CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION
Spirituality is the core of Indian life. Because of this Indian culture retained its identity inspite of onslaughts, alien rule, colonial exploitation from time to time. The fact remains that every civilization has its growth, decay and degeneration despite the rich cultural heritage, the history of Indian civilization is marked by cultural upsurge and degradation. Sri Chaitanya was born in a time when India was passing through a phase of transition. It was a time when the social life was characterised by materialism, discrimination, religious superstition and exploitation. It was at such juncture that Sri Chaitanya offered bhakti as a way of life which will help the individual to reach the state of perfection. His conception of bhakti is a kind of social radicalism. The purpose of bhakti-movement was dissemination of values of Hinduism among the lower and middle classes by expressing them in a language accessible to common man. According to him a person, an untouchable cāndāla is not an untouchable if he
utters the name of Krishna with loving devotion but a Brahmin no longer remains a Brahmin if he chooses the path contrary to spiritual life.

Cāndāla cāndāla nahe yadi Kṛṣṇa vale
Vipra nahe vipra yadi asatpathe cale.¹

He sought to create a social cohesion through common corpus, of religious values. Chaitanya's life was an experiment with theory and practice of bhakti. According to him, theory and practice are two aspects of the same process. The beliefs and practices of bhakti aim at helping the individual to have the experience of love. The māyā sakti causes creation, sustenance and dissolution of world but it does not affect his real self. Sri Chaitanya does not accept advaitic view that phenomenal world is illusory. Bhagavān through his own māyā-sakti limits himself to partial manifestation called paramātman. Regarding the nature of jīva and Bhagavān, Sri Chaitanya says that both consist of pure consciousness but jīva is affected by māyā sakti though Bhagavān is not. As Bhagavān is the possessor of māyā sakti and pure

¹ Chaitanya Bhagavata, p.120.
consciousness of jiva is clouded by māyā śakti, the jiva can overcome the ignorance caused by māyāśakti due to the grace of Bhagavān. In this sense Sri Chaitanya and his followers justify their claim that single-minded devotion or bhakti is the only path for reaching to the svarupa śakti of the Lord or the highest state.

The unique contribution of Sri Chaitanya to metaphysics is his doctrine of acintya-bhedābheda which is an attempt to explain the relation between self, God and world exhaustively. Samkara explains the relation as advaita or anirvacaniya, Rāmānuja explains it through aprthaksiddhi, Jainas explain it through the concept of avayakta. Sri Chaitanya says that the relation cannot be explained by complete identity as it will give rise to a tautology. Similarly if God and soul are treated as completely different then the principle of oneness would be contradicted giving rise to dualism. According to Vaishnava philosophers the relation between God and self is not merely identical or different, but it is beyond logical conceptualisation. The inconceivable
relation of difference and identity is known as acintya-bhedābheda - the theory that immanence and transcendence are untied in the Lord.

Sri Chaitanya makes a radical departure from the advaitic concepts of Brahman, Jiva and world. According to him, the absolute is one and indivisible. It manifests itself as Brahman, Paramātman and Bhaqavān. Bhaqavān is the most primitive concept. It is the basis of all that is intelligible. Brahman is an unqualified state of Brahman and is the incomplete manifestation of Bhaqavān. Paramātman is a state higher than Brahman but is not complete manifestation of Bhaqavān as it is conditioned by jiva śakti and māyā śakti. Bhaqavān is the ultimate reality in its complete manifestation. Sri Chaitanya explains the nature of Bhaqavān and his relation to the self and world is through the concept of śakti. Though Bhaqavān has infinite śaktis, the most important are cit śakti, māyā śakti and jiva śakti. Cit śakti otherwise known as svarupa sakti has three aspects; samādhi, samvit
and hiādini referring to the predominance of sat, cit, and ananda respectively.

The concept of bhakti of Sri Chaitanya is the message of love pure and simple. But every religion and ethics is rooted in a kind of metaphysics otherwise it will be unintelligible and would be a kind of dogma. So Sri Chaitanya had to reconstruct a metaphysical view based on the metaphysics of Bhaqavata which suits to his doctrine of bhakti. Bhakti is a type of devotion towards the ultimate reality. Now the devotee must have a clear picture and conviction of the nature of ultimate reality. Sri Chaitanya’s metaphysics can be termed as concrete monism where the personal Absolute which is not merely a theoretical construct of the Absolute of the western metaphysics but it is that reality which embraces in itself the formless Brahman. The ultimate reality is both savisesa and nirviśeṣa, or rather as posing infinite attributers and forms experience of love for God. Prīti transcends reasoning and conceptualisation but that does not mean that it allows room of mystification. Dogma, irrationality
and superstitions can be fought by having loving devotion for the Lord.

Bhakti being the key-concept in Gaudiya Vaishnavism, our main problem was whether and how far the concept of bhakti in Gaudiya Vaishnavism was meaningful. In order to deal with the problem we glanced through the concept of bhakti as it appears in various classical Indian literature and different philosophical systems of different Acharyas. Gaudiya Vaishnavas have classified bhakti into three types; sadhana bhakti, bhava bhakti and prema bhakti. Further, sadhana bhakti is classified into vaidhi and raga-nuqa. Vaidhi bhakti is stepping stone to raga-nuqa bhakti. For Sri Chaitanya progress towards raga-nuqa bhakti is essential for reaching the highest state. Raga-nuqa bhakti is spontaneous and it flows from heart ceaselessly. It springs from the intrinsic potency of the divine being. Therefore Rupa Goswamin recommends raga-nuqa bhakti as the only mode of sadhanas for reaching the highest goal. It is considered to be the emotional sublimation of intimate human sentiments. It follows the raga-tmikā
bhakti. For Gaudiya Vaiśnavas, rāgātmikā bhakti is defined in terms of passion which is the model for rāgānuqa bhakti sadhanā. The Gaudiya Vaiśnavas expressed their dissatisfaction with the social values existing in their time. They attempted a break through of the stereo-type social values by religious action which can open up a world full of values that transcends the determinism of social identity and day-to-day experience. Keeping this goal in view Sri Chaitanya sent Rupa to Vṛndāvana to formulate a means, a sādhanā which would lead the common man from the meaningless socio-political world to a world pregnant with values. So there was the necessity of a new kind of method which will open the way to the transcendent world and the way was rāgānuqa bhakti sādhanā.

Sri Chaitanya points out that bhakti is the only path for attaining the Lord. In this connection we have examined the efficacy of different paths like jhāna, karma and yoga. These paths are not meant for all persons in all circumstances as the follower of these paths requires some qualification which is not
necessary for the follower of the \textit{bhakti} mārga which is very simple and natural. According to Sri Chaitanya, \textit{bhakti} is the means as well as the end but \textit{jñāna}, \textit{karma} and \textit{yoga} cease to function as and when the goal is reached. These paths are treated as means not as the end. Further, it can be pointed out that \textit{jñāna}, \textit{karma} and \textit{yoga} are not possible without \textit{bhakti}, therefore these paths are \textit{bhaktisāpeksa} whereas \textit{bhakti} is independent of these paths (\textit{nirapeksa}). It is important to note that Vaishnavites do not completely reject these paths which serve as essential means through which \textit{bhakti} functions.

Sri Chaitanya’s concept of \textit{bhakti} as related to \textit{jñāna} is explained by the fact that \textit{bhakti} is the manifestation of the \textit{hīādinī} \textit{sakti} which includes \textit{Sāmīvit sakti} or the seat of knowledge. So the knowledge of the \textit{bhakta} is not mere ratiocination or abstract reasoning, rather it is that \textit{jñāna} which dispels the ignorance of the \textit{jīva} and enables him to realise \textit{Bhaqavān}. So \textit{bhakti} according to Sri Chaitanya is not illogical but alogical. It involves
the wilful suspension of logic or reasoning in view of its inadequacy.

Therefore, according to Gaudiya Vaishnavism, without bhakti it is not possible to follow the path of jñana, karma and yoga. The goal which is reached through these paths naturally arises out of bhakti as a necessary accompaniment.

Bhakti is the highest value which gives meaning to jñana, karma and yoga. Bhakti, in its core use refers to a state where all the cognitive, cognitive and affective activities of the individual attain their excellence. It is to be indicated here that the very function of a value is to integrate, to unify. The more unifying a norm, the more preferable it is. Given the plurality of values, the criterion for preferring one rather than the rest will depend on the extent or degree to which it unifies the diversity. So, by definition, the highest value would be one that serves as a basis to unify all actual and possible diversities and contradictions in the individual and collective plane. As Robert Nozick
puts it "the more diverse the material that gets unified (to a certain degree), the greater the value".  

_Bhakti_ is the highest value in the sense that it has a universal appeal and can be practised by all at all times. It is both a means as well as the end for perfection. The term 'bhakti', has two distinctive uses in Gaudidya Vaishnavism. It is denotative of the highest ideal of life - the _parama Purusārtha_ as the end of one's ethical endeavour. It is also referred as a means or a value concept to the extent it determines the worthwhileness of an endeavour i.e. the moral worth of an action. Hence _bhakti_ is not a process-word but a value concept. So, to treat the concept of _bhakti_ as a process or occurrence is to commit a categorial confusion. _Bhakti_ is to be treated as a form of life where _priti_ for Krishna is the means as well as the end. _Bhakti_ as the highest value gives meaning to _jñāna, karma and yoga_. It serves as the protasis of all value. But there is a

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sense in which the state of priti or suddha bhakti can be said to be a trans-ethical state as it is in terms of bhakti that all other value-concepts are to be defined.

Bhakti is not simple emotion or devotion. It is the intensification of devotion to a degree where the devotee is aware of the personal relation between God and himself. There is a link between faith and bhakti. Insight born of faith, and strengthened by bhakti is far more fruitful than the logic of rationalism.

\[ \text{Alaukika lila eiparama niquda} \]
\[ \text{visvase paiya tarke haya vahudur.} \]

S.N. Dāsqupta characterises Sri Chaitanya’s bhakti as ‘pathological’. According to him:

The religious life of Sri Chaitanya unfolds unique pathological symptoms of devotion which are perhaps unparallel in the history of any other saints that we

\[ \text{CCM, p.194.} \]
know of. The nearest approach will probably be in the life of St. Francis of Assisi; but the emotional flow in Sri Chaitanya seems to be more self-centred and deeper ... without the life of Sri Chaitanya our store house of pathological religious experience would have been wanting in one of the most fruitful harvests of pure emotionalism in religion.4

The novel contribution of Sri Chaitanya in the concept of bhakti is his logical analysis of the concept of priti and rasa. Sri Chaitanya treats love as the basic category. Priti is not a subjective state. Whether a particular person has priti or not can be known through the external behaviour termed as bhāvas and anubhāvas. According to Sri Chaitanya, priti is the highest type of bhakti which is derived from the fact that Bhagavan has the highest attribute of belovedness, which is the function of lādinī

śakti. So a person who has prīti for Bhaqavān is said to have the highest object of love. Sri Chaitanya treated bhakti as a rasa. Prīti is the means and rasa is the effect.

According to Gaudiya Vaishnavism, sthāyibhāvas, combined with vibhāva anubhāva, sattvikabhāva and vyabhicāribhāva creates rasa. Though there are different rasas, the superiority of a rasa is determined by its intimacy with Krishna. So mahdura rasa is said to be the highest rasa. Madhura rasa is often understood as a kind of eroticism. There has been a confusion regarding the nature of svakiyā-prīti and parakiyā prīti. Parakiyā prīti is nothing but an inordinate craze for the infinite.

The merit of Sri Chaitanya lies in the fact that he elevated the passions of the couple (Krṣṇa-Rādhā) to a high spiritual plane and stressed the emotional at the cost of the ceremonial side of religion. His piety, devotion and fervour introduced a pure and spiritual element.
in Vaiṣṇavism which offers bright and refreshing contrast to that promulgated by Vallabha.²

As has been discussed earlier, Krishna has been termed as premamaya, rasarāja. Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavism devised a process which will evoke Krishna-rati in the bhakta so that he can reach at the highest stage of rasa called as madhura-rasa. Bhakti as the highest value is niskāma, unconditional, unqualified and unambiguous which is the highest goal where the bhakta does not see any difference between heaven and hell and between hell and liberation. Bhakti becomes Parama Purusārtha for him, the highest ideal to be cherished and attained.