770. bilap-ai, rop- (plant) 434. rop-alū.

- b : jib (live) 236. jib-asi, ḍub- (sink) 28. ḍub-aiū.
- m : niram- (make) 1258. niram-ala, bharam- (walk) 571.  
bharam-ai, ram- (enjoy) 822. ram-asi.
- r : ḍār- (throw away) 367. ḍār-aha, ḍhār- (pour out) 59.  
ḍhār-ai, dhar- (catch) 36. dhar-aite.
- l : ṭhel- (push) 100. ṭhel-ai, dol- (swing) 1247. dol-aye.
- ś : daraś- (show) 1881. daraś-ai, daś- (bite) 53. daś-aite.  
diś- (show) 170. diś-ai. nāś- (destroy) 853. nāś-ai.
- s : rūṣ- (become angry) 1983. rūṣ-aba, sambhāṣ- (address)  
358. sambhāṣ-ai.
- s : nikas- (come out) 59. nikas-ai, nibas- (live) 428.  
nibas-ai.
- h : joh- (look) 2996. joh-e, dah- (burn) 183. dah-aye.
- r : ṭhār (stand) 419. ṭhār-ai, dhūr- (wander) 71. dhūr-aba.
- rh : darh- (make sure) 2208. darh-iyā, parh- (teach)  
420. parh-ala.

Closed roots may also end in consonant clusters. The following examples occur.

- tr- citr- (paint) 328. citr-ai
- hn- cihn- (recognise) 39. cihn-ai
- mb- cumb- (kiss) 287. cumb-ai
- mp- jhamp- (jump) 132. jhamp-ai
- ñś- dañś- (bite) 301. dañś-aite
- nd- nind- (abuse) 709. nind-au

-fic-	bafic-	(spend) 985.	bafic-aye.
-ndh-	pindh-	(wear) 436.	pindh-ala.
-ñg-	bhāng-	(break) 47.	bhāng-ai
-ñj-	rañj-	(paint) 483.	rañj-ai.

Included in the above are examples of a class of Verbal root which is formally related to certain Nominal Forms, and is therefore usually classified as Denominative: e.g.

<u>Nominal forms</u>	<u>Roots</u>	<u>Verbal forms</u>
anumāna (guess)	anumān-	199. anumān-alu
ota (curtain)	ot-	2895. otā-yala
andha (blind)	andh-	andhā-yala
bilamba (delay)	bilamb-	358. bilamb-aha
pulaka (delightment)	pulak-	218. pulakā-yita
paribāda (bad names)	paribād-	2039. paribād-asi
ṭhamaka (gesture)	ṭhamak-	ṭhamak-ai
biṣāla (sorrow)	biṣād-	558. biṣād-ai
nirasa (dry)	niras-	527. niras-ai
biṣa (poison)	biṣ-	1778. biṣā-ila
darha (sure)	darh-	53. darhā-ilū
paramāda (fault)	paramād	paramādasi

Closed roots described in terms of vowels (V) and consonants (C) are formulated as follows:

- VC ot- (hide), āch- (remain), uth- (get up)
- CVC bol- (say), dekh- (see)
- VCVC ughār- (open), utar (descend)
- CVCVC samujh- (realise), rirakh- (see)
- VCVCVC anumān- (guess), anusār- (follow), anurodh- (request)
- CVCVCVC parabodh- (vconsole), paratap- (lament)

The following examples of closed roots ending in consonant clusters are found:

- VCC añj- (paint)
- CVCC rafj- (colour)
- CVCVCC biramb (trouble)

It will not be necessary hereafter to maintain the distinction between Normal and Extended Roots; as both open normal and extended roots are satisfactorily classified hereafter as Open Roots. It is however necessary to state Open and Closed Roots separately as the difference between vowel ending and consonant ending roots correlates with certain distinctive features in the form of the Tense Morpheme which is conjoined directly to the root.

FINITE FORMS

The sets of Finite verbal forms which are classified respectively as Present, Past, Future and Continuative are distinguished by the form of their Tense Morphemes.

TENSEPresent Tense

The Tense Morpheme of the Present Tense, including both Indicative and Imperative sub-categories, is zero. The difference between the Indicative and Imperative, in so far as it can be definitely described in purely formal terms, is to be found in the forms of the Personal Endings, and is considered later.

The morphemic analysis of Present Tense forms is as follows: Root + Tense Morpheme + Personal Ending.

yā-zero-i (go)

kar-zero-i (do)

kah-zero-ō (say)

jān-zero-e (know)

dhar-zero-aye (hold)

jhar-zero-ai (flow)

Past Tense

The distinctive feature of the Tense Morpheme of the Past Tense is the phoneme l, either alone or preceded by a vowel or a semivowel plus vowel, according to the form of the verbal root, as follows:

(a) with Open Roots: -l-, -yal-, -ol-, -il-.

(b) with Closed Roots: -al-, il-.

The range of morpheme variation possible is greater in the case of Open Root than in that of Closed Root verbs.



(a) Open Roots(i) -l-

166. bhṛ-l-i (became). 28. ge-lū (go)  
 204. ne-l-a (take) 240. de-l-a (give)

(ii) -yal-

240. ne-yal-a (take) 259. ā-yal-i (come)  
 45. pā-yal-i (get) 15. ho-yal-a (became)  
 176. ū-yal-a (arise) 469. de-yal-a (give)  
 2511. nindā-yal-i (cause to sleep)  
 444. bārhā-yal-i (increased) 452. lotā-yal-a (roll)  
 417. corā-yal-a (steal) 434. samujhā-yal-a (explain)  
 437. darasā-yal-i (show) 320. pāthā-yal-i (send)  
 376. parhā-yal-i (teach) 459. śikhā-yal-i (teach)  
 129. banā-yal-i (make) 702. śutā-yal-a (cause to sleep)  
 189. baithā-yal-a (caused to sit) 189. śuna-yal-ū (report)

(iii) -ol-

1000. ā-ol-i (come) 38. pā-ol-a (got)  
 1762. lā-ol-a (take) 532. le-ol-a (take)  
 349. de-ol-a (gave) 607. jānā-d-a (report)  
 535. banā-ol-a (make) 1034. niramā-ol-a (make)

(iv) -il-

282. ā-il-ū (come) 412. pohā-ilū (spend)

(b) Closed Roots.(i) -al-

61. āch-al-i (remain) 62. chonal-i (give up)

Closed Roots (continued)(i) -al-

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 70. jān-al-u (know)         | 70. bheṭ-al-i (meet)       |
| 85. pekh-al-u (meet)        | 97. nehār-al-a (see)       |
| 99. kah-al-a (say)          | 100. śut-al-i (sleep)      |
| 113. cal-al-i (go)          | 158. paith-al-i (enter)    |
| 165. ālāp-al-i (converse)   | 227. śikh-al-i (learn)     |
| 430. kar-al-a (do)          | 227. samuḡh-al-ū (realise) |
| 230. bujh-al-ū (understand) | 163. teyāg-al-a (give up)  |
| 136. bichur-al-a (forget)   | 139. śun-al-ū (hear)       |

(ii) -il-

- |                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 734. dekh-il-ū (see)        | 734. śun-il-ū (hear)      |
| 964. bujh-il-ū (understand) | 246. āch-il-ū (remain)    |
| 608. kar-il-ū (do)          | 113. sōp-il-ū (give away) |

Future Tense

The distinctive feature of the Tense Morpheme of the Future Tense is the phoneme b, either alone or preceded by a vowel or semivowel plus vowel. The range of occurrences in Open Root verbs is -b-, -yab-, -oh-, that in Closed Root verbs is -ab, -ib-

(a) Open Roots:(i) -b-

- |                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 384. yā-b-a (go)   | 384. pā-b-a (get)          |
| 308. ni-b-a (take) | 81. bujhā-b-a (make clear) |

(ii) -yab-

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 240. ho-yab-a (become)          | 255. pā-yab-a (get)                      |
| 375. yā-yab-a (go)              | 406. de-yab-i (give)                     |
| 158. ji-yab-i (live)            | 412. samujhā-yab-a (cause to understand) |
| 430. milā-yab-a (cause to meet) | 434. bāhurā-yab-a (bring back)           |
| 435. bārḥā-yab-a (increase)     | 437. śikhā-yab-a (teach)                 |
| 600. lukā-yab-a (hide)          | 630. dekhā-yab-a (show)                  |

(iii) -ob-

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 430. gā-ob-a (sing)      | 350. ā-ob-a (come)         |
| 567. pā-ob-i (get)       | 979. yā-ob-a (go)          |
| 1025. jānā-ob-i (inform) | 474. mānā-ob-i (calm down) |

(b) Closed Roots(i) -ab-

- |                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 12. dhar-ab-a (catch)  | 12. car-ab-a (climb)       |
| 12. khōj-ab-a (search) | 27. kar-ab-i (do)          |
| 37. bol-ab-a (say)     | 45. rākh-ab-i (keep)       |
| 46. tej-ab-i (give up) | 46. paṭh-ab-a (enter)      |
| 46. śut-ab-i (sleep)   | 48. ān-ab-i (bring)        |
| 230. gop-ab-i (hide)   | 65. bujh-ab-i (understand) |
| 247. kah-ab-i (tell)   | 767. paur-ab-i (cross)     |

Continuative Tense

The distinctive feature of the Tense Morpheme of the Continuative Tense is the phoneme t, either alone or preceded by a vowel or a semivowel plus vowel. The range of occurrences in

Open Root is -t-, -yat-, -ot-, that in Closed Root Verbs is -at-.

(a) Open Roots.

(i) -t-

86. ho-t-i (become)      384. ho-t-a (become)  
233. yā-t-a (go.)

(ii) -yat-

3. gā-yat-a (sing)      11. ro-yat-a (cry)  
15. yā-yat-a (go)      310. ā-yat-a (come)  
171. khī-yat-a (destroy)      626. dhā-yat-a (run)  
156. lotā-yat-a (rolls)      567. parhā-yat-a (teach)  
600. lukā-yat-a (hide)      744. daraśā-yat-a (show)  
377. mānā-yat-a (accept)      200. bārhā-yat-a (increase)  
53. dhulā-yat-a (swing)      200. muruchā-yat-a (faint)  
1830. samujhā-yat-a (cause to understand)

(iii) -ot-

136. ā-ot-a (come)      170. bhā-ot-a (appear)  
498. yā-ot-a (go)      625. gā-ot-a (sing)  
588. mānā-ot-a (cause to accept).  
483. bājā-ot-a (play.)

(b) Closed Roots

(i) -at-

38. rah-at-a (remain)      90. jval-at-a (burn)  
97. t&j-at-a (give up)      430. jān-at-a (know)

(b) Closed Roots (continued)

74. kar-at-a (do)	2. bāj-at-a (play)
3. nāc-at-a (dance)	11. baith-at-a (sit)
11. bhāj-at-a (run)	171. bah-at-a (blow)
183. kah-at-a (speak)	217. uth-at-a (get up)
156. puch-at-a (ask)	156. nehār-at-a (notice)
158. dah-at-a (burn)	159. jāg-at-a (wake)
164. śun-at-a (hear)	164. paith-at-a (enter)

Person

The Personal Suffixes are conjoined directly to the Root in Present Tense verbs, and to the Tense Morpheme in the other three tenses.

Person cannot in all cases be determined on grounds of form alone as some of the terminations are shared, especially in the Present Tense. For instance, kara occurs in both First and Third person contexts, and without reference to the context it is therefore not possible to decide which it is.

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1. Statistics of the relative frequency of occurrence are of partial assistance in according priority to one of the "sharing" Persons, as the following figures show. The Present Tense terminations which are "shared" are -a, -u, -i, and a test check made over 100 poems selected at random produced the figures noted below.

(i)	<u>-a-</u> terminations	
	Total Occurrences	88
	1st Person	1
	2nd Person	17
	3rd Person	70
(ii)	<u>-u-</u> terminations	
	Total Occurrences	42
	1st Person	-
	2nd Person	2
	3rd Person	40

Present Tense(a) First Person(i) Open Roots, -i,(ii) Closed Roots. -a, -o, -ō, -u, -i

## Examples:

(i) 398. cā-i (want)	192. pā-i (get)
398. yā-i (go)	
(ii) 556. kar-a (do)	56. kah-o (say)
947. dekh-ō (see)	362. rah-u (remain)
508. kar-u (do)	182. śun-i (hear)
182. her-i (see)	188. kah-i (say)
412. nihār-i (see)	680. jān-i (know)
779. bujh-i (under-stand)	207. jap-i (recite)

There is no formal differentiation of Indicative and Imperative in the 1st Person category.

## 1. (continued from previous page)

(iii) -i terminations.

Total Occurrences	31
1st Person	10
2nd Person	1
3rd Person	20

These figures however cannot be satisfactorily interpreted until another statistical factor is taken into account. Counted over the whole of the poems 3rd Person occurrences are much more numerous than those of the other two persons. The ratio of 3rd to 1st Person occurrences for instance is of the order of 4:1. Thus interpreted the relative frequency of 1st as against 3rd Person forms in the above tables reads as follows: (a) 1:17 (b) -, (c) 10:5. On these grounds there is reason to accord to the 3rd Person priority over the 1st in respect of -a and -u terminations and to the 1st Person in respect of -i terminations; but the establishment of priorities of this sort is only a rough guide. The fact that terminations are shared still remains, and must be taken into account as an essential feature of verb forms in a linguistic analysis of the Brajabuli poems.

(b) Second Person1. Indicative(i) Open Roots, -yasi, -osi.(ii) Closed Roots, -asi.

## Examples.

- |      |                              |                            |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (i)  | 416. lāgā-yasi (employ)      | 373. bārḥā-yasi (increase) |
|      | 371. darasā-yasi (show)      | 45. tāpā-yasi (make hot)   |
|      | 888. de-osi (give)           |                            |
| (ii) | 138. kar-asi (do)            | 138. sambās-asi (address)  |
|      | 138. her-asi (look)          | 138. tej-asi (give up)     |
|      | 165. bol-asi (say)           | 227. jhāp-asi (cover)      |
|      | 236. samujh-asi (understand) | 440. dār-asi (throw away)  |

2. Imperative(i) Open Roots, -ha, -yaha, -cha, -iha(ii) Closed Roots, -a, -u, -aha

N.B. The frequent occurrence of the phoneme h in these terminations.

## Examples.

- |      |                         |                              |
|------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| (i)  | 21. de-ha (give)        | 446. le-ha (take)            |
|      | 1356. yā-ha (go)        | 986. pahirā-yaha (make wear) |
|      | 1061. jhāpā-yha (cover) | 588. rijhā-oha (please)      |
|      | 254. yā-ihā (go)        | 254. pūrā-ihā (fulfill)      |
|      | 184. jān-ihā (know)     |                              |
| (ii) | 45. kar-a (do)          | 49. śun-a (listen)           |
|      | 84. kah-a (say)         | 272. dekh-a (see)            |

411. cal-a (come)      426. kṣem-a (forgive)  
 446. cāh-a (look)      3036. bad-a (say)  
 337. parihar-a (give up) 16. pur-a (satisfy)  
 1657. upekh-a (ignore)      27. kar-u (do)  
 27. cal-u (come)      20. rah-u (remain)  
 443. birac-aha (make)      1744. pekh-aha (see)  
 984. bicār-aha (consider)      109. bujh-aha (understand)  
 496. bec-aha (sell)      1602 bhāk-aha (say)  
 128. bhet-aha (meet)      389. mān-aha (accept)  
 217. tej-aha (give up)      342. dekh-aha (see)

(c) Third Person

1. Indicative

- (i) Open Roots, -ya, -ye, -oye, -oi, -yai, -i  
 (ii) Closed Roots, -a, -aye, -e, -ai, -ā, -ī

Examples:

- (i) 12. ho-ya (is)      27. gā-ya (sing)  
 37. ro-ya (cry)      97. ā-ya (come)  
 778. dhā-ya (run)      221. cā-ya (want)  
 738. karā-ya (cause to do)      367. bāhirā-ya (come out)  
 2509. bhigā-ya (wet)      89. lotā-ya (hide)  
 223. bārhā-ya (increase)      228. lukā-ya (hide)  
 568. gā-oye (sing)      1153. ā-oye (come)  
 1014. dhā-oye (run)      1153. khā-oye (eat)  
 1153. bhā-oye (please)      1153. nācā-oye (cause to dance)  
 1087. rijh-oye (please)      1153. yācā-oye (offer)



2425. ā-ye (come)                      2505. ro-ye (cry)
398. ho-ye (is)                        190. pī-ye (drink)
308. yā-ye (go)                        2445. karā-ye (cause to do)
15. gā-oi (sing)                        176. pā-oi (get)
492. bichā-oi (spread)                91. ro-yai (cry)
283. de-yai (give)                      680. pā-yai (get)
91. pohā-yai (spend)                 275. dhulā-yai (swing)
310. bichā-yai (spread)               318. darasā-yai (show)
434. bārhā-yai (increase)            517. lotā-yai (roll)
190. yā-i (go)                         220. cā-i (want)
229. abagā-i (plunge)                319. muruchā-i (faint)
166. ro-i (cry)                         220. banā-i (make)
- (ii)
98. parakās-a (reveal)               129. kāp-a (tremble)
129. jhāp-a (jump)                    158. jān-a (know)
599. baith-a (sit)                     89. kah-a (say)
38. cāh-a (want)                      4. pār-a (can)
233. rah-a (remain)                   21. soh-e (beautify)
21. bihar-e (enjoy)                   21. jhalak-e (gleams)
89. bah-e (blow)                      157. uth-e (get up)
2. bol-e (say)                         2. jān-e (know)
3. jhar-e (flow)                      28. kah-e (say)
90. her-aye (see)                      76. bihar-aye (enjoy)
86. nikas-aye (come out)            95. bujh-aye (understand)

- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 95. jhar-aye (flow)       | 95. kah-aye (say)           |
| 96. kāp-aye (tremble)     | 97. muruch-aye (faint)      |
| 115. nibas-aye (live)     | 115. paith-aye (enter)      |
| 160. jap-aye (recite)     | 160. par-aye (fall)         |
| 169. kar-aye (do)         | 170. nirakh-aye (see)       |
| 130. uṭh-aye (get up)     | 156. śut-aye (sleep)        |
| 165. bol-aye (say)        | 165. rah-aye (remain)       |
| 223. dekh-aye (see)       | 549. ug-aye (arise)         |
| 95. bujh-aye (understand) | 176. ich-aye (wish)         |
| 176. upekh-aye (ignore)   | 179. bitar-aye (distribute) |
| 166. jhāp-ai (cover)      | 169. diś-ai (show)          |
| 170. nigad-ai (say)       | 171. cāh-ai (want)          |
| 171. cihn-ai (recognise)  | 176. kah-ai (say)           |
| 180. jib-ai (live)        | 218. lep-ai (smear)         |
| 218. ālāp-ai (talk)       | 610. niśedh-ai (forbid)     |
| 85. bas-ai (sit)          | 90. niram-ai (sit)          |
| 90. āling-ai (embrace)    | 95. tej-ai (give up)        |
| 100. ṭhel-ai (push)       | 100. rah-ai (remain)        |
| 4. dāk-ai (call)          | 4. cal-ai (walk)            |
| 343. cal-u (go)           | 27. rah-u (remain)          |
| 37. par-u (fall)          | 37. kar-ū (do)              |
| 67. jhankar-u (buzz)      | 69. bhar-u (fill)           |
| 158. jal-u (burn)         | 158. jhar-u (flow)          |
| 261. dhar-u (hold)        | 74. sañcar-u (wander)       |

1107. pār-i (can)                      992. baith-i (sit)  
 166. jān-i (know)                      176. lekh-i (write)  
 180. bicār-i (decide)

## 2. Imperative

- (i) Open Roots, -yau, -uka.  
 (ii) Closed Roots, -uka, -au.

### Examples.

- (i) 532. ro-yau (cry),                      465. yā-uka (go)  
 (ii) 465. rah-uka (remain)                      532. seb-au (serve)  
       532. pib-an (drink)                      532. tej-au (give up)  
       177. met-au (satisfy)                      371. dhar-an (hold)  
       425. bañc-au (deprieve) 1904. parabeś-au (enter)  
       2445. bāndh-au (fasten) 1527. bār-au (stop)  
       1004. samijh-au (realise).

### Past Tense

The terminations of this Tense are not shared, and distinction between Open and Closed Roots is not necessary.

- (a) First Person, -u, -ū

### Examples:

136. jān-al-u (know)                      395. pā-yal-ū (get)  
 348. pohā-yal-ū (spend)                      100. ā-ol-ū (come)

- (b) Second Person, -i.

158. paith-al-i (enter).                      472. samujh-al-i (realise)

- (c) Third Person, -a

131. sut-al-a (sleep)                      2. mil-al-a (meet)

Future Tense

The 1st and 3rd Persons of this Tense share a common termination -a. The termination of the 2nd is -i.

First Person: 167 bichur-ab-a (forget)

Second Person: 70 bhet-ab-i (meet)

Third Person: 10. de-yab-a (give)

Continuative Tense

All three Persons in this Tense share a Common termination -a. The majority of the forms are 3rd Person. There are 4 examples of 1st and 2 of 2nd Person concord.

Gender

Formal distinction of Gender is found only in the 3rd Person of the Past Tense. Its exponent is the a/i alternation in the Personal ending:- a, having concord with a subject word which has natural masculine gender, and, -i with a subject word which has natural feminine gender. Feminine gender concord however is not uniformly maintained. There are many instances of concord between a subject word which has natural feminine gender and a verb with the termination -a.

Examples of Gender concord:

259. dhani āyali (fortunate-girl came)

199. calali bālā (went girl)

100. śutali gori (slept Gori)

158. dhani paithali (fortunate-girl entered)

58. baithali sundari (sat beautiful-girl)

193. calali dhani (went fortunate-girl)

Examples where Gender concord does not operate

479. duti āola (messenger came)

240. Jaṭilā āola (Jaṭilā came)

85. Gori paithala (Gori entered)

It will be noted that the order of subject word and verb in the examples given above is free. Had the verb been uniformly in the first position, it might have been possible to claim that forms like āyali, etc., are feminine forms of the Participle in -ala, etc., for which see (b) (i) under Non-Finite Forms below; but as such is not the case, it is probable that the few examples in -i which occur are Finite Forms. Comparison of sentences of like structure with a Past Tense verb in -ala confirm this conclusion; it would be difficult to maintain that forms like āyala were Finite and forms like -āyali Non-Finite. Nevertheless the point is of minor importance as these feminine forms are very rare.

#### Non-Finite Forms

The Non-Finite forms of the verb can on formal grounds be analysed in four categories: (a) Infinitive, (b) Participle, (c) Absolutive, (d) Verbal Noun.

#### (a) Infinitive

There are two types of Infinitive, distinguished from one another by their suffixes. The suffixes, which are conjoined directly to the Root, are (i) -ai, and (ii) -ite, -aite

(i) -ai

In form an infinitive of this type is identical with one of the forms of the 3rd person of the Present Tense Indicative, V.....above. As the use of the Infinitive is however restricted to a certain type of verbal phrase, it can be distinguished from its homonym by reference to the context. The verbal phrase is of the following type.

Example:

- 75. sahai nā pāriye (cannot hear)
- 89. kahai nā pārai (cannot speak)
- 97. dharai nā pārai (cannot hold)
- 74. lakhai nā pārai (cannot see)
- 218. bahai nā para (cannot bear)

(ii) -ite, used with Open and Closed Roots, -aite, used with Closed Roots only.

Example:

- 73. yā-ite (to go)
- 24. banā-ite (make)
- 231. milā-ite (meet)
- 50. paraś-ite (touch)
- 28. ān-ite (bring)
- 12. pib-aite (drink)
- 39. śun-aite (hear)
- 50. cal-aite (walk)
- 52. kar]aite (do)
- 53. kah-aite (speak)
- 58. has-aite (laugh)
- 85. her-aite (see)
- 130. daś-aite (bite)

(b) Participle

There are two types of Participles, distinguished from one another by their suffixes. The suffixes which are conjoined directly to the Root, are (i) -ala, -yala, -ila, and (ii) -ita and -yaita.

## Examples:

- (i) 85. chut-ala (bāṇa) : (thrown arrow)  
 227. jhāp-ala (aṅga) : (covered body)  
 358. sāj-ala (seja) : (decorated bed)  
 358. jār-ala (bāṭi) : (lighted lamp)  
 433. āndh-ala (prema) : (blind love)  
 156. phu-yala (kabari) : (dishevelled hair)  
 688. kah-ila (bāṇi) : (said words)  
 2462. bukh-ila (rāhu) : (hungry Rāhu)  
 2506. khed-ila (hariṇa) : (grieved deer)
- (ii) 189. uchal-ita (antara) : (excited mind)  
 30. has-ita (badana) : (smiling face)  
 33. camak-ita (cita) : (startled mind)  
 744. bās-ita (tāmbula) : (scented betel nut)  
 2437. kusum-ita (kānana) : (flowered garden)  
 228. pulak-ita (tanu) : (delighted body)  
 171. sos-ita (antara) : (dried heart)  
 1257. sōp-ita (jiu) : (given life)  
 218. pulakā-yita (deha) : (delighted body)

(c) Absolutives

There are two absolute suffixes, which are conjoined directly to the Root, -i and -iyā. The two forms are grammatically in free variation, but the latter is less frequent than the former.

460. her-iyā (having looked)  
 1262. dekh-iyā (having seen)  
 604. bichur-iyā (having forgotten)  
 627. bhāb-iyā (having thought)  
 1263. kar-iyā (having done)  
 345. bichā-iyā (having spread)  
 97. her-i (having seen)  
 180. cā-i (having wanted)  
 169. dekh-i (having seen)  
 180. ān-i (having brought)  
 193. kar-i (having done)  
 166. go-i (having hidden)  
 169. jit-i (having won)  
 180. jān-i (having known)  
 482. roṣā-~~ā~~ (having been angry).

(d) Verbal Nouns

The Verbal Noun is formed by the conjoining to the Root of a suffix the distinguishing feature of which is the phoneme -n-. Apart from the phoneme -n-, which is universal, the form of the suffix varies as follows:



(i) Open Roots, -ona, -oni, -yani, -yana, -na.

(ii) Closed Roots. -ana, -ani.

(1)	Root	Verbal Noun
	pā- (obtain)	2893. pā-ona
	rijhā (please)	2966. rihā-ona
	bā- (play)	2888. bā-oni
	gā- (sing)	1278. gā-yani
	corā- (steal)	1055. corā-yani
	mucukā- (smile)	2426. muenkā-yani
	bārhā- (increase)	2966. bārhā-yana.
	banā- (make)	280. banā-na
	bāhirā- (come out)	833. bāhirā-na
	bichā- (spread)	1973. bichā-na
	muruchā- (faint)	1723. muruchā-na.
(2)	anulepa- (oint)	2415. anulep-ana
	kar- (do)	1929. kar-ana.
	kah- (say)	151. kah-ana
	gañj- (tease)	117. gañj-ana.
	jhul- (swing)	115. jhul-ana.
	ther- (push)	1557. ther-ana.
	nāc- (dance)	102. nāc-ana.
	pahir- (wear)	225. pahir-ana.

Root	Verbal Noun.
bilās- (enjoy)	113. bilās-ana.
bec- (sell)	1356. bec-ana.
đol- (swing)	171. đol-ana.
cāh- (see)	34. cāh-ani.
nehār- (look)	1336. nehār-ani.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE BRAJABULI LANGUAGE

The three preceding chapters contain a detailed analysis of the forms of the Brajabuli Noun, Pronoun and Verb, and the statement of these forms in a series of paradigms. In this chapter certain of the linguistic features which have been noted there are abstracted and used as the basis of a limited number of generalisations. The majority of these generalisations are appropriate to the field of descriptive grammar, but it is also possible to make some reference to aspects of the history of the language and the problem of the distribution within it of dialectal forms. It must however be admitted in respect of both history and dialect that the internal evidence is slight, and conclusions drawn from it must be made with extreme circumspection. This fact might not be important if we had reliable information from external sources; but regrettably this is not so. External evidence also is both scanty and inconclusive.

The principal feature of the Brajabuli language at the grammatical level is the multiplicity and heterogeneity of its word forms, and the fact that there is no regular one-to-one correlation between word form, and, in respect of the Noun, case form too, and grammatical function. In order to express any particular syntactical relationship the poet had a wide

range of word forms from which to choose. He could select any of the forms which in the preceding analysis are included with a given case group, or, in some instances, within more than one case group. Thus in a genitive context, the Noun forms available were all the four inflected forms in Case II, namely -ka, -ke, -ki, -kara, which are grammatically in free variation, together with the uninflected or Direct form, ~~the~~ ~~case~~. In a locative context the choice was even wider. The Direct form from Case I and any of the Oblique forms contained in Cases II, ~~III~~ and ~~IV~~ could be used. One example will illustrate. The texts exhibit no fewer than eight different ways in which the phrase 'in the grove' is expressed in Brajabuli: (a) kuñja (*Direct I*), (b) kuñjahi (Case II), (c) kuñjahī (Case II), (d) kuñjamāha (Case IV), (e) kuñjamāhā (Case IV), (f) kuñjamāhi (Case IV), (g) kuñjame (Case IV), (h) kuñje (Case III). This means to say that all the many forms of a noun, with the exception of the -k- forms in Case I, can be used at will to express location. Theoretically there are no exceptions, though a full range of examples cannot be found for every noun. There is no evidence that the form of the ending of nominal stem bore any relation to the number of forms available for use. Though even if this were so the fact would have little noticeable effect on the heterogeneous character of the picture as a whole, because some 90 per cent of Brajabuli nouns end in the inherent vowel -a.

1. See p. 179

The forms set out above in the verbal paradigms reveal a similarly bewildering complexity. In these paradigms too there are many variants, variation being exhibited in the forms of the Tense Morphemes and the Personal Terminations, which are appropriate to Finite verbs, and in those of the formative suffixes, which are appropriate to Non-finite verbs, i.e., infinitives, participles, etc.

In the Past Tense tables, for example, there are sets of inter-changeable Tense Morphemes which appear to a certain extent to correlate with the open and close structure of their respective verbal roots. With open roots they are (i) -l-, (ii) -yal-, (iii) -ol-, (iv) -il-. With close roots they are (i) -al-, (ii) -il-. The morpheme -il- is applicable to both open and close structures. For example, de, deyala, deola, from the open root de- (give), corresponding to the English he/she gave, and karala, karila, from the close root kar- (do), corresponding to the English he/she did, occur in the texts. But the picture is even more complex than this. Certain verbs appear to have both open and close root forms. Thus the Verb 'to faint' appears to have two root forms, muruchā- and muruch-, from which are constructed five alternative equivalents of he/she fainted: muruchāyala, muruchāola, muruchāila, muruchala, muruchila. Other examples might be cited. This means in effect that the 3rd Person Singular of

the Past Tense of a number of verbs may be expressed by one of five tense forms. A similar range of variants occurs in verbs of the Future Tense: -b-, -yab-, -ob-, -ib-, -ab-, -ib-.

But when to the possibility of variation in the Tense Morpheme position in a Verb is added the further possibility of variation in the Personal Termination position, the actual range of variants becomes very large indeed.

The difficulty in handling the Personal Terminations in Finite Verbs is due to two factors: (a) they are numerous, and, (b) some of them are shared by more than one person. In the 1st Person of the Present Tense there are five possible forms, all of which can be exemplified in common Verbs. Thus for 'I do' we find (i) kara, (ii) karo, (iii) karō, (iv) karu, (v) kari. In the 2nd Person there are two variants in the Indicative, -asi and -yasi, and six in the Imperative, -ha, -yaha, -oha, -iha, -a, -u. It is in the 3rd Person however that the greatest number of possible variants is found, and this is important to the total picture of the Brajabuli Verb because 3rd Person forms far outnumber the 1st and 2nd Person forms taken together. For this Person there are no fewer than 11 different Personal Terminations in actual use: (i) -a, (ii) -aye, (iii) -e, (iv) -ai, (v) -u, (vi) -ya, (vii) -ye, (viii) -oye, (ix) -oi, (x) -yai, (xi) -i. It is true that all eleven cannot be exemplified in the forms of any one Verb,

but it is not unusual to find five or six variants in a Verb. For the root kar-, the following six occur: kara, kare, kari, karu, karai, karaye; and for the root -gā- (sing), there are six also: gāya, gāye, gāi, gāoye, gāoi, gāyai.

These examples also indicate the extent to which terminations are shared by different persons. For example kara and karu may be a 1st, 2nd or 3rd Person form, and kari may be either 1st or 3rd. A similar sharing of suffixes can be exemplified in the paradigms of the other tenses.<sup>1</sup>

The result of this multiplicity and sharing is that when we attempt to parse a noun or a verb there is much that we are not sure of. We can assign a noun on formal grounds to one of the five Case categories, but we cannot be sure all of its function at the grammatical level. For instance, whereas the word kuñje is by definition assignable to Case III of the paradigm of the noun kuñja (grove), it is not known whether its grammatical function is that of subject of a verb, object of verb, or locative. All that is known is that its function is not genitival. Even less can be said of the Direct form kuñja. On formal grounds it must be assigned to <sup>the Direct</sup> Case I of the paradigm, but nothing at all can be asserted of its grammatical function. It can be subject, object, genitival or locative. Similarly with Finite Verb forms. Of kara it can be said on formal grounds that it belongs to the Present

Tense of the Verb kar- (do), but nothing can be stated of its  
1. The following is the list of the shared termination. Present Tense: -a shared by 1st, 2nd & 3rd Persons, -u by 1st, 2nd & 3rd Persons, -i by 1st, 2nd & 3rd Persons. Future Tense: -a shared by 1st, 2nd and 3rd Persons.

Person, Number or Gender.

The Pronoun paradigms contain also a great multiplicity of variant forms, particularly in the 3rd Person, the 3rd Case of which has no fewer than eight different forms. But here there is a far greater measure of correlation between word form and grammatical function. There is no ambiguity as between the three Persons, or between the forms which serve the function of Subject, Object or Genitive. The words hāma and muñi, for instance, can only be 1st Person, and their sole function is that of subject of a verb. Similarly, tāhe and uhnake can only be 3rd Person and serve the function of verbal object.

The Pronoun therefore may be excluded from the following general considerations which are true for the Noun and Verb, though it does share with the other two the uncertainty which is due to multiplicity of form.

To sum up then: the survey given above seems to justify the following general description of the Noun and Verb in Brajabuli. The Noun has the potentiality of inflection, and many inflected forms do occur, but the uninflected forms far exceed in number those which are inflected. The nominal stem has meaning at the semantic level, but there is no regular correlation between the form of the noun, whether inflected or uninflected, and grammatical function. It is not possible to assign grammatical function to the inflections, except in



a few rare instances. To put it another way, if the inflections serve any definable purpose that purpose does not seem to be grammatical. For all the help that noun inflections render in the analysis of the sentence at the grammatical level and the understanding of it at the semantic level they might as well not have been used at all. So Brajabuli presents the curious anomaly of being a language in which noun inflections occur, but which in the majority of cases makes use of the Noun as though it were uninflected, that is to say as though kuñja and kuñje, kuñjahi and kuñjamāha, were not Case forms in a grammatical paradigm, but synonyms to be inserted in any given context as the poet considered appropriate. The same is true of the final suffixes of the Verb to such an extent as to compel us to regard the employment for these suffixes of the convenient term 'personal terminations' as erroneous and without meaning. In so many instances the 'personal terminations' do not make distinction of Person.

The question how this anomalous condition of the language arose and was perpetuated is not easy to answer. It may be presumed, though in the present state of our knowledge of the history of the language it cannot be proved, that the poets inherited an inflected language but that for reasons beyond our knowing they ceased to regard the inflections as having any grammatical significance. At any rate they appear to have

treated them as though this were so. If this be a correct interpretation of their usage, the question remains why the inflections were preserved at all, why, that is to say, the poets should ever write kuñje or kuñahi when kuñja, which they used in other similar contexts, would have been grammatically and semantically equally satisfactory. Only one answer seems feasible: the variety of word form was preserved because it served some extra-linguistic purpose, such as euphony or metre, or both.

The next point to be considered is that of meaning in the sentence and in the poem as a whole. There are uninflected languages and languages like English, which make comparatively little use of inflections; but in their case the absence or rarity of inflections is not an obstacle to comprehension. In such languages the order of words in the sentence is important. In Latin, which is an inflected language, it matters little as far as meaning is concerned whether we write Caesar Balbum vidit or Balbum vidit Caesar, or any other permutation of the words order. The presence of the inflections precludes ambiguity. But in English, which in a similar sentence does not use inflections, meaning is determined by word order. Caesar saw Balbus is quite different from Balbus saw Caesar, and any other permutation makes nonsense.

With certain exceptions, mostly in a small number of noun



In most of the sentences in (a) and (b) only one translation is feasible, not because others are theoretically impossible, but because they would not make sense. But in (a) 5, 'dhayala pahū pāni' (lit. held lord hand), there are at least two equally sensible meanings. The obvious translation 'the lord held (her) hand' or 'the lord held (her) by the hand' need not be the correct one. Of course to take pāni (hand) as the subject would be nonsense, but it is permissible to construe pahū (lord) as object, knowing as we do from many other sentences that the subject is often left to be inferred. This would give a perfectly good, and possibly the correct, translation '(he/she/they) held the lord by the hand.' '(he-she-they) held the hand of the lord' is another equally sensible and possible alternative.

Such uncertainty in interpretation could constitute a serious obstacle to comprehension. The important fact is that so many examples of this type of usage can be found that it must be regarded as being a feature of the Brajabuli language. There are countless sentences which taken in isolation cannot be understood by the reader today, and it has to be asked whether the contemporary audience was aware of and disturbed by such undoubted ambiguities.

One must in fairness assume - and the wide-spread popularity of this type of literature supports the assumption - that the poets, at any rate the greater poets, had something to

communicate and that they were successful in communicating it. Yet how did they succeed through the medium of a language whose very nature made ambiguity of such frequent occurrence? Three reasons may be put forward. The first two are technical; the third is much more far-reaching. First, and most simple, the sentences were not taken in isolation, but were sung and heard in the context of a whole poem, which in many cases preselected one of the various meanings possible. Secondly - a reason of like character - the songs were not sung singly. In kīrtana, as the song recitals were called, it was customary to sing a cycle or a fixed group of songs, such as the songs of pūrvarāga or abhisāra, at one sitting. In this wider context much of the uncertainty of interpretation would disappear. Nevertheless these two reasons, though they are valid for the modern reader who reads the poems as he finds them in the Padakalpataru are technical, and have little significance in the total situation in which the poems were composed, sung and heard. There is much to suggest that comprehension of words and sentences at the intellectual level played little if any part in the appreciation by a contemporary audience of these songs, to whom they were a religious and emotional experience only. The Vaiṣṇava cult was esoteric, and the songs by which it was expressed partook of this esoteric nature. They were composed and sung by religious devotees to groups of listeners who were

initiated believers in the faith. The emotions expressed, the scenes, incidents and succession of events, and the technical vocabulary and imagery employed, were all alike fixed by orthodox convention, and the poems on similar phases of the cult varied from one another not in content but in the intensity of feelings aroused. The audiences assembled to enjoy a feast of religious emotion. It is true that the vehicle of this emotion was in part that of the word and the sentence - the other being the melody to which they were set - but they heard them as media of colour, rhythm, music and emotive association. They were very little if at all concerned with a literalistic interpretation of them. If by reason of the ambiguities inherent in the language there were sentences which they did not understand, it is pretty certain that they were not aware that there was anything they had failed to understand. The enjoyment of the rasa gave them complete satisfaction. They wanted nothing else. In these circumstances it must be concluded that the difficulties in textual interpretation which perplex the modern student did not exist for them. Seen in this light, questions of grammatical and semantic confusion and ambiguity become academic exercises. The student must not ignore them, but he must bear in mind that they would have seemed irrelevant to a sixteenth or seventeenth century audience.

A second point for general consideration which arises from the material collected in the three preceding chapters

is that of dialect. Brajabuli Literature belongs to the whole area of north-east India, and the poets who wrote it lived, as far as we can now locate their homes, in Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and possibly even further to the west. Brajabuli was written in Nepal during the first half of the 18th century, but as the literary forms in which it was used fall outside the tradition of the lyrical poetry under examination, Nepalese writings need not be considered in this connection.

Sure historical proof is not available from either internal sources, but there can be little doubt that the multiplicity of alternative word forms which constitutes one of the main features of the Brajabuli language was due to the importation into the language at an early stage in its history of forms with which individual poets were familiar in the regional languages or dialects which were their mother tongues. This hypothesis is supported by the existence in certain of the regional languages of some of the forms known to Brajabuli, and the absence in them of others. A few examples may be cited. The suffix -e in Case III of the Noun paradigms can be paralleled in both medieval and modern Bengali. The suffixes -hi and -hī are found in E.Avadhi, W.Hindi and early Maithili, but not in later Bengali. The suffixes in Case IV, i.e. those containing the morpheme m, are known in Hindi and Maithili, but not in medieval or modern Bengali, Assamese or Oriya. The tense

morphemes -il- and -ib- are the common forms in medieval and modern Bengali; the tense morphemes -al- and -ab- in the languages of Bihar. The m and h forms of the 1st person pronoun, e.g. muñi and hāma, can be paralleled in both Hindi and Bengali, and seem to have been part of linguistic equipment of the whole area in which Brajabuli developed; but in the use of these forms the resemblance is to Bengali rather than to Hindi and the Bihar languages. In Brajabuli the two are not distinguished in correlation with Number. In medieval and modern Bengali too both m and h forms are used without distinction of Number; but in Bihar and the western area the m forms are singular and the h forms plural. Forms like majhu and mujhe are common in Hindi, but unknown in Bengali. These few examples are sufficient to demonstrate that the character of Brajabuli is that of a mixed language, and the source of the varied elements which make it so can hardly be other than the dialects of the early poets, who while the condition of the language was still fluid made their own individual contributions to the number of its word structures.

The deduction so far seems reasonable, but the facts of the language as we know it today from the 18th century anthologies do not however permit us to carry it further. We might expect that the poems, or some of them at least, would reveal by the occurrence in them of regional dialect forms and usages the mother tongue of the poet; but such is not the case, except in the case of the Assamese poets, whose language does betray



their linguistic affinity. For the rest of the area, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, it is impossible to ascertain the native dialect of the poet from the language of the poems credited to him, even when we know from other sources what it was. One example will suffice. It is known that Jñānadāsa was a Bengali because we have poems in Bengali which were written by him, but his Brajabuli compositions do not reveal the fact.

Only one conclusion seems permissible. Brajabuli is a composite language, having formal elements which were drawn from a number of the languages of North-East India. Later, possibly, as has been suggested above, about the middle or during the second half of the 17th century, borrowing ceased, and Brajabuli became dissociated from the parent tongues from which it was born. The plethora of variants became part of a total linguistic inheritance which later poets and the scribes of the manuscripts used indiscriminately, without, it would seem, any noticeable preference for particular sets of dialectal forms, though some of them must have been more familiar to them than others.

Although the Brajabuli poets are known to have lived at different times during a period extending from the 16th to the 19th century, a comparative study of the language of their poems in the form in which they are now preserved fails to reveal any significant evidence of historical change, in respect either of vocabulary or word form. It is impossible on linguistic grounds alone to ascertain whether a given poem

was written by a 16th or an 18th century poet. One is aware of course of differences of poetic merit, but these are determined by a different set of criteria. This phenomenon is the more striking because it is true not only of Hindu poets but also of the works of Musulmans who wrote on the Rād̄hā-Kṛṣṇa theme in the latter part of the Brajabuli period. Musulman writers of Bengali make use of a new dialect, now known as Musalmani Bengali. This dialect is markedly different from that of Hindu writers. It contains a higher proportion of Arabic-Persian words, phrases and idioms than are used in Hindu Bengali. Yet Brajabuli as written by these poets shows no sign of a similar innovation. Musulmani Brajabuli is indistinguishable from that of both contemporary Hindu poets and those who lived two or more centuries earlier.

Three circumstances in the history of the literature may have contributed to this state of things. Of them two are peculiar to Brajabuli in that there seems to be no parallel to them in the history of other medieval languages in the area.

The first of these circumstances concerns the manner in which the poems were transmitted from the original composers to the scribes, to whom the extant form of literature is due. The 18th century anthologists, who were the first to record the Brajabuli songs in writing compiled their texts from contemporary singers or schools of singers, who participated in the kīrtana assemblies, which have been mentioned previously.

These contemporary singers had learned the songs from previous generations of singers over a period which in certain instances was as long as three hundred years. Faultless transmission is so rare a phenomenon that it is reasonable to suppose that at each stage some change of language took place. It is usual in such circumstances for obsolescent and unusual words and expressions to be emended or replaced by others, and even more radical reconstruction is not unknown. The possibility of change did not cease with the anthologists. No autograph copies of the original anthologies have survived. The texts we have today are scribal copies of those originals, and scribes also are very liable to error. Thus when we speak of a Brajabuli poem by a 16th century poet we really mean a poem recorded in an 18th or 19th century manuscript but containing the bhanitā of that poet. How much of the poem actually derives from the poet whose bhanitā is recorded cannot with accuracy be determined; though clearly some of the original quality must have been preserved because even from the extant form of their works some poets can be recognised as being finer craftsmen than others, and possessed of greater creative power.

The problem of transmission is not however unique in Brajabuli. The history of Bengali Literature provides an exact parallel. With the possible exception of the Caryāpada manuscript which has not yet been dated, it is doubtful whether

any Bengali manuscript is older than the 18th century, or at most the late 17th century. Allowing for individualities of style and vocabulary, the language of the Caṇḍīmaṅgalkāvya, the work of the famous 16th century poet Mukundarāma Kavikāṅkana, is not noticeably very different from that of the Annadāmaṅgal-kāvya, a poem known to have been written by Bhāratcandra Rāy in about the middle of the 18th century. So though the original Caṇḍīmaṅgalkāvya was written in the 16th century, the language of the oldest extant text of it is intrinsically the Bengali of the 18th century. This type of linguistic modification which the works of nearly all the early Bengali writers have undergone has been carried a stage further in time in the transmission of that very famous text, the Srīrāmapāñcālī, which was originally composed by Kṛttivāsa in the 15th or early 16th century. This version of the Rāmāyaṇa legend has been for several centuries perhaps the most popular work in Bengal. Part of the price of its popularity has been the loss of the language of the original, which is now lost beyond possibility of reconstruction. The present poem reflects the condition of the Bengali language as it was the beginning of the 19th century when it was first printed by William Carey at Serampore.

The parallel of Bengali would seem to suggest that the language of the Brajabuli anthologies is an 18th century language, but that may be going too far. There are two other circumstances which indicate that its present linguistic shape

was achieved a little earlier, possibly about the middle of the 17th century.

There was a conservative force at work which effectually controlled the production of Vaiṣṇava lyrics in Brajabuli, and which must also have played a large part in the absence of linguistic change which has been referred to above. This force is without parallel in the history of the regional languages of the area. The early Brajabuli poets who lived in the 16th and early 17th centuries were required to submit their compositions to the school of the goṣvāmīs, to ensure that no departure was made from the orthodox theology of the Vaiṣṇava faith. This practice did two things: it brought about a conventionalisation of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa myth and the methods of presenting it, and at the same time it established a technical vocabulary, a sort of Vaiṣṇava theological jargon. It is at least possible that this supervision which fixed the jargon also affected that part of the language which lay outside the words of a technical nature and led in practice to the evolution of a more widely embracing stereotype, and included word forms and phrase structures, which previously were fluid and subject to change. Not many decades after the death of Caitanya, the doctrine of the cult he founded seems to have taken on the rigidity of a dogma, and there is little evidence in the literature to show that it was departed from. This being so, it is not inherently incredible, indeed it seems

likely, that the language of Vaiṣṇava lyrics as well as their content should come to be regarded as sacrosanct. The singers, as well as the poets, were devotees, and would therefore be disposed to be jealous of the secrets of their esoteric faith, and likely as far as in them lay to avoid any important changes in content of the songs or in their language. It is difficult to change the words without to some extent changing the meaning the words were designed to convey. If the veneration with which present-day owners still regard their Vaiṣṇava manuscripts is any guide, it seems just to assume that their predecessors, the singers and the scribes, would not be less faithful to the holy things that had been entrusted to them. From this might well have been born a scrupulous care for the words of their texts. The full tightening of this curb on change might well have taken a little time to be made complete. The early poets, who were the giants of the band, had possibly more regard for the spirit than the letter, but when they died the importance of the letter could easily have increased. The authority of the goṣvāmīs was strongest at the end of the 16th and the beginning of the mid-17th century, so it is not unreasonable to sum up these conjectures by postulating that process of becoming static culminated about the middle of the century.

Another point also arises about this time. The later poets, those from the late 17th century onwards, were mostly

imitators. It is probably unjust to suggest that they were less concerned than their predecessors were with what the pandits had laid down, for they were devotees too; but even assuming that they were, they would not be likely to be careless of their reputation as poets. To this end they would tend to be careful to preserve the language of the great masters, even to the extent of retaining such minutiae as word inflections, since, lacking true poetic power, the only way they could achieve popularity in their trade was by imitating closely not only the substance but also the linguistic mannerisms of those whose reputations were already established.

Taking all these possibilities jointly into consideration, I am inclined to hazard the guess that about the middle of the 17th century, after the death of the 'master singers', Govindadāsa, Jñānadāsa, etc., there emerged a sort of orthodox stereotype, which embraced both things theological and poetics and language as well, and which came to be accepted by singers and later authors as a sort of canon law governing all aspects of the composition of Brajabuli poetry.

The third factor which may have contributed to the absence in Brajabuli of any marks of historical change is that it was a literary language. The term needs special definition here, as it can be applied to other languages which are not 'literary' in the sense that Brajabuli is. For instance, the medieval style of Bengali in which the mahākāvya and Maṅgalkāvya were

written is that of a literary language in the sense that it is a language of literature. It was not, so far as we can tell, the language of contemporary speech. The language of poetry seldom is. Yet the two in this case were not far removed from one another, as the stories this literature told were so easily understood by the common people that they became household words throughout the area. Literary Bengali and colloquial Bengali were then, as indeed they are today, different styles of the same language. They were both Bengali. Brajabuli is not a literary language in that sense. It had no known colloquial counterpart. There is no record anywhere of a Brajabuli speech. It was, however we regard it, a difficult esoteric language, designed for one single purpose, to be sung, not spoken. It was sung frequently, it is true, but on special occasions, and to audiences whose powers of reception were quickened by the religious and emotional insights of the Vaisnava cult. Part of what they heard was probably not understood intellectually, but, as has been pointed out, this was in the circumstances not a feature of the language they were aware of or which impaired their total enjoyment. We gather from the practice <sup>it</sup> ~~himself~~ that full comprehension was reserved to a few who were in the inner circle. It has also been conjectured that at a certain time in the history of Brajabuli it became stereotyped, a language of 'bits and pieces' from several sources, woven together into



a fabric of fixed pattern. Brajabuli was for these reasons very different from the Bengali of medieval poetry in the qualities which make it a 'literary' language. Bengali underwent changes in parallel with, and as a result of contact with, an evolving spoken language. Bengali therefore was in a very real sense a natural spoken language, alive, and being constantly modified through the centuries. In contrast, Brajabuli was an artificial literary language. However it came into existence, it had become static even before it was committed to writing its vocabulary and the forms of the words and phrases used were as fixed as was the subject treated.

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