Walter Pater expresses an axiom when he says: "If the style is the man, it is also the age". It is, indeed, hardly possible to assess the lyric form of the subject under review without recalling the period which gave it the required momentum. Revealing this point, one of our reputed historians said: "This was a new dynasty (the Hussain Şāhī Dynasty) established under whose enlightened rule the creative genius of Bengali people reached its zenith. It was the period in which the vernacular found its due recognition as the literary medium through which the repressed intellect of Bengal was to find its release... Finally, it was the period which witnessed the efflorescence of the Bengali Mind symbolised by the Lord Gourāṅga by whose message of love and forgiveness the whole Eastern India was carried off under its feet. The Bengali Mind burst its bonds and found its voice in the sweet lyricism of the cult of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the emotional intensity of the Vaiṣṇavism".

The period of the above dynasty (1493-1519) coincides with that of Chaitanyadeva (1486-1533) to bring forth our first Renaissance. Chaitanyaism is essentially a religion of man and
considering this humanitarian rôle of his, it has got to be recognised that "Chaitanya... represents to the mystic-loving East what Luther is to the West."\(^2\)

If this analogy is also justified from the consideration of form, we are to admit that as the Sonnet was characteristically the form of the European Renaissance, so also the Vaishnava pada, reinforced with the Kirtana, was adapted to the needs of our 16th century Renaissance poets.

What we should like to insist on is that the spirit of the Vaishnava Padavali is inseparable from its form which is unique and at the same time universal. "The Vaishnava Padavali", to cite Rabindranath, "is universal poetry only as Bengali poetry. It gives the world the treasury of the world, but not without contributing its specific flavour through a form which is entirely its own."\(^3\)

Regarding the vehicle of the Padavali, viz., the Brajabuli language, one of our leading philologists concludes: "Brajabuli has emerged from the Avahatta language. This Avahatta exerted some influence over court-literature and particularly in the Padavali about Radha-Krishna, even when Bengali, Maithili, Hindi, Rajasthani, and Gujrati etc., had more or less taken their final shapes. This latāsh
Avahatta, decidedly influenced by local patois like Maithili etc., assumed the Brajabuli shape in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. The sprinkling of un-Hindi vocables or padas in the old Brajabhāsa poets like Suradasa, may be identified as this latish Avahatta or old Brajabuli, by whatever term we would prefer to define it. Brajabuli, therefore, is not a monopoly of any particular province whatsoever. Furthermore, it is the common inheritance of the Aryan language, and in one sense the youngest as the pan-Indian, chaste Aryan speech.4

Though, admittedly, Brajabuli is not the property of any particular province, yet it was Bengal that contributed most to the texture of the language. Some other philologists have, however, clearly recognised this:

* It is immensely relevant to inform that the Brajabhāsa language is not the same as Brajabuli of the Bengali poets who mixed the Maithili language with the Hindi vocabulary and grammar to adapt them to this specific form of Bengali speech, namely Brajabuli.5

The above view seems to be philosophically if not philosophically sounder than the preceding one. That fact when faced from the aesthetic point of view, leads us to aforesaid conclusion. Chaitanyadeva, the exponent artist of the neo-Vaishnava movement, was a Bengali who gave the required impetus.
"The message of Sri Chaitanya, his new philosophy of life based upon love of God manifesting itself through the love of man, was not confined to the land of his birth. It travelled far and wide, traversing an area which comprised Gauda-vanga, Rādhā-Kamarupa, Mathurā-Vrāndāvana, Utkala-Dравida and Māraspiti-Prayāg, Chaitanyaism having practically created a Greater Bengal. His message was entirely that of the religion of man and he needed a medium for it which he found in Brajabuli, a literary lingua franca. This is not to seek his influence in Suradasa, a major Hindi poet almost contemporaneous with Govindāsa. Nor is it implied that he had anything much to do with the Aṣṭachhp sect of poets. Indeed, it would be hyperbolic and unhistorical to give the sole credit to him and to lose sight of the rest of the contemporary reformers. What we like to stress is that his role was the most effectual and pervasive. Practically the Brajabuli language was almost complete in the making before his advent. Umāpatis Utpādhyāya, Vidyāpati and Yaśorāja Khān had already given a clear indication of its future prospects. But it would not be an exaggeration to comment that it was Chaitanya-deva’s pan-Indian outlook, together with that of the six Gosvāmīs, the stalwart religious teachers of Vrāndāvana, that paved the way for its success. The Brajabuli language, then, was language of the heart, with
a strong emotive tendency. This language was different both from Pali, the vehicle for spreading Buddhism, and Argot, a code language in France in the late middle ages.

The form of Brajabuli was neither a vehicle for preaching Vaishnavism nor a pseudo-poetic artifice, but a supple instrument meant for poets. It was somewhat similar to the flexible language employed by the Troubadours. Once the various dialects of the Romance were not as distinct as they are at present, and the Troubadours passed with ease from the Castilian to the Provencal which was then reputed the most elegant of all the languages of the South. The artists in the Brajabuli language also had this facility of fusing what is sweet in one form of speech with that in the other, elegance or euphony being always the attainable norm. Beginning from the pre-Chaitanya Maithili poet Vidyāpati to Govindadāsa, the post-Chaitanya Bengali poet, this tendency is discernible in all the poets who are more or less concerned with this language. And Govindadāsa, the greatest of all Vaishnava poets, most reflects this tendency in his poetry.

Hence it is necessary to probe into the philosophy of the Brajabuli language. Most probably, as pointed by Dr. Sukumār Sen, the term 'Brajabuli' was first used by Ṣvar Chandra Gupta. Though the word does not occur in almost any previous writer, it was Rūpa Gosvāmī who first gave the most
direct hint of the nature of this language. While describing the attributes of Kṛṣṇa, Rūpa Gosvāmī used the epithet vividādbhutabhāsāvīt and described him as follows:

\[
\text{vividādbhutabhāsāvīt sa prokto yastu kovīdāḥ/
mnādeśvāsū bhāsāsū sanskrīte prakrīteṣu cha }\]

(One who is well-versed in Sanskrit, Prākṛt and the languages of various regions, may be termed vividādbhutabhāsāvīt).

Viśvanāth Chakravartī, while commenting on the above sloka, points out:

\[
\text{chakāraḥ paśvādhībhāṣāmapi śṛṇuyāt/}
\]

(The word 'cha' is to include the languages of the animals).

Rūpa Gosvāmī himself, while explaining, specifies:

\[
\text{brajāyutaḥ saūriḥ saūriḥ saūrasenīḥ surendre
pranatāśirasi saūriḥ bhāratiṣṭanoti/
ahaha paśusū kīresvaprāhṛṣaḥ saūrīpaḥ
kathamajani vidagdāḥ sarvabhāṣāvalīṣu/}
\]

(The maid of Braja wonders how it is possible for Kṛṣṇa to equally master all the languages. He talks in Sauraseni Prākṛt with the cowherdesses of Braja, in Sanskrit with the supplicant Indra, in animals' tongue with cows and in Paisāchī Prākṛt with the inhabitants of Kashmir and the birds!)}
The suggestions is obviously that this vividhābhuh-tabhāsāvit or the polyglot is no other than the poet of the Brajabuli language which combines within itself the polarities of Sanskrit, Prākṛt and even the incoherent languages of the birds! The word 'buli' is to suggest the sweet incoherence which is to be found in the half-spoken, almost inarticulate speech of the children and of birds.

It was Vidyāpati who first presaged the conscious aesthetics of this new kind of language when he said:

vālachanda vijjāvaiḥbhasā/
duhu nā hi laggal dujjanahāsā//
u paremeṣaraḥaraśira sohai/
ī nichchāi śāvaramaṇa mohai//

(The crescent moon and the diction of Vidyāpati are above the ridicule of malicious persons. The former adorns the forehead of Śiva, the Absolute and the latter pleases real connoisseurs).

It is impossible not to notice the simile, i.e., the comparison of a diction with that of the crescent moon, made by the poet. Reflection for a moment would make it clear that the full moon does not make any appeal to the poet because it is all too vivid and has no suggestiveness. The crescent moon, on the other hand, is more suggestive, meaning more than meets
the eye, Vidyapati's language too, it is implied, has the same suggestiveness where 'more is meant than meets the ear'. All these claims and considerations point to Vidyapati's substantial contribution to the euphonious fabric of the Brajabuli language.

Rūpa Gosvāmī, when dwelling upon the characteristics of 'vāvadūka', (the loquacious person) described him as follows:

\[
\text{sruti presthoktirakhilavāggunānvitagaragapi} \\
\text{iti dvīdā nigadito vāvadūko maṇisibhiḥ}
\]

(Two kinds of vavadūka are recognised among the learned circle — those who apply merely pretty words and those who use words delightful to all).

And, explains:

\[
\text{aśīstakomala padāvalī maṇjulena,} \\
\text{pratyakṣaraksaramandaśudhatrasena/} \\
\text{sahāya samastajanakaharsanācayansena,} \\
\text{nabhaṛi kasya hṛdayaḥ hārībhāṣitena/}
\]

(0 my friends, is there any one whose heart is not melted by the softly uttered lyrics, those nectar-pouring syllables and nice acoustic combination which make the words of Hari captivate the ears of the universal audience?)
The words *srutipreṣṭho, mañjula padāvalī*, *karpasāyana* suffice to show that the sine qua non of the Brajabuli language is its emphasis on audition (Sravana). The process of audition has also been given a prominent place in Sufism. "Sama expresses the attainment of the mystic state by the method of audition, 'hearing'. The entranced sense of being near to God is often produced in the mystic by the hearing of beautiful sounds. These may be the music of instruments and voices, or lovely sounds of the world of God, or they may be, after the theory of Pythagoras and Plato, recollections of the music of the spheres and of other harmonies in a state of pre-existence". The difference between the Sufistic emphasis on audition and the Vaishnava approach, however, should not elude our attention. The Sufi mode of audition evokes rather an abstract and inchoate idea while the Vaishnava form of audition is concrete and the deity incarnate. The latter reminds us of the Sihr halāl of the Arabic poetry, at least from the aesthetic point of view. A critic on Arabic poetry points out: "Arabic has a term for this strong influence the word exercises on the hearer or reader: Sihr halāl, the lawful magic." Sravana in Brajabuli or in Vaishnava Padāvalli is lawful magic in the sense that it is the first solid step in the nine-fold path of Vaishnavism. Jīva Gosvāmī in Kramasandarbha defines the magical aspect of śravana:

nāma-rūpa-guṇa-parikara-līlāmaya-sabdānām
śrotrasparṣah
Sravana awakens and intensifies the unique impression of the personal deity on the devotee whose very speech is affected by the self-articulatory attitude of sravana. Therefore, in Brajabuli the grammatical precision of speech, naturally, sacrifices itself to the exigencies of suggestion of sweetness. In Brajabuli, the auditory impression affects and moulds the verbal expression and does not allow the latter to take the arid course of mere clarity. The poet is at ample liberty to adopt musical devices which soften the monotony and aridity of the language. Among these, svarabhakti (anaptyxis) is perhaps the most significant. It is to be noted that the philological change called 'svarabhakti' or viślesa or anaptyxis already took place in Prākrit. The general principle underlying anaptyxis in Prākrit is that whenever a conjunct contains a nasal or 'ha', its two members are separated by an insertion of vowel, 'aa', 'i' and in one instance by 'u'.

The above dictum is of Hemachandra and applies more flexibly to Brajabuli. In Brajabuli, anaptyxis appears whenever there is an unsmooth conjunct ready to be softened. Thus, a word like 'Vajra' (thunder) can never occur in Brajabuli which must be converted into 'Vajara'. This process of softening is
the most pronounced tendency in Brajabuli. Even Govinda-
dasa, a poet with a classical bent, who was well-acquainted
with the grammar of the Sanskrit language coined words like
'agora', 'chorani', etc., which flout grammatical correct-
ness. This transgression of grammar by alliteration,
anaptyxis, assonance and echo-words is for the sake of euphony
which is the core of the Brajabuli language. 17

Hence the relation between music and poetry is more
reciprocal in Vaisnava lyrics than before and after. Before
entering into details about Kirtana, it is necessary to dwell
on one or two necessary points.

It has been said clearly in Vaisnava texts that though
the mantra contains the Name of God, the Name of God is greater
in potency than mantra and hence the Name is to be called
'mahāmantra'. Again, the mantra is something dead unless 'japa'
(muttering in prayer of the mystical syllable forming the
essence of a mantra) makes it alive:

\[ \text{paśubhūve sthita mantrah kevalam varnarūpinah/} \]
\[ \text{saṣumādanyuchchāritah prabhotva,prāpnuvantih//} \]

(Mere mantra as syllable lies coiled as a beast. It comes to
life only when it is uttered along the saṣumā nerve).

Rūpa Gosvāmī defines 'japa' as the soft and sweet
utterance of mantra. This 'japa', however, is not the end of
the devotee concerned. His only aim is to proclaim the Name of God which is Kirtana:

\[ \text{nāma-līlā-guṇādinamuchchairbhāṣā tu kīrtaṇam}^{20} \]

(Samkīrtana is the loud proclaiming of the Name, sports and qualities of God).

The word 'kīrtaṇa', it has been suggested by scholars, comes from the root 'krīṇ' which is 'to proclaim'. What puzzles the reader is that there is one definition of Kirtana which, at first sight, is contrary to the above one. For example, Jīva Gosvāmī in his Bhaktisandarbha defines Kirtana as 'only the inarticulate murmuring of the lips'(cāthaspanda-namātrena kīrtaṇam). This definition, understood properly, does not clash with the preceding one. Both the definitions, in fact, reach the same point. Both stress the utterance of something very intimate, sacred, secret. It needs, therefore, a special type of musical intuition to sing Kirtana. It mixes recitation and rāga, dance and music. It blends Kathakā with melody and chorus with solo in a characteristic fashion which is its own. Even Ābul Fazal, the matter-of-fact historian of Akbar's court, could not but wonder at this fusion of singing and recitation in the Kirtaniyas. While dwelling on the class of singers he observes in his Āin-i-Ākbari, "The Kirtaniyas.... dress up smooth faced boys as women and make them
perform, singing the praises of Kṛṣṇa and reciting his acts. The form may be compared to that of the Baroque, when opera and oratorio were juxtaposed. The opera and oratorio originated at the same time and at the same place — in Italy in the early seventeenth century. Many of the composers of the period wrote both operas and oratorios... Both used the recitatives for plot passages, and included solo arias, and choruses of formal design for purely musical purpose. Kīrtana, also, serves purposes which are literally distinct from each other and it combines within itself, the triple stream of drama, music and poetry. Thus it did something unforeseen in the history of lyric forms of Indian literature, as would be noticeable from the following description of the Kṛṣṇa-festival by Jīva Gosvāmī in his Gopālachampū:

atha nija nija vṛddhavandinaḥ śūtamāgadhavandinaḥ śrīmānandarājapuravirājaṃavṛmhitasimḥadvāri sarvordhvaṁ vīndamānām chandraśālikāma-
dhiruhyātanāni putanādidantavakrāntaśakrānichkrava vadhāsānyā-
dāhāni virudādichchhandamāṣi svachchhhandatayāṇaṇṭanta ivāparyantam
paṭhantah samantādeva janasandohamānandadoham lambhāyāmāḥ sāpurā-
garāgarāvalī-vibhāga laṅgimaśaṅgītasamgītiśāsānkathākulaṁapyaśākalyama-
suḥ/*

(The choral band of traditional keepers of heroic poetry, divided in groups, climbed the chamber of the most majestic palace that stood upon the highly arrayed citadel of king Nanda. Then they danced and recited with verve the excited passages in prose and verses of Viruddha etc., where there were description of the fatal end of Pūtana and Danta-
valera, the foe to India. They stirred the audience to ecstasy. At last in an emotional outburst they began to sing the sweet Kṛṣṇa-kathā, well arranged into various rāgas, to the audience).

The last line of the above description is particularly noteworthy in this connection. It is nothing else than the description of Kārttana. Moreover, we should observe that it gives the description of a romantic strain which is being sung and in that it differs from the preceding passages where heroic pieces are to be read out. The passage apparently depicts in verse a kind of theme metamorphosis, shifting from ballad to lyric form but retaining its original content intact. But taking the subtle development of an idea in the passages into consideration, we can deduce that there is a change of spirit which changes the form and vice versa.

To put it more clearly, it is with the intensity of the emotional mood that the reading of heroic legends ends and the singing of Romantic and bucolic melody emerges which reminds us of Tagore's line in his narrative poem 'Gaanabhaṅga', i.e., 'geyechhe gokuler goāl-gātha bhūpali multāni sure'. This change marks also the beginning of Kṛttana and the Vaiṣṇava lyric and the end of the epic or pseudo-epic strain. One must take note of this emotive and Romantic mind behind Kṛttana and the Vaiṣṇava Padāvāli. This mind is responsible for the mingling of classical rāgas and folk-air, of purity and the sub-
jective note in Kirtana. "The soul of Bengal hungered as a means of self-expression. That is why the general run of people could not become staunch followers of the Hindusthani School of Music. That is why, inspite of the rich musical material contained in Kannada, Adana, Malkaus, and Barbiri To di the Bengali has had to create Kirtana. It is because he loved song that he wanted to fashion it tenderly with his own hands, nearer to his heart's desire."

Kirtana is significant not only in the flexibility of the melodic pattern but also in the conception of tāla (rhythmic beat) and laya (tempo) in the permutations and combinations of certain systems of beats. The Kirtana-singers have given us a large variety of tālas, based on the conception of mātras. The patterns of some are adumbrated below:

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- DASAKOSI (7 mātras)
- ADATALA (5 mātras)
- VIRRVIKRAMA (9 mātras)
- SASISEKHARA (11 mātras)
- VIṢAMADADHATALA (8 mātras)
- MADANADOLĀ (11 mātras)
- INDRABHĀSA (13 mātras)
- VIṢAMASAMUDRA (10 mātras)
- GAŅJANA (8 mātras)
- RŪPAKA (6 mātras)
- DHARA (8 mātras)
It is to be noted, the same combination of stressed and unstressed units becomes either Gañjana or Dharā according to variation in start (sama). Gañjana corresponds to Skt. Samānikā (Chhandomanjari 2/19), Pkt. Mallikā (Prākṛta-paṅgalala 2/70) and Gk. Trochaic tetrameter. Dharā corresponds to Skt. Pramaṇikā (Chhandomanjari 2/20), Pkt. Pāmaniā (Prākṛta-paṅgalala 2/69) and Gk. Iambic tetrameter.

The given diagram is far from complete. But it helps us to understand that the composers in Kīrtana created innumerable talas of moric variety in keeping with the emotional scheme of their songs. This could handle very well the metrical scheme of the Vaiśnava Padāvalī. Rāvindranāth in his Bengāl Bhāsa Parichaya points out that the Vaiśnava Padāvalī, in its variety of matras, freed Bengali poetry from the monopoly of the payar. In keeping with their varied emotionalism the Vaiśnava poets had to speak through matravṛttā which is charged with emotional power. Regarding the laya (or tempo) of Kīrtana, this provision befitting the rise and increase of emotion, is seen in the gradual crescendo from lahaṇa and mātana to mūrchchhanā which marks the growing intensity of accelerated emotion from its rising level to its climax.
All these facts have to be mentioned to substantiate the assumption that the Kirtana and Vaishnava lyric went hand in hand and that the emancipation of the Romantic Bengali Mind urged both to do so. These details about Kirtana have to be glanced at because the Padavali is reborn in it and amplified by it. The festival of Kheturi (circa 1581) marks the establishment of the classified modes of Kirtana and its marriage with the Vaishnava lyrics.

The four constituents (Dhatus) of our Classical Music, i.e., Udgraha, Malapaka, Dhruna and Abhoga, have been already mentioned in describing the structure of the Charyapada. But the Charyapada, it must be admitted, retain these four 'dhatus' rather in a regular order. The Vaishnava lyrics, in moulding Kirtana and also being influenced by the latter, however, exploit them fully as it would be vivid from the following lyric quoted by Narahari Chakravarti in his Bhakti-ratnakara:

\[
gīte yathā-patamañjari \\
uhitapuranā niśī niśakara, \\
kiraṇa karu tama duri/ \\
bhānunandini pulinaparīsara \\
śubhara śobha bhuri// (udgrāha) \\
manda manda sugandha sītala \\
chalata malaya saītra/
\]
Though the verse begins with a description of nature, the poet volatilizes it as if to grasp a mood of suspended consciousness where 'a landscape is a state of mind'. In conformity with this, the composer has taken liberty to metamorphose the order of 'dhātu'. The poetic licence that a Kirtana-singer or composer has taken in arranging and re-shuffling the dhātus of classical music is here evident from the treatment of the dhātu 'dhruva'. It was ordained that 'dhruva' was to come only as the third part of the song. We are not suggesting that a Kirtana-composer always has broken the order, but it is seen from the above arrangement that he can transgress it unpredic-tedly. The following panegyric to Chaitanyadeva (Gaurachandrika), commonly sung in rāga gōuri, is by Govindadāsa. It hastens to give 'dhruva' a priority, which is really very significant:

champakasona
kusuma kanakāchala
jītala gouratana lāvani re/
unnata gīma- sīma nāhi anubhava,  
jaga manomohana bhāṅganire //  
jaya sachinandana, tribhuvana-vaṇḍana  
kāliyuga kālabhujabhaya khandana//(dhruva)\textsuperscript{31}  

This attitude of Kīrtana-composers towards 'dhruva' would seem pronounced to us if we interpret it from the way they performed the portion called 'dhuā' allotted to the main group of singers.

The leader of the throng went on improvising while the others (e.g., 'dohārs'; the word 'dohār' most possibly coming from 'dhruva' and its appellation 'dhuā') clung closely to the dhua, i.e., the burden of the composition. The leader of the throng, in case he was other than the lyricist himself, had no right to improvise the composition, but only to develop in the way of 'ākhar' which might have come from 'ākṣara' (the immutable substance) or from 'āṅkura' (shoots from the seed). Whatever it might be, it is an appreciation as well as an explanation of the 'pāda' concerned. The once-composed song becomes thus re-composed, by the 'mūl gāyen', i.e., the leader of the throng, and when the tension is heightened, the whole song assumes the air of a through-composed song. Apabhramśa poetry had provisions for certain part-songs or couplets which had to be explained by other songs:

\begin{align*}
\text{vatthaagīyamajhe bīśāri ekkaam duvaieam cha/}
\text{vitthāariaam cha kaihīṁ suāṅu taha atthaae //}
\end{align*}
Similarly, Akhar, also appears to split the couplets to elucidate the meaning contained therein. But it explains the meaning neither by didactic nor by verbatim reproduction, but by subtle melodic and lyrical improvisation. This enlivens and variegates the rhythm and cadence of the lyric without marring its metrical structure. Therefore, Prof. Amulyadhan Mukhopadhyaya rightly remarks: "As the stones stir up a stream so also over-added words may impart variety to metrical composition. That is why there is a convention of adding 'Akhar' to Bengali Kirtana". This spontaneous process of improvisation changed the order of the 'druva'. In other words, this close yet flexible relationship between 'akhar' and 'dhuś' modulated the pre-established order of the Prabandha-samśiita and moulded it to its more organic form.

The term 'organic form' should not, however, be misinterpreted. A brief comparison of Padavali-kirtana with Tagore songs may be useful here. RayIndra-samśita has maintained, despite its drive at the unfoldment of the autobiographical myth, more or less, a formal rigidity in that the poet-composer has not allowed any singer to improvise upon his songs. He feared that improvisation would mar the distinctively personal element of his songs. The person in Tagore song is extremely
individualistic, if not solipsistic, in the sense that it works entirely in terms of its own emotive and subjective idiom which can neither be adapted to, nor explained away by, any other language.

And this leads us to the central problem of the Vaisnava Padāvallī. The problem may be stated in Richard Green Moulton's language as thus: "Monodies of experience are given us in the first person. Who is the 'I' that speaks? And whom therefore are to picture as passing through the experience?" Moulton, however, hastens to conclude that "neither David, nor Israel, nor any historical personage, is the hero of the great mass of the psalter, but an ideal sufferer of an idealised experience". The personality represented in the Biblical monodies seems in the light of this interpretation, an idealisation, if not the emancipation, of the ego. Is this generalisation equally true of the Vaisnava lyrics?

Narahari Chakravartī said categorically:

abhogate kavi nāyaker nām hay/38

(The name of the poet is to be found in the concluding portion of the song).

This concluding portion is 'bhānitā' which already was seen in the Charyā-lyrics. But that does not prove the
preponderance of the element of personality in the Charya-padas. One can, if one seeks for it, find out an intrinsic difference as regards the point of departure between Kāhna and Bhusuku, the two leading Charya-poets. One may discern a more metaphysical and cosmic imagination in the former than in the latter whose poems possess abundantly human and communicative elements. But one should not over-emphasise this point of difference between them because the element of subjective personality could have been accepted neither before the Romantic revival of Vaisnavism nor by the restrictive coterie of the Sahajīn Buddhistic order. 'Nīśvavāhīnāraṇa' (depersonalization) was their goal and their verse was expected to be a subservient medium to achieve the objective. In spite of this, the Charya-poets could write certain real lyrics because of their concealed introvertive leanings. But in the last analysis their different personalities disappear into the idea of self-abnegation.

"Romanticism," according to Herbert Read, "was and is a universal phenomenon." Romantic spirit, in fact, was not absent in the pre-Vaisnava Indian poetry. But it made itself deeply felt in the neo-Vaisnava era of our literature. The vast expanse of Vaisnava lyrics, reflects from the very beginning tendencies romantic and lyrical, secular and personal. A brief analysis may show how Chandraśīva and Vidyāpati of the pre-Chaitanya period, and Govindādāsa and Jñānādāsa of the post-Chaitanya phase, each and everyone reflects this
Critics may easily discern a note of Ballad-like impersonality in Chandidasa. That will not be a wrong assessment. But a deep empathy on the part of the reader would reveal that Chandidasa's impersonality is the result of his inwardly built personality. His lines like 'chale nil sadī niṅgādi niṅgādi parāna sahitā mor' may easily be compared with Herrick's

'When in silk my Julia goes
Then, then (methinks), how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes'.

"Then", Lascelles Abercrombie in his 'The Idea of Great poetry' comments on the above excerpt, "Herrick's Julia becomes everyone's Julia". So also we may say, that Chandidasa's Rādhā becomes everyone's Rādhā.

The strain of Chandidasa's poetry is that of soliloquy. 'ghar kainu bāhir, bāhir kainu ghar/
par kainu āpan āpan kainu par/
or
'dukhinir din dukhete gela/
mathurā nagare chhile to bhālo'// are all touchstone lines because of this intensely internalized quality of the monologue.
Vidyāpati started his poetic career as a craft-conscious court-poet with an awareness of details and a photographic fidelity to outward life. But long before reaching his last years, he struck a new note where he evolved into a poet of inward unrest and dissatisfaction. It was a high-strung metaphysical anguish rather than a mystic ecstasy, (not unlike the 'Holy Sonnets' of John Donne), that characterises the last phase of Vidyāpati's poetry.

If Vidyāpati's later poems resemble 'Kheya' of Tagore, Govindadāsa's poems are like 'Gitanjali'. Had there been no Vidyāpati, there might have been no Govindadāsa. The latter's idol of life was Chaitanyadeva whereas his poetic precursor was Vidyāpati. Govindadāsa's poems also contain a fusion of pathos and faith, of ethos and person. The following extracts will confirm this:

1 sītā atapa      vātā varikhana
 e dina yamini jagi re/
 viphale seṭilūn  kṛpāna durjana
 chapelā sukhalava lāgi re//
 e dhana youvana       putra pariṣana
   ithe ki achhe paratīta re/
 kamaladala jala   jīvana talamala
 bhaṭaḥuṣṇharipada nītare//
(Summer and winter, wind and rain, days in and days out
I have uselessly served the evil doers for trivial pleasure.
What can we rely on, property, youth, sons and relations?
This mundane life is fluctuating like water on a lotus leaf.
Therefore, always cling to Hari's feet. Audition, Kirtana,
meditation, recounting of God's Name, benediction, service,
worshipping, companionship and complete submission—these
are the ways that can please Govindadasa).

2 mama hrdaya vrndavana kaha ghumaolo
   prema prahari rahu jagi/
(Krsna now is asleep in the Vrndavana of my heart, whereas
the sentinel of love is wide awake).

3 jivana thira prema athira duranta/
(life is steady while love is evanescent).

Jnanadasa, it goes without saying, was a poet of deep
romantic anguish. His lyrics are simple, sensuous and passionate.
His secular spirit shows through his heartfelt utterances, full of idiomatic and proverbial usages which combine
common sense and sensuousness alike.
All the four poets, Charāḍāṣa, Vidyāpāti, Govinda-
dāsa and Jñānadāsa fully exploited the possibilities of
the speech-element which have rendered their poetic ex­
pressions lively and lyrical. Ramīndranāth was correct in
maintaining that "as Sanskrit was not a language of conver­
sation, the whole Indian psyche could not be expressed through
it. The type of poetry which is termed lyric in English
Poetics is not possible in a dead language. There are Sans­
krit songs in Kālidāsa’s Vikramorvaśi but they do not have
the typical lightness, directness and suggestiveness that
enliven a song. The Bengali poet Jayadeva wrote songs in
Sanskrit but those fall short of the lyrical attainments of
the Bengali Padāvalī of the Bengali Vaisnava poets". This is
neither to underrate Sanskrit poetry nor to claim Vidyāpāti
exclusively as a Bengali poet. It is curious to observe that
even so eminent a Hindi scholar as Prof. Haṃsarāj Āgrāvāl
discerns and emphasises a considerable amount of Bengali influ­
ence in Vidyāpāti. Nor does it mean to deny the fact that
Govindadāsa wrote most of his verses in Brajabuli (in fact,
there were many Govindasas. But Govindadāsa Kavirāja who is
by far the best of them all wrote mainly in the Brajabuli
diction and nothing else). The point has to be emphasised
that it was the contact with the Bengali Mind that paved the
way for the major poets like Govindadāsa, Jñānadāsa, Balarām-
dāsa, Raśikhaṇḍa, and Sasiśekhaṇḍa. They are to be hailed
as lyric poets who spoke in a language full of lyrical
flow and flexibility. Vidyāpati ought not to be kept apart.
Philologically, the Maithili Avahatta of Vidyāpati was not
far from the Bengali Avahatta. Their mutual co-operation
as sister-dialects was still strong in their similarity of
speech and script alike. Moreover, Jayadeva gave a new
pan-Indian nucleus that influenced all the forthcoming poets.
It was imitated by Umāpati Upādhyāya who influenced Vidyāpati
very deeply. And what Vidyāpati added to his materials, was
himself. Vidyāpati, the most susceptible of our vernacular
poets to influences, influenced in turn practically all
Vaisnava poets who came after him. This process shows the
gradual growth of a lyrical psyche which culminated in Vaisnava
lyrics. A historian observes:

"In the field of lyrical poetry very little has been
preserved for us between Kalidāsa and Govardhana, a contem-
porary of Jayadeva. In fact, the only source of our know-
ledge of this branch of literature during this age is the
anthologies which naturally enough have preserved for us only
fragments of the works of poets of whom again nothing more than
mere names can be told."

The opinion is true to the extent that the Sanskrit
and Prākrit verses included in the anthologies of the transi-
tional period are lyrical. But a word of caution is perhaps
needed here. In their amoral suggestion and their presentation of a single thought, feeling or situation, they may be termed lyrics. But as they are preoccupied with the problem of expressing a thought through a small unit of śloka or ārya, their lyrical impulse is at times choked within and checked by a cramping space of a couplet or two. This is why Sanskrit and Pāṇḍit verses of the anthologies are more lyrical in content than in full-fledged lyrical form. And that reticence about form has more than once affected the content which sometimes gives us a cursory glimpse and not the total impression. But the Vaisnava poets, while they took abundantly from these verses, arrived at a lyrical totality because of their free and flexible form. A Sanskrit śloka and its adapted version by Govindadāsa are quoted here to show this flexibility of form in the latter:

pancāhavat āryatva bhūtanivahā svānā
dhvānā pranipatiya hanta śīrṣā tatrāpi
yāche varma/
tadvāpi su payastādyamukura jyotistādyāṅgane
vyonna vyoma tadiyavartvani dharā tāstālavrnteh-
anila//

jānāhā pahun ārunaḥcharane chali yāta/
tānāhā tānāhā dharanī haie majhu gāta//
yo darapanę pahuṁ nija mukha chāha/
majhu aṅga jyoti hoi tathi māha//
e sakhi viraha-maraṇa niradanda/
aichhane milayi yava gokulachanda//
yo sarovare pahuṁ niti niti nāha/
majhu aṅga salila hoi tathi māha//
yo vijane pahuṁ vijai gāta/
mojhu aṅga tahi hoi mṛdu vāta//
jāñhā pahuṁ bharamai jaladhara-śyāma/
majhu aṅga gagana hoi tachhu ṭhāma//
govindaḍāsa kaha kāñchana gori/
so marakata tanu tohe kiye chhoḍi//

(Let my body be turned into the dust that my lord treads upon with purple feet. Let my body reflect lustre in the mirror which reflects the face of my lord. O my friends, let the barrier between the pang of separation and death vanish. I will meet the Moon of Gokula, my lord, only when my body will be dissolved into the five elements. Let my body turn to water into the pond where my lord bathes. Let my body be the soft air of the fan used by the lord. Where he would travel like a dark blue cloud, let my body be the sky to encircle him. Govindaḍāsa comments: "O gold-complexioned fair lady! How can the emerald-bodied lord desert you?")
The excessive condensation of the Sanskrit stanza becomes an emotional tension in the latter. It is clear even at the first glance that the meaning was already present, though in a condensed form, in the former sloka. But the adapted version melts away the implied content and achieves dramatic tension of a 'free form'.

In other words it does not observe any restriction of pre-ordained form, but moves on to fulfil its destiny.

The Vaisnava poets, in fact, got many of their images and similes from some such Sanskrit stanzas. But that was not a case of imitation, but of inspiration. Because they enlarged those into an enormous variety of stanza patterns conforming to different modes.

But why then have all the Vaisnava poets used the Kṛṣṇa-kathā as the 'alamvāna vibhāva' (objective correlative) and again, why have they preferred a garb, to complete commitment? Why do they put so much stress on concealed imagery? There are more esoteric ideas in Chāryā-padas than in Vaisnava Padāvalī where concealed images prevail. For instance, Govindadās's famous pada beginning with 'nakhapada hrdaya tohari/antara jvalata hāmāri' is communicated, to borrow Eliot's phrase, before it is understood. But to understand the pada is immensely difficult because the poet is always oblique in his expression. Is it because the
poet has something private to say and the direct expression of it is forbidden?

This may not be a false conjecture altogether. The fact has to be admitted that there were restrictions for the individual in our collectively built medieval society. Furthermore, despite its difference with the Sahajī Buddhism order as regards pronounced subjectivity, the Vaisnava aesthetics had an ethics behind it. The religious preceptor could impose, if necessary, his clear-cut likes and dislikes upon the poet. The following extract from a letter of Jīva Gosvāmī to Govindadāsa is a proof of this:

sampratī yat kṛṣṇavargaṁanyāsvīya gītānī prasthā- 
pitānī pūrvamap yānī, tāiyanamaparītvā saṃpūrṇa- 
pi nītanatattvadasāyā mūhurapatṛptīrcha labhāmehe, tasmātatra o 
cha deśayadhānam kartavyam

(The lyrics containing nectar-like descriptions of Kṛṣṇa, which you sent before and have sent now, have quenched my thirst. So please send me more).

The letter has been addressed to 'Mahābhāgavata' (the best among the devotees) Govindadāsa, and that epithet somehow delimits the prerogative of the poet to write purely secular lyrics. The whole letter is tender in tone, but that does not hide the tale that the religious teacher would not permit the disciple to have his own solipsistic way. For this obvious
reason, Govindadasa got a recognition which Jnanadasa could not win. The reference to Govindadasa has been made at least thirty-three times in Bhakti-ratnakara while Jnanadasa has been referred to only once and that in a single line! Govindadasa could serve and satisfy the religious demand of his patrons which Jnanadasa could not. The latter was more preoccupied with human interests. That is not to say that he lacked in religious faith but the personal cravings got the upper hand in him. His poems fall under two broad divisions, each completely separated from the other. In one phase he is immersed in the joy of faith while in the other he feels extremely humiliated by Fate. On the whole, he has a heart palpably human that responds to desire and disillusion, to lust and disgrace. This did not, and could not please the connoisseurs of the Vaisnava school which stressed the coalescence of the subjective with the sublime.

The above-mentioned limitation had its direct bearings on the form of the Vaisnava lyric. Dines Chandra Sen was rightly of the opinion that though the Vaisnava padas are lyrics, they are interrelated. They are not self-contained lyrics like those in Palgrave’s Golden Treasury. Therefore, they should rather be termed Kanda-kavya (cycle of poems).

The Vaisnava lyrics are, then, not isolated phenomena. They are attached to their respective phases, i.e.,
Purvarūga, Ākṣepātmurūga, Abhisāra, Māthura, and so on. Again, they have reference to Padavali as a whole. The poets have to follow the sequence of a story and also a normative order. Pālākirtana and Rasakirtana express the significance very well. The Kirtana-performer is expected first to sing a benedictory prelude known as Gourāchandrika, i.e., homage to Gourānga and then to introduce the subject. That creates a sacred and spiritual atmosphere which permeates the songs. This atmosphere rather tends to diminish the specific difference of personality that lies between the songs and to push them to a greater whole. All these connections between Kirtana and Poetry, between Religion and Art, show that a Vaisnava lyricist could project his whole humanity in his lyric forms with an eye to sublimation. His art expresses his 'transfigured personality'. A Vaisnava poet, thus, might easily apprehend the meaning of Tagore's words and could slightly alter them to say, "my poetical life has followed the same mysterious line of growth as has my religious life".
NOTES

1 Dr. A. B. M. Habibullah in History of Bengal, vol. II, 1948, pp. 143-44.


4 Dr. Sukumār Sen's article 'Brajabulir Kāhinī' (Visva-bhārati Patrika, Oct-Dec, 1955, p. 115).

5 Dhirendra Varmā, Brajabhāṣā, Allahabad, 1954, p. 16. The author refers to Dr. S. K. Chatterji's view in this connection.

6 Prof. Janārdan Chakravarti's article 'Cultural Fellowship — Brajabuli' (The Presidency College Magazine, 1950, p. 30).

7 J. C. L. Sismondi, De Sismondi, Historical View of the Literature of the South of Europe, p. 83.

8 Bhaktirasamrtasindhu, 2/1/65

9 Ibid. 2/1/66

10 Kīrtilatā, 1/9/12

11 Op. Cit. 2/1/72
12 Ibid. 2/2/73

13 John Murphy, The Origins and History of Religions, University of Manchester, 1952. See Chapter XXXVI

14 Philip K. Hitti's article 'Arabic Literary Contributions to Western Thought and Culture', World Literatures by Joseph Remenyi and others. Pittsburgh, 1956.

15 Cf. 'Sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pādasevanam/ archanam vandanam dāsyam sakhyamātyanivedanam// iti purnārpaṇa visṇau bhaktischchhennavalaṃksaṇa/ kṛte bhāgavatyaaddhā tanmayehadhitamuttamam//' — Sri Bhāgavata, 7/5, 23, 24

16 Hemachandra, Kūmārapālalacharita (Prākṛta Dvīyāṣya Kavya) with an appendix containing his Prākṛta grammer, Ed. Shankar Pāndurang Pandit, Second edition revised by Dr. P. L. Vaidya, Bombay Sanskrit and Prākṛta series No.LX, 1936, Notes II 100-115

17 The same tendency is discernible at times in Prthvirāja Rāsa by Chāṇḍ Bardāi. For instance, the word muraḷī (flute) has been changed to muraḷḷī by Bardāi. This change is brought only to achieve the desired euphonious effect and is lēśīt preoccupied with grammatical congruence. See introduction to Samāśipta Prthvirāja BasoEd. Hāzārī- prasād Dvivedī and Nāmvar Sinha, Allahabad, 1952.

19 'mantrasya sulaghuchcharo japa ityabhidhiyate' (Bhaktirasāmarasaśindhuh 1/2/148).

20 Ibid. 1/2/145


22 Dogglas Moore, From Madrigal to Modern Music, New York, 1942, p. 48. According to Donald J. Grout, Oratorium came to its own when 'Latin Oratorio was largely abandoned in favour of Oratorio Volgare' (A History of Western Music, New York, 1964, p.224). If so, it must be admitted that Kirtana grasped the spirit of the folk and free use of the vernacular much earlier.

23 This combination, however, is not entirely polyphonic. Kirtana, thus, gave the Vaiṣṇava Padāvall a great support to express emotive totality. Compare to this, Hymns of the Ālvārs, which made an impact on the neo-Vaiṣṇava movement, were more rigid in structure.
Hooper has observed that originally the hymns of the 
Alvars were sung, but the custom of reciting them 
together with the commentary gradually grew possibly to 
emphasise the similarity between the Tamil Veda and the 
Sanskrit'. The reciters were called Ariyar who had to stand 
on opposite sides of the mandapam or hall, in front of the 
temple and render the hymns antiphonally' (Hymns of the 
This alternate chanting, however, was more restrained than 
that in Kirtana.

24 Gopālachampū, pūrva champū, 2/2

25 Theme Metamorphoses — a theme presented in different 
guise but retaining some of its original character (From 

26 It is interesting to note that as the lyric composition 
flourished in the sixteenth century, the translation of 
the Bhāgavata was not that popular. Chaitanyadeva was 
solely responsible for the success in this shift from the 
epic version of Kṛṣṇa-kathā to the lyric strain of the 
same.

27 Rabindranāth Tagore in 'The Place of Music in Education 
and Culture' (The Visvabharati Quarterly, May-Oct, 1947). 
Translated by Indirā Devī Chaudhurānī from the original 
Bengali article published in Bulletin I of Bengali section
of New Education Fellowship).

Dr. Sunil Kumar Chatterji's view explains the fact more objectively: "Kirtana was created by the Goudiya Vaisnava school in Mediaeval Bengal in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its basis was classical raga and tāla. But it assumed quite a different shape being influenced by the local folk-songs of Bengal; Kirtanas of slow and grandiose tempo are reminiscent of the Dhrupada style but there are Kirtanas of light style too". Dr. S. K. Chatterji's article 'Bharatiya Samgīta O Rabindranath' published in Gitavitan Varsikā, Calcutta, 1350 B. S. To support Dr. Chatterji's view on the Kirtana of light style, one example will suffice. Dhāmāli, both an instrumental prelude and song, is based on a tāla which is similar in tempo to that of thumri. Prof. Prabodh Chandra Sen gives a revealing account of his quick tempo in his Chhandoguru Rabindranath, Calcutta, 1352 B. S. pp. 31-32.

28 I am indebted to Prof. Paresh Chandra Mazumdar of the Samgīta Nṛtya Lalitkāla Academy for the diagram.

29 Crescendo — The gradual increase of sonority from soft to loud (From Madrigal to Modern Music, p. 325).

30 The song is set in raga Patamānjari. Quoted from Bhakti-ratnakara, Ed. Nabin Kṛṣṇa Bārāvidyaśākāra, Goudīyamath.
Calcutta, p.257.

31 Ibid. p. 552. Examples in p.558 also testifies to the preference for this new order. Again, those in p.563, melodies set in Megharāga and Naṭṭanārāyaṇa respectively, gives dhrūva the top priority, i.e., brings it first in order. In Chāryā-lyrics too, the position of dhrūva is seen to have shifted, but in those cases no intrinsic musical motif is apparent. That is, the Chāryā-poet adhered to dhrūva more for the sake of memorising a metaphysical idea, than for its emotional import.

32 The word already occurs in the sixth section of Varnaratnakara of Jyotirīśvara-Kaviśekharacharya. Edited by Dr. Sunīti Kumār Chatterji and Babuā Misra, Jyotiśatirtha, Jyotiśāchārya, Biblotheeca Indica work number 262, Issue number 1540. New series, Calcutta, 1940. It is interesting to note that the expression 'dhuā dharāa' (Catch the refrain) occurs in the Prākṛta-paṅgala (1/159).

33 That the word has derived from aṃkura is a hypothesis strongly advocated to by Haridāsa Kar, one of the leading Kīrtaniyās of our time. In Chaitanya Charitāmṛta there is one portion denouncing the dull sinner who has no grasp on Kṛṣṇa-name which is a seed ready to sprout into shoots:

hena kṛṣṇa nāma yadi lay bahuvār/
tabe yadi prema nahe, nahe āśrutārā//
Bipin Chandra Pal also makes a similar suggestion when he says, "Like the process from seed to sprout, and from sprout to plant, the emotional content gradually unfolds itself in our hearts. This has taken place in the composition of all the great Mahājana Vaiṣṇava poets. The Kīrtana-singers, also retain this process of emotional development intact in their pala-kirtanas". 'Mahājana-padāvalī': Rāsākīrtana', Narayana, 1915-16. Reprinted in Sāhitya o Sadhanā, Calcutta, 1960, II, p. 165.

Through-composed — a song is said to be through-composed when the music of the various verses does not repeat but changes with its meaning and the mood of the poem (From Madrigal to Modern Music, p. 336).


37 Richard Green Moulton, The Literary Study of the Bible, Boston, 1895, p. 185.

38 Bhaktiratnakara, p. 256.

39 'The first and foremost quality about the Ballad, in any language, is not its personality, but its impersonality'. F. Sidgwick, The Ballad, p. 11.

40 The development of Vidyapati's Mind has been ably discussed in the introduction to Vidyapati Padavali, Ed. Khagenra Nath Mitra and Dr. Bimun Bihari Mazumdar, Calcutta, 1359 B. S.

41 Some such proverbial sayings have been cited in Dr. Sukumār Sen’s article, ‘Women’s Dialect in Bengali’ (Journal of the Dept. of Letters, vol. XVIII, Calcutta University).

42 This is a misnomer. The songs in Vikramorvasī are all in Prākrit, and not in Sanskrit.


45 The question of Umapati Upādhyāya’s influence on Vidyāpati Gosthi O Gititrīṇḍatikā, Burdwan, 1354 B. S.
46 The Age of Imperial Kanouj, Ed. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavana, Bombay, 1955, pp. 183-84.

47 These are according to F. T. Palgrave the necessary features of the lyric. See preface to The Golden Treasury, 1861.

48 Included in Rūpa Gosvāmi's Ujjvalanīlamani and also in his Padyāvālī, an anthology of Vaiṣṇava and Vaiṣṇavised poems.


50 Concealed imagery, according to R. G. Moulton, is a metaphorical idea to be sustained throughout the whole poem or lengthy passage and yet not to be embodied in distinct words. Expository critic will have to collect the image from a variety of indirect references. While to miss it is to lack the key to the whole (The Literary Study of the Bible).

51 Cf. 'The personal experiences of each individual immediately flowed into the collective store and the whole collective experience of the group became the property of every member of it'. Maxim Gorky, 'The Destruction of Personality', Literature and Life, tr. Edith Bone, London,
1946, p.113. Also Cf. Huizinga's view concerning the mediaeval panorama of Europe: 'Towards the end of the Middle Ages', Huizinga observes, 'two factors dominate religious life: the extreme saturation of the religious atmosphere, and a marked tendency of thought to embody itself into images!' The Waning of the Middle Ages, Penguin, 1955, p. 136.

52 The letter has been quoted in 'Bhaktiratnakara' (p. 633) and also in Nityananda Dasa's 'PREMVILASA' (the sixth letter of the chapter, 'ARDHAVILASA PATRA').


55 Tagore's statement: "My religion is essentially a poet's religion... My religious life has followed the same mysterious line of growth as has my poetical life". The Religion of an Artist, reprinted from Contemporary Indian Philosophy (1936). Visvabharati, 1953, p.10.