CHAPTER - 3
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INFLUENCE OF VEDANTA IN ASSAMESE
VAISNAVITE LITERATURE

“All religious movements are generally accompanied with and assisted by the efflorescence of a new literature. There was a vaisnava literature in Assam which uphold and beautified the cult of bhakti, and its sweetness and attraction compelled people to the side of Sankaradeva” (Neog, M.: 1998: 156). Sankaradeva was the greatest spiritual leader of a great literary renaissance. As a matter of fact, Assamese Vaisnave literature came into prominence with the rise of the Neo-Vaisnavite Bhakti Movement initiated by the great saint. Sankaradeva is a versatile genius and prolific writer. They made systematic attempt through the media of literature for the spread of the humanistic message of religion. “The great age of literature consisted of a constellation of stars and manifested itself in all prevailing literary forms like poetry, including epic narratives, musical lyrics, drama prose narratives etc.” (Mahanta, P.: 2007 : 37). The Ramayana was read, translated and dramatized during this period. Undoubtedly Sankaradeva was the greatest figure who formed the centre as well as the ideal of all literary works of the great age.

The Assamese vaisnavite literature rich and varied, unique in style and language is made up of comprehensive literary and artistic genius of authors. The neo-vaisnave movement in Assam which was backed by a strong literary
upsurge found expression in the translation of the epics and the puranas, the adaptation of the puranic episodes in the form of independent kavyas, devotional works explaining the types and modes of devotion, lyrics, dramas and the biographies of vaisnava saints.

Sankaradeva inspires a host of contemporary and following scholars. Around Sankaradeva centered a galaxy of several other artists, composers of the age. “Madhavadeva, the most brilliants amongst them, Rama Saraswati, the most voluminous, Ananta Kandali a pleasant story taller in prose Vaikunthanath Bhattacharya or Bhattadeva and Gopala Carana Dvija, the prose writers and a host of other minor satellites” (Neog, M.: 1998: 156). They clustered together to raise a vigorous literary movement. As a result, the period saw the efflorescence of a new literature i.e. Vaisnava literature. Thus, this period is best described as the age of Sankaradeva which is the ‘Golden Age’ in Assamese literature. The present Assamese language and literature are largely indebted for its growth and vitality to Sankaradeva and the galaxy of his vaisnavite followers.

The Vaisnava ideology and its consequent literature was prevalent even before the advent of Sankaradeva. In that period, there was no lack of vaisnavite scholars and poet who contributed towards the enrichment of Assamese vaisnave literature. “The history of Assamese language and literature dates back to around tenth century.” (Neog, M.: 1987: 47: A). But no definite literary specimen of that formative period of Assamese literature is available except the Caryapadas. The predecessors of Sankaradeva like Madhavadeva,
Hema Saraswati and Harivara Vipra, who wrote in the fourteenth century, Assamese language and its literary forms blossom with enriched versifications. And the only hitherto extant material available in between the Caryapadas and the pre-vaishnava composers are the folk traditions of ballads, songs and magic incantations. It is a well known fact that of all preceding poets Madhava Kandali was the brightest star in the firmament whom Sankaradeva too pays high tributes in the choicest possible phraseology, as

\[
\text{purvakavi apramadati madhava kandali adi} \\
pade viracila rama katha
\]

(Baruah Dutta, H.N. (ed.) :1960 : 44)

Sankaradeva calls Madhava Kandali as the unerring predecessor poet. Thus, Sankaradeva received from his predecessor a highly developed literary language and embellished verse form In this context, it is worthwhile to remember the galaxy of poets of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of Assam who had left behind a vibrant poetic tradition and sowed the seeds of vaishnavism before the advent of Sankaradeva. The pre-sankarite poets also laid a solid foundation of Assamese epic poetry with a vaishnava tinge before Sankaradeva and other vaishnava poets took up poetry as a principal medium of message during the Bhakti Movement. The literary works of these poets reflected a glow of Vaishnavite consciousness latent in the contemporary social mind.

After Sankaradeva and Madhava deva, Rama Saraswati is the most prominent of all vaishnava poets considered from the truth of his compositions
for which Maheswar Neog called him the 'most voluminous' poet. He translated most of the Mahabharata verses into Assamese a newer and popular form of epic narrative called 'Vadha Kavya' based on death and destructions of demons representing all that is evil. The Mahabharata tradition is believed to have percolated to Assam as early as on the fourth century A.D. Madhava Kandali explains through his 'Vadha-Kavya' the supremacy of the Lord Krishna as the name of Rama. But, no co-ordinated effort was made to render the great epic into the vernacular through episodic treatments were made by several poets at different periods. Thus, Rama-saraswati rendering of the Mahabharata was a trend setting event in the History of Assamese Vaisnavite literature and also a massive contribution to the colourful body of vaisnava poetry.

Ananta Kandali was a poet of great eminence and a writer of distinguished scholarship of the neo-vaishnavite period of Assamese literature which flowered in the sixteenth century A.D. He was a prominent member of that batch of brilliant poet litterateur who undertook the task of producing varied types of literature under the inspiring leadership of the great Sankaradeva. The 'Dasama Skanda' of the Bhagavata Purana was translated by Ananta Kandali following the advice of Sankaradeva. He had constantly to kept his regardful eyes on the works of Sankaradeva in the task of rendering Book X. His indebtedness to Sankaradeva is evident in respect of the subject matter, the style and the ideology. Ananta Kandali was a noted Sanskrit scholar of the age having mastery in Vyakarana (grammar) and philosophy. His main works are — Kumara
Harana Kavya, Vrtrasnka-Vadha-Kavya, Kalpadruma, Vaisnavamrta, Jiva-tuli, Ramayana (Books-II, III and IV) and Dosama (XL, VIII-XC). He composes varied books with a view to propagating bhaktism among the non-elite village folk. Ananta Kandali holds a unique place in the domain of Assamese literature.

The Vaisnava renaissance literature gradually came to proximity with Bhattadeva who was the last bright star of the galaxy. Bhattadeva was one of the foremost vaisnava saints and a reputed prose writer of the sixteenth century. "Bhattadeva's works are important steps towards the great achievements of Assamese philosophical and narrative prose." (Kakati, B (ed.): 1959 : 133 article by Baruah B.K.). His prose is mainly narrative and argumentative in character. Bhattadeva learnt grammar, kavya, smriti, Bhagavata philosophy in course of time and developed skill and expertise in them all. The literary works of Bhattadeva are — Bhagavata Katha, Katha-Gita, Bhakti- ratnavali-Katha, Bhakti-Sara, Bhakti-viveka and Sarana-Sangraha. Almost the whole of the Sri-Gita-Katha is narrative which transmits to the reader, the different incarnations of Visnu and their deeds. Bhattadeva's Bhakti-Viveka is an imprinted form of the essence of Purana, Upanisadas and different Sanhitas. With the help of his creative excellence, Bhattadeva enriched the store of Assamese literature by reproducing the essence of Bhagavata purana, Gita, Visnu Purana, Padma Purana, Chandogya Upanisad, Kathopanisad, Manusanhita, Visnu-rahasya etc. He wrote Bhagavata-katha and Katha-gita, two very considerable works, all in prose and created a landmark in the history of Assamese literature. And at some places, not withstanding, his best effort
to minimize the intricate philosophical contents in his rendering, Bhattadeva could scarcely do away what constituted some of the most radiant and beautiful parts of the original work and in such places his prose naturally turned into being argumentative.

The central text of Assam Vaisnavism are the Gita and the Bhagavata Purana which have been rendered into verse and prose by Sankaradeva, Bhattadeva and Ananta Kandali. Assamese Vaisnavite literature covers the main texts of the upanisads and the teaching of the Bhagavata and few other Vedanta texts and represents the ideals and philosophy of Vaisnavism which is for common man of this age. The main theme of all vaisnavite literature are to highlight the supremacy of Lord Krishna or Visnu, the object of worship and devotion of Krishna, who is pure knowledge and consciousness, absolute truth and perfection. He is Sat-Cit-Anada. Everything else is the product of maya or illusion as His act of sport. The qualities and names of Krishna, the qualityless and formless, are beyond the three gunas of maya or prakrti and all the rest are subject to maya. This brings vaisnavite literature solely relies on bhakti and surrender to and service of God and His created beings.

Sankaradeva did not want to create a new philosophical system. Assamese vaisnavite literature accepted the Bhagavata as the principal scripture to construct their philosophy. So, they developed a unique religious philosophy for the common people of Assam, based on the humanity. In the majority of the Assamese vaisnavite literature, the philosophy is generally kept in the background. The philosophy of the Bhagavata and the Gita is reflected in the
vaisnavite literature. Vedanta philosophy inheres in the Bhagavata Purana. So, the reflection of Vedanta is found in the vaisnavite literature. It is because, not to speak of other vaisnavite saints, even Sankaradeva was primarily a speculative thinker. "He propagated a simple system based on devotion and faith and his religion was never a thing of discursive reasoning and abstract thinking." (Sarma, S.N.: 1996:25). Although, Sankaradeva and his followers did not deem it necessary to formulate an independent philosophical system, yet they did not leave out the theological questions altogether. Devotional works or other digests have dealt with theological questions which give us a considerable idea of the philosophical and ethical principles of the sect. It should be mentioned that though they have dealt with the philosophical problems yet they have not done them systematically. As their works are mainly translations and compilations.

The philosophy of the Bhagavata Purana is the philosophy of the Assamese vaisnavite literature. "Bhagavata is not a systematic work on philosophy. It is more religious than philosophical. Yet it has a philosophical basis (Chetia, B.: 1999 : 37). Theoretically, it is absolute monism and from practical point of view, it preaches dharma, the means of realizing God with selfless motive and total devotion. The Assam school of Vaisnavism derived its devotional theology mainly from the Bhagavata Purana and the Bhagavad-gita. "Bhagavata is the essence of the Vedanta." (Bhagavata Purana: XIII :15). It is true that a theoretical homage is paid to the Vedas, but the authorities cited by the reformers are invariably the vaisnava puranas and more particularly the
Bhagavata Purana. S.N. Dasgupta writes as “It may be generally appear rather surprising to find such extreme idealistic monism in the Bhagavata but there are numerous passages which show that an extreme form of monism recures now and then as one of the principal lines of thought. (Dasgupta, S.N., Vol-IV : 1991 : 33). The Bhagavata Purana is regarded as the essence of all sastras, hence it is the supreme authority. Almost in every devotional work atleast a few lines in praise of the Bhagavata are found. Most of the Bhakti literature, written with a view to formulating the Vaisnava dogmaties are compilations from Puranas and Tantras and the Bhagavata Purana has supplied three fourths of these materials. The greatest poetry of this period had the child Krishna as the main source of inspiration and the Bhagavata Purana in general was the most widely discussed single work. Since the Bhagavata Purana is the basis of Assamese vaisnavite literature and most of the vaisnavite literature is the translation of Bhagavata, it is natural that it will find the trace and streaks of vedanta philosophy in Assamese vaisnavite literature. B. Upadhaya in his work on Indian philosophy also categorically speaks of the predominance of the Advaita view on the Bhagavata Purana (Upadhaya : 1959 : 476).

Sridharsvami, a Sankarite Sanyasi, interpreting the philosophy of the Bhagavata Purana and that of the Bhagavadgita, compared two commentaries viz. Bhabartha-Dipika and Subodhini (C-1400). In fact “Sridhara interpret the chief Bhakti works, the Bhagavatgita, the Visnu-Purana, and the Bhagavata-Purana as a true devotee but never relinquishes the position of an Advaitin.” (Neog, M. : 1998 : 224). Ananta Kandali and Bhattacheva accepted the
commentary of Sridhara with great respect and made the best use of it while interpreting the Bhagavata-Purana. The Bhagavata-Bhavartha-Dipika by Sridharsvami has been hailed as the one of the best of the various commentaries on the Bhagavata-Purana. J.N. Farqukar observes “He (Sridhara) was clearly an excellent scholar and he must have had access to a very trustworthy tradition. His interpretation of the Purana is advaitist, since he was a follower of Sankara and since the Bhagavata tends to be monist, his Dipika is usually regarded as the most authoritative” (Farqukar, J.N.: 1925: 297). The writings of Ananta Kandali and Bhattadeva were based on these commentaries, of course, with some alterations where they felt necessary. They also treated the Bhagavata Purana and the Gita as the authority of their philosophical views. Almost they leans back upon the Bhagavata-Bhavartha-Dipika of Sridharsvami in respect of the interpretation of the Bhagavata Purana. Sridharsvami combined and tempered the severe monistic idealism of Advaita with the emotionalism of bhakti in such a way as to make it acceptable to the Advaita schools. His interpretation of the Bhagavata Purana is advaita-biased, since Sridharsvami was a follower of Sankaracharya. Regarding Sridharsvami’s view, S.K. Dey writes as “About the time of Sridhara there must have grown a tendency of tempering the severe monistic idealism of the Advaita school with devotional worship of a personal God. Sridhar appears to have given a definite expression to this tendency in his well known commentaries on the Bhagavata, the Gita and the Visnu purana in which he
acknowledges Sankara’s teachings as authoritative but considers bhakti as the best means of Advaita Mukti” (Dey, S.K.: 1961:14).

There are remarkable influences of Sridharasvami’s two commentaries on the interpretation of the Bhagavata Purana of Sankaradeva, Ananta Kandali and Bhattadeva and also in the interpretations of the Bhagavadgita by Madhavadeva (in Namghosa). Sridharasvami softened the hardness of Advaita Monism with the Bhaktivada. There is great influence of such Bhaktivada mixed with monism on the theology and philosophy of Assam Vaisnavism. Of course, it is worthmentioning that the great saint Sankaradeva and his successors nowhere tries to establish an independent system of thought and as such the philosophical views of their systems have to be culled from the extensive literary works of Sankaradeva, Madhavadeva, Bhattadeva, Ananta Kandali and other vaisnavite litterateurs.

According to vaisnavite writings, the personified supreme reality is ‘Narayana’. Though, the Assamese vaisnavite literature did not represent a consistent philosophy, yet the inclination towards advaitism is as prominent as that of the Bhagavata Purana which undoubtedly exercised the greatest influence in shaping its faith and teachings. Sridharsvami is generally believed to have belonged to the Advaita school of thought and hence it is no wonder that his commentary Bhavartha-Dipika would interpret the Bhagavata from the Advaita’s point of view. His commentary tends further weight to the monistic tendency inherent in the Bhagavata Purana. “The Bhagavata Purana did not earn much popularity at the time of Ramanuja, is evident from the
fact that in Ramanuja’s writings there is no mention of the said Purana (Dasgupta, S.N. Vol-IV: 1991:61). In Assam Vaisnavism, Bhagavata Purana with Sridharsvami’s commentary is very much popular and much importance is given to the latter by the vaisnava sect (Neog, M.:1987:61:B). Therefore, it has reasons to believe that Jagadish Misra, a Brahmin from Tirhut and author of Bhagavata-Bhaktiratnavali, brought the Bhagavata Purana which contained Sridharsvami’s commentary.

In the Vaisnavite literature while interpreting the existence of God, the preacher of Bhakti-cult in Assam took the essence of the Upanisads as embodied in the Bhagavata Purana. They did not take the help of Vedanta-Sutra in this respect. Ananta Kandali’s philosophy of life, as found in his works, came only after his poetry. He made attempts to propagate the doctrine of Bhakti through his poetical works, in the light of Sankaradeva’s ideals. So, Ananta Kandali first ranks as a poet, not as a philosopher. All the vaisnava litterateur of the time regarded bhakti to the sumum-bonum. Devotional works like Bhakti-ratnakara, Bhakti-viveka, Bhakti-ratnavali and Namghosa have dealt with theological questions from which one can have a considerable idea of the theological and ethical principles of the sect. But, the relation between God and the soul, the nature of the phenomenal world and the like questions have not been systematically answered. Almost all the works of vaisnavite literature are translations and compilations. No original theological work or commentary on any fundamental scripture was written by them. Therefore, it is not possible to get a clear philosophical view of the sect. Nevertheless, a
rough idea of their philosophical views can be formed from the numerous translations and compilations left by them.

According to Bhagavata-Purana, God is the ultimate reality of the universe and He may be called Brahman, Paramatman, Bhagavata, Narayana, Visnu, Hari etc. (Bhagavata Purana: I, II, III). Though, God is called by different names, in His pure essence, He is formless, pure consciousness. God as pure consciousness is beyond the grasp of our knowledge. It cannot be described in words. It is realized only in direct experience known as vijnana. From the standpoint of jnana, this absolute becomes a personal God who creates, maintains and destroys the whole universe. He is both material and efficient cause of the universe. God is both immanent and transcendent. The Assam school of vaisnavism doesnot deny the nirguna aspect of God. But, the vaisnava writers have laid more stress on the personal aspect of God. In this context, Ananta Kandali in his ‘Dasama’ narrates the two fold aspects of God, which is evident in the prayer of Mucukunda as –”O, Gunamaya (possessor of all qualities), relinquishing all desires and happiness, I seek Thy shelter. Thou art nirguna, the undecaying Purusa and Brahman (V-309). Again, from the standpoint of devotion, the Saguna aspect of God has been specially extolled. God in this aspect is called Saguna Brahman or Isvara in Sankaracharya’s philosophy. Bhattacharya also explains the God as the Ultimate Reality as –
[In Bhagavadgita, Srikrishna has told Dhananjoy or Arjuna that all the creatures are the branches of the ‘Samsara Tree’ of the world and the ultimate truth is ‘Bhagavanta’ or ‘God’].

\[
\text{eke bhagavanta matra sarana loyoka}
\]
\[
\text{loiyo veda puranata pramana pratyaka}
\]

\[\text{Bhakti viveka : 108}\]

[There is one God and the ultimate surrender should be done before him. It is proved in vedas and puranas].

In the vedastuti (prayer of the vedas to the Lord) Ananta Kandali says as “As the qualities cannot conceal Brahman, so, the saguna aspect of God, cannot mar the nirguna aspect of Brahman. Hence, He may be called both saguna and nirguna (Dasama : V - 3967).

According to Bhagavata Purana Saguna Brahman or Isvara is the object of worship. The adorable God is personal and immanent. Ananta Kandali states that the original unmanifested and undifferentiated Brahman manifests as Narayana for creation (Vaisnavamrta :V-4). He uses terms – viz. Krishna, Hari, Bhagavata, Narayana, Visnu, Madhava, Keshava as synonyms without
maintaining any subtle distinction amongst them. Bhattadeva also explains as—

\[
\text{sarvavyapi antaryami karma adhistata} \\
\text{nirvikara nirguna caitanya sarvasastra}
\]

(Bhakti viveka: III)

[God is omnipresent, omniscient, cause of all actions. He is nirvikara or indifferent, qualityless or nirguna, consciousness and the creator of all].

Bhattadeva took the example of fire and sun as -

\[
\text{ekake agni gurah rupe sevate asnta} \\
\text{kasthadi bhedata yena bahurupa hanta} \\
\text{bahire bhitare hari asa sehi mata} \\
\text{deha upadhiye bhinna dekhiyo saksata.}
\]

(Bhakti viveka: 112)

[The fire is same everywhere, but it looks different in a burning wood. Likewise, God is same everywhere inside and outside but He is perceived differently in different shape and form]

\[
\text{yena surya jagataka prakasa karaya} \\
\text{jagatara dosa gune tanka suibe naparaya} \\
\text{sehimate hari dehadika prakasanta} \\
\text{karo dose tanka suibe naparanta}
\]

(Bhakti viveka: 114)

[The way sun enlighten the world and remains unaffected by its vice and virtue, God also enlightens the body of the creatures but still remains uninfluenced by the qualities of it].
Vedanta philosophy reflects in Bhattadeva’s extract from the Sribhagavata-katha, as-vidura asked “Oh Maitreya, how do the sports like the creation of the universe which is subject to the limits of qualifications accrue from the Lord, who is beyond qualification? You say that the sports are done for the sake of unreal individual selves, but that is not possible. Will you please remove the doubt of my mind why the individual self which is no other than Brahman, where consciousness is never suspended by space and time is subjected to the cycle of rebirths wrought by nescience.

Maitreya said “Know you this Vidura, that it is Hari’s maya which remains inexplicable, because of which the unreal cycle of rebirths seen in the individual’s self, just as one’s own head is seen falsely cutoff. If you seek to argue, why do we not see it (the unreal cycle of rebirth) in Isvara have a parallel phenomenon, just as one sees trembling and other phenomenon in the image of the moon but not in the moon itself, so, also it is the individual self and not Isvara who undergoes the cycle of rebirth. Therefore, if one practices devotion towards Isvara, the cycle goes away automatically.

From, the above conversational and argumentative prose of Bhattadeva it is evident that the Advaita Vedanta like world is unreal, only world is the creation of maya, Brahman is nirguna or qualityless reflects in his writings.

Bhagavata preaches the doctrine of Maya as the eternal power of God. This God and maya are also called purusa and prakrti. But Bhagavata concept of purusa and prakrti are different from Samkhya Darsana (Chetia, B. : 1999: 89). In samkhya, prakrti is an independent entity and all the evolutes are real.
In the Bhagavata, prakrti has no independent existence of its own but an inseparable energy or shakti of God or Purusa and Purusa takes the place of the Absolute as well as the personal God. Maya or Prakrti of the Bhagavata produces an unreal world which appears as real. The Samkhya conception of purusa cannot take the place of God of religion, while in Bhagavata the purusa is God and also the absolute or Brahman. Maya is an illusory power of Brahman, which is nothing but an illusion producing ignorance. From this standpoint, Maya is called ajnana or avidya (ignorance). Ananta Kandali explains that maya is the maid servant of Brahman. Maya is like a female monkey, who dances according to the direction of God. Maya conceals the supreme joy of devotion and exposes the attachment towards the sansara or phenomenal world. God with the help of maya creates the world, protects it and destroys it. But, He Himself is different manifestations of maya. (Dasama:V-3995, 3997, 3989, 3977, 3978).

In Vedanta Philosophy, unlike the Samkhya system, maya has no independent reality. Ananta Kandali explains maya as a power of God and it is absolutely dependent on God (Dasama: V-1617). Bhattadeva also explains maya in his Bhakti viveka as -

\[
\text{sansaya sakala} \quad \text{mayara bhitara} \\
\text{janiba taka nishaya} \\
\text{sansara brikkhara} \quad \text{mula bhagavanta} \\
\text{sansaraka mayamaya} \\
\text{jito jane tara} \quad \text{apuni guchaya} \\
\text{samule sansara bhaya}
\]

\((V-55)\)
[It should surely be known that doubt is always there in maya. God is at the root of the ‘Tree’ of this world; And this world is an illusion who is wise enough to know this fact he is free from fear of this worldly life].

In the first skandha of Bhagavata, Bhattadeva also called maya as avidya or ignorance. This ignorance can be removed with the wisdom derived from devotion to Hari or God.

pase mora harita akhandita mati hoila
ji matie dehatma viveka jnana bhoila

(Katha-Bhagavata-Ist Skandha : 26, 28)

[The firm knowledge derived from devotion to Hari makes creature realise that the ultimate truth of jivas or individual selves is Param-Brahman who is beyond maya. And it is this we can imagine the minute or magnanimous physical form].

The embodied self, the enjoyer of the fruits of actions is called jiva. The individual self is a part of the Absolute Being. The gross body which is perceived by us, like every other object, from the empirical standpoint seems to be real, but from the transcendental point of view it is merely an illusory appearance.

upadhira bhede bhede dekhiyo yadyapi
paramartha bhede nahi janiba tathapi
eke veda mantra kahe suna yatnakari
sakalo pranite ase eke deva hari

(Bhattadeva-Bhakti viveka : 110)
Hari is present in every creature. Though, He is perceived and addressed in different ways, His essence is one and only and this is what has been said by the Vedas and mantras.

Soul is the real one, which is no other than the Ultimate Being. Just as the same fire manifests differently or as the one sky may be perceived from different places, in the same manner, Paramatman is only one identity in all beings. The ignorant consider Him as many due to the influence of Maya (Dasama: V-705, 706, 707). Bhattadeva explains as:

\[
\text{samasta pranita mota bheda nedekhanta}
\]

\[
\text{brahma visnu hara tini eke bhagavanta}
\]

(Bhakti viveka: 130)

The essence of God in all creatures has no distinction and Brahma, Visnu and Hara (Siva) are the three different incarnation of one God or Bhagavanta.

According to Ananta Kandali, Prakrti is an inherent power of Brahman and both purusa and prakrti are ajas (uncreated). And prakrti is nothing but the creative energy of Brahman (Vaisnavamrta: V-4). So, Ananta Kandali’s prakrti seems to be nearer to Maya of the Advaita doctrine of Vedanta.

Thus, the Vaisnavite literature was not composed only for the literary interest, the writers rather created a humanistic religious consciousness among the common people. Bhattadeva’s works are important steps towards the great achievement of Assamese philosophical and narrative prose. He
created a sure footed expository prose style with an eye to grammatical perfection. His conversational and argumentative prose style of Katha-Gita served as a model and pattern to the Vaisnavite prose writers of philosophical matters of later years. The Vaisnava writers of Assam explains that mukti lies inherent in Bhakti. It is clear that there is a strong tendency in Bhattadeva and Ananta Kandali's works towards advaitism with its concomitant mayavada. Of course, in a few cases dualistic tendencies are also evident, yet the predominance of the monistic view is more conspicuous than the dualistic view. Acceptance of mayavada of Idealistic Monism, recognition of the identity of jiva with Isvara are few characteristics from which it can be assumed that Ananta Kandali and Bhattadeva leaned towards the monistic view.