CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. HARI-BHAKTI-VILĀSA AND ITS AUTHORSHIP

One of the remarkable features of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava movement is its extraordinary literary activity, the power and vitality of its inspiration is being evidenced by the vast literature, which it produced both in learned classical tongue i.e., in Sanskrit and in the living language of the province i.e., Bengali.

On the one hand, it enriched the field of Sanskrit scholarship by its more solid and laborious productions in theology, philosophy, ritualism, Rasa Sāstra etc.; on the other, it poured itself out lavishly in songs and stories creating as it did, a new literary epoch by its fruitful contribution of great diversity and charm.

Among the books of Vaiṣṇava cult Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is an authoritative compendium of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava teachings. In the long history of man’s endeavour to grasp the fundamental truth of Vaiṣṇava thought the treatise known as Hari-bhakti-vilāsa holds an honoured place. It represents the earnest effort of the author about the Vaiṣṇava code of ethics and canonical norms. It is related with the sublime means of self-purification required for the realization of God who is none other than Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is a voluminous and the most exhaustive metrical compendium in Sanskrit containing the corpus of Vaiṣṇava rituals and
religious practices. It contains several thousand useful and invaluable thoughts collected from various sources and scholarly works in Sanskrit and classified under suitable subject of popular Vaiṣṇava interest. This work contains prescriptions for the daily behaviour of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas as well as for their ritualistic worship, observance of religious festivals, initiation, founding of temple etc. The text shows signs of influence from the Śrī Śampradāya of Rāmānuja, a fact which is usually taken as evidence that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, a native of South India and descendant of Śrī Vaiṣṇava, has a hand in its authorship.

It is a work of patient and extensive Purānic and Tāntric erudition. Each rule is copiously illustrated and supported by large quotations from the Purāṇas, Saṁhitās, Tantras and other scriptures and sectarian religious treatises. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa has utilized 279 books, as sources for writing the book. The work is composed in the usual Anustubh śloka metre. This shows that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was a well-read scholar philosopher. It is a complete guide to the Vaidhī Bhakti, in which devotional acts proceed from vidhis or sāṁśic injunctions. Some omissions, however, are remarkable. On the whole, the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa and its commentary together form quite a monumental work, which required profound commitments to this Pañcarātric approach to Vaiṣṇavism. It was one of the very first Gosvāmi works, but was clearly
marginalized historically and other worship procedures quickly appeared to take its place.

There is a controversy over the authorship of the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. No conclusive evidence has been discovered till today regarding the author of the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. From the internal evidences of the book it seems that the author of the book is Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. From some other evidences it seems that Sanātana Gosvāmi wrote the book in the name of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. In the list of Sanātana’s works given by Jīva Gosvāmi, a close associate and nephew of Sanātana, at the end of *Laghu Vaiṣṇava Toṣanī*, the authorship of the said work has been unequivocally attributed to Sanātana¹. This is also confirmed by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja². According to him, Caitanya himself taught Sanātana the rudiments of the *Vaiṣṇava Smṛti* and instructed him to codify them in a systematic work within the scheme outlined by him. Sanātana simply acted in deference to the wishes of the master and compiled the massive text³. In the Bengali *Viśvakosa* (Encyclopaedia) also *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* has been included in the list of Sanātana’s works⁴. We can not reasonably set aside these testimonies. In *Bhaktiratndākura*, however, it has been made out that Sanātana was heavily preoccupied with other compositions and as such he entrusted Gopāla Bhaṭṭa with the responsibility of writing a work on Vaiṣṇava rites within the conceptual frame-work of Caitanyaism. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa carried out the behest of the elder Gosvāmi by writing a book entitled *Laghu Hari-bhakti-
vilāsa which is said to be still available at Śrī Govinda Library in Jaipur. Later on, Sanātana improved it and produced the present version along with a Sanskrit commentary named Digdarśini. This is the work we have as Hari-bhakti-vilāsa in its present form.

But for some unknown reasons, so it is said, Sanātana passed his own composition in the name of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. Manoharadāsa on the other hand, presents a different story. He believes that Sanātana wrote the work himself but Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was instrumental in adding illustrative passages culled from Purāṇas, Tantras and other scriptures. However, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa himself maintained total silence about these things.

Narahari Chakravarti, in the first half of the 18th century, explains this extraordinary silence as due to an express prohibition, befitting his Vaiṣṇava humility by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa himself. He undertakes to remedy this deficiency by a curious account in his own Bhaktiratnākara. It is said that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa gladly ordered not to narrate his reference in the book Caitanya-caritāmṛta. But why he had prohibited this is not known. He constantly thinks himself to be humbled and modest, hence, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja could not violate his instruction and refrained from mentioning his name.

Ramakanta Chakravarti in his book ‘BangeVaiṣṇava Dharma’ has mentioned that the Gosvāmis realized that elite culture of Vṛndāvana would not accept the emotional sentiment of the Vaiṣṇavas. The rituals and duties of
the Vaiṣṇavas are also to be defined and codified. This important work was done by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. He composed Hari-bhakti-vilāsa which was considered as the Smṛti Śāstra of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sects.

Swāmi Tattāvananda in his work stated that Mahāprabhū Caitanya, Nityānanda and Advaita have not left any written document. Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, Vaiṣṇavatoṣani which is a very beautiful and learned commentary on the tenth Skandha of Bhāgavatapurāṇa and Brhad-Bhāgavatāmrta, a very instructive treatise dealing with devotion, religion and the Supreme Being are some of the well known books of Vaiṣṇava religion and philosophy written by Sanātana Gosvāmi for the guidance of the devotees and spiritual aspirants. Further he also quoted in the same book that “the customs and conventions of the Vaiṣṇavas are rigorous. Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, an important book written for the guidance of the Vaiṣṇavas by Sanātana deals with their customs and conventions”. However, the author is confused and has contradicted himself in ascribing the authorship of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa in some other place, because again he has mentioned in the same book that “Hari-bhakti-vilāsa and the commentary on Kṛṣnakarnāmrta by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi and the Stavamālā and the Muktācarita by Raghunātha-dāsa are also well known books of Vaiṣṇava literature”.

Vaiṣṇavācārya Dr. Mahanambrata Brahmačari holds that Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is jointly compiled by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and Sanātana Gosvāmi. This work
is an embodiment of the talent and research of both of them. It is said that Caitanya held that Vaiṣṇava rituals and festivals should not be regulated by the Smṛtis of Raghunandana which was then followed in Bengal. So he instructed Sanātana Gosvāmi to compose a Vaiṣṇava Smṛti\textsuperscript{11}. As Sanātana was engaged in writing his Brhad-Bhāgavatāmya he could hardly find time to compose this smṛti. Hence, he asked Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to prepare a draft of the smṛti. Sanātana examined the draft copy and revised it by way of addition and alteration and finished it endowing his commentary namely Digdarśini\textsuperscript{12}. The order of Lord Caitanya, power of inspiration and dedicative spirit of both of the Gosvāmis are prevalent brightly in this book.

Śrīla B.V.Tripurāri Svāmi holds that “perhaps Gopāla Bhaṭṭa helped to make the fledgling Sampradāya less controversial. With this in mind, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa compiled the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Smṛti, Hari-bhakti-vilāsa much of which is a concession to the orthodox brahmanical climate that permeated the religious landscape”\textsuperscript{13}.

But in the text of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa itself, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa’s authorship has been unambiguously declared and there is nothing to show that the opening verses are spurious. Further, it has been noticed that in Hari-bhakti-vilāsa the worship of Lākṣmi-Nārāyana has been prescribed but the author has not shown much interest in the cults of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya. This lends support to the assumption that this work might have been composed by one
who has emotional involvement in Śrīvaiṣṇavism though not overtly. S.K. De., an eminent modern authority on Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, made an in-depth study of this controversial issue and finally arrived at the following conclusion: "It seems probable, therefore, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa as stated in the work itself, was the actual author of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa but the attribution to Sanātana might have arisen from a kind of close collaboration, which will remain undetermined, between these doyen of Vaiṣṇava Sāstra and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in making this voluminous compilation""14. Dr. Radha Govinda Nath, another erudite Vaiṣṇava scholar, lends his support to this view, adding that Sanātana wrote a commentary on this work15.

Similarly Dr. S.C. Mukherjee also attributed the authorship of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. He stated that "Compilation of such a religious code was necessary for the common devotees; and the task was accomplished with success by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in collaboration (probably) with Sanātana"16.

P.V. Kane, Haridāsa Sāstrī and others have also accepted Gopāla Bhaṭṭa as the author of this work. P.V. Kane has mentioned in the Vol.-I of his work The History of Dharmasastra that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, the pupil of Prabodhānanda composed Hari-bhakti-vilāsa17. Haridāsa Sāstrī also held that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa wrote the Bhagavad-bhakti-vilāsa which is also known as Hari-bhakti-vilāsa as per the consent of Sanātana18.
From the available records, it can be reasonably assumed that Bhatta had the pious company of great Vaiśnava saints and sāvāntes Sanātana, Rūpa and Raghunāthadāsa during his Vṛndāvana days. He held them in highest esteem. In the second opening verse of his Hari-bhakti-vilāsa he has distinctly stated¹⁹ that the work has been compiled for the satisfaction of Raghunāthadāsa, Rūpa and Sanātana as the disciple of Prabodhānanda.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa wrote Hari-bhakti-vilāsa and collected the greater part of the Pramanās found there. However, as Mahāprabhu instructed to collect these evidences, it was he who gave direction to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. In other words, he appointed Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to search through the scriptures for these proofs and to write the text of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa. It was his wish that the book meets with society’s approval through the sterling character of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa who was a lifelong brahmacārī from a Brahmin family of good status. Therefore, full credit for Gopāla Bhaṭṭa’s authorship is given in the colophon to every chapter.

1.2. LIFE SKETCH OF GOPĀLA BHAṬṬA

Apart from uncertain legends, there is neither full nor satisfactory account of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. Nothing practically is recorded of him by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviṇāja, who refers to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in the first Chapter of Adihla of Caitanya-caritāmṛta as one of his Śikṣā-Gurus and who must have known him quite well during the last phase of his life at Vṛndāvana²⁰.
The tradition recorded by Narahari informs us that Gopāla Bhāṭṭa was the son of Venkaṭa Bhāṭṭa, a learned Brāhmaṇa of Southern India, at whose house Caitanya was a guest for four months during his South India pilgrimage. But no information is given regarding the place where Venkaṭa lived. Venkaṭa’s elder brother was Trimalla and younger was Prabodhānanda. They were worshippers of Lakṣmi and Nārāyana and belonged to the Śrīvaṁśava sect. Through the grace of Caitanya, they as well as young Gopāla Bhāṭṭa were inspired with devotion for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa worship. Gopāla Bhāṭṭa further received Caitanya’s direction to leave for Vṛndāvana and meet Rūpa and Sanātana there. This would imply that Rūpa and Sanātana were already in Vṛndāvana when Gopāla Bhāṭṭa arrived there. This fact is supported by Bhakti-ratnākara which described the arrival of Gopāla Bhāṭṭa in Vṛndāvana where he met Rūpa-Sanātana. But in another place Narahan implied that Gopāla Bhāṭṭa was already there when Rūpa and Sanātana arrived for the first time. He was educated by his uncle Prabodhānanda and in a short time, went to Vṛndāvana with the permission of his parents. Narahari tells us that there is a special account in Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa’s biography, but he acknowledges that Gopāla Bhāṭṭa’s name does not appear there in this connection. He further states that elsewhere it is found that Gopāla Bhāṭṭa was the son of Venkaṭa Bhāṭṭa (anyatra vyakta venkaṭa tanayam). By ‘elsewhere’, therefore, Narahari may be referring to some such works of later
date as the Prema-vilāsa of Nityānanda-dāsa, where a similar but much brief account is found. The Anurāga-vallī of Manohara-dāsa records in some detail a somewhat similar tradition²³. However, it is surmised that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came to Vṛndāvana sometimes in the period 1512-1534 A.D. After 150 years of this Anurāga-vallī and Bhakti-ratnākara were composed depending on hearsay²⁴. Hence, this book involved contradiction and inconformity.

What is actually found in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta and elsewhere about Gopāla Bhaṭṭa only be summarised as follows: Murāri Gupta mentions the hospitality of Trimalla and not of Venkata during the rainy seasons and described Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, then a young lad, giving up his boyish sports and turning into a Bhakta by the touch of Caitanya, as the son of Trimalla, but no other details are given. In his Sanskrit Kāvyā on Caitanya Kavi Karnapura states that Caitanya spent four months in the house of Trimalla Bhaṭṭa at Śrīraṅgam during his South Indian pilgrimage, but no mention is made of Venkata, Prabodhānanda or Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in this connection²⁵. Not is this incident referred to in Karnapura's better known Sanskrit drama on Caitanya-candrodaya.

Biman Bihari Majumdar, the author of Śrī Caitanya Chariter Upādin holds that Śrīpāda Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi is one of the six Gosvāmis. His life and works are enveloped in mysteries. There is a controversy about his parentage, whether he is the son of Trimalla or Venkata²⁶. In the second
benedictory sloka of Bhakti-ratnakara Gopala Bhatta has been said as the son of Venkaṭa. On the contrary, he has been mentioned as the son of Trimalla in Anurāgavallī of Manohara-dāsa written in 1696 A.D. The cause of such controversy is the inadvertence of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmi. Biman Bihari Majumdar stated that the verse composed by Kavi Kārṇāputra describes that Gopala Bhaṭṭa was skilled in drama and music and also amiable in talk.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the author of Caitanya-caritāmṛta makes the matter worse, by speaking separately of the hospitality of Trimalla and Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa at Śrīraṅgam, respectively for four months. Both of them are described as Śrīvaiṣṇavas, but their connection is not stated. The first chapter of Madhyālīlā mentioned that Prabhū Caitanya halted four rainy months in the house of Trimalla, who was a renowned scholar of Śrīvaiṣṇava group. Caitanya was astonished at the charming scholarship of the Gosvāmi and observed Cāturmāsya with him in singing, dancing and Saṅkīrtana of Kṛṣṇa. Again in the 9th Chapter of Madhyālīlā he has written that he spent Cāturmāsya at Śrīraṅgam in the house of Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa. Kavirāja describes that Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa of Śrīvaiṣṇava School invited Prabhū Caitanya with due honour and humbly requested him to stay in his house for four months to observe the Cāturmāsya which draws near for his redemption with Kṛṣṇa. Thus he spent four months happily with Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa. Such difference of statement is due to inadvertence of Śrīpāda Kṛṣṇadāsa which may be presumed.
on account of his old-age. The name of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa does not appear in the above connection. In other biographies of Caitanya there is no reference to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa or to this incident at all. Such inadvertence of Kaviṛāja Gosvāmi has not escaped the notice of Manohara-dāsa who comments in his *Anurāga-vallī* that Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviṛāja confused the matter by speaking separately of the hospitality of Trimalla and Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa at Śrīraṅgam respectively for four months. Kaviṛāja has committed slip of pen not showing the connection between the Bhaṭṭas. So Manohara-dāsa has removed the confusion by stating Venkaṭa as younger brother of Trimalla. On the request of Trimalla Bhaṭṭa Caitanya passed four months in his house. Kaviṛāja Gosvāmi mentioned Gopāla Bhaṭṭa with other five Gosvāmis and stated his name ascertaining his branch as the best. He also stated Gopāla Bhaṭṭa as his Śikṣāguru in the first chapter of Ādīllā of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

Besides these, there is no detail account or reference to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in his book. The biographies of other five Gosvāmis are given in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Observing his silence about Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, various doubts came upon the minds of Vaiṣṇavas of later period. Such kind of doubt is hinted in the *Bhakti-ratnākara* as follows: Somebody describes such account of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa while some others do not. The person who argues unreasonably, “the germ of offence infects his heart”33. Thus Narahari exhorts that faithful should not indulge in vain argument. Narahari Chakravarti suggested two probable
reasons of the silence of Kavirāja Gosvāmi. Firstly as Vrndāvana-dāsa excluded totally the topics of south India sojourn of Caitanya. Similarly Kavirāja Gosvāmi also excluded the account of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. The intention of both was to keep some provision for account of the future poets. Secondly at the request of permission from Kavirāja Gosvāmi for writing Caitanya-caritāmṛta Gopāla Bhaṭṭa asserted that his reference should not be detailed in the book. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa commanded Kavirāja Gosvāmi not to state any account of him. It may be said relating to the first argument of Narahari Chakravarti that although the meeting of Caitanya with Śrījīva was doubtful Kavirāja Gosvāmi wrote about this episode but omitted the account of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, its reason is somewhat serious. It is more difficult to support the latter argument; since if any permission would have been taken prior to starting Caitanya-caritāmṛta from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa then the issue would must have been delineated in eight chapters of Ādīlīlā with glory and importance by the Kavirāja Gosvāmi.

There is no account of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa either in Kavi Karnapura’s ŚrīCaitanya-candrodaya or in Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Vrndāvana-dāsa, Locana and Jayānanda are also silent about him. But Murāri Gupta, the first biographer of Caitanya wrote about him as follows:

\[
sukhāsīnim jagannātham trimallākhya dvijottamah
striputrasvajanaiah sārdham sīṣeva premanirbhrahah\]

\[\text{T 618} \]
Without specific evidence the truth of the statement of Murāri can not be doubted. The information from Murāri is received that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa attained the grace like Kavi Karnapura from Caitanya in his childhood. According to Nityānanda-dāsa, Caitanya spent four months in the house of Trimalla Bhaṭṭa at Śrīraṅgam and advised Trimalla’s younger brother, Prabodhānanda, to educate the young Gopāla. Caitanya instructed Gopāla Bhaṭṭa to go to Vrndāvana after his parents’ death. The account of the later biographers of Caitanya such as Manohara-dāsa (author of Anurāga-vallī) and Narahari Chakravartī (author of Bhakti-ratnākara) generally confirmed the description given by Nityānanda-dāsa (author of Prema-vilāsa). Manohara adds that some time after Caitanya’s visit, the three brothers, with their wives, set out on a pilgrimage and came to meet Caitanya at Purī, where after religious intercourses they were told to return home.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came to Vrndāvana after the death of his father Trimalla, teacher and uncle, Prabodhānanda and uncle Venkaṭa. Raghunātha-dāsa came to Vrndāvana after the death of Caitanya. Narahari Chakravartī wrote in Index to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa (Gopāla Bhaṭṭer Sūcaka) that he met Rūpa- Sanātana...
when they came to Vṛndāvana. This means that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa began to live at Vṛndāvana before Rūpa-Saṅṭāna. Hence, it can be presumed that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came to Vṛndāvana sometimes in the period from 1512 to 1534 A.D. After more than 150 years of this incident Anurāga-vallī and Bhakti-ratnākara were composed. In writing these two books the writers based upon hearsay more than other materials. This is why there are self-contradiction and inconsistencies in their own statements.

It may be noticed at once that there is a great deal of discrepancy and uncertainty in the accounts, meagre in themselves, which the records of the sect give of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. From these recorded accounts all that we can be sure of is that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa hailed from a South Indian Brahmin family belonging to the Vaiṣṇava tradition. The reason for the disagreement among the Vaiṣṇava scholars as regards his ancestry and personal history is that none of Caitanya’s trusted disciples accompanied him during his South Indian pilgrimage. The biographers of Caitanya had therefore, to depend more upon hearsay and other unconfirmed reports.

Some modern writers like Dinesh Chandra Sen etc. made more confusion by proposing to identify Gopāla Bhaṭṭa’s alleged father Venkata Bhaṭṭa with Venkaṭnātha of Velgundi whom Dharmarājadhvarindra mentions as his Guru in his Vedānta-Paribhāṣā, but of this there is not the slightest evidence. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa’s native place, again is given by some as
Bhaṭṭamāri, but in Kṛṣṇadāsa's description of Caitanya's South Indian pilgrimage, Bhaṭṭamāri occurs not as the name of a place but as the name of a gang of false ascetics whom Caitanya is said to have met in Mallara lane (which is also called Malafar). But a somewhat different version is also noticed. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came of a very sophisticated South Indian Brahmin family. It is held that he was born at Velgundi village on the bank of holy river Kaveri not far off from Śrīraṅgam in Śaka 1422 (1500 A.D.). His father's name was Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa. Trimalla and Prabodhānanda were his uncles. Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa was a great Vedāntin scholar. Dharmarajadhvarindra, the author of Vedānta-paribhāṣā had saluted him in benedictory of the book as his Guru (preceptor). Prabodhānanda also attained the title Sarasvatī for his erudition in Vedānta philosophy and he educated his nephew in different śāstras or branches of knowledge. The boy, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa under the care of his uncle and on account of his alround genius and uncommon perseverance became conversant in various branches of knowledge and attained fame in the domain of Vaiṣṇavism. During the sojourn to South India Śrī Caitanyadeva passed four months in the house of Venkaṭācārya. Caitanyadeva came to Raṅgakṣetra in 1511 A.D. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was a young lad of seven years when he met Mahāprabhu Caitanya in Śrīraṅgam. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered him to move to Vṛndāvana after the dis-appearance of his parents and perform bhajana and other rites. At the age of thirty Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came to
Vṛndāvana. He became very prominent in Vṛndāvana yet he remained very humble, so much so that he asked Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmi not to mention his name in his treatise Ĉaitanya-caritāmṛta. Through Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi introduced the worship of Śālagramaśilā, a vaishnava Deity, into Śrī Vṛndāvana. Jīva Gosvāmi was junior to him and Rūpa and Sanātana were his seniors. He was the main dikṣāguru amongst the six gosvāmis. Mahāprabhu gave his own seat to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa in Vṛndāvana indicating his preference for Gopāla Bhaṭṭa with regard to dikṣā. Mahāprabhu is the Guru of Gurus, the Ādīguru of the sampradāya. Thus the sending of his own seat for Gopāla Bhaṭṭa is significant. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi is considered the repository of Guru-sakti. It is said in Gaurā-ganoddeśa-dīpikā that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi’s position as the principal dikṣāguru amongst the Gosvāmis has considerable inner significance. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa is also śāstra-guru of the bhakti-sāstras of the Sampradāya. It is also said that he compiled under the guidance of Sanātana Gosvāmi, the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Smṛti. Hari-bhakti-vilāsa. In this book and in his Sat-kriya-sāra-dīpikā, he has given all behavioural codes and ritualistic procedures for the Sampradāya. Perhaps Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi is best known for having established the Rādhā Ramana deity and temple in Vṛndāvana. Although he is most well known for these works, he was also a principal contributor to Jīva Gosvāmi’s Sat-sandharbha. In each Sandharbha Śrī Jīva Gosvāmi offers his respect to Gopāla
Bhaṭṭa noting that his own work in the Sandharbhas is merely what he considers a rearranging of notes gathered by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa.

It is already mentioned that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was the main Śākta amongst the six Gosvāmis. Indeed, Rūpa Gosvāmi had only one initiated disciple. We know of no dīkṣā line of Sanātana Prabhū. One reason that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi was the principal initiator, is related to the preaching strategy of the Gosvāmis. They were not only *prema bhaktas* of the highest order, they were also politically astute, culturally wise and very pragmatic. Rūpa-Sanātana were socially tarnished due to their having taken service in the Muslim Government. Jīva Gosvāmi, their nephew shared this social blemish. While Mahāprabhū used these three to establish his *sampradāya* and religious revolution, he was sensitive to the climate of the times. Although he overturned caste considerations when they got in the way of spiritual ideal, he did not go against socio-religious trend if he did not have to. He chose Rūpa and Sanātana to help to establish his *Sampradāya* because they were very learned people. They knew how to deal with people. They were ministers in the muslim Government. The muslims ruled much of India at that time and Rūpa and Sanātana were capable of dealing with their leaders. More importantly, they were the embodiment of what Caitanya Mahāprabhū himself came to experience. But for some external and internal reasons Mahāprabhū chose Gopāla Bhaṭṭa as the principal initiator. Externally he was from a very
sophisticated South Indian Brahmin family. In consideration of the religious climate, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi’s parentage and religious background made him better suited to act in the capacity of Dīkṣāguru. These perhaps helped to make the fledging Sampradāya less controversial. With this in mind Gopāla Bhaṭṭa compiled the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Smṛti Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, much of which is a concession to the orthodox brahmanical climate that permeated the religious landscape of that time.

It is believed that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa passed away in śaka 1507 (1585 A.D.) and if the reliability of this account is found acceptable, he seems to have enjoyed a pretty long life of 85 years.

1.3. DATE OF COMPOSITION OF THE WORK

Like majority of old Sanskrit books, Hari-bhakti-vilāsa presents some difficulties relating to the date of its composition. To determine the date and historical authenticity of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa a comparative study of some Vaiṣṇava works is essential. It is seen from the internal evidence of Caitanya-caritāmṛta that none of the six Gosvāmis was alive when it was composed. The work itself was begun as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja tells us, at the special request of the Vaiṣṇavas of Vṛndāvana at a time when its erudite have already attained mature age and it was completed with exemplary patience and labour of seven (or according to some, nine) years in śaka 1537 (1615 A.D.). The verse which gives the date of the composition in Caitanya-Caritāmṛta is: 

19
It gives 1537 Saka (1612 A.D.) as the date of composition of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. But the reading Sake'gni-bindu-banendau which occurs in *Premā vilāsa* (24th vilāsa) of Nityānanda-dāsa gives 1503 saka (1581 A.D.) is also found. The authenticity of the verse, therefore, is not beyond question, but probably the traditional date is correct. Unfortunately the difference of reading makes a difference of 34 years. From internal evidence, however, it appears that the latest work cited in it⁴⁷ is Jīva Gosvāmi’s *Gopāla-campu*, which was not completed till 1514 śaka (1592 A.D.). Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, therefore, could not have completed his work in 1581 A.D. The date 1537 saka (1612 A.D.), therefore, appears to be more likely.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has made profuse quotations from the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. The quotations are found in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in Madhyalilā, chapters 17, 18, 19, 22, Antyalilā, chapter 2. These facts evidently prove that *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* was composed much earlier to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

The version of P.V. Kane in respect of date of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* is amenable to reason in view of historical background. He referred to the name of this book as Dharmasāstra. He quoted the name of Raghunandana who mentioned that *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* was composed about 1562 A.D.
Haridāsa Śāstri, the editor of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (published by Gadhadhar Gaurahari press, Vṛndāvan, Mathura, 1986) held that as per the consent of Sanātana, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa wrote the Bhagavat-bhakti-vilāsa which is also known as Hari-bhakti-vilāsa. It is referred to in Bhakti-rasāṃrta-sindhu which was composed in 1463 BS (1541 A.D.). Hence, Hari-bhakti-vilāsa must be composed before the 1463 Šaka (1541 A.D.). The closing śloka of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is as follows:

\[
\text{sakābde pañcaśat saka sankhye sūryye tulām gate/S}
\]

\[
vṛndāvanānta grantho 'yam nandāvāse samāpitah //^{18}\]

From another point of view an attempt may be made about the date of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came to Vṛndāvana between the period from 1512 to 1534 A.D. The Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is the product of joint effort of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and Sanātana. Sanātana either gave guidance or collaborated with him in compilation of the work. Moreover, Sanātana’s Vaisnava-tosāna commentary which was completed in śaka 1476 (1554 A.D.) shows that Sanātana must have been alive up to this date. Hence, on the basis of this it can be definitely said that the compilation of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa must have been completed sometimes before 1554 A.D. and later to 1534 A.D.

As the reference of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is made in Rūpa Gosvāmi’s Bhakti-rasāṃrta-sindhu written in śaka 1463 (1541 A.D.), it must have been composed sometime before that date or before this period.
1.4. SUBJECT-MATTER OF THE HARI-BHAKTI-VILĀSA

The work is composed in the Anuśṭubh Śloka metre, but each prescription is supported and illustrated copiously by long quotations from the Purāṇas and other scriptures. It is not easy to give a detail summary of the contents of this massive compendium running into twenty Vilāsas or chapters; nor is this essential for our present purpose. The main contents of the work can be summarized briefly chapter by chapter as follows:

Vilāsa-1

The first vilāsa is called Gauravah. The subjects dealt with in the first vilāsa are: the necessity of a Guru or Preceptor; the qualifications of the Guru and the Śisya (disciple) greatness of the Bhagavat who is the supreme object of worship; efficacy of the Mantra or mystic formula which has the Bhagavat for its object; persons qualified to receive the Mantra; the method of finding out the nature of particular Mantra to be imparted by the Guru to the Śisya and the purification of particular Mantra.

Mantra-dikṣā is the first qualification for a man to become a Vaisnava which is to be received from a qualified preceptor. A worthy preceptor is of the greatest importance for a man to acquire devotion to Kṛṣṇa, for without resorting to the feet of the preceptor, people become overwhelmed by hundreds of perils, like merchants without a pilot in the sea. A long list of the characteristic of a good preceptor is compiled from such works as Mantra.
A Brahmana preceptor who can impart the Mantra to all castes is highly desirable. In his absence, worthy people of the Kṣatriya and Vaiśya castes may act as preceptors to men of their own or lower castes respectively, while a Śūdra preceptor can initiate a man of his own caste. Thus, Anuloma initiation is permitted, but Pratiloma initiation is prohibited.

Disciples are to be carefully selected. Long list of desirable qualities and also undesirable characteristic of the disciples are also furnished. Before entering into the relationship of preceptor and disciple, at least one year's constant companionship on their part is necessary for the discovery of each other's qualities and defects. A long list of various acts of devotion, service and duties of the disciple during this period is also given. When the prescribed period is over, the disciple should pray to the preceptor to initiate him in the Viṣṇu-mantra. There are two kinds of Viṣṇu-mantra: namely, the Mantra of eight syllables and twelve syllables. The former is called Mantra-rāja because it is highly potent and is the essence of the Vedānta and is also inseparable from Viṣṇu himself. The Mantra of twelve syllables is also highly efficacious. The Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-mantra of eighteen syllables is also very potent; for the real svarūpa of Kṛṣṇa is described in it as revealing the world.

Before imparting a Mantra to the disciple, the preceptor should be guided by several considerations. Of this selection of worthy recipients is of
primary importance. The preceptor should also find out the suitable nature of the *Mantra* to be imparted and determined whether it is favourable or not. Some of the *Mantras* are beneficent and some harmful, while others are deficient and impure. The latter kind, therefore, requires *Samskāra* or purification, which consists of ten operations which are discussed in this chapter. But there are certain *Mantras* which are beneficent but do not require any *Samskāra*.

**Vilāsa-2**

This vilāsa is known as *Daikṣikah* meaning initiation rituals. It deals with the mode of initiation. Without initiation a man is not entitled to worship. For initiation careful choice of the proper month, day, planetary position and so forth is essential. Guideline and auspicious moment for initiation is prescribed. Four songs of initiation are mentioned in the *Sāradā-tilaka* namely *Kriyāvatī, Kalātmā, Varnamayī* and *Vedhamayī*. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa is concerned with the form called *Kriyāvatī*. The initiation ceremony is to be conducted in a *Mandapa* of prescribed measurement. The *Mandapa* is to be sprinkled with *Pañcagavya* and with fragrant water. The preliminaries which are to be performed on the day preceding that fixed for the actual *Dikṣā* are also described in detail.

On the day of initiation after performing *Homa* and *Samhāra-muhrā* the *Guru* sprinkles and consecrates his disciple and purifies his body by *Bhūtā-
śuddhi. The Dīkṣā is completed with the disciple doing obeisance by falling prostrate at the feet of the preceptor, with offer of money and things as fee to the preceptor and with feeding of Brāhmaṇa’s and friends. The above mode of Dīkṣā is mainly Tāntric. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa also mentioned another kind of Dīkṣā called Paurāṇikī. The main outline of this type of Dīkṣā has been also envisaged in this chapter. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa prescribes this Paurāṇika initiation on the basis of the Varāha Purāṇa.

In case of inability, elaborate ceremonies are dispensed with and shorter ways are prescribed for what is called Samksipta-dīkṣā. The method of this type of Dīkṣā is also outlined here. The chapter concludes with an enumeration of the merit of the Mantra-dīkṣā.

Vilāsa-3

The third Vilāsa is called Śaucīya which deals with purificatory rituals. It gives the details of conduct and daily pious duties of the initiated Vaisnava devotee. Waking up in the early dawn the devotee should contemplate on his spiritual preceptor and Lord Kṛṣṇa after cleaning and changing of cloths. This meditation is called mental bath (Mānasa snāṇa), the best of all Holy bath, as it produces merit of bathing in all places of pilgrimage. Then he should perform morning obeisance. This mode of morning affair and contemplation and its effects are described in detail by means of quotations from the Purva-śāstra and other scriptures.
As soon as the sun rises the devotee should go out to a sacred bathing place. An elaborate direction is also given for the devotee about the cleaning after defecation. Direction of tooth-brushes is also given for cleansing of teeth with appropriate Mantras. Detail rules for purification, sipping of water from the palm of the hand, bathing libation of water to the Gods. Vedic Sandhyā, Tāntric Sandhyā, mode of worshipping the God in water etc. are narrated in this chapter.

Vilāsa-4

The fourth chapter is called Vaiṣṇavālamkāra. It means the tilaka and Vaiṣṇava symbols or decorations. This vilāsa also continues the topic of daily devotional acts. Some of the main topics discussed here are: cleansing of the temple, sprinkling and besmearing it with cow-dung and water, drawing of Mandalas of lotus and svastikas, placing of flagstaffs and flags, fastening garland and planting pillars of plantain trees, cloths and seats of Visnu, plucking of basil leaves, flowers, twigs for worship etc. The methods and result of these pious acts are described in detail.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa takes up the topics like painting of tilaka marks on twelve different parts of the body, significance of Gopicandana, method of wearing of garlands made of basil beads. The method and merit of drawing the sectarian marks, especially distinctive Īrdhva-pundra, are dealt with in some detail, possibly because in later Vaiṣṇavism these became the peculiar sectarian
marks. Some other topics like worship of spiritual preceptor (ŚrīGuru Pujā), significance of the preceptor as representative of Gods, the result of devotion to the spiritual preceptor are also discussed.

Vilāsa-5

This chapter is known as Ādhiṣṭhānikah. In this Vilāsa Gopāla Bhaṭṭa proposes to describe mainly the Tāntric method of daily morning worship of Gopāla-deva with the Mantra of eighteen syllables. The chapter begins with the worship of Ksetrapālas at the door and at different parts of the temple. Then gradually it deals with the significance of entry into the temple, inside worship, seat for worship, merit and demerit of seat, placing of auspicious pitcher (Mangala-ghata), pots for Arghya (offerings), Mangala-śānti for averting evils and accidents, preliminary ceremonies for purification of the five elements (Bhūta-suddhi), practice, control of breath and the contemplation of Kṛṣṇa. Next comes the repetition of the Mūla-mantra accompanied by Nyāsas. The process of performing such Nyāsas as Mātrkā-nyāsa, Keśavādhi-nyāsa, Pīṭha-nyāsa, Anīga-nyāsa, Aksara-nyāsa, Pāda-nyāsa and Rṣyādi-nyāsa, as well as description of the forms, śaktis and Dhyānas are then given in some detail. Then the devotee proceeds to perform five times of Mudrā which is dear to the Lord and meditate on Kṛṣṇa with the Mudrā. These meditations or mental worship (Antar-yāga or Mānasa-pujā) consist of various
operations. Various articles of worship, which are employed in the external worship, may also be utilized in the internal.

The object of outward worship is the image of the deity and the Śālagrāma stone. The worship of Śālagrāma is said to be more efficacious than that of thousands of Śiva-lingas. The purchase and sale of Śālagrāma are strictly forbidden. Its worship is compulsory. Then the significance and symptoms of Dvārakā-cakra and Dvādaśa-cakra are also discussed in detail.

**Vilāsa-6**

The sixth vilāsa is called Snāpanika. This chapter deals with the significance of image worship of the Deity with ancillary process, self-purification, purification of the place of worship, purification of the articles employed in worship, purification of the formula of incantation (Mantra-śuddhi), purification of the mind by the relinquishment of every other thought. After this consecration of the seat of the image (Pīha-pujā) is discussed. It has also dealt with the importance of reading the Bhagavad-gītā and the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas, basil tree and candana and chowry or fan made of palm leaf.

This vilāsa also deals with the rules and operation of the worship of the image of deity. The images are self-revealed or established (sthāpita) by some pious devotees of which the former is rare.
This vilāsa, called *Pauspika* or *Puspa-Karman* begins with the offering of flowers in worship and gives detail list of permissible and forbidden flowers as well as a description of their merits and demerits with reference to their species, colour, smell and season of growth. In any case, the offerings of *Tulasī* is obligatory, being declared the most efficacies and sacred in the scriptures and all Vaiṣṇava worships being fruitless without it. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa also adds that those who are unable to go through elaborate ceremonies may worship with the eight names (*Śrīmānmaṭakā-pujā*) alone, which are equally efficacious.

This vilāsa is known as *Prātaracryasamāpana* which means closing of morning worship. It begins with a description of the burning of incense before the deity. Next comes offering of light (*Dīpana*), *Naivedya* (food) and long list of different kinds of food which should constitute the *Naivedya* are compiled from the different Purāṇas. Incense burning before the deity is highly praised in Purāṇas and qualifies one for the *Sārūpya* form of emancipation. Besides this list of forbidden food is also furnished. Devotional acts like rule of *pranāma*, circumambulation (*pradaksīna*), reverential placing of garland to the deity etc. are discussed. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa concludes with a few general remarks on the mode of worship.
Vilāsa-9

This chapter is termed as Mahāprasāda which means honouring the remnants of worship. This Vilāsa deals with the great favour of food offering accepted by the deity and then distributed among devotees and people present at the worship. The mode of taking and distributing the Mahāprasāda is described in detail. Water in conch-shell is regarded is highly sacred. The intake of water used for washing the śālagrama frees man from the sufferings even in mother's womb. The Vilāsa concludes with the glorification of the Mahāprasāda by quotation of texts on its Māhātmya.

Vilāsa-10

This chapter is called Satsangama i.e., Vaiṣṇava association. It is devoted entirely to the characterization of the Vaiṣṇava devotees and Vaiṣṇava religious practices and gives an epitome of social religious usages known as Vaiṣṇava sadōcāra. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa also explains in detail the characteristics of the Bhāgavata religion that leads to the love of the deity. Man aspiring of virtue and salvation should always listen to the words of Śrī Hari and the listeners surely attain Vaikunṭha. Devotion breeds love in the person who then attains God. The chapter concludes with a description of the merits of celebrating the glories of the deeds and sports (Līlā) of the Bhagavat.
Vilāsa-11

This Vilāsa is called 'Nityakṛtya samāpana'. This chapter deals with regular morning and evening rites or worship of deity and contains incidental remarks on certain rules of virtuous conduct and on the efficacy of repeating the sacred names. Such daily worship is a compulsory duty for the Vaisnava. Those who do not follow this practice, they are sinful and have to suffer in hell. The discourse on washing of teeth and details of forbidden food are also topics of this chapter. The topics like the glorification of Vaiṣṇava worship of the Bhagavata, incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, offences relating to sacred names, expiation of such offences, the rarity and efficacy of devotional attitude towards the Lord etc. are also included here. The chapter concludes with a list of rules of virtuous conduct and traditional usages for Vaiṣṇava householders. It is noteworthy that in addition to the Purāṇas, the orthodox law-books of Viṣṇu and Atri are also drawn upon.

Vilāsa-12

This Vilāsa is called the Ekādaśī-nirnaya. It deals with the topics of fasting on the 11th day of the fortnight, necessity of fasting, reason for fasting, prohibition of intake of food on the ekādaśī, offences of non-observance (Pratyavāya), significance for the observance of ekādaśī. Beside this, a more or less technical discussion on the determination of the exact time and period of fasting is also discussed along with various types of ekādaśīs.
Fasting of ekādaśi and break of fast has been specially discussed in this chapter. The devotees of Viṣṇu should not take food on ekādaśi. It has been considered that observance of ekādaśi annually requires no penance and pilgrimage. The day of ekādaśi is considered also as the day of Hari.

Vilāsa-13

This Vilāsa is termed Viṣṇu-vratotsava. Passing night remaining awake on Śrīhari-vāsara i.e., the day of worship of Viṣṇu and raising of light (dīpa) has been considered as very pious. It is advised that the religious observant should undertake the vow saluting his preceptor. The vrata sanctifies the body, mind, soul, and life becomes meaningful. In the chapter topics connected to the rites and duties of the days preceding and following the Ekādaśi fast respectively are dealt with. The glory of observance of vigil and sin of non-observance in respect of Ekādaśi fasting are described in detail on the testimony of the scriptures. Detail account of the eight kinds of Dvādaśi, their merits, method of observing vows and rules of worship on these special occasions and topics connected with these rites and observances are also taken up.

Vilāsa-14

This Vilāsa is called Śāqmāsika. This Vilāsa is devoted to the religious observances and Vaiṣṇava festivals occurring from the month of Agrahāyana to that of Caitra. The month of Agrahāyana is the most important and
foremost of the months during which all pious ceremonies or rites are to be conducted. This month is described as the divinity of Kṛṣṇa. From the devotional point of view these months are highly auspicious. An account of relative rites and ceremonies is given in this chapter. Accomplishment of some important Vaiṣṇava festivals like dolayātra, kātyāyanī vrata, vasanta-pancami, Bhīṣma-aṣṭamī, śivarātri-vrata are dealt with in this chapter.

Vilāsa-15

This Vilāsa is known as Divyāvirbhāva. In this Vilāsa Gopāla Bhaṭṭa continues the subject of monthly festival and observances and deals with those which occur from the month of Vaiśākha to that of Āśvina. Monthwise routine of Vaiṣṇava festivals are discussed here. Some of the major and important Vaiṣṇava festivals like Janmāśṭamī vrata, Rāmanavami vrata etc. fall during this period. Detail account of rules for observance of such festivals are also given here. The worship of Śālagrāma, ‘the symbol of Kṛṣṇa’, its glory and endless virtues that may occur is discussed here. Janmāśṭamī celebration is also referred to here as one of the highest religious observance.

Vilāsa-16

This Vilāsa is called Śrīdāmodarapriya. Vaiṣṇavas call Kārtika month as Dāmodara month. So the Vaiṣṇavas perform many pious and religious observances. The effects of the vows accomplished in Kārtika month never go in vain. Hence, this chapter is devoted entirely to the month of Kārtika, which
is notable for a series of religious vows and pious observances involving fast, daily bath, continence, worship, vigil, distribution of gifts and festivity. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa has summarized the rites and ceremonies which are dealt in Purāṇas for this month. One of the important festivals of this month is the Praḥoṇaṇiṇi kṛtya which is to be conducted as per rule enjoined.

**Vilāsa-17**

This Vilāsa is called *Pauraścaranika*. Regarding the subject of *Puraścarana*, in this chapter, the fortnightly and monthly practices have been considered. After having dealt with the daily, fortnightly and monthly religious practices, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa proposes in this chapter to deal with occasional observances. The subject is mainly *Puraścarana* (preparatory rite). After attainment of Dīkṣā Mantra from the preceptor and gaining his instruction the disciple should begin his *Puraścarana*. Oblation (homa), sacrifice (yajña), repetition of Mantra (Japa) etc. become fruitless without *Puraścarana*. As a weak is incapable in all works, so a Mantra devoid of *Puraścarana* is equally frustrated. The rules of this the author purports to derive from the *Krama-dīpikā* which, in his opinion, is the essence of all works on the worship of Gopāla Kṛṣṇa. Detail account of preparation of idol of deities, determination of the nature of images and anciliary rules of making images are taken up here.
Vilāsa-18

This Vilāsa is called Śrīmūrtiprādurbhāva. In this Vilāsa description of some Śrīmurtis has been given in connection with worshipping of images (Śrīmūrti). The manifestation of those idols and their rules of installation are also discussed. Referring to the four types of images, the author has endorsed the images made with earth, wood, iron, jewels, stones, scented material and brass. The construction, from diverse material, of different kinds of images of the various forms of the Bhagavat, as well as their characteristics, found in the śāstras, forms the subject matter of this Vilāsa. In this matter, as usual, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa supports his statements by copious quotation from the Purāṇas and from Tāntric and Vaiṣṇava texts.

Vilāsa-19

This Vilāsa is called Prātiṣṭhika. This vilāsa deals with the installation and consecration of images. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa has lavishly and elaborately given account of rites and ceremonies and the various stages of the procedure for installation of the images. The author believes that Śri Bhagavat manifests himself through the installation of images. Hence, the installation of images should be as per the rules of the scriptures and such installation bestows consciousness in life and to the world. The Vilāsa concludes with comprehensive direction regarding reconstruction or reinstallation of the
image in case it is displaced by wicked people, desecrated by the touch of undesirable persons, destroyed by fire and flood, defiled by wine or blood or decayed by old age.

**Vilāsa-20**

This last Vilāsa is called *Prāsādika*. This vilāsa is concerned with the construction of temples and rites and duties associated with it. It mentions the rule for construction as laid down in the Śāstras. The names and characteristics of various kinds of temple structures along with their measurement and technical details are given here by the author quoting from different sources. It is believed that construction of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s temple destroys the sin of seven lives. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa concludes this Vilāsa with the remark that the elaborate ceremonial worship described in this work is not necessary for those exclusive devotees (*Ekāntin*) who have attained the highest stage of indifference to the world and loving devotion to deity (*Prema-bhakti*) and who can, therefore, have distance with the mechanical acts of devotion; but the rites and deities are meant for those good house-holders who have wealth and attachment enough to undertake them to their own advantage.

A cursory survey of the contents of the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, an extensive work is only given here. The work undoubtedly reveals the author’s erudition in Vaiṣṇava devotional literature in general and in Purāṇic literature in particular, from which sources its endless number of quotations are patiently and
laboriously compiled. The concise summary may give some idea of the importance of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa

1.5. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The history of Bisnupriya Manipuris before the 16th or 17th century AD is shrouded in darkness. Practically no document has yet been found regarding linguistic, social and cultural conditions of these people of that time. However, the Bisnupriya Manipuris are said to be the followers of Vaiṣṇavism from ancient times. But before adopting Vaiṣṇavism as religion the Bisnupriyas were the worshiper of Āpokpā, Lāmar Dou etc. However, it can definitely be said that the Bisnupriya Manipuris became Vaiṣṇavite before 18th century. Traditions say that an image of Lord Viṣṇu was installed by these people at a place in Manipur to which was given the name Bishnupur.

In course of time, Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism established a deep root in the religio-cultural life of the Bisnupriya Manipuris. It is found that some of the injunctions incorporated in Hari-bhakti-vilāsa have a strong influence upon this community as a solid foundation of right faith. The typical practices give a distinct identity to Bisnupriya Manipuri community. All the rituals, celebrations, festivals etc. are performed following the directives given in this scripture. The Bisnupriya Manipuris are required to follow the practices which are authorized and discard those which are forbidden by this book. Hari-bhakti-vilāsa is as it were an ethical code to the Bisnupriya Manipuris.
The present study is an endeavour to reveal the relationship between the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa and Bisnupriya Manipuris in the field of religio-cultural life of the latter. The main objective of the study is to find out the historical roots of cultural and social details of the Bisnupriya Manipuris. So far my knowledge goes no ardent and systematic study on the religious and cultural heritage of the Bisnupriya Manipuris has been made. Therefore, the present researcher has felt the necessity of a detailed and indepth study and it is hoped that the discussion presented here may fill that need. It is hoped that this study will open a new vista on the life of Bisnupriya Manipuris and also provide a source of information or knowledge to the future generation. This study will also offer useful insights into the complex religious beliefs of the Bisnupriya Manipuris and the relevance of Caitanyaism and Hari-bhakti-vilāsa to it.

This study will primarily address the needs of Bisnupriya Manipuris of the facts underlying the philosophy and practice of Vaiṣṇavism. An attempt has been made to present a complete picture covering both ritualistic and historical aspects emphasizing the fact that for the most part the two are convergent.

This is to reiterate that the purpose of the work is to bring out the solemn thoughts and essentials of Vaiṣṇavite religion. Endeavour is made to show that Hari-bhakti-vilāsa has wholesome influence on the life of the
Bisnupriya Manipuris as an art of right living in the light of treatment as it contains.

NOTES AND REFERENCES


3. Ibid., P.452.


9. Ibid., P.49.

10. Ibid., P.44.


12. Ibid., P.2.


19. bhaktervilāsamścinute prabodhānandasya

śiṣyo bhagavatpriyasya /
gopālabhāṭṭo raghunāthadāsam

santoṣayan rupasanātanau ca // HBV, 1.2.

20. mantra guru ār yata śikṣā gurugan /
tā savār āge kari caraṇa vandan //

śrīrūpa sanātana bhaṭṭa raghunātha /
ei chay śikṣāguru ye āmār // CC, Ādilīlā Ch.1,P.6.


22. cf, rūpa ār sanātana yabe āilā vṛndāvana

24. cf. ibid.


27. cf. jitavara-gatibhangirnātya sangīta-rangī
tanubhṛta-janu-cittānanda-baraddhi-sudhīśah /
carīta-sukha vilāsascitracāturyya bhāṣah
parama-patītamīsah pātu gopāla bhattah // quoted from
Anurāgavallī (2nd Mañjari) by B.B. Majumder, op.cit., P.166.

28. cf. trimalla bhaṭṭer ghare kailā prabhū vāsa /
tāhāi rahilā prabhū varṣā cārimāsa //
śrivaiśṇava trimalla bhaṭṭa parama pāṇḍita /
gosāīr pāṇḍityapremē hailā vismita //
cāturmaṣya tāhā prabhū śrivaiśṇava sāne /
gonāīla nṛtyagīta-kṛṣṇa-samkīrtane // CC, Madhyalīlā, Ch.1, P.139.

29. cf. śrīvaiśṇava ek venkāṭa-bhaṭṭa nāma /
prabhkūṭe nimantrana kailā kariyā sanmāna //
bhikṣā karāiyā kīchu kailā nivedan /
cāturmaṣya āsi prabhū haila upasanna //
cāturmaṣya kṛpā kari raha mor ghare /
kṛṣṇa kathā kahi kṛpāy nistāra āmāre //
tār ghare rahilā prabhū kṛṣṇa kathā-rase /
bhaṭṭa sange gonāilā sukhe cāri-māse // CC, Madhyalālā, Ch.9. PP. 231-232.

30. sekhāne trimalla bhaṭṭer ghare bhikṣā laila /
   bhaṭṭera prārthana mate cāturmāṣya raila //
   navam paricchede sei sūtra vistārila /
   tāhe tār chota bhāi venkaṭa likhila //
   trimalla bhaṭṭer putrādi ātmasāt paripāti /
   rahī gelā te kārane likhaner truti // Anurāgavallī, Maṇjari 1.
   referred to by B.B. Majumdar, Caitanya Cariter Upādān. P.163.

31. śrī gopāla bhaṭṭa ek śākhā sarvottama /
   rūpa-sanātana sange yār prema ālāpana / CC, Ādilālā, Ch.10. P.92.

32. śrī rūpa sanātana bhaṭṭa raghunātha /
   śrijīva gopāla bhaṭṭa dāsa raghunātha //
   ei chay śikṣāguru ye āmār /
   ihā savār pada āge kari namaskār // CC, Ādilālā, Ch.1, P.6.

33. śrīgopāla bhaṭṭera esava vivaran /
   keho kichu varne keho nā kare varṇan //
   nā bujhiyā marmma ithe kūtarka ye kare /
   aparādh bīza tār hṛdaye saṅcāre // Bhaktiratnākara, Narahari
Chakravarti, referred to in *Caitanya Cariter Upādān*, B.B. Majumdar. PP. 163-164.

34. srīgopāla bhaṭṭa hṛṣṭa haiyā ājñā dila /

granthe nija prasanga varnite niṣedhila // Bhaktiratnākara, quoted by


35. Murāri Gupta, *Krṣna Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, 3.15.14-16, quoted by


37. cf. ibid., P.128.


39. ibid., P.165.


41. An excerption of a speech about Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmi delivered by

Śrīla B.V.Tripurārī Svāmi on 23rd July 1997, P.3 (collected from internet)

42. ibid., P. 4.

43. ibid.

44. ibid.

45. CC Ādilīlā, Ch.8, PP. 83-84.

46. ibid., Antyālīlā, Ch.20, P. 627.

47. ibid., Madhyālīlā, Ch.1, P.135; Antyālīlā, Ch.4, P.517.