

## **Chapter – 1**

### **Coming of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu : Raj Jog in Bengal**

- 1.1 Cause of Mahaprabhu's *Chaitanyavatar***
- 1.2 Vaishnav & Goudiya Vaishnav**
- 1.3 Socio Religious conditions of Bengal during the arrival of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu**
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## 1.1 Cause of Mahaprabhu's *Chaitanyavatar*

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is a guide in the history of Bengal's religion. Before discussing the reasons for Mahaprabhu's Chaitnyaavatar, we have to discuss his incarnation. Who was he? And for what reason did he take the form of Avatar? Srila Jib Goswamipada composed old texts of 'Sri Sri Brahasamhita', where Brahma quoted,

ঐশ্বরঃ পরমঃ কৃষ্ণঃ সচ্চিদানন্দ বিগ্রহঃ ।

অনাদিরাদি গোবিন্দঃ সর্বকারণ কারণম ॥

It meant that there may be many incarnations of God but the Supreme Being is only Krishna. His being is knowledgable, *chinmaya* and pleasant. Everything in this universe had its origin but Sri Krishna is the Absolute, he has no creator. He is the creator of everything. For every action in this universe there is a reason behind it but those are apparent reason. Sri Krishna is the reason for everything. Again Sri Krishna claimed in Srimad Bhagabat Gita that

অহং সর্বস্য প্রভবো মন্তঃ সর্বং প্রবর্ততে

ইতি মত্বা ভজন্তে মাং বুধা ভবসমষ্টিতাঃ ॥<sup>1</sup>

It meant that 'I am the source of very living & non-living and everthing centers around me. Knowing this everywise man worships me with pure bhakti'. Although intelligent people worship Srikrishna, the dull people think that as Srikrishna does everything, all wrongs are done by Him and I am blameless. As we are intelligent because our intelligence is given by the God, He provides us will power and for that we can move as our wish. Every people according to his wish do the wrong and the right and get his ultimate result. According to Rig Veda,

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<sup>1</sup> *Srimadvagabat Gita*, edited by Srimad Vakti Charu Swami, Akhanda Sanaskaran, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, 2004, p. 355

ॐ कृष्णो वे सच्चिदानन्दघनः कृष्ण आदिपुरुषः कृष्ण पुरुषोत्तमः।

कृष्ण हा उ कर्मादिमूलं कृष्ण स ह सर्वैः कार्य॥

कृष्ण काशं कृदादिशोमुखप्रभुः पूज्यः कृष्णहनादिस्तुतिन्-

जान्तास्तर्वाह्ये यन्ममङ्गलं तल्लभते कृती॥

It meant that Srikrishna is the Sachchidanandaghana. He is One and the Absolute. He is the source of every action. Srikrishna is the adorable God of Brahma - Bishnu - Maheswara. He is eternal. A follower of God gets everything which is stated to be good in and out of the universe in Srikrishna.

In *SrimadBhagbat Gita* (2/9/33) the quotation of the God is mentioned, where the God speaks to Brahmha.

अहमेवासमेवाग्रे नन्यद यं सदसं परम ।

पश्चदहं यदेतच्च योह वशिष्येत् सोहस्यहम् ।।

It means 'I was the only one before the creation. Nothing except me was there. Moreover, the natural nature of the creation was not there only. I shall also remain after the creation and after the destruction'.

Dharmaraj Jhudhistir told Bhismadeva, 'O Grandfather, please tell me something about the one who is the creator and to whom the people know to be Gobinda, Krishna, Narayan, Bishnu etc. and I am interested to hear about Him. Seeing his keenness Bhismadeva told him that I have heard about the God from Jamadagniputra Parasuran, Debarshi Narada, Krishnadaipayan Basa deva. Balmiki and the Great Markandaya etc. gave strange account of the God. They told about the God to be One and the absolute and then Bhismadeva told more,

‘O Dharmaraj! You know well that Mahatma Basudeva is the source of every action in this universe. Don’t think him to be an ordinary man. His greatness cannot be defined’.<sup>2</sup>

In support of Vhismadeva’s sayings we can mention the quotation of Srikrishna in Gita,

অথবা বহুনৈতেন কিং জ্ঞাতেন তবার্জুন ।

বিষ্ট ভ্যাহমিদং কৃৎস্নমেকাংশেন স্থিতো জগৎ ॥<sup>3</sup>

It that means, what can I say more, I, with my incarnation, shall remain in this universe. Srikrishna appeared in the world when there was sin, unjust, immorality in the name of religion on earth. Now the question is that in how many shapes in the form of *avatar* has he appeared? The answer is that he has appeared in six types of *avatar* on earth. A brief idea about the avataras is given below.

### **Purushavatara**

The first incarnation of Srikrishna is Sribalaram from Sribalaram came Mahasankarshan from Mahasankarshan came the incarnation of Karonodakshayi Bishnu, Garvadhaksagi Bishnu and Khairodakshagi Bishnu.

Among these three Bishnus, first, is the Karondak Bishnu or Mahabishnu, the creator of the Universe. Many endless universe are being created in the form of a drop of sweat from his hair. That Mahabishnu enters into many parts in each universe in the form of Gorvodakshari Vishnu. The original being of the creation, Brahma, takes his birth from the navel of Vishnu. In the lower part inside the universe Bishnu is lying in this Gorvodaksamudra and in the upper part of Bishnua ppears as Kshirodaksayee in Khirsanudra. This Bishnu lives in the

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<sup>2</sup> Kashiram Das, *Mahabharat*, edited by Bidhayak Bhattayachariya, Kolkata: Akshay Library, 2008. p. 971

<sup>3</sup> Srimad Vagabat Gita, edited by Srimad Vakti Chru Swami, Akhando Sanaskaron, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, 2004. p. 377

heart of every living being as Paramatma. In this mortal world people know him as Gov-Narayana.

### **Lilaavatara**

The Lilaavatara of Brahma appears in this world everyday. They are of 25 types: 1) Chatuscumer 2) Narada 3) Baraha 4) Matsya 5) Yagya 6) Naranarayan 7) Kardami Kapil 8) Duttatreya 9) Hoyshirsha 10) Hansa 11) Dhruvapriya or Prsnibhorgo 12) Rishava 13) Prithu 14) Nrisingha 15) Kurma 16) Dhanwantari 17) Mohini 18) Bamana 19) Bhargava Parasuram 20) Raghavendra 21) Byas 22) PralambariBalaram 23) Krishna 24) Buddha 25) Kalki.<sup>4</sup>

### **Gunavatar**

From Garvodaksayi Vishnu appears three Gunavataras, like Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva to create, rear and destroy Vishnu takes the quality of Satta, Brahma takes the quality of Raja and Shiva takes the quality of Tama.

### **Manwantaraavatara**

14 Manus reign in the daytime of Brahma. This reign is called Manwantara. One Manwantara is formed when Satya, Treta, Dwapar and Kali: the four ages, encircle around 71 times altogether. In every Manwantara, one Avatara of the God appears in this universe. Amongst them the remarkable are Satyasen, Bamana, Sarbobhowm, Sudhama, and Jogeswara. At present in Baibaswat (7th) Manwantara, Sribamandeva is the Manwantaravatara.

### **Jugavatar**

One Jugavatar appears in the universe in every age to establish the religion. In Satya Juga Shuklabama appears, in Treta Juga Raktabarna appears, in Dwapara Juga Shyambarna

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<sup>4</sup> Shri Sanatan Das Brahmachari, *Jagote Amra Kothai*, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, 2004.p. 16

appears and in Kali Juga Krishnabarna appears, but in special Kali Pitabamaavatar appears. Shil Rup Goswami told that Jugavataras are of four shapes. Generally, Manwantaraa vataras appears as Juga avatara. But there is an exception in terms of ages. For example, in Dwapara Juga, Srikrishna himself appeared on earth from Heaven, and in that age *shyambarna* Jugaavaara entered into Srikrishna and after that in Kalijuga, Krishnabarna Jugaavatara entered into the swarmabarna Srikrishna Chaitnya. Jugavatara appeared at Baibaswata Manwatara, Dwapar and Kali Yuga.

### **Shaktabesh Avatara**

Shaktabesh Avatara is of two types: Bhagabad Abesh and Bhagabat Shakti Abesh Aapildeva and Rishav are BhagabadAbesh. The seven shapes like Sheshnag in Baikunta (Swaseban Shakti), Hnantadeva (Bhudharam Shakti), Brahma (Power of Creation), Chatusana (Power of Knowledge), Narada Muni (Power of Bhakti), Prithu Maharaj (Power of rear) and Parashuram (Power of Destruction) are of Bhagabad Shakti Abesh. Here, I am discussing about Jugabatara Sri Krishna Chaitanya.

He is Srikrishna Chaitanya, because he had given Chaitanya about Krishna to the living being who are devoid of Chaitanya. It is necessary to know the history and knowledge of literature to know about Him, to understand Him and to realise his activity. He is unexplainable in terms of Time; to know his vastness is like searching a piece of stone in the vast ocean. Srichaitanyadeva was born at Mayapur in Nabadwip in 1485 (in some opinion in 1486) on the day of Dolpurnima when Hindus across Bengal were engaged in religious rituals and in jubilation. His father was Jagannath Mishra and mother was Sachidavi. After he lost his eight daughters, Biswarup was the only son of the Mishra family. The new-born child was named Biswambhar, whose nick name was Nimai. Father of Nimai, Jagannath Mishra, was the inhabitant of Srihatta in Purbabanga. Once lots of Hindus took shelter in Nabadwip where

they were tortured by the Sultana ruler of Srihatta Jagannath Mishra, Adwaita Acharya, and Sribas Pandit were in that group.

Nabadwip was then the centre of learning, but the situation in other parts of the country was worst. On one hand there was the unjust and torture of the Sultana ruler and on the other hand, there was non religious activities, anarchy and atrocities by the priests of the Hindu society in the name of religion. Moreover, the condition of the Hindu society was at stake due to casteism and untouchability. The Hindus in groups took to Islam. During that time, Adwaita Acharya prayed to God Narayana earnestly to rescue the wretched people standing in waist-deep water in Ganga regularly when bathing. Most probably hearing this prayer Lord Bishnu appeared on earth in the in the form of Chaitanya.

In the medieval age, Vaishnav religion was a powerful sub-caste in Gourbanga. Vaishnava religion originated from Vishnu. Though not Vishnu, only Lord Krishna is worshipped among Bengali devotees. Baidik Surya, that is, worshipping Krishna in the form of Vishnu with Garuda in Purana began from the second and third centuries. In Bengal, worshipping the statue of Krishna of Lord Vishnu was particularly introduced in the age of Guptas. In Gourbanga, Baidik Surya Vishnu, Upanishidik Narayana, historic Basudeb Krishna, and the God of Gopa, the Krishna created a Baishnava belief which was considered as Bhagabat Dharma'. Due to historical reason in Sen age although Goutam Buddha was appreciated as the avatara of Vishnu, Bhaktibadi movement centering around Srikrishna got momentum after the birth of Mahaprabhu.

It is found enquiring the birth-place and nature of thought of Baishnava religion before Srichaitanya that despatch being one of the Vedic God as Bishnu, Vaishnava religion became slowly popular in the post Vedic age. As a result worshipping Bishnu slowly became included in the fold of the religion of Brahmana. But in many places, inspite of the word

‘baishnaba’ as the worshipper of Bishnu, words like ‘Satala’, ‘Oikatik’, ‘Bhagabad’, ‘Pancharatra’ were found. According to researchers, in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C Bhagabad or Vaishnava religion appeared through the introduction of Bhaktibad. According to R.G. Bhandarkar, the basic bhakti of Bhagbad religion was in the thought of upasana in Upanishad. It is learnt from the writing of BesnagarGarudastambha of about 1st century B.C. that Greek messenger Holiodoras coming from Takshashila to Bidisha in modern day Madhya Pradesh built and dedicated a Garudastambha named ‘Deb DebBasudeba’ to express his faith in Bhagabad religion It was written that

দেব দেবস বাসুদেবস গরুড় ধবজে অলংকারিতে হোলিওদোরেন ভাগবতনে  
দিয়স পূত্রেণ তক্ষশীলাকেন, ই অ মোন দূতেন আগতেন.....

Similarly it is learnt from Morarip writings during the reign of MahakshatrapShorash in the beginning of 1st century AD that an unkown foreigner, named Tosa, built a stoned temple with a statue of PakshaBrishni Bir which was associated with Bhagabad religion.

ভাগবতাং বৃষ্টিনাং পঞ্চবীবানাং প্রতিমা

In this way Vaishnav religion through revolution during Gupta Kings, particularly in Bangladesh was well spread. The oldest example of spreading Vaishnav religion in Bangladesh was evident from the cavewriting discovered at Shushunia in Bankura. From the cave-writing we came to know that the King of Pushkasan (at present Pokhanna near Bankura), Chandrabarma was a comtemporary of the Gupta emperor Samudragupta. He entitled himself as Charkraswami or the worshipper of Lord Bishnu. But the impact of Vaishnav religion was mostly found during Sen period in Bangladesh because Sen rulers were the followers of Vaishnavism.



During the fifth century, in Bengal the birth of Srichaitanya transformed the nature and spreading of Vaishnava religion. Old Vaishnav religion was especially ritual-centric; on the other hand, Sri Chaitanyadeb and his followers stressed on the path of 'Bhakti' in the new Vaishnav religion. His movement of Vaishnavreligion was made on the basis of ageold belief of Vaishnav religion, but Sri Chaitanyadeb included the concept of Bhakti in it. As a result Sri Chaitanya's movement of Vaishnava religion moved about the castism and other narrowness and became fast-moving, attractive and age-centric. Sri Chaitanya's Vaishnav religion was accepted to all kinds of people in the society; a fact which gave Chaitanya a speciality.

Bhaktijoga has been created in India on the relation between God and human being. Sri Chaitanyadev emphasized on this ageold path. Now the question arises who is Chaitanyadev? Krishnadas Kabiraj answered to this in the following lines,

শ্রী চৈতন্য প্রভু স্বয়ং ভগবান

He further mentioned that

স্বয়ং ভগবান কৃষ্ণ, কৃষ্ণ পরতত্ত্ব।  
পূর্ণ জ্ঞান পূর্ণানন্দ পরম মহত্ত্ব।।  
নন্দসুত বলি যারে ভাগবতে গাই।  
সেই কৃষ্ণ অবতীর্ণ চৈতন্য গোসাত্রি।।  
প্রকাশ বিশেষে তেঁহো ধরে তিন নাম।  
ব্রহ্ম পরমাত্মা আর পূর্ণভগবান।।

Mahaprabhu Chaitanyadev was although a wiseman but he did not give importance to knowledge. He gave importance on the absolute knowledge. One cannot get Bhakti in his

mind if he is not gifted with this knowledge, similarly one cannot get interested in Krishnaprema. Today people have become materialistic and follower of Charbak and gain if there is no end of this there will not be a case of giving-up. But SriChaitanyadev took birth to rescue all human beings. There was a prediction centering around his birth,

সেই খানে বিপ্ররূপে এক মহাজন।  
প্রভুর ভবিষ্য কৰ্ম করহে কখন।।  
বিপ্র বোলে এ শিশু সাক্ষাৎ নারায়ণ  
ইহা হইতে সৰ্বধন হইবে স্থাপন।।  
ইহা হইতে হইবেক অপূৰ্ব প্রচার।  
এ শিশু করিবে সৰ্বজগৎ উদ্ধার।<sup>5</sup>

If the rescuer of the world Sri Chaitnya did not take birth, the people of the world would be devoid of something, this was the notion of the then Vaishanba Pandits. The contemporary of Chaitanya, Basudeb Ghosh wrote,

যদি গৌরাঙ্গ না হইত কি মেনে হইত কেমনে ধরিতাম দে।  
রাধার মহিমা প্রেমরস সীমা জগতে জানত কে।।  
মধুর-বৃন্দা-বিপিন-মাধুরী প্রবেশ চাতুরী-সার।  
বরজ-যুবতী ভাবের ভকতি শকতি হইত কার।।<sup>6</sup>

The word 'Hari' as told by Srichaitanya was not coined as narrow Hindu religiousness. This 'Hari' and 'Haribhakti' were famous words of the then Hindu society. He did not say that only the Hindus should be given the 'Harinam', only the Brahmans should be given this name

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<sup>5</sup> Brindaban Das, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Bhagbat* edited by Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay Kolkata: Banimadhab Shils Library, Reprint, 2014. p. 51

<sup>6</sup> This song was composed by Gouranagabadi: a group of Vaishnav

or given to a special caste. His Hari was universal and He took birth in this world to spread this 'Harinam'.

কলিকালে যুগধর্ম নামের প্রচার  
তথি লাগি পীতবর্ণ চৈতন্যবতার।<sup>7</sup>

His special disciple Nitynanda spread 'Harinam' among people and this was evident in his songs. The folkpoetsang,

হরিমান দিয়ে জগৎ মতালে আমার একলা নিতাই।<sup>8</sup>

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu introduced Sankirtan to spread 'Harinam'.

সংকীর্তন প্রবর্তক শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য।  
সংকীর্তন যজ্ঞে ও তারে ভজে সেই ধন্য।।  
সেই সুমেধা আর কুবুদ্ধি সংসার।  
সর্ব যজ্ঞ হইতে কৃষ্ণ নাম যজ্ঞসার।।

Harinam is most appropriate to a devotee of Vaishnav,

হরেনাম হরেনাম হরেনামৈব কেবলম  
কলৌনাস্ত্যেব নাস্ত্যেব নাস্ত্যেব গতিরন্যথা

Mahaprabhu took birth in this world to preach 'Harinam'. But it should be mentioned that Krishnadas presented Mahaprabhu before us in such a way that he could never see him with

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<sup>7</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011. p.25

<sup>8</sup> This song was composed by the follower of Nityananda

his own eyes. Kabiraj was gifted with the darshan of Sri Gouranga more successfully than most of the eyewitnesses and in doing so he could write seeing the penetration of Radhakrishna into Chaitanya Satta.

রাধা কৃষ্ণ এক আত্মা দুই দেহ ধরি।  
অন্যোন্মোহে বিলাসে রস আশ্বাদন করি।।  
সেই দুই এক এবে চৈতন্য গসাঁক্রি।  
ভাব আশ্বাদিতে দোঁহে হৈলা একঠাক্রি।।.....  
রাধা পূর্ণশক্তি কৃষ্ণ পূর্ণশক্তিমান।  
দুই বস্তু ভেদ নাহি শাস্ত্রের প্রমাণ।।  
মৃগমদ তার গন্ধ যৈছে অবিচ্ছেদ।  
অগ্নিজ্বালা তেঁযেছে কভুনাহি ভেদ।।  
রাধা কৃষ্ণ ঐছে সদা একই স্বরূপ।  
লীলারস আশ্বাদিতে ধরে দুইরূপ।।  
প্রেমভক্তি শিখাইতে আপনে অবতরি।  
রাধা ভাবকান্তি দুই-অঙ্গীকার করি।।  
শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্যরূপে-কৈল অবতার।<sup>9</sup>

Kabiraj further mentioned that

.....  
সব শ্রোতা বৈষ্ণবেরে করি নমস্কার।  
এই সব শ্লোকের করি অর্থবিচার।।

<sup>9</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Harakrishna Mukhopadhyay & Subodh Chandra Majumdar, Kolkata: Banimadhab Shils library, Reprint 2009.p. 51

সকল বৈষ্ণব শুনো করি এক মন।  
চৈতন্য কৃষ্ণের শাস্ত্র মত নিরূপন।।  
কৃষ্ণ, গুরুদ্বয়, ভক্ত, অবতার, প্রকাশ।  
শক্তি এই ছয় রূপে করেন বিলাস।।

Again in the first sloka in the 5th chapter in Brahmasanhita, it is said that,

ঈশ্বর পরমঃ কৃষ্ণ সচ্চিদানন্দ বিগ্রহঃ।  
অনাদিরাদি গোবিন্দঃ সর্বকারণ কারনম।।

Lord Gobinda, Sachhidanandamoy, is the source of everything. He, that is Srikrishna, is the God and limitless and yet. He is the source of everything. So Lord Gobinda is the Parameshwar. Krishnadas Kabiraj wrote when explaining the theory of Sri Chaitanya that

সেই কৃষ্ণ অবতারী ব্রজেন্দ্র কুমার।  
আপনা চৈতন্য রূপে কৈল অবতার।।  
অতএব চৈতন্য গোঁসাত্রিঃ পরতত্ত্ব সীমা।  
তাঁরে ক্ষীরোদশায়ী কহি কি তাঁর মহিমা।।.....  
চৈতন্য গোঁসাত্রিঃ এই তত্ত্ব নিরূপন।  
স্বয়ং ভগবান চৈতন্য ব্রজেন্দ্র নন্দন।।  
শ্রীরূপ রঘুনাথের পদেয়ার আশ।  
চৈতন্যচরিতামৃত কহে কৃষ্ণদাস।।

Krishnadas Kabiraj wrote about the appearance of Srikrishna in Nadia in the form of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu' in his preaching of Prem dharma throughout the world and his blessings on the people in the following lines,

তাহাতে আপন ভক্তগণ করি সঙ্গে।  
পৃথিবীতে অবতরি করিনু নানা রঙ্গে।।  
এত ভাবি কলিকালে প্রথম সন্ধ্যায়।  
অবতীর্ণ হৈলা কৃষ্ণ নিজে নদীয়ায়।  
চৈতন্য সিংহের নবদ্বীপে অবতার।  
সিংহ গ্রীব সিংহ বীর্য সিংহের হুঙ্কার।।  
সেই সিংহ বসুক জীবের হৃদয় কন্দরে।  
কল্মষ-দ্বিরদনাশ যাঁহার হুঙ্কারে।।  
প্রথম লীলায় তার বিশ্বস্তর নাম।  
ভক্তি রসে ভরিল ধরিল ভূত গ্রাম।।  
ডুভঃ ধাতুর অর্থ ধারণ পোষণ।  
ধরিল পোষিল প্রেম দিয়া ত্রিভুবন।।  
শেষ লীলায় নাম ধরে শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য।  
শ্রীকৃষ্ণ জানায়ে সব বিশ্ব কৈল ধন্য।।

Chaitanyadeva took birth in this world in order to rescue the whole human being and to bless Chaitanya to those who are ignorant about greatness of God. Again, as he blessed Chaitanya to human beings about Srikrishna, he is considered as Srikrishna Chaitanya. Now the question arises why God Srikrishna came to earth as the avatara of Chaitanya? Before we enquire into this answer we will discuss about a quotation of Srikrishna in Gita.

God Srikrishna told Arjuna,

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অথবা বহুনৈতেনে কিং জ্ঞাতেন তবাজ্জুন।

विष्टु भ्याहमिदं कृत्नमेकांशेन स्थिते जगत् ॥

It meant, O Arjun, what is the importance of your observation, why are we interested in knowing the supernatural? You will know wholly that I am everywhere in this materialistic world as Paramatma. I am the only person who knows everything and this universe belongs to me. Again he also told Arjuna that he takes birth age after age in this world to destroy the evil-power. According to him,

यदा यदाहि, धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।  
अभ्युथानम धर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम॥  
परित्रानाय साधुनां विनाशाय च दुक्कृतम।  
धर्म संस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे॥<sup>10</sup>

That means O! India, when everything gets reduced by the name of religion and when the sin and evil things become prominent gradually, only then I with the impact of maya, take the form of a human being which is absolute. To rescue the followers of Srikrishna, to destroy the people having evil motive and to introduce dhyana in Satyajuga, jagan in Tretayuga, Parecharya in Dwaparyuga and a religion in the form of Sankirtan, I take birth in every age.

Under what situation did Sri Krishna take the form of Chaitanya avatara? What was the lowering of religion that the world required a new avatara? In ancient history of Bengal we will see that during the reign of Lakshman Sen, the royal power became powerless and the attack of Iktiaruddin Mahammad-bin-baktiar Khilji introduced Muslim reign in Bengal. As a result, the Muslim reign hit the Hindu society and Hindu religion.

The attack on the Hindus, destruction of maths and temples, the forceful conversion of Hindus to Muslims taking all of these incidents a society and religion and culture coming

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<sup>10</sup> *Shrimad Vagbat Gita*, edited by Srimad Vakti Charu Swami, Akhanda Sanaskaran, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, 2004, pp. 163-164

from abroad vandalized the Hindus in such a way that the whole society of the Bengal waited for a Greatman or an *avatar*. From Vidyapati's writings we get a real explanation of the torture of Muslims on the Hindus in the following words,

কতহুঁ তুরক বরকর।  
বাট জাঁহিতে বেগার ধর।।  
ধরি আন ও বাঁওন- বডুয়া।  
মাথাঁ এ চড়ায় এ গাইক চুডুয়া।।  
ফোট চাট জনউ তোড়।  
উপর চড়াব এ চাহ ঘোড়।।  
ধোতনা উড়িধামে মদিরা সোঁধ।  
দেউল ভাঁগি মসীদ বাঁধ।।

We can guess the condition of the Hindus from Vidyapati's writings that a masjid was made by breaking a Deul. In this situation Chaitanya Avatara appeared to destroy the evil force and established the religion. Bhagabadkar of Srichaitanya mentioned similar reasons for the appearance of Sri Chaitanya,

ধর্ম পরাভব হয় যখনে যখনে।  
অধর্মের প্রভাবতা বাড়ে দিনে দিনে।।.....  
তবে প্রভু যুগধর্ম স্থাপন করিতে।  
সাম্ভো পাস্বে অবতীর্ণ হন পৃথিবীতে।।<sup>11</sup>

The sayings of Brindaban Das echoed the saying of Srikrishna in Gita about the appearance of Chaitanya. These two great men took birth on earth to destroy the evil force in order to

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<sup>11</sup> Brindaban Das *Shri Shri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shills Library, Kolkata, 2014, p. 37



establish religion. Chaitanyadeb was obsessed with the thinking of Radha. He was Krishna in inward appearance and Radha in outward appearance. In reality, the greatness of Radhaprem was preached through him, Sri Rup Goswami wrote about the advent of him,

রাধা কৃষ্ণ প্রণয়বিকৃতি দিনীশক্তিৰস্মাকদেদাত্মা  
নাবপি ভুবি পুরা দেহভেদং গতো তৌ।  
চৈতন্যাখ্যং প্রকট মধুনা তদ্বেয়ং চৈক্যমাপ্তং  
রাধাভাবদ্যুতি সুবলিতং নৌমি কৃষ্ণস্বরূপম।।  
শ্রীরাধায়া প্রণয় মহিমা কীদৃশো বানয়েবা-  
স্বাদ্যোষেনাদ্ভুত মধুরিমা কীদৃশো বা মদীয়ঃ।  
সৌখ্যং চাস্যা মদনুভতঃ কীদৃশং বেতি লোভা-  
ওদ্ভাবাত্যঃ সমজনি শচীগর্ভ সিন্ধৌ হরীন্দুঃ<sup>12</sup>

It means, Sri Radhika was intensely attached with the *premlila* of Krishna. His energy and power was Sri Radhika. For this Sri Radha Krishna was one and united, but at the end of Dwapar *yuga* they took different body to preach *premlila* at Sri Brindabandham recently Kalijuga we pay homage to Sri SriChaitanya who had an outward appearance of Sri Radha and expressed himself in the nature of Srikrishna. What was Sri Radha's greatness of love? Thinking of Srikrishna, Sri Radhika gets pleasure, what is the nature of this pleasure? To make people realize of these greatness taking the softness and calm nature of Sri Radha, Sri Chaitanya took birth in the form of Hari in the womb of Sri Sachidebi.

Krishnadas Kabiraj also mentioned in his writings about the appearance Chaitanya avataraon earth to make people realize the three fold greatness. He wrote,

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<sup>12</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Harakrishna Mukhoipadhyay & Subodh Chandra Majumdar, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint, 2009. p.51

তাতে জানি মোতে আছে কোন এক রস।  
আমার মোহিনী রাধা তারে করে বশ।  
আমা হইতে রাধা পায় যে জাতীয় সুখ।  
তাহা আশ্বাদিতে।.....  
সে সুখ মাধুর্য ঘ্রানে লোভ বাড়ে চিতে।।  
রস আশ্বাদিতে আমি কৈল অবতার।  
প্রেম রস আশ্বাদিতে বিবিধ প্রকার।।.....  
রাধিকার প্রেম দেহ অঙ্গীকার বিনে।  
সেই তিন সুখ কভু নহে আশ্বাদনে।।  
রাধাভাব অঙ্গীকার ধরিতার বর্ণ।  
তিন সুখ আশ্বাদিতে হব অবতীর্ণ।।  
সবর্বভাবে কৈল কৃষ্ণ এই ত নিশ্চয়।  
হেন কালে আইল যুগাবতার সময়।।  
সেইকালে শ্রী অদ্বৈত করে আরাধন।  
তাঁহার হুক্মারে কৈল কৃষ্ণ আকর্ষণ।।  
পিতা মাতা গুরুজনে আগে আবতারি।  
রাধিকার ভাব-বর্ণ অঙ্গীকার করি।।  
নবদ্বীপে শচীগর্ভে শুদ্ধ দুষ্ক সিন্ধু।  
তাহাতে প্রকট হৈলা কৃষ্ণ পূর্ণ ইন্দু।।

God Sri Krishna appeared in the form of Sri Chaitanya thinking in the core of his heart to appreciate Radhabhava. He is Gouranga: Krishna inward and Gour outward in order to fulfill

the three-fold purposes. This Chaitanya is the incarnation of Radhakrishna, depending on this theory the Vaishanava religion of Gour has been made.

## 1.2 Vaishnav & Gaudiya Vaishnav

It is mentioned in the book Sribhakti Saraswati's composition 'Who is a Vaisnava?' Vaisnava's status is very great, because this dignity means that the relation with the lord Sri Vishnu is closer to men. Vaisnava is a descriptive definition, which is based on the spiritual level, the quality of Vaisnab's being that he has abandoned the desire for sensual pleasure and secular status. To serve Sri Krishna, a Vaisnava need to be well qualified. The person who denies all the earthly desires, is the real Vaisnava."<sup>13</sup> In Bengal, it was thought that Vaishnavism was introduced in this country only after the arrival of Sri Chaitanya, but there is evidence of this religion that was prevalent in Bengal much earlier. From the fourth century AD to the middle of the fifteenth century, the mention of Vaisnava religion is found in the writing on thirty five stone scripts. Some of them are

<b>Time</b>	<b>Scripts Name</b>	<b>Place</b>
300 AD	Stone script of king Chandra Barman	Bankura
432-433 AD	Dhonaidaha copper script	Raj shahi
476-495 AD	Coper script of Damodarapur	Dinajpur
500 AD	Mallasarul Copper script	Bardhaman
507 AD	Gunaighar Script	Tripura
812 AD	Khalimpur Script	Maldaha
1000 AD	Deopara Script	Rajsahi
1024 AD	Murti Script	Baghaura, Tripura

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<sup>13</sup> Bhakti Sidhanta Saraswati Thakur, *Vaisnab ke?*, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vadanta Book Trust, Reprint, 2013. p. 80

In addition to the above, various events of Krishna Lila are mentioned on the ancient temple of Paharpur situated in Bankura district. At the same time there was a special introduction to Buddhism, Vaisnavas considered Buddhadev as incarnation at this time. In Bengal, there is evidence of religious co-ordination during this time, when Ritu Gupta, the great merchant built Vishnu temple and Shiva Temple at the same time.

Vaishnavism was given special place in the traditional history of Pancha worships that was present in Bengal. But Krishna's popularity was less powerful than that of Vishnu during that time. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay mentioned about Joydev's Geet Govinda. He wrote 'the life of the Aryan Nation has been weak become. Instead of the discussion of the internal world, Kamini's discussion was very much popular during that time. Joydev Goswami was a social avatar of this period and lyrics of this society were recorded in Geet Gobinda'.

Ramakant Chakraborty noted that at the place of Aryan Nation, the Bengali people are told to be read. At this time the mentioned Vaisnav Purans include: Adi Puran, Kalki Puran, Kriajogsar (under Padma Puran), Narasingha Puran, Sambapuran, Vabiswattor Puran (fifty part of vabiswaPuran), Brihadharma Puran, Brihanarodiya Puran, and Brishnudharma.<sup>15</sup>

There are varied opinions on the introduction of Vaishnava religion, one such is that due to the influence of the materialistic and non vedic ideology, restriction of Hindu society was reduced. It reduced the power of the Brahmanas leading to an increase in the power of the sudras. The influence of Hindu culture was decreased by Buddha religion, and at this time it was necessary to promote Vanisnav Yoga. It has considered that only the company of dishonest person must be left in Vaisnavreligion. That is why Kabiraj Goswami mentions in

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<sup>14</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bange Vaisnav Dharma*, Dwitya Mudran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2007. p. 9

<sup>15</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bonge Vaisnab Dharma*, Dwitya Muduran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2007.p.18.

Charitamita that a man should leave the company of a dishonest person. It is said in the symptoms of Vaisnav that

কৃপালু অকৃতদ্রোহ সত্য সার সম।  
নির্দোষ দান্ত মৃদু শুচি অকিঞ্চন।।  
সর্বোপকারক শান্ত কৃষ্ণৈকশরণ।  
অকাম অনীহ স্থির বিজিত শড়গুণ।।  
মিতভুক অপমত্ত মানদ অনামী  
গম্ভীর করুন মৈত্র কবি দক্ষ মৌনী।।

A country becomes holy and proud by the appearance of Vaisnava religion. If this idealness is not easy in the character of Vaisnab Community, yet its effect is seen in Vaisnav community many times. Sushil Chakraborty says the following about the duties of Vaishnava,

গুরু কৃপা প্রসাদে ভক্তি লতার বীজ কোন ভাগ্যবান প্রাপ্ত হইলেও অতিযত্নের সহিত তাহা রোপণ করতে হয় এবং শ্রবণ কীর্তন জল তাহার মূলে সেচন করিতে হয়। এই ভক্তিলতা কৃষ্ণচরণ কল্প বৃক্ষে আরোহন করিলেও সাবধানে রক্ষা করিতে হয়, কেন না নানা অপরাধে (সেবাপরাধ, নামাপরাধ, বৈষ্ণবঅপরাধ) এই লতা ছিন্ন করিতে পারে; আবার ভুক্তি মুক্তির বাঞ্ছা প্রভৃতি উপশাখা উদগত হইলেও যেমন বিপদের কথা, তেমনি আচারানুষ্ঠানানুরাগ লাভ, প্রতিষ্ঠা প্রভৃতি উপশাখাও লতার প্রানান্ত করে।<sup>16</sup>

Sahajiyara says like a foolish person that their unloving bodies are not real. That is why they are deprived of real Vaishnav company and as a result they cannot learn the behavior of a real

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<sup>16</sup> Sushil Kumar Chakraborty, *Vaisnav Sahitya*, Kolkata: The Book Company, 1925, pp. 128-129

Vaishnav. Seeing this fault of Sahajiyara, Shil Bhakti Vinod Thakur writes in *Kalyan Kalpaturu* that

আমিত' বৈষ্ণব; এই বুদ্ধি হৈলে,  
অনামীনা হ'ব আমি।  
প্রতিষ্ঠাশা আসি হৃদয় দুষ্টিবে  
হইব নিরয় গামী।।  
'নিজেশ্রেষ্ঠ' জানি; উচ্ছিষ্টাদি দানে,  
হ'বে অভিমানভার।  
তাই শিষ্য তব, থাকিয়া সর্বদা  
না লইব পূজাকার।।

The main speech of Bhakti Binod Thakur is that if a person considers himself a vaisnav, then he will be successful to gain respect always from others. If he desires result, prosperity, popularity, then he will to go to hell. Even if anyone gives his leftover to others and thinks himself the great, then in him grows a false glory. So it is better to stay as a refugee disciple than to accept the worship of others. How a vaisnav devotee keeps his mind involved in spiritual theory, about this it has been discussed in *Chaitanya Charitamrita*,

এই ত পরম ফল পরম-পুরুষার্থ।  
যাঁর আগে তৃণ-তুল্য চারি পুরুষার্থ।।

Means great result is Bhagabat Bhakti, which brings great success of life. To devotee these four types of worldly success: religion, money, sen and liberty are equal to grass.

If human beings can join the compassion of Nityananda, he will be able to feel the great feelings of Krishna. Having dissluded from little things, a man can achieve addiction to Lord

Krishna by the devotion of God. Its explanation is found in *Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu*, which states,

अनासक्तस्य विषयान यथाहर्मुपयुञ्जतः।  
निर्वन्तः कृष्ण सशक्ते युक्तं वैराग्यमुच्यते॥  
प्रापञ्चितया बुद्ध्या हरिसम्बन्धिवस्तुनः।  
मुमुक्षुभिः परित्यागो वैराग्यं फलुकथ्यते॥<sup>17</sup>

Means when human beings have no addiction to any things, but of that time he can accept all things related to Sri Krishna, then he lives at the top level of all addiction on the other side, he has rejected all things, but about the relation of Srikrishna with those things, he has no knowledge.

The dignity of a Vaisnava is in the slavery of God. The ability of reaching Sri Krishna can be achieved by serving with gentle mentality to great soul. A pure devotee is nonaddicted, which means he has dedicated all his desires in the feet of Sri Krishna. In this content Lord Sri Krishna speaks through his own mouth in Srimad-Bhagbad Gita

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते  
श्रद्धया परयोपेपासते ते युक्ततमा मताः॥

In the above lines Sri Krishna says that 'one who believes me from the inner core of his heart, I think that he is my best worshipper. Liberation is not so valuable for a real Vaisnav because if a Vaisnavis pure from within then liberation is naturally achieved'. Sri Chaitanyamahaprabhu's saying about a pure Vaisnav follower is in the following lines,

न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरीं  
कवितां वा जगदीश कामये।

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<sup>17</sup> Shil Rup Goswami, *Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu*, Pancham Muduran, Baharampur: Radharaman Press, 1933, pp. 255-256.



মম জন্মনি জন্মনীশ্বরে  
ভবতান্দ্রক্তির হৈতুকী হ্রয়ি।<sup>18</sup>

Means ‘O God, I do not pray wealth, beautiful women. I only pray that I can worship only you’. These two theories must be discussed at the time of discussing Vaisnava: first, the theory of Radha Krishna; second, is the theory of Sadhya Sadhan. At the time of discussing those two theories, first, this research will focus on the theory of Radha Krishna.

### **Radha Krishna**

Radha Krishna is not only the God of Bengal, but also the God of an entire India. Even Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay says that Krishna is the only God. In this context, he says that I myself believe that Lord Krishna is the only God. Sisir Ghosh delivers a similar speech, he says that ‘Krishna is the real God, and not an *avatar*. In Bengal the affect of Radha Krishna is unexplainable. Even many Bengalis wake up from bed while praying the name of Radha Krishna, they get rid of their tiredness, start new and good work and start new journey at the time of going to a faraway country. Even at the time of human beings last journey after death, Krishna’s name gives company. Before the appearance of Sri Chaitanya and after the affect of Goudiya Vaisnav, Radhakrishna takes place in the heart of man. Now the question is who is Radha? The ‘feelings of Radha’, and the ‘love for Radha’ are the worship with devotion code of Vaisnava religion; all love songs of Bengal are inspired by the love of Radha. Bengalis become thinker and lover of Radha. The theory of Radhakrishna is the heart of Vaishnava religion. But it is necessary to mention that Mahabharata or Geeta is different from Vaishnava Krishna. There was a vast difference between Mahabharata Krishna and Geeta Krishna. He is not the great savior or ruler of the sphere but he is that Krishna who realized men’s hopes, desires, adorator, later on, using this great theory of Sri Chaitanya

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<sup>18</sup> Thakur Bhakti Sidhanta Saraswati, *Vaisnav Ke?*, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, 2013. p. 39

Mahaprabhu's life, the discovery of the theory of Radha Krishna was later possible. This Radhakrishna is the treasure of adoration of all Vaishnava. The religion that was preached in the Ved-Purana, Krishna could not become so much intimate because Ved could not give him such a way, even men could not hear his valuable messages. But in Brindaban we find a different Krishna, there he played a unique role as a supreme soul and Radha Rani fell in love with Krishna. Through she was in great grief, she did not display her love for Radha, but in an utmost grief he mentioned that

বধু কি আর বলিব আমি  
মরণে জীবনে      জনমে জনমে  
প্রাণ নাথ হৈও তুমি।।  
তোমার চরণে      আমার পরাণে  
বাঁধিল প্রেমের ফাঁসি।  
সব সমর্পিয়া      এক মন হৈয়া  
নিশ্চয়ই হইলাম দাসী।।

Radha's thoughts can be seen a little better if she thinks that her thoughts have artsen and for the thought, she can say that Sri Krishna's feet caught the glimpse of Radha's soul. Even in BrahmavaivartaPuran Radha was not so popular. But in Vaisnav literature Radha's appearance was worth nothing. Vaisnava devotes considered Gopi to be the standard of life, because Radha is the greatness, which is not included in the ability, Chaitanyadev becomes unstable when he felt the sweetness of Radhakrishna. We have to realize the theory of Radha Krishna in the continuous shelter field of life. About this great feelings of Radha, Kabiraj Goswami says that

প্রেমের পরম সার মহাভাব জানি।  
সেই মহাভাবরূপা রাধা ঠাকুরানী।।

For this great feelings of Radhathakurani, Srikrishna is mad Radha's love. As we need a key to enter into any house, we also face Radha to enter into the Kingdom of Krishna. Possibly for this Mahaprabhu Chaitanyadev said to Raghunath that

অনামী মানদ কৃষ্ণ নাম সদা লবে।

ব্রজে রাধা কৃষ্ণ সেবা মানসে করিবে।।

We will be able to taste the pageant by serving it mentally, and from it we will observe directly the continuous pageant.

### **Sadhya Sadhan**

The desired things of living beings are understood and the different ways to achieve this leads to sadhan. The desired things of a Hindu human being are heaven, soul, Brahma or God. These things are called Sadhya and its spiritual practice is work, yoga, knowledge and devotion. Residing at Kashidham, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says to Tapan Mishra about 'Sadhya Sadhan' in the following words,

যেই জন ভজে কৃষ্ণ তার মহাভাগ্য।

Means to serve Krishna is the best desired thing of living beings, and says about sadhan in Kaliyug it is named 'YugyaSar', Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then advised him that

হরে কৃষ্ণ হরে কৃষ্ণ কৃষ্ণ কৃষ্ণ হরে হরে।

হরে রাম হরে রাম রাম রাম হরে হরে।।

To pronounce through devotional song this sixteen names and thirty two letters. While advising, he mentioned about the features of sadhan, Krishna Das Kabiraj has written on this in *Chaitanya Charitamrita*,

সাধিতে সাধিতে যবে প্রেমাঙ্কুর হবে।

সাধ্য সাধনতত্ত্ব জানিবা সে তবে।।

Though this theory is spread out in different places of *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, it is depicted beautifully in the eight chapter of Rai Ramananda Sambad. Here Mahaprabhu has disclosed this extraordinary theory through the mouth of Ram Rai, here he is the speaker where as in the *Sastrait* is discussed in between the two persons. But in Rai Ramananda Sambad there is a contradiction in this normal tradition. Here the yonger is the speaker and the elder is the listener. Here devotee is saying and God is listening. Chaitanya Dev visited Ram Rai only for listening, in this context *Chaitanya Charitamrita* mentioned that

তিহো কহে আমি নাই জানি কৃষ্ণকথা।

সবে রামানন্দ জানে তিহো নাই এথা।।

তোমার ঠাঁঞি আইলাম মহিমা শুনিয়া।

তুমি মোর স্ততিকর সন্ন্যাসী জানিয়া।।<sup>19</sup>

The creator is now the begger, which is a great mystery. For this reason, poets have written that ‘the feelings of Mahaprabhu are not comprehensible’. What is the desired thing of living beings? Ramananda answered Bishnu Bhakti to give the answer of this question of Mahaprabhu. Prabhu again asked him in which ways it can be achieved? Ramananda answered him it can be achieved by practicing self religion. It means obeying one’s own self religion, one can achieve Haribhakti. In this context, one *sloka* of the third chapter of *Srimad Bhagbad Gita* is very continual. There it is mentioned that

শ্রেয়ান স্বধর্মো বিগুনঃ পরধর্মাৎ স্বনুষ্ঠিতাৎ।

স্বধর্মে নিধনং শ্রেয়ঃ পরধর্মো ভয়াবহঃ।।<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shills Library, Reprint 2011, p. 225

Means of the rituals of own religion is full of fault, yet it is superior than the rituals of other religion though performed in a better way. Again in the eighteen chapter of the above mentioned anthology it is said that

যতঃ প্রবৃত্তিভূতানাং যেন সৰ্বমিদং ততম।  
স্বকৰ্মনা তমভ্যৰ্চ্য সিদ্ধিং বিন্দতি মানবঃ।<sup>21</sup>

It means human beings can acquire God by through their work. In the society, people are involved in different types work and if they do their work carefully, then their work are transformed into devotion. Mahaprabhu then says that it is speech of outside, not inside. He says to him to speak the word of heart. In this content Rai said ‘Krihsna Karmpari’ which means ‘your work is your right’, work should be performed without hoping of its result. In this context the quotation of Gita is more relevant.

কৰ্মন্যে বাধিকারস্তে মা ফলেষু কদাচন।  
মা কৰ্মফল হেতু ভূৰ্মাতে সঙ্গোহস্ত কৰ্মনি।<sup>22</sup>

It means one has the right in work but holds no right in its result. You never be tempted by not obeying your own religion. Which is discussed about the subject of Sadhan with sanatan, here two types of devotion are said in the following lines,

সেইত সাধন ভক্তি দুইত প্রকার।  
এক বৈধি ভক্তি রাগানুগা ভক্তি আর।।  
রাগহীন জনে ভজে শাস্ত্রের আজ্ঞায়।  
বৈধি ভক্তি বলি তারে সৰ্ববশাস্ত্রে গায়।।

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<sup>20</sup> *Srimad Bagbat Gita*, edited by Srimad Bakti Charu Swami, Akhanda Sanaskaran, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vendanta Book Trust, Reprint 2004.p. 146

<sup>21</sup> *Srimad Bagbat Gita*, edited by Srimad Bakti Charu Swami, Akhanda Sanaskaran, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vendanta Book Trust., Reprint 2004, pp. 552-553

<sup>22</sup> *Srimad Bagbat Gita*, edited Srimad Bakti Charu Swami, Akhanda Sanaskaran, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vendanta Book Trust, Reprint 2004, p. 100

সাধুসঙ্ঘ নামকীর্তন ভাগবত শ্রবণ।  
মথুরাবাস শ্রীমূর্ত্তের শ্রদ্ধায় সেবন।।  
সকল সাধন শ্রেষ্ঠ এই পঞ্চ অঙ্গ।  
কৃষ্ণ প্রেম জন্মে এই পাঁচের অল্প সঙ্ঘ।।

The theory of above mentioned sadhana is the path of devotion, which all common Vaisnabas follow. Saint company and holy book reading is the first priority of all religion. About Raganuraga Bhakti it is said that

নিজাভিষ্ট কৃষ্ণশ্রেষ্ঠ পাছেত লাগিয়া।  
নিরন্তর সেবা করে অন্তর্মন হঞা।  
এই মত যে করে রাগানুগা ভক্তি।  
কৃষ্ণের চরণে তার উপজয়ে প্রীতি।।  
প্রী ত্যাঙ্কুরে রতিভাব হয় দুই নাম।  
যাহা হৈতে বশ হয় ভগবান।।

Raganuraga Bhakri is a purpose of all devotion and that is, which is possible for me, we can devotion to him. This working of an adorator has some stages. These stages are depicted in a beautiful devotional anthology named *Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu*, here it is said

আদৌ শ্রদ্ধা ততঃ সঙ্গস্ততো হত ভজন ক্রিয়া।  
ততোহনর্থ নিবৃত্তিঃ স্যান্ততো নিষ্ঠা রুচিস্ততঃ।।  
অথাশক্তি স্ততো ভাবস্ততঃ প্রেমাভ্যুদঞ্চতি।  
সাধকানাং প্রেমঃ প্রাদুর্ভাবে ভবেতক্রমঃ।।

First respect, then company of monk, then Bhajan, prevention is the result of Bhajan, then Devotion from Devotion to temptation, then feelings and from feelings love is arisen. Sushil

Kumar Chakraborty says that this period of sadhan‘it is as true and beautiful from the side of theory, it is also good symptoms, of spiritual experience’. So every Vaisnavshould involve themselves in the workings of Sadhan to produce the love of Srikrishna.

### **Gaudiya Vaisnav**

GaudiyaVaisnavis the main key of Vaisnav religion of Bengal, that is why when the time starts for discussing Vaisnav religion of Bengal it is necessary to discuss Gaudiya Vaisnav before that. At the time of GaudiyaVaisnavthe main chaftsman of Vaisnav religion Ramakanta Chakraborty mentions that Gaudiya Vaisnavis situated on *praman*. This *praman* is ‘sruti’ or *Veda Praman*. According to Gaudiya this *praman* is accomplished. Direct *praman* is not accepted, because different kinds of people can produce different binds of feeling. It is imagined that srutipraman has deep relation with sriti, puran and history. This *praman* is rare in *kaliyug*. History and puran are composed for the discussion of praman. However, in puransgod’s and goddesses’s devotions are depicted. In Kaliyug, ‘Kaismaya Devaya Habisha Bidhem’ which means this question has no easy answer. So the existence of goodness, motion and inertia puran is imagined. Even it is also accepted that ‘BhagabatPuran’ is the best capitulation of praman. According to that Puran, Srikrishna is the main God, so in Kaliyug Sri Krishna is the only God to worship. Though in the capitulation of praman, there are many faults, yet Gaudiya Vaisnavas accept this.”<sup>23</sup>

Bhakti is such a yogaby which a personal relation is established between the God and his followers. The concept of God is not cleared without devotion. For realization the devotion of devotee, God in the disguise of devotee appeared on earth. In this conent is is said. In *Chaitanya Charitamrita*,

কৃষ্ণ মাধুর্যের এক অদ্ভূত স্বভাব।

আপনা আশ্বাদিতে কৃষ্ণ ধরে ভক্তভাব।।

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<sup>23</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bange Vaisnav Dharma* Dwitya Mudran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2007, p. 58

According to the language of Brahma Sanhita, Sri Krishna is the best God and he is the idol of honesty and joyfulness. But Goudiya Vaisnavas like his rural form rather than his such form. For this according to Gaudiya Theory,

কৃষ্ণের যতোক লীলা                      সর্বোত্তম নর লীলা

নরবপু তাহার স্বরূপ।<sup>24</sup>

The wealth of Gaudiya Vaisnav's heart is when Sri Krishna in disguise of gope takes flute in his own hands. In Brindaban the embodiment of Krishna is really joyful, because he is the embodiment of consciousness of joy. He is the joyous idol of honesty and good quality. The three powers which is present in Krishna is 'Swarup Shakti, Maya Shakti and Jiba Shakti'. In Upanishad, Krishna is the embodiment of joyous person, who is always joyful. The living powers of Krishna depends on swarup Shakti and Maya Shakti. According to the theory of yoga the soul of man becomes mined up with God though it is denied by GaudiyaVaisnavas. Gaudiya Vaisnavas accept more respect to God rather than liberty. Gaudiya Vaisnav thinks devotion is superior to liberty, which is highly appreciated in the history of spiritual sadhana. Six stages for the love of Krishna are present. The doings of human beings about Krishna and the six stages are discussed below:

**Brahmananda :** The loyal devotee Brahmanandi sinks to feel the idol of Krishna.

**Shanta Rati :** In this satage devotee chaturbhuj becomes satisfied to worship narayan.

**Dasya Rati :** In Dasya Rati all the devotees think that they are the servant of Krishna.

**Sakhya Rati :** In Sakha Rati all the devotees are best friends of Krishna.

**Batsalya Rati :** The significance of Batsalya Rati is the devotion of Krishna in the form of a son. Nandalal and Yoshada bring up Krishna as their son.

**Madhur Rati :** It is the final stage, in this stage Sri Krishna is worshipped as a lover.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamita* edited by Shasibhusan Bandhopadhyay. Kalna: 1923 pp. 516-517



According to Gaudiya Vaisnavin this stage the worship of Krishna is the best because all other stages are mixed up with this. *Chaitanya Charitamrita* writes about this

গুনাধিক্যে স্বাদাধিক্যে বাড়ে প্রতিরসে।

শান্ত দাস্য সখ্য বাৎসল্য গুণ মধুরেতে বৈসে।<sup>26</sup>

It means though Krishna is worshipped as a lover, yet the mixture of Dasya Sakhya and Batsalya Rati is seen in him.

Though Srichaitanya embodies the best beauty and sweetness of Bhagbat in Bengal, but Gaudiya Vaisnav community founded him with brightness. This community says that living beings want Brahman always and not only the living beings but Brahman also wants living beings. This communication of love is always flowing. Thus, the Bhakta poet writes,

তোমায় আমায় মিলন হবে বলে আলোয় আকাশ ভরা।

তোমায় আমায় মিলন হবে বলে ফুল্ল শ্যামলধরা।।

God does not call his devotee in the same way; he calls his devotee in different manners. This feeling is beautifully depicted in the language of Vaisnav poet, for example.

এ আলোকে এ আঁধারে                      কেন তুমি আপনারে

ছায়া খানি দিয়া ছাও আমি সে জানি।।

সারা দিন নানা কাজে                      কেন তুমি নানা সাজে

কত সুরে ডাক দাও আমি সে জানি।।

There is no physical intimacy between the lover God and the beloved *Sakhi*. In the heart of Gopi, there is only great feeling instead of any physical relation. In this context, certain lines of *Chaitanya Charitamrita* are very significant. Kabiraj Goswami writes,

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<sup>25</sup> Ramakanta Chakroborty *Bange Vaisnav Dharma*, Dwitya Mudran Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2007, p. 60

<sup>26</sup> Kabiraj Krishnadas, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Shasibhusan Bandhopadhyay, Kalna: Kurana Prakasani, 1923, p. 283

আত্মেন্দ্রিয় প্রীতি ইচ্ছা তারে বলি কাম।

কৃষ্ণেন্দ্রিয় প্রীতি ইচ্ছা ধরে প্রেমনাম।।

অতএব কাম প্রেমে বহুত অন্তর।

কাম অন্ধতমঃ প্রেম নির্মল ভাস্কর।।<sup>27</sup>

In the discussion of love communication the reason of explaining all devotees as a beloved is that he is the only male person and he is the perfect devotee, and an intelligent person. The emotion of common people is false and it is nothing but evoking himself. As a proof of this reason of mine, somelines are mentioned from the biography of Mira as explained in ‘Bhaktamal’, where Mira embodies a hope to see Sri Rup Goswami after reaching Brindaban,

বৃন্দাবন গিয়া বাই আনন্দে গমন।

বাঞ্ছা হৈল শ্রীরূপ গোস্বামী দরশন।।

কহি পাঠাইল শ্রীরূপে কের দ্বারে।

দরশন করি যদি কৃপা করো মোরে।।

After hearing this prayer Sri Rup Goswami says,

গোসাত্রিঃ কহেন মুই করি বনে বাস।

নাহি করি স্ত্রীলোকের সহিত সম্ভাষ।।

After hearing the speech of Srirup Goswami, Mirabai expressing her anger says,

একথা শুনিয়া বাই ক্ষোভ পাই মনে।

পুন কহি পাঠাইল গোসাত্রির স্থানে।

এতদিন শুনি নাই শ্রীমন বৃন্দাবনে।

আর কেউ পুরুষ আছেয়ে কৃষ্ণবিনে।।

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<sup>27</sup> Kabiraj, Krishnadas, *Shri Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Shasibhusan Bandhopadhyay, Kalna: Kurona Prokasoni, 1923, pp. 63-64

It means Sri Krishna is the only male and all are devotees in the form of *Sakhi*. For this reason, the Gaudiya Vaisnav community do not think of themselves as equal to God. Even they do not hope for liberation, they want to stay as devotee of God. According to Gaudiya Vaisnav, liberty has special stages,

সাক্ষি – সমানৈশ্বর্য প্রাপ্তি

সারূপ্য – সমান রূপ প্রাপ্তি

সামিপ্য – সমীপে অবস্থিতি

সালোক্য – সমান লোকে বাস এবং

সায়ুজ্য – ঈশ্বরে লয়।<sup>28</sup>

According to Gaudiya Vaisnav human beings should not hope to get liberty because the unity of Brahman is never possible, because God and living beings are indifferent and different at the same time, which is a part of Radha Krishna Theory.

Living beings can come close to God as a forming part of Krishna, but they may not be equal to God. For this, it is said, ‘সায়ুজ্য না লয় ভক্ত যাতে ব্রহ্ম ঐক্য’ It means equality is not possible, again this equality is one of the stages of achieving liberty. So achieving liberty is never possible. The feelings of devotion by devotee are the only ways to serve God which is highly appreciated in Gaudiya Vaisnav Dharma.

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<sup>28</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bange Vaisnav Dharma*, Dwitya Mudran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishars 2007, p. 61

### 1.3 Socio Religious conditions of Bengal during the arrival of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

#### Social condition

When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was born, at that time Navadvip was a famous cultural centre of Bengal. At the same time, the progress of Saptagram was also seen as a port. Later though Saptagram failed to retain its tradition and Navadvip retained its traditional heritage. The most important tribes which are mentioned in Chaitanya Bhagavata are *Goyala, Tanti, Malakar, Gandhabnik, Tambuli, Vaidya, and Badyakar*. During that time, there were many lower castes in the village. There was no social solidarity between upper caste people and lower caste people. Only transactional relationship was present between them. Vaishnava was a joke at that time, Brindaban Das wrote,

জগত প্রমত্ত ধন পুত্র বিদ্যারসে।  
দেখিলে বৈষ্ণব মাত্র সবে উপহাসে।।  
তারে বলে সুকৃতি যে দোলা ঘোড়া চড়ে।  
দশ বিশ জনে যার আগে পাশে চলে।।<sup>29</sup>

So it was not Vaishnavata, financial prosperity was the the only criterion for social establishment. Sri SundaranandaVidhyabinod in his compiled book *Sri Chaitanya Dev* said that before the arrival of Chaitanya, the condition of most of the Bengalis was good. Brindaban Das in his *Chaitanya Bhagavata* says,

রমা-দৃষ্টিপাতে সৰ্বলোক সুখে বসে।  
ব্যর্থ কাল যায় মাত্র ব্যবহার রসে।।

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<sup>29</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 36

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দম্ব করি বিষহরি পূজে কোন জনে।  
পুতুলি করয়ে কেহো দিয়া বহু ধনে।।  
ধন নষ্ট করে পুত্র কন্যার বিভায়ে।  
এই মত জগতের ব্যর্থ কাল যায়ে।<sup>30</sup>

That is to say that due to financial solvency people often spent money on their own. People spent huge money on doll's marriage, sons and daughter's marriage, and events for worshipping the Goddess Manasa. By the grace of Goddess Laxmi, the families were full of happiness and joy. But the opposite image is seen as well. If we look into the family condition of Nimai, we will understand it. As Brindavan Das highlighted the words of Nimai's mother, his mother says,

পড়িবারে তুমি বোল এখানে যাইবা।  
ঘরেতে সম্বল নাহি কালি কি খাইবা ?  
হাসে প্রভু জননীৰ শুনিয়া বচন।  
প্রভু বোলে কৃষ্ণ পোষ্টা করিব পোষণ।।<sup>31</sup>

There was a huge respect and devotion to the elders. Krishnadas Kabiraj mentioned Chaitanya's devotion to his mother in the following lines,

তার সেবা ছাড়ি আমি করিয়াছি সন্ন্যাস।  
ধর্ম নয় কৈল আমি নিজ ধর্মনাশ।।

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<sup>30</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, pp. 39 - 40

<sup>31</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 84

নীলাচলে আছি মুই তাঁহার আজ্ঞাতে।  
মধ্যে মধ্যে আসি মু তাঁর চরণ দেখিতে।।

The above lines express that he took Sannyas, leaving his duty to his mother, so his own religion was destroyed. But he took that decision at her mother's direction and he will come occasionally there to touch his mother's feet. It is natural that there were many social restrictions, therefore, being a *Sannyasi*, he had to live very carefully. Because if he did not live strictly with the the social norms, the society would slander against him. He said to Ramananda Roy about taking a cautious life as a monk,

..... আমি মনুষ্য আশ্রমে সন্ন্যাসী।  
কায়মনো বাক্যে ব্যবহারে ভয় বাসি।।  
শুল্ক বস্ত্রে মসি বিন্দু যেছে না লুকায়।  
সন্ন্যাসীর অল্প ছিদ্র সর্বলোকে গায়।।

That is if a monk does a little blame, the people of the society criticise it very much, so it is better to stay away from it. Despite being Devadasi of Ramananda, Mahaprabhu discusses various religious thoughts with him. Even though he himself lived a strict life, the decision of religious thoughts with Ramananda was criticised by people. Hospitality was considered as an important job in the society at that time. At that time every household used to serve the guest as God. Hospitality at the house of Lord Brindaban Das has been depicted as follows,

নিরবধি অতিথি আইসে প্রভু-ঘরে।  
যার যেন যোগ্য প্রভু দেন সভাকারে।।  
কোন দিন সন্ন্যাসী আইসে দশ বিশ।  
সভা নিমন্ত্রণ প্রভু হইয়া হরিষ।

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গৃহস্থে মহাপ্রভু শিখায়েন ধর্ম।

অতিথির সেবা গৃহস্থের মূল কর্ম।<sup>32</sup>

Mahaprabhu was not only serving the guests but also referring it as an important work of the household. But it is worth mentioning that the human rights of wives were not recognized till then.

They did not have the right to read Vedas. To serve the husband was the only work of women. A playful account of serving the husband is mentioned in the following lines,

‘A true devoted wife would bow down to her husband after changing her clothes in the early morning. Then she would bath after finishing domestic works. After bathing she would wear fresh clothes and worship her husband with white flowers. She would clean her husband’s feet with water after his bathing. Then she would garland him and spray perfumes to his body and then serve him food with much affection... After that she would devotedly drink the water with which her husband’s feet were cleaned’.<sup>33</sup>

This means that there was no individual existence of women. Not only women, but also the lower classes of society also had no social status. At that time Raghunandan in his ‘Shudranhikacharatattwam’ announced his controversial dual caste system theory where it is said that there can be no other than Brahmin and Shudra. The Shudra will not have the right to read Vedas and their only work is to serve the Brahmins. But Chaitanyadev says,

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<sup>32</sup>Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 125

<sup>33</sup> Abdus Samad, *Patibratapadesh*, in Bardhaman Rajsovarshrito Bangla Sahitya edited by Abdus Samad, Kolkata: Mollic Brothers, 1991, pp. 133- 134

"হরিভক্তি পরায়ণ চণ্ডাল ব্রাহ্মণ অপেক্ষা, শ্রেষ্ঠ" –ঘোষিত হওয়ার পরে সমাজে ব্যাপক পরিবর্তন লক্ষ্য করা গেলো। এসময়ের সামাজিক পরিবর্তন সম্বন্ধে শ্রী সুশীল চক্রবর্তী লিখেছেন- "সাধনা কসাই- পরমভক্ত, এই সাধনার চরণধূলি, পাদোদক জগন্নাথের পাণ্ডাগণ গ্রহণ করিলেন। এমনিভাবে নানা শ্রেণীর অতি অস্পৃশ্য নীচ জাতীয় হিন্দুরাও বৈষ্ণব ভক্ত হইয়া সমাজে পরম পূজ্য হইলেন। .....স্ত্রী, শূদ্র, অস্পৃশ্য, নীচ সকলে এই ধর্মের আশ্রয়ে পরম সার্থকতা লাভ করিয়াছিলেন।"<sup>34</sup>

In the Bhakti theory (devotional theory) gender or caste was not given priority as such. But it was not possible to eradicate casteism from the society. Devotion and identity of caste became contrary. As the 'Aavaishnavas' could not accept the thoughts of the Vaishnavas, the Vaishnavas also proved their caste speciality by writing their own book. There it is said that,

"প্রধানত নদীয়া, হুগলী, ২৪ পরগনা জেলার মধ্যে গৌড়াদ্য- বৈদিক বৈষ্ণব জাতি সমাজ লইয়া 'আট সমাজী থাক' হয়। নদীয়া জেলার মধ্যে বেজ পাড়া, সিঙ্গুরিনী (চাকদহ), হুগলী জেলার চাঁপদানী (বৈদ্যবাটি), বলরামবাটি (সিঙ্গুর) বলাগড়, ২৪ পরগনার প্রতাপপুর, বাদুড়িয়া, পুকুরকোনা, এই আট সমাজ লইয়া আট সমাজী।"<sup>35</sup>

The social system of the Vaishnava could not only be accepted by the Shudra but also by the Brahmins. The different views of the Vaishnavas of Panchasakha and the Vaishnavas of Gourha became wide spread at that time. Although Ishwar Das mentioned Chaitanya as an incarnation of Buddha, Gaudiya Vaishnavas could not accept Buddha. Chaitanya Dev could not accept this dispute. Scholar Ramakanta Chakraborty quotes from Dibakar Das's *Jagannath Charitamrita* that the Vaishnavas of Gaudiya arrogantly went to Jajpur to bring

<sup>34</sup> Sushil Kumar Chakraborty, *Vaishnav Sahitya*, Kolkata: The Book Company, 1925, p. 147

<sup>35</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bonge Vaishnav Dharma*, Kolkata: Dwitya Mudran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2007, p. 166



them back. When Gaudiya Vaishanava again wanted to take back Chaitanya to Brindaban, without paying any attention to their request, Chaitanya came back to Puri. There after, the dispute remained unsettled, the six Goswamies of Brindabana whose effort established the prominence of the Vaishanava religion of Gaura are Sanatan Goswami, Rup Goswami, Jib Goswami, Gopalbhatta Goswami, Raghunath Bhatta Goswami, and Raghunath Das Goswami.

Among them, Raghunath Goswami belonged to the Shudra dynasty. From Shudra dynasty to Tattwachariya is considered as a Sign of social history of Bengal. Though Sanatan Goswami and Rup Goswami had vast knowledge in literature, they did not get much preference in society, because they used to work in the house of Jaban. When the Lodi dynasty ruled the Delhi's Masanad, the rulers of Bengal were

<i>Name of the ruler</i>	<i>Regime time</i>
(I) Saifuddin or Firoj Shah	1486-1489 AD
(II) Nasiruddin or Mahammad Shah	1489-1490 AD
(III) Mujaffar Shah	1490-1493 AD
(IV) Alauddin Hussein Shah	1493-1519 AD
(V) Nasrat Shah	1519-1532 AD

Mean while the Mughal rule was established in Delhi

(I) Alauddin Firuz Shah	1532 AD (Only for few days)
(II) Giyasuddin or (Mahmud Shah)	1532-1538AD (probably he was the last Sultan or ruler of Bengal)

This Hussein Shah appointed Sanatana and Rup Goswami in the royal post. The father of Jiva Goswami, was the counselor of Sri Chaitanyadev, he was also the principle of Gauda's mint. Therefore, it can be said that during this time there was some religious neutrality. But as soon as Hussein Shah's guru Maulana Sirajuddin took the power, secularism was not protected anymore. Because of this Chand Kazi not only opposed the Sankritan (devotional song) of Nimai but also asserted that it would be seen as a criminal offence if anyone sang Sanskritan in Kazi's area.

All the Muslims were not like Kazi in Bengal during Chaitanya's time, many Muslim people respected Chaitanya. These Muslims were mainly divided into three groups: external Muslims, Bengali Muslims by birth, and moderated Bengali Muslims. Thus, the Bengali Muslim society was created. Although there was a religious conversion to Islam in most cases there was no cultural transformation so their respect for Chaitanya was immense. But the non Bengali external Muslims had a feeling of royal (Nababi) pride as they came with the Nabab.

Therefore, there was a huge social distance between the non Bengali Muslims and the residential Bengali Muslims. Again, the local Muslims gave more importance to the humanitarianism of Chaitanya than the pride of Nabob's Muslims. Chaitanyadev also gave much attention towards them. Chaitanya Bhagwatkar wrote,

যবনেও প্রভু দেখি করে বড় প্ৰীতি।

সর্বভূত-কৃপালতা প্রভুর চরিত।।

It means that the Vaishnava religion's devotion is the the primary object than caste. By walking on this path, Jabon Haridas was considered as the best friend of Vaishnava. If Nithyananda is one helping hand of spreading Chaitanyadev's Bhakti movement, Jabon

Haridas is obviously another helping hand. Chaitanyadev never differentiated between Hindus and Muslims in promoting his religion. His deep concept about Haridas is known from the writings of Kabiraj. Krishnadas Kabiraj wrote,

তবে মহাপ্রভু নিজে ভক্ত পাশে জাগ্রা  
হরিদাসের গুণ কহে শত মুখ হাগ্রা।।  
ভক্ত গুণ কহিতে প্রভুর বাড়য়ে উল্লাস।  
ভক্তগণ শ্রেষ্ঠ তাহে শ্রী হরিদাস।।

The evidence of Chaitanyadev's deep love to Haridas was seen after the death of Haridas. He took the deadbody of Haridas in his lap and went to the sea to bathe his body. After that he dug the sand on the beach and buried him according to the Muslim religion. Again, it is worth mentioning that Chaitanyadev pronounced 'Harinam' while burying the deadbody. It is written in *Chaitanya Charitamrita*

হরি বোল হরি বোল বলে গৌর রায়।  
আপনি শ্রী হস্তে বালু দিল তার গায়।।<sup>36</sup>

It means Chaitanya did not follow Hindu or Muslim rituals during the funeral of the devotee Haridas. What he did was that he should do whatever he needs to do in the death of a Vaishnava. The touch of an actual devotee can make the see a pilgrim as it was proved by Chaitanya's speeches. What was said by Mahaprabhu while bathing the deadbody of Haridas in the sea is worth mentioning. We know from Kabiraj Goswami's writings as he presented Chaitanya's speech from *Chaitanya Charitamrita*,

হরিদাসে সমুদ্র জলে স্নান করাইলা।

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<sup>36</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 580

প্রভু কহে সমুদ্র এই মহাতীর্থ হৈলা।<sup>37</sup>

It means, in the time of Chaitanya, there was no much issue of caste difference between Hindu and Muslim. However, Muslims like Chand Kazi are not accounted as it is not considered in the case of Jagai-Madhai. In this context, I argue that they are quite wrong who think that Chaitanyadev had only loved the Hindus or he spread his religion to bring out the Hindu society from the clutches of Muslim power. In this context Ramakanta Chakraborty said that 'the growing caste discrimination in social and cultural field, the lack of neo-concept in education created a serious crisis in Bengal society during the advent of Chaitanyadev. There was no logical way of getting out from the crisis with the help of various religious beliefs. Many signs of this crisis were noticed before the establishment of the Muslims. Therefore, those who believe that there was a crisis in the Hindu society due to the political and economical empowerment of the Muslims and for this reason Chaitanyadev spread the Vaishnav Bhakti movement to get rid of this draws only gets a partial picture'.<sup>38</sup>

If we consider that people accepted Islam to get rid of the oppression of Muslim rulers, then also it cannot be explained that being a Jaban (Muslim) why Haridas accepted Vaishnava. Therefore, it is necessary to judge the weakness of the Hindu religion without blaming only the Muslims.

### **Religious condition**

After the arrival of Chaitanyadev, Vaishnavism spread rapidly. The first seed of Vaishnava religion was seen in the age of Chandi Das. Later, when the Vaishnava religion was established and Vaishnava society was formed then Chandi Das was known as 'Adikabi' and soon his verses became the basis of the constant worship of the Vaishnava people. At the

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<sup>37</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 580

<sup>38</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bange Vaishnav Dharma*, Dwitya Mudran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers 2007, p. 27

time of Mahaprabhu's Vaishnava religion, Buddhist religion had a tremendous impact on the society. Proof of this is found in the following text, where it is said that

বৌদ্ধাচার্য মহাপন্ডিত নিজ নব মতে।  
প্রভু আগে উদগাহ করি লাগিলা কহিতে।  
যদ্যপি অসম্ভাব্য বৌদ্ধ অযুক্ত দেখিতে।  
তথাপি বলিলা প্রভু গব্ব খান্ডাইতে।  
তর্ক প্রধান বৌদ্ধ শাস্ত্র নব মতে।  
তর্কেই খন্ডিল প্রভু না পারে স্থাপিতে।।  
বৌদ্ধাচার্য নব নব প্রশ্ন উঠাইল।  
দৃঢ় যুক্তি তর্কে প্রভু খন্ড খন্ড কৈল।।

It means, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had to break the arguments of Buddhism to spread his Vaishnava religion. Because there was a permanent foot print of Buddhism in Bengal society, thus words like ‘Fate’, and ‘The Law of Karma’ still exist in the society of Bengal, which are believed by the people of Bengal, are due to the indirect influence of Buddhism. Before the arrival of Chaitanyadev, Vaishnavacharya Advaita Acharya of Shrihatta was the leader of Vaishnav.<sup>39</sup> Later, many Brahmins from East Bengal came to Kolkata in the hope of getting the wealth from the rich people. Chaitanyadev's guru was Ishwar Puri from 24 Parganas, and the guru of Ishwar Puri was MadhabendraPuri. So, according to the Guru tradition, MadhabendraPuri was the ‘Param Guru’ (ultimate Guru) of Chaitanya. Krishna Das Kaviraj wrote about the preaching of MadhabendraPuri which is stated in the following lines,

পৃথিবীতে রোপন করি গেলা প্রেমাঙ্কুর।  
সেই প্রেমাঙ্কুরের বৃক্ষ চৈতন্য ঠাকুর।।

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<sup>39</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bange Vaishnav Dharma*, Dwitya Mudran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2007, p. 34

It means, Chaitanyadev was that tree, which was germinated from Madhabendrapuri. But it was not an easy task for Chaitanyadev to become the tree of love and spread the love amongst all. Desh Bhakti movement was interrupted by Bhattacharyas in Nabadwip and Shantipur. In this context, Chaitanya Bhagbatkar wrote,

কুতর্ক ঘুষ্টিয়া সব অধ্যাপক মরে।  
ভক্তি হেন নাম নাহি জানয়ে সংসারে।।  
দেখিলে বৈষ্ণব মাত্র সবে উপহাসে।<sup>40</sup>

The then Brahmins considered the devotional preaching of Chaitanya as trivial. In their view, Vaishnavas were only a matter of joke. Advaita Acharya could not tolerate this type of joke about the Vaishnava. Brindaban Das very beautifully reflected the thoughts of Advaita. In this context, it was written in *Chaitanya Bhagavata* that

শুনিয়া অদ্বৈত ক্রোধে অগ্নি হেন জ্বলে।  
দিগম্বর হই সর্ব বৈষ্ণবেরে বোলে।।<sup>41</sup>

Not only the Brahmins, but also the Kazi became an obstacle to the preaching of Vaishnavas. The ban of "Harinam" by breaking the *khol*s of the people who sang Harinam proved how tough was the situation for Chaitanyadev. Along with this, there were sinister-like Jagai-Madhai who opposed Chaitanyadev. But it is not clear that they did so by their own intellect or they were inspired by the Brahmins. At that time as Brahmins became busy in accepting donations, similarly the Kshatriyas were unable to protect the subjects, had lived only with the title of the King. Previously we condemned the torture of the Muslims by

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<sup>40</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 36

<sup>41</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 13

noticing that many people had converted to Islam after leaving Hinduism. But now it is the time to discuss the weaknesses of Hinduism. We must have to notice that why people had come into the Islam. Is there any religious lawlessness or the disrespect of the Brahmins to the lower caste? On one hand, there was the oppression of the Muslim rulers on the Hindus and the oppression of the lower caste in the hands of the Brahmins. This was the precise moment when the appearance of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took place.

Krishna Das Kabiraj wrote about the advent of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য পৃথিবীতে অবতরি।

অষ্ট চল্লিশ বৎসর প্রকট বিহরি।।

চৌদশত সাত শাকে জন্মের প্রমাণ।

চৌদশত পঞ্চম্নে কৈল অন্তর্ধান।

Chaitanyadev was standing above the circle of ordinary people, though he did not acknowledge it. One Advaita Acharya told the group of Vaishnavas that

আজি আর কোন অবতার গাওয়া নাহি।  
সর্ব অবতার ময় চৈতন্য গোসাহি।।

Chaitanyadev was utterly ashamed with Acharya's words because he would only present himself as the servant of Lord Krishna. In such a situation, it was written to describe Chaitanyadevas follows,

ক্ষনেক থাকিয়া প্রভু আত্মস্তুতি শুনি।

লজ্জা যেন পাইতে লাগিল ন্যাসমনি।।

That is, he was ashamed when he heard his praising because his job was to preach the 'Harinam Sangkirtan'. His expectation about the 'Harinam' was that

পৃথিবীতে আছে যত নগরাদি গ্রাম

সর্বত্র প্রচার হইবে মোর নাম।

During his time, devotion to 'Hari' (God) was the only strength of man. But here it is necessary to mention that the 'Hari' (God) of Chaitanyadev was not only a Hindu God but it is also the universal truth. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, through his Bhakti movement brought 'Sanghirtan' (devotional song about God).

It is said in Srimad Bhagwat Gita that

ন সাধয়তি মাং যোগো ন সাখ্যং ধর্ম উদ্ধব

ন স্বাধ্যায় স্তপস্ত্যাগো যথা ভক্তি মর্মোজিতা

It means, God said, 'My son, Yoga, Sankhya, religion even monasticism cannot bound me as much as devotion does. The only way to to gain Krishna was devotion. The religious of Chaitanyadev was accepted by people from all social status in the sixth century. In the deadlocked society of this period the emotional perception of Chaitanyadev grew against the priesthood and the dull observance of the scriptures. This act of protest was not the deed of a single person but it was an act of united pursuit. There was no conflict between the domestic life and religious life. Chaitanyadev, the founder of Love religion never preached any religious word. Whatever he told to do his followers, he performed those before. Instead of giving any knowledge, Mahaprabhu preferred the act of one's behaviour. In his, *Chaitanya Charitamrita* Krishna Das Kabiraj said

আপনি করিমু ভক্ত ভাব অঙ্গীকারে।

আপনি আচরি ধর্ম শিখাইমু অপরে।।

আপনে না কৈলে ধর্ম শিখান না যায়।



এইত সিদ্ধান্ত গীতা ভাগবতে গায়।<sup>42</sup>

It was not only a saying of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, but he wanted to teach the society through his own activities. It was mentioned in the fourth chapter of *Chaitanya Charitamrita* written by Kabiraj and he said that

এই মত ভক্ত ভাব করি অঙ্গীকার।

আপনি আচরি ভক্তি করিলা প্রচার।।

অতএব সেই ভাব অঙ্গীকার করি।

সাধিলেন নিজ বাঞ্ছা গৌরাঙ্গ শ্রীহরি।<sup>43</sup>

For this reason own behaviour of Mahaprabhu is more important to us than his theoretical speeches. Before the arrival of Chaitanyadev, the way of devotion was the pole star of liberation. But Chaitanyadev added a new label in this concept and built it as the religion of love and devotion. He considered that love and devotion for Shri Krishna was better than salvation of man. The love and devotion required for this state of mind, is dispassionate devotion. When *ghee* is poured in fire, its flame hundred times; similarly, fulfillment of desire increases the appetite for lust. For this reason Chaitanyadev advised us only to proclaim ‘Namgan’ leaving all wishes and desires.

তৃণাদপি সুনীচেন তরোরপি সহিষ্ণুনা।

অমানিনা মানদেন কীর্তনীয়ঃ সদা হরি।<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Kabiraj Krishna Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita* edited Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 40

<sup>43</sup> Kabiraj Krishna Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 50

<sup>44</sup> The third couplet of Mahaprabhu’s Shikhhastakam. It is taken from *Vaishnav Ke?* by Bhakti Sidhanta Saraawati Thakur.

It means, to be lower than the grass and to be more tolerant than the trees by giving up self esteem and showing respect to others, we should always worship Sri Hari, this was the teaching of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. It was not possible to gain Chaitanyadev by the knowledge for wisdom. Thus, Brindaban Das wrote,

দানে কূলে পাণ্ডিত্যের চৈতন্য নাই পাই।

কেবল ভক্তির বশ চৈতন্য গোসাই।<sup>45</sup>

Chaitanyadev did not cease to preach religion only. For the reformation of own society primarily he focused on undermentioned issues. First, removal of caste division and promotion of unity; he understood the impact of religion upon the people of this country. But the weakness of Hinduism lies on the discrimination between the Brahmin and Non-Brahmin people. Here the people of lower class did not get any importance. But in Muslim religion there are no such differences. As a result, to be a Hindu one had to give up their self respect. On the other hand, miraculous activities of Muslim peers and Phakirs, means Muslim preachers, charmed them. So the Hindu people of lower class were removed by the calling of the Muslims for Islamization. They felt a conflict in their mind. In Hindu religion, Chaitanyadev was very sad to notice all the divisions of the Hindu religion and announced his famous message 'Untouchable with great devotion to Hari (God) is better than the Brahmins'. For this reason even the main Mahantas of Vaishnavism were not judged according to their caste. According to the Gaudiya Vaishnava, eighty-four 'Mahantas' were led by only eight main 'Mahantas'. These main 'Mahantas' are Swarup Damodar, Roy Ramananda, Goubindananda Tagore, Ramanand Basu, Shibanand Das, Gobinda Ghosh, Madhab Ghosh and Basudeva Ghosh.<sup>46</sup> Most of them were non Brahmin. Not only in the case

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<sup>45</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Shri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhav Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 197

<sup>46</sup> The list of chief Mahanta, *Sri Sri Brihat Bhakti Twatya Sar*, Pratham Khanda by Radhanath Kabasi, Sri Madanmohan Mandir, Dhanyakuriya, 1945, pp. 664, 666

of Mahantas but also in the case of preaching the devotion to the lord Krishna was considerate to be the main act than caste. Therefore, it is told that

শ্রীকৃষ্ণ ভজনে হয় সবে অধিকারী।  
কিবা বিপ্র কিবা শূদ্র কি পুরুষ নারী।।  
শূদ্র নহে কৃষ্ণের ভজন যেই করে।  
সেইজন ভাগবত জানিহ সংসারে।।

It means, untouchable who has great devotion to the Lord is considered better than the Brahmins. But the problem arose, when it was told that

মহা ভাগবত শ্রেষ্ঠ জ্ঞানী সুব্রাহ্মণ।  
সকল বর্ণের গুরু বেদের লিখন।।  
ইনি স্বর্গলোক মধ্যে শ্রীহরির ন্যায়।  
পূজনীয় সদাকালে কহিনু তোমায়।।  
অতএব নিজশ্রেয়ঃ লাভের নিমিত্ত।  
বৈষ্ণব ব্রাহ্মণগুরু করিবে নিশ্চিত।।<sup>47</sup>

That means, the Brahmin gurus are the best among all the gurus. Then what is the position of the baptized Vaishnava in the society? When this question struck the Vaishnava doctrine, at that time the writer of 'Hari Bhakti Bilash', Gopal Bhatta and his commentator, Sanatan Goswami announced that

প্রথমতঃ 'অতএব বিপ্র: সহ-বৈষ্ণবনামেক ত্রৈবগণনা'  
(অর্থাৎ বৈষ্ণবকে বিপ্রের সঙ্গে গণনা করিবে)

<sup>47</sup> Ramchandra Goswami, 'Pashanda Dalan' in *Sri Sri Brihat Bhakti Twatya Sar*, by Radhanath Kabasi, Pratham Khanda, Sri Modanmohan Mandir, Dhanyakuriya, 1945, p. 554

द्वितीयतः इथथं वैष्णवानां ब्राम्मणेः सह साम्यमेव सिद्धति।.....

अवैष्णव ब्राम्मणेभ्यो नीच जाति जानामपि वैष्णवानां श्रेष्ठाः.....

(अर्थात् एइभावे वैष्णवदेर सङ्गे ब्राम्मणदेर साम्य स्थिर हईल..... अवैष्णव ब्राम्मणदेर हईतेओ

नीच जातिजात वैष्णवदेर श्रेष्ठता स्थिर हईल।)

With the theory of equality of the Vaishnava, Chaitanyadev, on one hand, gave a call to the people for being an ideal Vaishanava and on the other hand, he was able to eliminate ethnic hostility to some extent. The second task of Chaitanyadev was to remove the hostility between Hindus and Muslims. His Lord (Hari) was not only for Hindus or Muslims, instead, 'Hari' is for all the people and therefore, he expected to preach the 'Harinam' in every town and village of the world. He opened the door of his religion for all and only for this reason Haridas, being a Muslim got access to the Vaishnava society and Chaitanya also regarded him as the greatest devotee.

Brindaban Das in his *Chaitanya Bhagbata* said about Haridas,

एइ मोर देह हईते तूमि मोर बड़।

तोमार ये जाति सेइ जाति मोर दर।।

It means whatever race a person belongs to, if he has a strong devotion to Hari, he is considered as the favourite of Chaitanyadev. In spite of being a Muslim by birth, Haridas's dead body was carried by Chaitanyadev and Chaitanyadev took his dead body in his lap. There is no such evidence that Chaitanyadev took any other Vaishnava's dead body other than Haridas's. Kabiraj Goswami beautifully expressed the mental state of Chaitanyadev after Haridas death in the following lines,

हरिदास आछिल पृथिवीर शिरोमणि।

তাহা-বিনা রত্নশূন্য হইল মেদিনী।।

জয় জয় হরিদাস বলি কর হরি ধ্বনি।

এত বলি মহাপ্রভু নাচেন আপনি।।<sup>48</sup>

It means, Jaban Haridas was not only a great Vaishnava to Chaitanyadev, but he was also the precious gems among the Vaishnavas whose demise made this world gemless. In the era when the conversion from Hinduism to Islam was a common incident, at that time it was considered the greatest achievement of Chaitanyadev to attract Muslims to Vaishnavism. He adopted the policy of coordination instead of discrimination between Hindus and Muslims. This principle of coordination proved to be the ultimate culmination when a Muslim Kazi said that

কাজি বলে সবে তোমা বলে গৌরহরি।

সেই নামে আমি তোমা সম্বোধন করি।।<sup>49</sup>

That is, even being a Muslim Kazi accepting the defeat of Chaitanyadev's coordination principle, respectfully stooped down to Chaitanyadev, on the other hand, Chaitanyadev proved that the man who has true devotion to 'Hari' (the Lord) is far more better than Brahmins as Jaban Haridas. Haridas was neither a Hindu, nor a Muslim but he was a true devotee of the Lord Krishna and he stood above any caste.

The third and important task of Chaitanyadev was to establish the power of people against the power of the King. He repeatedly advocated the importance of equality than inequality. Then main preaching of Chaitanyadev was 'Harinam Sankirtan'. Opposing it, the Hindu

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<sup>48</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 581

<sup>49</sup> Kabiraj Krishnadas, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 137

community goes to the Kazi for justice and Kazi also opposed the ‘Harinam’. The singing instruments of the Vaishnava were broken. The evil-sainted Jagai-Madhai struck Nithyananda with the edge of an earthen pitcher when he was singing ‘Harinam’. It means, the two forces, the chief Hindu community and the royal power combined together to oppose Vaishnavism. When the entire Vaishnava society was confronted with such opposition, at that time Chaitanyadev invented a new weapon against the royal power. This weapon was the chorus or ‘Samabeta’ devotional song. The entire Vaishnava society participated in this movement. Chaitanyadev said,

প্রভু আজ্ঞা দিল যাহ করহ কীর্তন।  
মুক্তি সংহারি মু আজি সকল যবন।।  
ঘরে গিয়া সবলোক করয়ে কীর্তন।  
কাজী ভয়ে স্বচ্ছন্দ নহে চমকিত মন।।  
নগরে নগরে আমি করি মু কীর্তন।  
সঙ্ক্যা কালে কর সবে নগর মন্ডন।।  
সঙ্ক্যাতে দেউটি সবে জ্বাল ঘরে ঘরে।  
দেখি কোন কাজী আসি মোরে মানা করে।।<sup>50</sup>

It is worth noticing that neither Chaitanyadev himself took any initiative nor he told any special person to take any steps during the opposition to Kazi. He told everybody to light the lamp together. Chaitanyadev used this United power against the royal power. This incident conveyed the political wisdom of Chaitanyadev. After a long deliberation Kazi gave in to Chaitanyadev and he made confession. After hearing Chaitanya's words,

এত শুনি কাজীর দুচক্ষে পড়ে পানি।

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<sup>50</sup> Kabiraj Krishnadas, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 135

প্রভুর চরণ ধরে বলে প্রিয়বাণী।।  
তোমার প্রাসাদে মোর ঘুচিল কুমতি।  
এই কৃপা করো যে তোমাতে বহু ভক্তি।।  
প্রভু কহে এক দান মাগিয়ে তোমায়।  
সকীর্্তন বাদ যৈছে নহে নদীয়ায়।।  
কাজী কহে মোর বংশে যত উপজীবে।  
তাহাকে তালাক দিব কীর্্তন না বাধিবে।।<sup>51</sup>

At last Kazi admitted in front of Chaitanyadev that nobody of his lineage would oppose ‘Nam Sankirtan’. It was not only Kazi, but also Hussain Shah whose torture ceased the ‘Nam Sankirtan’ for a certain time also admitted to Chaitanyadev’s preachings. Haridas was beaten with cane by order of Kazi Gangadhar Pandit had to leave his country but this Hussain Shah, being attracted towards self restrain, the great power of love and devotion of Chaitanyadev, said to Keshab Khan that

হিন্দু যারে বলে কৃষ্ণ খোদায় যবনে।  
আপনার শাস্ত্র মত করুন বিধানে।।  
সর্ব লোক লই সুখে করুন কীর্্তন।  
কি বিরলে থাকুন, যে লয় তাঁর মন।।  
কাজী বা কোটাল বা তাঁহাকে কোনো জনে।  
কিছু বলিলেই তার লইমু জীবনে।।

It means, we should accept the provisions according to our respective scriptures. Do ‘Nam Kirtan’ with happiness and if anyone tries to oppose Chaitanyadev, he will die. This

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<sup>51</sup> Kabiraj Krishnadas, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 138

characteristic change of Hussain Shah was only made possible by Sri Chaitanya. The united struggle and love of Chaitanyadev even reduced the power of the King (royal power). Chaitanyadev was the man who wiped off the caste discrimination through the path of devotion.

He said,

আমাতে ঈশ্বর মতি আপনাকে হীন।  
তার প্রেমে বশ আমি না হই অধীন।।  
আমাকে ত যে যে ভক্ত ভজে যেই ভাবে।  
তার সে সে ভাবে ভজি এ মোর স্বভাবে।<sup>52</sup>

It means that Chaitanyadev does not need to be worshiped as God. He worships his worshippers in the same way as his devotees worship him. Here Chaitanyadev's message of equality as Gandhiji thought about the Harijanas, Swamiji about the Shudras, Rabindranath Tagore about the backward classes of our society; similarly Chaitanyadev wanted to see the lower caste in a high status.

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<sup>52</sup> Kabiraj Krishnadas, *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 48



#### 1.4 Primary Activities of Chaitanya

The arrival of Sri Chaitanyadev was for giving 'Chaitanya', which means consciousness to the unconscious people of the world about God Shri Krishna. Thus, it is natural that his work will be a subject of confabulation. In his childhood whenever Chaitanyadev cried, only the holy name of Sri Hari could stop him from crying. About this Chaitanya Bhagbatkar wrote,

তবে ত কান্দেন প্রভু কমল-লোচন।  
হরিনাম শুনিলে রহেন ততক্ষণ।।  
পরম সঙ্কত এই সবে বুঝিলেন।  
কান্দিলেই হরিনাম সবেই লয়েন।।<sup>53</sup>

But one day anastonishing incident happened. On that day, he was crying continuously although everybody was chanting in front of him. At last when everybody wanted to know the reason, what he said made everybody dumbfounded. Chaitanyadev's desire was to eat the offerings to the God Vishnu, made by two brahmins. In Chaitanya Bhagbat it was written that,

প্রভু বলে যদি মোর প্রাণ রক্ষা চাহ।  
তবে বাট দুই ব্রাহ্মণেরে ঘরে যাহ।।  
জগদীশ পণ্ডিত, হিরণ্য ভাগবত।  
এই দুই স্থানে মোর আছে অভিমত।।  
একাদশী উপবাস আজি সে দোঁহার  
বিষ্ণু লাগি করিয়াছে যত উপহার।।

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<sup>53</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 51

সে সব নৈবেদ্য যদি খাইবারে পাও।

তবে মুঞ্চি সুস্থ হই হাঁটিয়া বেরাও।<sup>54</sup>

He tried to prove it that he is the incarnation of Sri Krishna through his activities. In deep compassion for the people, he travelled all over India on foot. For the peace of the bound and distressed people, he anointed everybody in the stream of cosmic absolute love crossing the territory of Brahmin religion, he hugged everybody, even a Chandal. Because in his language, 'Whoever is a devotee is a Brahmin'. Mahaprabhu was deeply saddened by the example of human corruption in the era of *Kali*. And he also directed the remedy to be released from the action of sin. In this context he said that 'in the era of *Kali*, creatures are corrupted by such evils... Medicines are also strong... One can be released only by chanting the Holy name of the God!' Which holy speech Mahaprabhu carried for the burning creatures... He delivered this Holy speech from door to door dedicating himself.

He did not think that the devoted and short lived people of the era of *Kali* have any requirement of hard pursuit. For this reason Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitanyadev has said again and again that in the era of *Kali* 'Harinam' means the Holy name of Lord Hari, is the only way to get peace. There is no need of so much worships; sacrifices and austerities. Who would chant the Holy name of Shri Hari and it is the only way to be released from the worries of this mundane world. Mahaprabhu also said that 'There are so many dogmas and ways in religion, but the only way will be instructed by the Superman'.<sup>55</sup> During the moment of giving knowledge to Sanatan Goswami about scripture, Mahaprabhu told him that characteristics of a disciple include: descended of pure and honest family, meek, truthfull, sacred, intelligent, unpretentious, calm, tustless, kind, restrained about his senses, devotion to the Guru, and

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<sup>54</sup> Brindaban Das, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Bhagbat*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2014, p. 64

<sup>55</sup> Dayamoyee Majumdar, *Mahajiban Katha: Sri Chaitanya Sri Ramakrishna*, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, Dwitya Mudran, 2014. p. 63

devotedion to the God ect. Who is full of these virtues is the claimant of initiation. The person who receives shelter under his Guru's feet, acquires 'Brahmanjan'. He is the real Guru who teaches his disciple through his own activities and enlightened them by explaining the scriptures. Who desires to get service, fame, money etc is not worthy to be a real Guru. In this context, Mahaprabhu's famous speech was that, 'a person can be a monk or Brahmin or Shudra, does not matter. Who presents the theory of the God Shri Krishna, is thereal Guru, is the best person!'

Again, about a devotee, Mahaprabhu's speech is also very important. About a devotee he says, 'only devotion can subjugate the God... A devotee's desire is only true and pure devotion. To be an ascetic person is the characteristics of a pure devotee. The character of a devotee is to protect dignity, and the quality of an honest person is his dignity'. In this context, Rup Goswami wrote in his 'Bhaktirasamrita Sindhu' Grantha (1/2/101) that devotion to Srimad Bhagbat Gita is not allowed without myth, memories and proof of Adivaidik scripture. Shreel Bhakti Sidhant Saraswati Thakur comments that,

"পেশাদারগুরু, বৃত্তিধারী ভাগবত পাঠক, ভাড়াটে কীর্তনীয়া এবং মনগড়া ভগবৎ-ভজনকারীরা ভক্তিরাজ্যে স্বীকৃত নয়।"<sup>56</sup>

To a rise love for Shri Krishna, man has to adopt five ways of worship. These five ways are,

সাধু সঙ্গ নাম কীর্তন ভাগবত শ্রবণ।

মথুরা বাস শ্রীমূর্ত্তের শ্রদ্ধায় সেবন।<sup>57</sup>

Among these five ways of worship, chanting and listening the holy name of God is mentioned repeatedly. If a person stays alone with the holy name of the God ingeniously, he

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<sup>56</sup> Bhaktivedanta Prabhupad, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhur Sikkha*, Sri Mayapur, Paschimbanga: Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2013, p. 275

<sup>57</sup> Sushil Kumar Chakraborty, *Vaishnav Sahitya*, Kolkata: The Book Company, 1925, p. 130

does not have to go back being empty handed and empty hearted. Because in *Vaishnav Padabali*, it is said that

এক নামাভাসে তোমার পাপ দোষ যাবে।

আর নাম লইতে কৃষ্ণ চরণ পাইবে।।

Chaitanya also says that

ত্ণাদপি সুনীচেন তরোরপি সহিষ্ণুনা।

অমানিনা মানদেন কীর্তনীয় সদা হরি:।।

As the grass does not prevent anybody, does not give pain but it endures all the obstacles and pain, we should be humble just like that. We must tolerate like a tree. Someone who cuts the branches of a tree, it give him shade, shelter and fruit. Just like that if anybody hurts, we should give him shelter and this is the work of a true Vaishnava. Even devotee Haridas Tagore said about the result of 'Nam-Jap-Kirtan' that,

কেহ বলে নাম হইতে হয় পাপ ক্ষয়।

কেহ বলে নাম হইতে জীবের মোক্ষ হয়।।

হরিদাস কহে নামের এ দুই ফল নহে।

নামের ফলে কৃষ্ণ পদে প্রেম উপজয়ে।।

আনুষঙ্গিক ফল নামের মুক্তি পাপনাশ।

তাহার দৃষ্টান্ত যৈছে সূর্যের প্রকাশ।।<sup>58</sup>

But the first saying of Chaitanyadev's theology is that you are the nearest person of all, again without me you cannot live, you are looking at me, you are waiting for me as somebody begging for love. Again the second point is that Ragmarg Bhajan is the way to test the sweet

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<sup>58</sup> Sushil Kumar Chakraborty, *Vaishnav Sahitya*, Kolkata: The Book Company, 1925, p. 133

essence of Braja. Braja-Gopi's love is pure lean and very beautiful. Again Holy chanting and proclamation of love are the third point of Chaitanyadev's theology. How to accomplish Radha's love, how much wonderful it is, he has shown all these things in his life through his own activities. The only happiness means to see the Lord Krishna and sadness means the disappearance of Krishna. There is no other sadness and happiness other than these. Although Sri Chaitanyadev himself was a Sannyasi, he spread Vaishnavism particularly in the southern part of India, he advised his disciples to express their love for the God by rightfully performing all the domestic activities. He said,

হরিনামে যার চক্ষে বহে অশ্রুধারা।

সেই জন হয় মোর নয়নের তারা।।

He was such a believer in the power of 'Harinam' therefore, he advised all to chant the holy name.

'There is no need of yoga, no accomplishment, leaving everything my soul only utters the holy name of Shri Krishna', this was the most important advice of Chaitanyadev. The social and political views of Chaitanyadev became apparent when we notice his activities consecutively. The three most important characteristics of the religion that Chaitanyadev preached through the chanting of 'Harinam' are firstly trying to sing chorus with the help of drum (*Khol* and *Kartal*), it increases the organisational power. He realised the power of united man power and he applied this power against the autocrat.

There was no promotional message. That is why Sukumar Sen said in the first volume of History of Bengali literature that in the sense we use the word 'preaching' now a days, Chaitanyadev was not a preacher in that sense and he never preached any religion. However, one of Chaitanyadev's words hit badly the root of caste system. He said that a devotee is a person to be worshipped. Though a devotee is an untouchable, Chandal, yet he is better than

irreligious Brahmin. Even 'Muchi' 'Yaban/Jaban' who is devoted to Lord Hari is to be worshipped. The Queen took Mantra ('holy chanting') to a Ruidas Muchi, one who mends shoes, Murari Das, who was an untouchable was the Guru of the king. Kshatriya kings and queen accepted water after washing Murari Das's feet. Sadhana, a butcher, was a great devotee. Even the Pandas of Jagannatha accepted the dust and water of Sadhana. Therefore, the untouchable, lower caste people of different classes became very venerable in the society being a Vaishnava. In this era, religion got a new concept, because there was no conflict between daily life activity and religious activity. Chaitanyadev did not give any instruction to his followers to become a leading Brahmin or a monk. His life was beyond all the conflicts and confusions. Secondly, in his gatherings of 'Nam Sankirtan' there was no division of caste and creed. He welcomed each and every human being to join in this occasion. The system of eating which he introduced also was his thought for social welfare. His role in removing untouchability was surprising. That is especially in that milieu. By doing this work Sri Chaitanyadev consciously built up a new social thinking which was the removal of caste system.

Thirdly, Chaitanyadev gave importance to the empowerment of women. He thought that society could not move forward excluding a part of its power which is women's empowerment. So, it was seen that the remarriage of widows or abandoned women was recognized in the Vaishnava religion. This recognition played an important role in social reformation and it had also cut down the trend of the conversion into Islam. The door for women's education was also opened in the vision of Chaitanyadev. During this period the educated Vaishnava women brought the light of education to women of noble families. But it is to be mentioned that Chaitanyadev did not accept disciples like other gurus. Literally, he had no disciple, because in the conventional way he did not initiate anybody. Like other

religious preachers, he never composed any scripture and also never gave any religious lecture.

The way to pursue religion was also very simple, easy, straight forward and not so much expensive. There was no place for scholarly pride in his religion. There were some similarities between the religion of Chaitanyadev and Sufi. Due to which some Marami Muslim devotees felt attracted towards Chaitanyadev's religious views. Cutting off the rules and regulations, Chaitanyadev showed a simple and easy way that was 'Nam Kirtan'. Without judging any caste, creed, and standard, He gave this right to all. He was the first religious leader who gave the people equal right in the field of worship. Therefore, wise person Puntarik Vadyanidhi and Shridha, a pot seller were equally favourite of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Being attracted by his religious views, noble men like Sonatan Roop, and Raghunath Majumdar also visited him.

He was the first social leader who united common people to protest against injustice. He has established our identity with our birth right Sri Chaitanya had such a special mentality that it was not possible for him to look down upon or underestimate anyone. This equal attitude enhanced the acceptance of his religious doctrines. One of the greatest contribution of Chaitanyadev is that he makes the way of worship very simple. In his religion the main way of worship is devotion.<sup>59</sup> Although Chaitanya did not write any theological book, yet Gaudiya Vaishanava constituted the 'Dashamul Shloka' as his own writing. Chaitanyadev's Guru was from Magadha community. For this reason Chaitanyadev considered himself as a part of that community. Shankarachariya said that 'Nirgun Brahma' is the ultimate theory, but Chaitanyadev opposed this opinion. The later said that the ultimate/absolute theory is that we have a very intimate love and affection with Brahma who is the master and creator of this world. According to Chaitanyadev, the second characteristic is that, Krishna and Radha are

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<sup>59</sup> Arundhuti Mukhopadhyay (Roy), *Chaitanya Lok Samaj O Sahitya*, Memari: Avenel Press, 2014, p. 23

considered as the God and his power respectively. And here the God, the creatures, and this material world are joined in an absolute affinity. Mahaprabhu said that ‘Lord Krishna is the ultimate Brahma and this world is created out of his affection’. The Power by which he can appear in many shapes is call *Bilash* power, which is spiritual power of Sri Krishna. This power is of two types: *Baivab Bilas* and *Pravab Bilas*.<sup>60</sup> Chaitanyadev has created the feelings of unity in our divided Hindu society through the religion of devotion. Though he did not violate the rules and regulations of Brahmins, he evoked people in the field of ‘Harinam Sangkirtan’. He said,

চণ্ডাল চণ্ডাল নহে – যদি কৃষ্ণ বলে।

বিপ্র নহে বিপ্র – যদি অসৎ পথে চলে।।

[Sri Chaitanya Bhagavata, 1st Chapter]

He removed untouchability. He broke idolatry worship which was referred in Varnashram system and controlled by the medieval Brahmin, scripture. Instead of worshiping the God in a temple, people began to like ‘Harinam Sangkirtan’ openly which was called ‘Nagar Sangkirtan’. In that state Chaitanyadev encouraged the oppressed people to think about the God through the religion of devotion. One of Chaitanyadev’s greatest contribution is to expand the ambit of the Hindu religion by making a bloodless religious revolution through democratic movement in the pursuit of the three words ‘Krishna-Rama-Hari’. When Chaitanyadev was in Dwaraka, his eyes filled with tears by seeing some blind, lame, distressed poor beggars, standing in the corner of the street. All of them came to get his ‘Prasad’ from the Temple,

পশুদের মধ্যে গিয়া গোরা গুনমনি।

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<sup>60</sup> Arundhuti Mukhopadhyay (Roy), *Chaitanya Lok Samaj O Sahitya*, Memari: Avenel Press, 2014, p. 20



প্রসাদ বন্টন প্রভু করেন আপনি।।

With the power of Mahaprabhu's mercy, the door of the temple opened. The distressed people got a place in the main stream of society. A new religion of humanity was awakened. After giving Sanatan Goswami the education of devotion, Mahaprabhu sent him to Brindaban and gave the charge of formulating Vaishnava scripture.

তুমিই করিহ ভক্তি শাস্ত্রের প্রচার।

মধুরায় লুপ্ত তীর্থের করহ উদ্ধার।।

বৃন্দাবনে কৃষ্ণ সেবা বৈষ্ণব আচার।

ভক্তি স্মৃতি শাস্ত্রে করিহ প্রচার।।

Among the three Goswamis Rup was a poet, Sanatan was Vaishnava theologian, and Jiv was a philosopher. They had a special connection with the Vaishnava society of Navadwip. The base of Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy was built upon 'Achintavedaved theory', which is a part of Radha Krishna Theory, and this theory was formulated and innovated by Jiv Goswami. He gave the importance upon the worship of Radha and Krishna in pair. He had great contribution in the extension of Vaishnavism. Nityananda is worshipped as the international of the Lord Balarama in Gaudiya Vaishnava society and as a representative of Chaitanyadev, he spread Vaishnavism throughout the country.

After taking Sannyas, Chaitanyadev went to the house of Advaitacharya and on hearing it even Raghunath Das arrived there and asked for the acceptance of Sannyas, he prayed to Chaitanyadev. But Raghunath's prayer was not granted

স্থির হও ঘরে যাও না হও বাতুল।

ক্রমে ক্রমে পায় লোকে ভবসিদ্ধি কুল।।

মৰ্কট বৈৰাগ্য না কৰ লোক ভাঙ্গাইয়া।

যথা যোগ্য বিষয় ভূজ অনাসক্ত হইয়া।।<sup>61</sup>

Later, while staying at the house of Sri Raghav Pandit in Panihati in 24 Parganas, Chaitanyadev organised a food festival and there Raghunath Das got the opportunity to come in contact with Chaitanyadev. Sri Ramakrishna is invited every year to Sri Chaitanyadev's food festival in Panihati, but he could not attend it for a few years. On June 18 of 1883, he expressed his interest for going but due to his throat problem everyone objected his going. Because if he sings devotional song (*kirtan*) and becomes thoughtful the disease will increase and therefore everyone objected. However, Sri Ramkrishna promised everyone that he would be very careful so that there are create no trouble. And he will eat some rice from home in the early morning and he could not stay long for any cost. Then he said to his devotees, 'you all are young Bengal means young people, you never see such occasion, let's see on that day there sits the fair of happiness and Harinam, let's see'.<sup>62</sup>

Before the arrival of Chaitanyadev, the Vaishnavas used to chant 'Nam Kirtan' but Chaitanyadev added a new dimension to this. The Vaishnavas of preChaitanya era used to chant *kirtan* in the house behind people's eyesight. But Chaitanyadev brought it out from the closed Chamber. It is said in *Chaitanya Charitamrita* that

চারিদিকে চারি সম্প্রদায় উঁচৈ স্বরে গায়।

মধ্যে তান্দব নৃত্য করে গৌর রায়।।

বহুক্ষণ নৃত্য করি প্রভু স্থির হৈলা।

চারি মহান্তরে তবে নাচিতে আঞ্জা দিলা।।

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<sup>61</sup> Bhakti Sidhanta Saraswati, *Sri Chaitanyadev*, Shri Mayapur: Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, 2009, p. 14

<sup>62</sup> Dayamoyee Majumdar, *Mahajiban Kotha: Sri Chaitanya Sri Ramakrishna*, Dwitya Muduran, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers 2014, p. 39

মধ্যে রহি মহাপ্রভু করেন দর্শন।

তাহা এক ঐশ্বর্য্য হইল প্রকটন।।<sup>63</sup>

It means, he instructed to the people of each and every community to sing the holy name. The impact of this proclamation was first felt by the people of Navadwip. For this reason, Ramakanta Chakraborty said that to ‘the wise society of Navadwip, the *kirtan* had much limitation and this proves that as a teacher and a scholar Chaitanyadev had no importance there.’<sup>64</sup> Apart from this minimum limitation, it can be said that the novelty of Chaitanyadev’s ‘Nagar Kirtan’ flooded Bangladesh. And his famous speech, ‘a true Chandal devotee is much better than a Brahmin’ hit the base of the caste system of the contemporary society. This great social activist and reformer passed away on 29 June in 1540, according to Lochan Das's *Chaitanyamangal*, but there is no accurate information about his death. Only a passing remark is seen in Dayanand and Lochan Das's *Chaitanyamangal*, and it is

তৃতীয় প্রহর বেলা রবিবার দিনে।

জগন্নাথে লীন প্রভু হইলা আপনে।।

It was said that while being delirious in genuine love with Lord Krishna, one day Chaitanyadev entered the temple of Lord Jagannatha at the age of 48, but he was never seen coming out again from the temple. As a result his followers deduced that he melted away in the idol Lord Jagannatha, though it is not proved properly, thus there is still a space for suspicion about its accuracy.

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<sup>63</sup> Krishnadas Kabiraj, *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, edited by Sri Dilip Mukhopadhyay, Kolkata: Benimadhab Shils Library, Reprint 2011, p. 278

<sup>64</sup> Ramakanta Chakraborty, *Bange Vaishnav Dharma*. Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, Dwitya Mudran, 2007, p. 70