CHAPTER TWO

VAISNAVISM: ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

(1) Vedic:

Viṣṇu is the Vedic god. Vaisnavism is as old as the RV. The principal seed of Vaisnavism is sprouted from the RV. The name of Viṣṇu is mentioned in the RV for hundred times, but in the Rgvedic age, Viṣṇu was not a God of highest rank. Viṣṇu is described in the RV as a calm and quiet god. In one RV he is compared with Pusan, the lord of cowherd. Moreover, He is mentioned as the benevolent god for man, and a protector of beasts.

In Hinduism, Viṣṇu is considered as a divinity of highest rank; but in the RV he is merely a minor god where he is called one of the Adityas. "Other authors inconsiderately took for granted that the Viṣṇu, who appeared in the RV, was representative of the Viṣṇu figure of that early period in its entirety. The ancient Hindus worshipped the Sun as Viṣṇu seems to have been originally conceived as the Sun, not in his general character. In the RV the name of Viṣṇu is used to mean the Sun, and Viṣṇu is praised in the form of Upendra. In that form Viṣṇu is worshipped in the RV. Indications
the greatness of Viṣṇu are met in the Rv. The names of the gods like Agni, Indra, Vāyu, Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Soma, Varuṇa, Pusan, Marut, Rudra, Savitar, Aryaman, Agāṅnapāt, Āsvins, Ādityas, Dyauh, Rbhu, Yama and Mitra etc., and goddesses like, Vāk, Uṣā, Aditi, Rātri, Prthivī, Sarasvati and Dhīṣaṇā are found in the Rv.

According to Yāska⁴, the author of Nir., there are only three principal gods, viz. — Agni, in the earth, Indra, or Vāyu (the another name of Indra) in the intermediate space between heaven and earth, and Sūrya, in the heaven. In the Rv. too, supported by Nir. a hymn is found which bears the same meaning. Among these three gods, Agni is the nearest god (agnirvai devānāmavamah), and the Sun is the furthest one (suryo devānām paramah), and the other gods are in between these two gods.

From the standpoint of minute observation, it has been seen that, the abovementioned three principal gods are, indeed, merely the three different manifestations of one omnipresent and omnipotent Supreme Soul. In his Nir.⁶, Yāska had admitted the oneness of the God. Likewise, in the Rv ⁷, it is explicitly expressed that, the one Being, priests, speak of in various ways, they call him, Agni, Yama and Mātariśvān. Again the Rv⁸ sings clearly of the one Being and seers speculate of him in different ways. At the same time, demanding the unique place of the God, the Rv.
declares that 'ekam vai idam vi babhuva sarvam' which leads one to monism in later period.

In the Purana, there is a description of the Vamana incarnation of Visnu and as to how He defeated Bali by covering up the three worlds with His three strides. The sources of this fact is the Rv. In Veda, Visnu is the name of mid-day Sun. In size, the mid-day Sun is the smallest one, and so also the form of Vamana is a small one. The very smallest mid-day Sun is the strongest in power. The three strides of Visnu, according to Aurñanābha, a former Vaiyakarana, Acaryya of Yāska, the first step in His dwarf incarnation is on the Udayacala (at the mountain of the rising Sun), the second one is on the Madhyahna (at mid-day hour), and the third step is on the Astacala (i.e. at the time of setting of the Sun).

These three strides are the most essential feature of the Vedic Visnu's character, with which He traversed the three worlds. In a way, the universal character of the God is indicated by the number three. As J. Gonda quotes the universe is tripartite, eleven gods belong to the upper regions, eleven to the earth and eleven to the water, they are three times eleven; but Visnu belongs to all three regions, he alone supports the tridhātu of universe. Moreover, it is believed that in these three strides, made by Visnu, all sorts of beings dwell.
The German scholar Max Mueller writes that, the European scholars are of opinion that - "the stepping of Viṣṇu is emblamatic of the rising the culminating and setting of the Sun". The Rv. is said to be the father of Viṣṇu, Uṣā and Agni.

In the Taittī. S. and the Vājasaneyī Samhitā, Viṣṇu's three steps are enumerated as - 'uru viṣṇo vikramasva, uru kṣayāya nas kṛdhi' - i.e. 'step widely, O Viṣṇu, give us broad space for dwelling in'. Viṣṇu's striding activity engendered power and it also helped Indra to slay Vṛtra. Indra asked Viṣṇu's help and said "to stride more widely". These three strides or steps are said to be full of honey (madhu), in the Rv.

Viṣṇu is called 'Trivikrama' because of his three steps containing vital energy. According to Benfey, the whole universe is decorated with the dust of Viṣṇu, i.e. the whole universe is dependent upon Viṣṇu. But Muir thinks that the whole universe is decorated with sunrays. The Rv is the first book of Sanatana dharma, and it is like a mirror that reflects the genuine Aryān civilization and Aryān religion. Most of the Rcas or Mantras of the Rv are consecrated in the name of the Vedic gods like Agni, Indra, Varuna etc. There are many gods, depicted in the Rv., but all those are manifested as one Divine power. He is
unrivalled, all in all. He is almighty, omnipotent, possessed infinite power. In one place of the Rv. the curiosity of the people, regarding the Supreme Being is described as - who is our father, our producer, our creator who pervades the whole universe and 'He' who is practically one, but known as the names of other gods or divinities, the people of this world want to know Him or identify Him.

There are twenty two Roas in the 3rd Mandala of the Rv. and every second line is ornamented with these particular words - 'mahādevanamasuratvamekam'. "In Veda, the word 'Asura' is used for many times, and it means as the giver of life (Prāṇadātā). 'Asun- prāṇān rātī dādātī iti asuraḥ'. In 'Avesta' Asura or Ahura is the highest god. The word 'Asura' is derived as 'Asu + ra = Asura'. Sāyana explains it as 'devanam ekam mukhyam asuratvam.... prāvalyam mahat alścaryam'. The simple meaning is the only and sole power of the divinities - is one i.e. Visnu himself. Prof. Wilson endorses his view in this connection that 'great and unequalled is the might of the gods'.

The great Sanskrit scholar Max Mueller says that - "the great divinity of gods is one". But according to scholar like Müir is of opinion that "the divine power of the gods is unique." He is 'one' despite his several
manifestations. At the time of eulogising the god Āditya, a question arises in the mind of the Rgvedic sage, regarding the oneness of the divinities and at the same time about the creator of this whole universe, who is of single birth (prathamajāta) and no re-birth (janma-rahita). The ever resplendent and powerful Gāyatri mantra has always been occupying a permanent seat in the human heart from a very long period in past "what is it, which is not contained in Gayatri?" asks a sacred text, and the answers comes at once : "The Gāyatri is Brahma, Viśnu and Siva, in the Veda".

In a Rgvedic mantra, sage Viśvakarman says about the unique character of the God, that "Viśvakarman (the creator of the universe), whose mind is very wide, himself is a huge one. He, who creates and conceives, He is almighty and He sees everything." So, it is distinctly visible to all of us that Viśnu, the sole god, appeared as an incarnation of Viśvakarman too.

Vaiṣṇava dharma takes root from the Vedas, no doubt. Viśnu is praised in the Rv. in various ways. He is adorable, full of goodness and cinmaya. Viśnu can be satisfied by chanting his name which is most efficacious to his bhaktas. Though the Rgvedic Rṣis are polytheists, in some of the hymns of the Rv. the adorable god is well-calculated as the primary god. The omniscient seers of the Rv. through
their knowledge of ontology and deep speculation became able to establish the monotheism in the Rv. The Supreme soul of this universe is the cause of creation of this phenomenal world. In the ṢV, that very Supreme soul is manifested as Āditya, Vāyu, Candra, Sukra, Brahman, Jalapati (water god) and Prajapati etc.

Towards the end of the Vedic era, masses were influenced by the preponderance of Visnu. Gradually, the two gods, Narāyana and Vāsudeva-Kṛsna also became identical with the Ṛgvedic god Visnu.

The famous German scholar Kaegi says about the Ṛgvedic gods — "The great majority of the songs, are invocations, and glorifications of the deities addressed at the time, their keynote is throughout a simple outpouring, a prayer to the Eternal One's, as invitation to accept favourably the piously dedicated gift".

It has been found for the first time in the Taitt.- that, Visnu, Narāyana and Kṛsna are the same. But the name of Kṛsna is absent in the Samhitās. But, the name of Vāsudeva-Kṛsna is mentioned in the Taitt.B.(3.10.6.15) Taitt.A (7.2.9,3), Sat.B (3.1.14) and in the Jai.B. (1.6.1). Gṛikṛṣṇa, the son of Devaki is mentioned in the Ch.U. educated in the Karmakanda by Angirasa Rsi which he put to
practical use in the *Gītā*. One sage, as Āngirasakṛṣṇa is mentioned in the *Rv.* who is also a chief owner of a special race.

In the Brāhmanic period specially in the *Ait. B.* Agni is described as the lowest category of the gods, while Visnu as the highest.

(ii) *Post Vedic:*

(a) *Rāmāyana: Lord Visnu appeared in the Rām. in his eight incarnation.* Outwardly in the Rām, Rāma, is depicted as a soft hearted king, a good archer, a deft warrior, an obedient son, a good husband etc. Although, Rāma is an incarnation of Visnu, commonly appears in his human character alone. Visnu had to take this form of Rāma only because of the destruction of evil power. specially, Rāvaṇa the king of Lankā, was his target.

The greatness of Visnu in the Rām. is quite apparent. It is found in the Rām. that Rāma was borne to Kauśalya as the half part (Viṣṇorardham) of Viṣṇu, possessing all divine qualities in the line of Ikṣvāku.

Vāmana, the fourth incarnation of Viṣṇu is nicely delineated in the Rām. In this incarnation of Viṣṇu, Bali, the son of Virocana, got duped by the three padas (steps) of Viṣṇu and was sent to Pātalā.
Holding the conchshell and wheel, Lord Viṣṇu appeared in the Rām, at the time of churning the milky ocean by the gods and demons. Bhagavāna Sankara was asked by Hari, the holder of Sankha and Cakra to drink the poison Hālāhala, exuded from the churned ocean. At the same time Lord Viṣṇu took the form of Mohini (a charming lady), to distribute the nectar, produced from the churned ocean, among the gods but not to demons. Many of demons were killed by Lord Viṣṇu after following him.

In the Rām, Lord Viṣṇu's preponderance is shown here through his great and powerful incarnations. Parasurāma (the fifth incarnation of Viṣṇu) being agitated hearing the prowess of Rāma prepared for a combat with him to root out the Kṣatriyas from the world. But with the help of Vaishnava Dhanu (a bow given by Viṣṇu) Parasurāma, the son of Jamadagni, was defeated by Rāma.

In the seventh Kānda, i.e. in the Uttarakānda, Lord Viṣṇu is extolled by the gods and sages to get rid of the clutches of demons. Being frightened by the demons like Māli, Sumāli and Mālyavāna, the gods and ṛṣis approached to Mahēśwara and requested him to kill the demons, who made them gipsy. But, on his part these demons were 'avadhya' (that can't be killed); so the Tripurārī Mahēśwara exhorted the gods and sages to take refuge in Lord Viṣṇu.
Thereafter, at the command of Siva, they rapidly reached to the vicinity of Viṣṇu, the holder of conchshell and wheel. Seeing the unstable condition and knowing their restless and irresolute state of minds due to the oppression of the demons, Janārdana assured them to rescue from the vyūhas of the demons. To re-instate the gods and sages, Lord Viṣṇu without any effort killed the demons like Māli Sumali and Malyavana.

All these three demons were more powerful and energetic than Rāvana. So, no one could be able to kill the rakṣasas except the God Narāyaṇa Viṣṇu (the holder of conchshell, wheel and mace).

Bhagavāna Narāyaṇa, the caturbhūja Sanātana, produced himself here (in the Rāmāyaṇa) to root out the evil-doers like rakṣasas.

He was addressed as 'Viṣṇu' by his grandfather (Pītāmaha) from the space (sky) when Rāma was going for Māhāprasthāna. He was wel¬comed by his grandfather, and he was requested to take any form with his brothers, as he desired. At the behest of his grandfather, Rāma, with his brothers entered into 'Vaisnava Teja'. Thereafter, he was worshipped as Viṣṇu by the gods.

(b) Mahābhārata: In the epic Mbh, the 'Supreme Triād' viz. Brahma, Viṣṇu and Maheśwara are well established with their
special greatness, no doubt, but at the same time it must be mentioned that, Viṣṇu, in the form of Kṛṣṇa is the chief controlling power in the Mbh. Focussing upon the Mbh, it can easily be understood, how Kṛṣṇa is attached and encircled as an incarnation of Viṣṇu with the theme of the Mbh. 'To rescue the 'Earth' and 'Dharma' from its decline, Viṣṇu himself did not come to the earth, therefore to keep the equipoise of 'Dharma', 'He' came to the earth in the form of a divine envoy (avatāra). In the Bh. Gītā 52 Sri Kṛṣṇa spoke to Arjuna as - "whenever there would be decrease or decline of 'Dharma' and there would rise of 'Adharma', then, I would create myself for the protection of the righteous and the destruction of evil-doers, and for the establishment of 'Dharma' I would come into being in every age."

At the juncture of the Dvāpara and the Kali age, Lord Viṣṇu, took the form (avatāra) as Kṛṣṇa to extirpate Kamsa, the embodiment of all kinds of misdeeds, along with innumerable baleful demons.

In the Mbh, especially in the Santiparvan, Lord Viṣṇu is eulogised in many ways by his fervent votaries. 53 Dharmarāja Yudhīsthirā praised Lord Kṛṣṇa being reinstated in his kingdom, because Kṛṣṇa's hot favour, policy, force, strategy, shrewd politics and power enabled him to win the battle, and to re-occupy their hereditary royal throne.
also said as seven Adityas, viz.-Viṣṇu, Jīṣṭu, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Vaikuṇṭha and Puruṣottama.

Being a sole, Supreme authority of this universe, Lord Viṣṇu moulded himself in different forms in the different wombs. In three epochs, 'He' is the omnipresent and omniscient God. He is also described as the first creator of the Vedas in this world. But sage Narada, in his 'Visṇustava' praised Narāyana as the advisor of the Vedas of Brahma. To all intents and purposes, Bhagavana Narāyana and Nara appeared at the last stage of the Dvāpara age, as Kṛṣṇarjuna.

The Mbh also declares that Lord Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Being, is the creator, the protector and the destroyer of this universe. Concealing himself within his thousand names like Viṣṇu, Rāma, Hari, Nara-Nārāyana, Lord Kṛṣṇa played the important part in the Mbh. To worship and praise Bhagavān Vāsudeva, Yudhisthira, was advised by his grand-father Bhīṣma, as it was the only way to lead to salvation.

Regarding the ten incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa there are too many controversies. In the Narāyaniya parvan of the Mbh, there are ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, except the Buddha incarnation. The Mbh mentions first the swan incarnation (Hamsa avatāra) of Kṛṣṇa. In the later...
Purāṇas, ten incarnations of Viṣṇu including the Buddha avatar have been found. But, in the Bh.P there are twenty two (22) incarnations, and a part of famous ślokas is there - 

\[ \text{ete cānśakalāḥ pumśaḥ Krśpastubhāgavān svayam} \] 

Viṣṇu, the Supreme ruler and the protector of the whole universe is greatly lauded by his devotees. His divine power, fame and sanctity is highly glorified in the Bh.Gītā (included the Bhīśma parvan of the Mbh) and in the Narāyaṇiya chapter (included the Santiparvan of the Mbh). There is no difference in between the two characters of Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa, but in the Mbh, Viṣṇu's greatness is established as the complete incarnation, Kṛṣṇa by name. Bhagavāna Viṣṇu, in the form of Kṛṣṇa covered the whole Mbh like a helmsman. He is delineated in the Bh.Gītā as a saviour, a deliverer of all those who are in distress or in calamity. In the Bh.Gītā, his supremacy, his power, as Viṣṇu, as radiant sun, as Marīchi and as moon is clearly expressed. The disappointed Arjuna, in the Bh.Gītā, was soothed by ŚrīKṛṣṇa and was assured by him to give Mukti (salvation) from all sins. Lord Kṛṣṇa is emblazoned by the arrowbeded Bhīśma as Supreme Being. He is shown as the cause and effect of this whole universe. With his folded hands, Bhīśma, the grand father (piṭāmaha) of Kuru-Pāṇḍava, benignly offered his heartfelt invocation. The whole universe and all the beings are absorbed within the Lord, showing the relation as cause and effect, as the pearls strung upon a thread. He is the Sanātana (eternal) puruṣa, is covered the heaven with his head, Vasundhara i.e., earth with his feet and the three worlds with his valour. The arrowslept Bhīśma wanted to be free from the shackle of this illusive world, prayed Lord Viṣṇu and sought his favour. The grace of God Viṣṇu, is the high power dose of
medicine to the afflicted one. Because, the whole world is full of Visṇu, truth is Viṣṇu and He is the destroyer of all sin and of all heinous deeds. 65

Lord Kṛṣṇa himself expressed the identity with Arjuna as none but Nara and Narayana. 65

In the Mbh, there are many legends of Vaiṣṇava bhaktas. They are devarsi Nārada, king Ambariṣa, king Uparicara etc. Their ardent devotion, deep meditation and strenuous austerities enabled them to get the grace (prasāda) of Lord Viṣṇu.

Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, is the pivotal point in the Mbh.

In the two everlasting and eternal and national epics of India viz. the Mbh and the Rām, Lord Viṣṇu is greatly invoked and worshipped as the central figure of popular affection. The Gītā also brings forth in the minds of Vaiṣṇavas that - 'Vasudeva is all'. 67

(c) Pancaratrāgama: Pancarātra is the another name of the Adi Bhāgavata or Vāsudeva dharma. The word Pancarātra may be analysed in this way - 'ignorance', is the meaning of the word 'rātri'. The word 'Pāṇca' is derived from the root 'pac' i.e. cook. So, that is Pāncarātra, by which 'ignorance' or 'rātri' is cooked or destroyed. 68
'Agama - is a work, written after the Vedas enjoying the system of worship of various gods and goddesses.

Regarding the age of Pancañtrātra Sāṁhitā, Pit U.K. Goswami in his introduction of the S.S. writes, that according to Dr. Schrader, eight (8th) century is the last date of composition of all PS.

The authorities on the Bhāgavata system was based on the PS. And Rāmaṇuja in his commentary on the BS 11.2.39–42, quoted from the PS. The first quotation was from the Pau.S. by which it was intended to show that when Brāhmaṇaṣ worshipped the fourfold soul with the traditional names, it should be considered as authoritative. The second was from the SS which was to the effect that this great śāstra contained the secret of Brāhmaṇaṣ and imparted discrimination to Brāhmaṇaṣ, who worshipped the true Brahman bearing the name of Vāsudeva.

Vaisnavism is also called the 'religion of Bhāgavatas.' In the Bhāgavata, it is found that Satvataṣ are the branch of Yādavas. They considered Vāsudeva as Supreme God, and worshipped Him in accordance with the Pāñcarātra system.

The synonym of the word 'Bhāgavata' are given thus in the Padma Tantra as - Sūri, Suhrd, Satvata, Pāncekalavīt Ekāntika, Tanmaya and Pāñcarātrīka. Of these only four viz.
Bhāgavata, Sātvata, Ekāntika and Pancaṛātra are mentioned in the Mbh.  

From a study of the Epic literature, it is clear that Vasudeva-Kṛṣṇa (the Sātvata-Vṛṣṇihero) is pivotal point around whom Bhagavatism centred and it was the root of the 'cult of Bhakti' that came to be designated as Vaiṣṇava at a comparatively late stage of its growth, its growth, its earlier names being Ekāntika, Pancaṛātra, Sātvata, etc.

The epic Mbh contains literature of Pancaṛātra school. Along with the Gītā, the Mbh declares the superiority of Vaiṣṇava ideals. The epic Rām. also could not escape from the influence of the Pancaṛātra. Therefore, Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sitā are recognised as the incarnations of Nārāyaṇa, Saṃkarṣaṇa and Lakṣmī respectively. The influence of the Pancaṛātra also visible in the Vis.P., Bh.P. and Br.P. The tradition of the Bhāgavata, was propagated by Śuka and Brahmā, Nārada and Vyāsa, respectively from Nārāyaṇa, recognised the tradition of the doctrines of Pancaṛātra.

The Pancaṛātra doctrines are indeed very old and are associated with the Puruṣa-Sūkta of the Rv, which is as it were, the foundation stone of all Vaiṣṇava philosophy. It is said in the Sat.B. that Nārāyaṇa, the great being wishing to transcend all other beings and
becoming one with them all, saw the form of sacrifice known as Panca-ratra, and by performing that sacrifice attained his purpose. It is probable that the epithets 'puruṣo ha nārāyaṇah' became transformed in later times into the two rṣis Nara and Nārāyaṇa. The passage also implies that Nārāyaṇa was probably a human being who became a transcending divinity by performing the Panca-ratra system. In Vedic age, in the Ṛv., the Supreme Being was named as Nārāyaṇa. Because, according to Manu, the word 'Nāra' means water and water was the asylum or ayana of Brahma. So also in the Bh. P., the word 'Nāra' is described as lives (jiva) and the ayana is described as asylum. Thus, He is called Nārāyaṇa, the asylum of all jivās.

There are some Epics and Purāṇas, however, like the Mahābhārata, Bh. P. and the Vis. P., which are strongly in favour of the Panca-ratrins. The Purāṇas are specially favourable to the Panca-ratrins and Viṣṇu, Nārādyā, Bhāgavata, Garuḍa, Padma and Varāha are called the Sātvika Purāṇas.

In the Ad. P. of the Mahā Vāsudeva has been named as Sātvata. Again, the Sātvatas are also known as Yādavas. The Panca-ratrins considered Vāsudeva as Nārāyaṇa and in consonance with, the Panca-ratra sastra is recognised as the sastra, created by Nārāyaṇa. In many cases Panca-ratra is equal to the Bhāgavata, Sātvata and Ekantika.
As a result, the Bhāgavata religion merged into Pañcarātra doctrines. The main aim and object of the Pañcarātra, is to establish Vāsudeva as the Supreme Reality.

The original source of the Pañcarātra Samhitas are Veda no doubt, such is the point also admitted by the Padma Tantra. The Supreme God, referred to in the Upaniṣads in none but Vāsudeva, and it is He, who composed the Pañcarātra. Moreover, the four Vyuhas, mentioned in the Pañcarātra are not interpreted as the union of many gods, because, they are only the manifestations of Vāsudeva. Thus Yāmuna, in his Agama-pramanya and Kashmir-agama Pramanya, tried to prove that the Pañcarātras are as valid as the Vedas, since they are derived from the same source via the divine person - Nārāyaṇa.

The Sātvata-saṁhitā, the Ahiṁbudhnya samhitā, Īsvara-saṁhitā and other saṁhitās like, Pausakara Saṁhitā, Jayākhya Saṁhitā etc. are included in the Pañcarātra-Saṁhitās.

The Pañcarātra-Saṁhitās are quite numerous. Dr. Schrader, in his 'Introduction to the Pañcarātra and the Ahiṁbudhnya Saṁhitās' mentions the names of nearly two hundred and twenty-four (224) Saṁhitās found mentioned in the various texts.
The S S consists of twenty five (25) chapters, describing the modes of worshipping Narayana, with all His four Vyuhas. In addition to this, dress and ornaments, other special kinds of worship, the installation of icons and the like, are also discovered in the same. The Isvara Samhita says that the Ekayana Veda is the sources of all Vedas, originated with Vasudava and the Pancaratra works, such as Satvata, Paukara and Jayakhya and some other similar Samhita works, were written, at the instance of Samkarsana in accordance with the fundamental tenets of the Ekayana Veda. The purport of the Ekayana Veda, as taught by Narayana, are known as Satvika-sastra. And it is Rajasa-sastra which is partly based on the Ekayana Veda and partly contributed by the sages like Marici, Atri etc. It is called the Tamasa-sastra, which is the mere contribution of human beings. From the Rajasa-sastra the Pancaratra and the Vaikapasa sects have been found. Satvata, Paukara and Jayakhya Samhitas were probably the earliest Pancaratra works written by the sages. And of these, again the Satvata is considered the best, as it consists of a dialogue between the Lord and Samkarsana.

In the Ahi.S., Ahirbudhnya expressed about the true knowledge how he acquired from Samkaraśana, after undergoing a long-termed penance. This true knowledge was the science of Sudarsan, based on all things in the world.
Nārada was made to understand by the Lord Ahirbudhnya that Sudarsana is the receptacle of this world. Like pearls strung upon a thread, sudarsana also, likewise, is holding the world.  

The ultimate reality is the beginningless, endless and external reality. He is beyond all primary and secondary qualities, but endowed with six special qualities (sādguna). The essence of Brahman is pure consciousness and yet he is regarded as possessing knowledge as a quality. In addition to this, the God stored within him other qualities like kartṛtva, aisiṣṭya, bala, vīrya and tejas. These five guṇas, are called knowledge and knowledge alone is considered as the essence of God. The Lord is ornamented with six qualities, so he is named as Bhagavāna, and being the abode of all creatures he is called as Vasudeva. Lord Viṣṇu, the holder of four weapons like wheel (cakra), mace (gada), sārṅga bow (a bow of Viṣṇu made of horn) and sword (khaḍga) is eulogised as the primary God.

The earliest extant authority on the Bhāgavata cult is the Narāyaniya section of the Mābh. Here the Pañcarātra system is proclaimed as the religion of the Śātvetas and is also called Śātvet religion.

King Uparicara, also clearly known as Vasu Uparicara, was a devout devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. He was a
follower of Satvata religion of Pañcarātra system.

Uparicara is described in the Mbh. as worshipping the Supreme God according to the Satvata vidhi which was exposed for the first time by the sun.\(^92\)

When Vāsudeva became identified with Nārāyana, the peculiarities of the Nārāyaṇa cult influenced the further development of the Vasudeva or Pañcarātra cult. Thus, according to Schrader,\(^93\) the very name Pañcarātra is from the Pañcarātra Sattra of Nārāyaṇa' 'interpreted philosophically as the fivefold self-manifestation of God by means of His - Para, Vyuha, Vibhāva, Antaryāmin and Arca forms. It is also interesting to note that the earliest usage of the word Pañcarātra is found in this Sattra. Moreover, the Puruṣa Sūkta together with Sahasra-sūrīṣa portion of the Mahānārāyaṇa Upanisad plays an important part in the cosmological accounts and Mantra exegesis of the Pañcarātrins'.\(^94\)

The Vyuha theory is present in the Nārāyaṇiya section of the Mbh, where Saṃkarṣaṇa is thought to represent the individual soul (Jīvatmā), Pradyumna the Manas and Aniruddha the Ahaṃkāra. But this theory of Vyuhas does not mentioned either in the Bh.Gītā or in the Anugītā. In the Vis.p.(book V), the Vyuhas are mentioned as names of Kṛṣṇa and the members of his family. In the
Bh.P. we find, mention of the four Vyūhas in numerous places.  

Many treatised were written in which the Pañcaratra doctrines were summarised. Of these Copālaśurī's PanCaratrarakṣasamgraha seems to be the most important. The main subjects of the Pañcaratra literature are directions regarding the constructions of temples and images, descriptions of the various rituals associated with image worship, and the rituals, dealing elaborately with the duties of the Śrīvaiśnavas and their religious practices.

According to the Pañcaratra Samhita, the world is merely a sport (lila) of Bhagavāna - Narayana. The Sudarsana Sakti is endless, and it is hidden within his Samkalpa Śakti and Iccha Śakti. This sudārsana Śakti is of fivefold, viz. Utpatti, Sthiti, Vināśa, Nīgraha and Anugraha. The contents of the N.P is called Jñānāmṛtāsāra. Here, in this book, the glories of the boy Kṛṣṇa is sung. Narada, desiring to know Kṛṣṇa's greatness and the methods of his worship is recommended to go to Sankara or Śiva, and seeks instruction from him.

According to the NP 'knowledge' is the meaning of the word 'ratri'. The Parama tattva, Mukti, Bhakti, Yoga and Vigaya - these five are discussed in the NP. The Ahi.S. also agrees with this opinion.
Sankarācārya, in his notice of the Bhagavata school under Brahma-Sutra 11.2.42, gives five methods of worshipping the Supreme Lord. The fourfold formed of Bhagavata Vāsudeva and the mode of His worshipping is explained by the commentators as follows: (1) Abhigamana or going to the temple of the deity with the speech, the body and mind centred on Him, (2) Upādana or collecting the materials of worship; (3) Ijyā or worship; (4) Svādhyāya or the muttering of the usual mantra (japa), (5) Yoga or meditation. By worshipping Him in these ways for a hundred years, all sin is destroyed and the devotee reaches Bhagavata.

Regarding the existence of Pancaḥātra system in Bhagavata religion, in Assam, T.N. Sarmah writes that up to thirteenth century, the kings and subjects of Kāmarūpa, the easternmost part of India, were dominated by the Bhagavata religion, based on Pancaḥātra system.

The icon of Vāsudeva attached to Lakṣmī and Sarasvati, cannot be ascertained as to the influence of Pancaḥātras. It can easily be assumed as the icon of Pancaḥātrins, if the right hand of the icon of the front-side taking in a position of Abhaya-Mudrā, or Varada-Mudrā. The rosary (Aksa-mala) handed icon, also indicates as the icon of Pancaḥātrins. In Assam, such kind of icons
have been found. The image of Bodha Janardana situated on the back of the hill Sukheswara, facing towards the river Brahmaputra, is one of the said species. Of late, though the variation has appeared in the mode of worshipping, yet the name of Pañcarātra is rolling over from mouth to mouth.

According to Sankara Carita of Ramacarana, Pañcarāti is described by Śankaradeva, to Dāmodaradeva with its essence.

Besides, the worship of Hayagrīva Madhava is known to have been conducted according to Pañcarātrāgama. And Brahmins are following this section mostly in Assam. In the Oresa Varnana of the Kṛtanaṇḍam, Mahāpuruṣa Śri Śri Śankaradeva, lucidly delineated the Pañcarātra system as - "Pañcarātra vidhi kariṇā puja karanta stuti Indradyumnaraṇā ā ".

(d) Purāṇas : Purāṇas may be classified into three categories, according to the qualities or merits, possessed by them. So, the Visnu Purāṇa, the Nārādiya Purāṇa, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the Garuḍa Purāṇa, the Padma Purāṇa and the Varāha Purāṇa are of Sātvika class or pure qualities, from the predominance in them of the Satva quality. In fact, these are the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas.
The second variety is known as Rajas. It consists of the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, the Markandeya Purāṇa, the Bhavisya Purāṇa, the Vāmana Purāṇa and the Brāhma Purāṇa. These are designated as Rajas 'passionate' because of the property of passion, which they are supposed to represent.

The Matsya Purāṇa, the Kurma Purāṇa, the Linga Purāṇa, the Śiva Purāṇa, the Skanda Purāṇa and the Agni Purāṇa are included into Tāmasika class, or the Purāṇas of darkness. All these are Śaiva Purāṇas.

The Hindu religion is basically the Vedic religion. Under the guise of polytheism, the Vedas actually signify monotheism. In the Upaniṣads also treat monotheism as reflected in the same tone. The Purāṇas beget the Hindu triad or trinity. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheswara are the elegant emblem of this triad or trinity. Behind the screen of Paurāṇic Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheswara, the same monotheism is visioned. Thus, the only one God Janārdana, takes the designation of the triad, accordingly, as he creates, preserves and destroys. The eternal (sanātana) Viṣṇu is the cause of this world.

In the Purāṇas the sole Supreme Being is supposed to be manifested in the person of Śiva or Viṣṇu either in the way of illusion or in sport. The main purpose of the
Purāṇas is to support the doctrine of Bhakti or faith in Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu's preponderance, domination, power, superiority and greatness are explicitly visible in the Purāṇas.

This universe is created by Viṣṇu. Within his own creation he conceals himself. He is the controlling power of the duration and cessation of this world. Moreover, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa declares that the Supreme spirit, entitled Vāsudeva, and this whole universe is of undivided nature. Śiva and Viṣṇu under one or other form, are almost the sole object. Therefore, in the Purāṇas, the homage paid by the Hindus are claimed by them. During the post-Vedic period they are recognised as Hari-Hara.

To secure the final beatitude, Lord Viṣṇu was praised by Indra, the chief of the gods, and his followers. As an Ādi-purusa (primeval God), Lord Viṣṇu was also requested by them to be satiated.

(The) God who is fundamentally indescribable is described in some myths, produced by the Purāṇas. Almost in all the Purāṇas viz. the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, the Vamanā Purāṇa, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the Matsya Purāṇa, the Brahmanda Purāṇa, the Padma Purāṇa, Lord Viṣṇu appears as an important 'Reality'.

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Some agreeable legends are neatly arranged in the Pad.P. (P.Kh), that bears completely Viṣṇuism. The supremacy of Viṣṇu is excelled through the pleasing and efficacious conversation of the king Ambarīśa and Mahārṣi Vedavyāsa and goddess Parvati and Lord Śiva.

In the Pad.P. Viṣṇu is mentioned as an widespread God in nature - 'sa eva bhagavāna viṣṇuh prakṛtyāmāvaive-sah'.

The word 'Viṣṇu' is derived from the root विग to 'enter' or 'pervade'. The creative power of the Supreme spirit is Brahman. His another name is Vāsudeva. Lord Viṣṇu is worshipped by the gods as he is the saviour of all kinds of calamities.

In the ViṣṇuP. the greatness of Lord Viṣṇu is explicitly exposed through the attractive and pleasant legends of Dhruva and Prahlāda. The Viṣṇubhakti (devotion towards Viṣṇu) was sprouted in their minds from their very childhood. Gradually, the Bhaktivrksa reached its luxuriant growth. They were inundated in Bhaktirasa in the name of Lord Viṣṇu. The story of Dhruva is runs as follows:

Being upset by his stepmother's version, Dhruva who was merely a five year old child, took firm determination to get the best place, through the deep meditation
of Janārdana. Therefore, to obtain the grace of Lord Visnu, Dhruva stucked himself to a strenuous austerity.

To fulfill his vow, himself fully absorbed in meditation and inaudibly recited on "Om: glory to Vāsudeva, whose essence is divine wisdom, whose form is inscrutable or is manifested as Brahma, Visnu and Siva. Ultimately, Dhruva, the tender-aged-devotee became able to please Lord Visnu. He obtained his desired boon from Visnu, only because of his Eka-gra bhakti (ardent devotion).

In this regard, here is cited another excellent example of devotion, Prahlāda, by name.

Prahlāda was the son of Hiranyakasipu, the king of demons. Being a descendant of demon family, Prahlāda was vehemently opposed to accept any others' supremacy, but Visnu. Due to his obstinate attitude sticking to Visnu, he had to suffer from severe punishment ordered by his cruel father. Prahlāda, wholeheartedly believed in Visnu's omnipresence. Even, to prove the greatness of Visnu, Prahlāda had to enter in fire and water ordeal also. But, he was protected by the Lord Visnu by virtue of his fervent devotion.

Hiranyakasipu, the father of Prahlāda, could not tolerate it. His audacity reached the culmination. As a consequence his life came to an end in the hands of Visnu in his Narasimha incarnation.
In addition to this, there are so many legends in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, viz. legend of Jadabharata, Kandumuni and the accounts of Śiśunāgānanda of Maurya dynasty etc. The essence of these legends are Viṣṇu bhakti.

The kernal of these above mentioned legends is nothing but the greatness of Lord Viṣṇu. The eminent philosopher Rāmānujacāryya mentioned in his commentary of Vedanta Sutra, that the Viṣṇu Purāṇa is an authentic document of Vaiṣṇava sect. But the Viṣṇu Purāṇa mentions neither any worship of Viṣṇu nor any Viṣṇu temple. The religious legends produced in the laps of the Purāṇas made able to spread-out the Vaiṣṇavism, and it deeply rooted in the minds of the masses.

In the K.P. (11th century), Lord Viṣṇu is offered the highest position with due honour. This Śākta Purāṇa begins with a Viṣṇu hymns. Lord Vāsudeva is worshipped in the K.P. with the Viśva-mantra of twelve syllables. 'Om namo Bhagavate- vāsudevaya'. The worship is to be performed with flowers and vegetarian offerings. There are different syllabic mantras also for the worship of the weapons and the ornaments like the mace the lotus etc. In the K.P. , Viṣṇu is also described as the sole cause of the creation.
Regarding Viṣṇu's worshipping in the K.P.

Dr. Banikanta Kakati, mentions as follows:

(a) 'Viṣṇu, as Haya-Grīva, killed Jvarāsura in a place called Manikūta.

(b) Viṣṇu as Fish incarnation worshipped in the Matsya-dhvaaja mountain east of Manikūta.

(c) Mādhava in the form of a Bhairava named Pāṇḍunātha in Raksakūta.

(d) Viṣṇu as B有所 incarnation in the Citravaha mountain east of Pāṇḍu.

(e) Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu in the Dikkaravāsini region.

Being a Śaktā Purāṇa, the Kālika Purāṇa does not try to surpass Viṣṇu and His supreme power. 'Viṣṇu's Sāyuja i.e. union with God is specially stated as the ultimate reabsorption' of the soul in the 'Divine Essence' is considered as the final beatitude in the KP.

(e) Ālvars of Tāmilnādu:

After the decline of the Guptas, the Bhāgavata religion fell away in the northern part of the country. But at the same time to keep the religious balance intact, in the South India, the Tāmil Vaishnavites became
healthy and stout. These Tamil Vaisnavas were known as Alvars.

In the history of Vaisnavism of South India, the religious life was influenced by the Vaisnava Alvars and the Saiva Nayanars or the Nayanmars. With them begins the line of poet saints which later became a distinguishing feature of Indian life.

The word Alvar means 'one who is immersed in God'. They flourished from about the 3rd century A.D. to 9th century A.D. within this period Saiva Nayanars or Nayanmars also flourished in Tamilnadu.

Alvars are twelve (12) in number, and their names are respectively given as: (1) Poykai Alvar (2) Bhutattalvar (3) Peyalvar, (4) Tirumalisai Alvar. (5) Nammalvar, (6) Madhurakavi Alvar (7)Kulasekhara Alvar (8) Periaalvar (9)Andal (female), (10) Tondaradippodi Alvar, (11) Tiruppān Alvar and (12) Tirumangai Alvar. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar places all the Alvars before the second half of the eight century A.D.

Regarding the date of Alvars one thing must be admitted that the earliest Alvars flourished about the time of revival of Brähmanism and Hinduism in the North.
Alvars are traditionally divided into three groups viz. (i) Ancient (ii) Middle and (iii) Modern. So, the ancient group consists of - Poykai Alvar, Bhütattalvar, Peyalvar, Tirumālīsai Alvar.

The middle group includes gradually - Nammālvār, Madhukarakavi Alvar, Kulasēkhara Alvar, Periālvar and Āndāl (lady).

The modern and last group comprises - Tondaradippoli Alvar, Tiruppan Alvar and Tirumangai Alvar.

Among the Ālvārs, Āndāl was a woman. She was traditionally believed to have been the daughter of Periālvar. But S.N. Dasgupta writes that Āndāl was the adopted daughter of Periālvar, and Madhurakavi Alvar. Āndāl was passionately devoted to Kṛṣṇa. She considered herself as one of the Gopīs. She desired to be united with Kṛṣṇa. She was married to the God Rāgaṇāṭha of Srīraṅgam. Her chief works are, Tirū-pāvai and Nacchiyar. Āndāl was a poetess. The poem Tirū-pāvai, composed by her, comprises thirty stanzas. Through this poem she expressed her devotion to Lord Viṣṇu and devoted herself to the service of the Lord.

The writings of the Ālvārs were mostly in Tāmīl. Nālayirdiyva Pravandham is the well-known collection of
the works of Ālvaṛs. It was collected by Nathamuni, who lived about 1000 A.D. This Pravandham, was, indeed pregnant with four thousand hymns, and these hymns were considered as purely sacred and were adored as the Vaiṣṇava Veda. The Nālayīra-divya-pravandham delineated the two great incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

According to Dr. T.S. Rukmani the Bhag. P. and the writings of the Ālvaṛs have much in common and a description of the contents of the Nālayīratvī Pravandham will reveal what is known as the Bhāgavatadharma. One characteristic of all the writings of the Ālvaṛs is the expression of their bhakti in vivid language. In fact the view that the bhakti of the Bhag. P. is just that of the Ālvaṛs has great weight behind it.

The songs of the Ālvaṛs are largely based on the lives of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. And their basic emotions are traditionally associated with Vaisnavism, namely - friendly love (Sakhyā), servant’s devotion for the master (dāsya), mother’s affection for her son (Vatsalya), son’s respect towards the father (pitrbhakti) and also of a female lover to her beloved (mādhurya).

Nammālvaṛ was the most profile writer, among the Ālvaṛs and a great mass of his poetry is preserved in the Nālayīrādīvyapravandham. He was considered as an incarnation of Viṣṇu by his disciple Madhurakavi.
In their writings, Ālvārs, places Rādhā as the consort of Kṛṣṇa. The word 'Rādhā' is used in their language as 'Nappinnāl'.

The pretty and melodious songs of Ālvārs inspired almost all the people of South India towards Vaisnavism. The Bhāgavata-religion as preached by the Ālvārs was opened for all kinds of people. Prapatti or self-surrender, according to the Ālvārs was indispensable for the realization of Supreme Self.

To all intents and purposes, the Ālvārs of Tāmil nādu, are the efficacious source of Vaisnavism.

(f) Other Southern Vaiṣṇava Cults:- (Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Vallabhadeva and others):

In South India a group of teachers called Ācāryas, preceded the Ālvārs represent the intellectual side of Tāmil Vaiṣṇavism. They are called theologian-philosophers provided a philosophical basis for the personal theism of the Ālvārs. They also tried to combine their doctrines of bhakti with karma and jñāna. They are identified as Ubhayavedāntins. They equally valued the Sanskrit and Tāmil Veda. Among the Ācāryas, Nāthamuni, the first Ācārya was an erudite scholar.

"The second great Ācārya was Yamunācārya. He wrote six works, of which the Stotra-ratnam consists of
sixty-five (65) verses. The other five works are -
Catuh-Śloki, Āgama-prāmanya, Siddhi-traya, Gītārtha-
samgraha and Mahāpuruṣa-nirṇaya. Of these, Siddhi-traya
is the most important work. His stotra ratnam is
repleted with the beauty and fame of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The
doctrine of Prapatti, is expressed in lucid and trans­
parent verses in the said work. After reading this
work stotra-ratnam, Ramanuja overwhelmed with joy and
was deeply attracted towards Yāmunācārya. 126(a)

Rāmānuja: Rāmānuja, the founder of Śrī Sampradāya, was
born in 1027 A.D. at a place called Parambudoor, and
died in 1137 A.D. Initially he was a pupil of Yādava
prakāśa, an Advaita-philosopher of conjeevaram. But,
Yādavaprakāśa's teaching could not satisfy him. There­
fore he had to leave this teacher and at the same time
the place also. In search of experienced preceptor and
true knowledge he rushed towards Kāṇḍa. He wanted to
become a Vaiṣṇava. Its source of inspiration was the
Nālāyiradivya-pravandham of the Ālvārs. He imbibed the
essence of this Tamil work and sought out his desired
object in it. He became the Ācārya at Srīrangam, and
was the successor of Yāmunācārya. Rāmānuja was a great
philosopher and the originator of the Viśisṭadvaita
system. The philosophical position of Viśisṭadvaita is
styled as concrete monism.
Nārāyaṇa is the tutelary deity of Rāmānuja's school. Though Nārāyaṇa is the most favourite deity to the school of Rāmānuja, Vāsudeva comes into prominence when the Supreme soul and its vyuhas are mentioned.

The works composed by Rāmānuja are Śrī-Bhasya on Vedānta Sūtras or BrahmāSūtras, Vedāntasāra, Vedārtha samgraha, Vedantadīpā and Bhagavadgītā.

The Śrī Vaisnavism, preached by Rāmānuja was accepted by his followers and they denoted it as a form an important group of Vaisṇavism. In the Visistādvaita philosophy of Rāmānuja, three eternal important points are included therein; such as, the individual soul, the world and the Supreme Being. But the individual soul and the world are absolutely dependent on God i.e. Supreme Being, and can not exist by themselves. "They constitute His body and with the controlling inward Supreme soul constitute one entity called Brahman." According to Rāmānuja God is the perfect personality. He has a divine body and infinite knowledge and bliss. He is the creator preserver, and destroyer of this universe. His consort Lakṣmī is the symbol of power and mercy.

Though one in Himself, He manifests Himself in five forms in order to help His devotees. These five are - Antaryāmi, Nārāyaṇa, or Vāsudeva, Caturbyuha, Vibhāva or Avatāra and Arcavatāra.
Bhakti can be attained through Karmayoga and jñānayoga.

Prapatti consists in the resolution to yield, the avoidance of opposition, a faith that God will protect, acceptance of him as saviour or praying him to save and sense of helplessness resulting in throwing one's whole soul on him. Prapatti thus comes to mean self-surrender.

Rāmānuja derives his metaphysical doctrines from texts of the Upaniṣads and from the Brahma-sūtras while his theory of the external world is that adopted by the Purāṇas and based on the twenty-four (24) elements of the Śāmkhya-system. His Vaiṣṇavism is the Vāsudeivism of the old Pañcarātra system, combined with Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu elements.

Another point in favour of the Sri-Vaiṣṇavas was Rāmānuja's attitude towards the non-Brahmins whom Śāṅkara had denied the right of Vedic knowledge, and therefore salvation in their present life. Rāmānuja, as we have seen, took lessons from a śudra and admitted Jains, Buddhists Sudras and even untouchables to his fold. On the basis of the Prasthānatrayī, Rāmānuja wrote three independent commentaries. It was demonstrated through his Viśistādvaitavāda that bhakti is the right way for salvation.
Acarya Nimbarka was another Vaisnavaguru in the history of southern Vaisnavism. He was also known as Nimbāditya or Nimbananda. Nimbarka was a Telugu Brahman. Dr. R.G. Bhandarkar writes that Nimbarka is said to have been a Tailanga Brahmana by birth and he lived at a village called Nimba, which perhaps is same as Nimlapura in the Bellary District.

His philosophy is called Dvaitādvaita or Bhedābheda or Sanakasampradāya of Vaisnavism. Nimbarka's philosophy is completely influenced by the philosophy of Rāmānuja.

Regarding God, Nimbarka believed in three realities or existences, i.e., cit, Acit and Isvara. These cit, Acit and Isvara also may be called as soul, matter and God. Practically these are quite different from each other, but basically identical. His such type of system of thought, i.e. philosophy, can be called monistic as well as pluralistic. According to him the highest object of worship is Kṛṣṇa, Radhā is his consort.

To give a clear cut idea of the philosophy of Nimbarka, Sir R.G. Bhandarkar gives the translation of Dasāslōkī, a complete work of Nimbarka, consisting of ten slokas. "These ten stanzas contain the quintessence of Nimbarka's system. This appears to have Rāmānuja's doctrines for its basis and is a sidewise development of it. It gives predominance to Prapatti or self-surrender of the six kinds,
and then by the grace of God, love for Him is generated. His Sādhana Bhakti comprehends all the Yogas of Rāmānuja's system. But the great difference between the two teachers is that, while Rāmānuja confines himself to Nārāyana and his consorts Lākṣmī, Bhu and Līlā, Nimbārka gives almost an exclusive prominence to Kṛṣṇa and his mistress, Rādhā, attended on by thousands of her female companions.135

The orthodox followers of Nimbārka wear two perpendicular lines of Gopicandana on the forehead with a black spot in the middle.136

Besides Dasāśloke the another work of Nimbārka, is Vedānta Pārijāta Saurabhā, a commentary on the Brahmasūtras.

Vallabhācārya: The South Indian Telgu Brāhmana Vallabhācārya was born in 1479 A.D. He preached that the gospel of bhakti is the only way that leads one to salvation. To Vallabhācārya, Srikṛṣṇa is the Highest Being or Brahman he is also called Puruṣottama. Bhakti is the powerful bridge to reach the vicinity of the Highest Being. Dr. Rukmani mentions that Vallabhācārya believed in a two-fold bhakti called the Maryāda-bhakti and the Pusti-bhakti. In the Maryāda-bhakti one has to follow the injunctions, given in the Vedas and practise the different types of bhakti like
Sravaṇa etc., till he begins to love God. But in the Pusti-mārga love or bhakti is promoted by the grace of God Himself and these bhaktas love God most zealously and worship Him because of their love and not because of He is the Paramātman.¹³⁷

According to Vallabhačārya's philosophy, Brahman is the sole reality and is identified with Kṛṣṇa. His essence is Sat (existence), Cit (knowledge) and Ānanda (bliss). His philosophy is known as suddhādvaita or pure non-dualism identified by Māyā. Brahman is the sole authority as well as many. Vallabhačārya sought to bring home to that the Māyā or Avidyā is the power of the sole Brahman. In the light of Māyā He manifests Himself many times.

Madhva or Ānandatīrtha: It is impossible to say correctly the exact date of Madhva or Ānandatīrtha, still one thing is right that he must have flourished within 1238-1317 A.D. At Pājakā village, in the Southkanadā district of the present Karnataṭaka state, he was born in a humble Brahmana family.

His philosophy is known as dvaita philosophy and its plinth is strengthened by the Bhāgavata. Madhva is called a champion of unqualified dualism (dvaita). Achyutā-preksa was his proceptor. After his initiation he went to Bādarikāśrama in the Himalaya and brought back the idols
Madhvā decried Śankara’s Māyāvāda. To him, Māyāvāda is a complete source of inner weakness. He believed that the Supreme Being, whom we call God, is an abode of unnumbered guṇas and is the Eternal Truth. As to the knowledge of God, who is Hari, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa or Vasudeva can be realised through the scriptures. His philosophical doctrine is famous as Pūrnaprajñādarśana.

Sir R.G. Bhandarkar quotes "all knowledge springs from Paramātman, whatever the means by which it is produced. It is of two kinds—that which leads to worldly existence, and that which leads to Mokṣa. Viṣṇu bestows knowledge on the ignorant, and Mokṣa on those who have knowledge. The knowledge or feeling which creates an attachment to the body child or wife, leads to a worldly life. This is not true knowledge. But ignorance, from which results that worldly life and that ignorance is dispelled by the knowledge of God:"

"According to Madhvā, 'God is the Independent Being' possessed of all adequate and unrestricted powers in regard to the CIT and ACIT and who is all knowing."

Madhvā propagated Vaiṣṇavism. To tighten the knot of friendship among his followers, he installed a beautiful image of Lord Kṛṣṇa after his return from Northern India.

In his philosophy, goddess Lākṣmī occupies a best place, nearer to Śrīkṛṣṇa, as Kṛṣṇa’s consort. She is
manifested as the power of God. "Lakṣṇī is distinct from the Supreme soul, but entirely dependent on him. She is eternal and blessed (Mukta) like the Supreme soul and is his consort. She has various forms, but no material body, and is thus like the Supreme soul, and like him is expressible by all words. She possesses the same extension in space and time as the Supreme soul, i.e., is concomitant with him."

Ānandatīrtha is the author of thirty seven (37) different treatises. The most important among these are the commentaries on the Prasthānātrayī, i.e., Gītā, Upaniṣads and Brahma-sūtras.

(g) Varkāri Sampradāya of Mahārāṣṭra (Jñānēśwara, Nāmadeva, Ekanātha, Tukārāma and others):—

Jñānēśwara, Nāmadeva, Ekanātha and Tukārāma—these four are the great mystics of Mahāraṣṭra. Jñānēśwara is the type of intellectual mystic. Nāmadeva heralds the democratic age; Ekanātha synthesizes the claims of worldly and spiritual life; Tukārāma's mysticism is mostly personal.

Jñānēśwara: Jñānēśwara was a most powerful Vaiṣṇava in Mahāraṣṭra. God Viṣṇu was his tutelary God. There is a Vithoba or Viṣṇu temple in Pandharapura in Mahāraṣṭra. Pundilika, another devotee of Viṣṇu, is said...
to be the originator of the Vitthala cult. Regarding the Vaisnavism i.e. Vitthala cult of Mahāraṣṭra, Dr. T.S. Rukmani mentions that "Pundalika is referred to as the originator of the Vitthala cult of devotion, later propagated by Nāmadeva and Tukārāma. Kṛṣṇa is said to have come all the way from Dvārakā in order to bless his devotee Pundalika. At Pundalika's request Sūkrṣṇa decided to stay there for ever. All this probably points to the fact that Pundalika was the founder of Vaisnavism in Mahāraṣṭra. Jñāneswara also known as Jñānadeva, wrote four works. His Jñāneswari is a commentary on the Srimadbhagavadgītā. Amṛtānubhava is a philosophical work. The third work is the collection of Abhangas which are the religious lyrics and Changadeva Pakhastī is also another religious work of Jñāneswara.

Before Jñāneswara, Viṭṭhala bhakti prevailed in Ḍalṇḍi. His Abhangas are religious lyrics. These religious lyrics are sufficient to know about the Viṭṭhala Sampradāya.

In 1293, Jñānaśwara, in company with his brothers and sister visited Pandharapura. There he met Nāmadeva and formed a deep friendship. Nāmadeva introduced Jñānadeva or Jñāneswara to the Panḍhari sect of which he became the first apostle.
According to the Varārī Sampradāya, Vīthala and Kṛṣṇa are identical. Vīthala is known as Rukminipati or Rukminibara. In Mahārāstra, Rukmini is known as Rukhamai or Rakhamabai. And she is worshipped along with Vīthobā.

In the Jñāneswari, we have a reference to Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu in a very famous passage.

"Kṛṣṇa Viṣṇum Hariṁ Govindaṁ ya nāmaṁ
nikhila pravandha - "

To Jñāneswara, Saivism and Vaiṣṇavism were identical.

His philosophical stand, however, was pure monism, in proper sense it is called Advaita bhakti. For example he writes in the Jñāneswari. "As a particle of gold becomes one with gold, as a ray of light merges in light, as pieces of ice constitute the Himalayas, similarly the individual selves make God. The wave may be small, and yet they are one with the ocean.... Experience such as this, is real devotion."

Nāmadeva: Nāmadeva, the devoted worshipper of Vīthobā was born in Mahārāstra 1270 A.D. He was a tailor by profession. Nāmadeva received general education, but showed little capacity for the usual occupation of his
family. "He became a devoted worshipper of Vithoba and had for his Guru a person named Visobā Khecara, who appears to have been a non-idolater.

Nāmadeva composed many Abhangas (short lyrics) and some songs are in Hindi as well. Some of his abhangas are included in the Grahtha Sāheva of the Śikhās. He worshipped idol at Pandharapur, but he had true knowledge and idea of the true nature of God. These Vaiṣṇavas accepted idol worship; so Nāmadeva, a Vaiṣṇava was not exceptional to this. In Mahārāṣṭra he preached Vithoba as the Supreme Lord. In his devotion Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa did not take place.

It is heard about Nāmadeva that in his early life he led a very disorderly and lawless life. Thereafter he went to Pandharapur, where he met the ardent devotees of the God Vitthāla. He was inspired by them, their sincerity and their deep devotion towards the Lord Vitthāla. The God Vitthāla and his devotees led him to the state of Vaiṣṇavism. Thenceforth, he turned over a new leaf in the company of Vitthāla's bhaktas.

Ekanātha: Ekanātha was the great grandson of Bhānuśāstrī and he was a great Varkāri of Pandharpur. Moreover, Ekanātha himself tells us that he derived his spiritual illumination from the line of Jñāneswara. Janārdanasvāmī was his teacher.
Ekanātha was born in a Brāhmīn family at Faith. At the age of twelve, Ekanātha went to the famous teacher Janārdanasāmī, with whom he studied the Jñāneswarta, and Amṛtanubhava. Like Jñānesvara, he was also a monist and laid emphasis on Advaita bhakti. He was a devout devotee of his Lord, from his very childhood. He always recited the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and the Bhagavadgītā without fail. He wrote commentary on the 11th Chapter of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Bhāvārtha Rāmāyaṇa and the marriage of Rukmīni. Bhandarkar also mentions about the writings of Ekanātha as there is a work, entitled the Adhyatma-Rāmāyaṇa, in Ekanātha, a Maharastrian saint, who flourished in the sixteenth century, calls a modern treatise, composed of excerpts from older writings and having no pretence to be considered as emanating from the old Rṣis. The object of this work throughout has been to set forth the divinity of Rāma. By such way, the Mahārāṣṭra bhakti movement left vestige to the successors of Varkāri sampradāya.

Tukārāma: Tukārāma, the Vaiśnava poet-saint of Mahārāṣṭra, lived in 17th century A.D. Though he was a Śūdra by birth, he himself and his ancestors (not less than seven generations) were the devout devotees of vithobā. Of these seven generations, Viśvambhara was the first who set up a Vithoba temple at Pandharapur placing an idol of vithobā. Tukārāma preached the worship of Vithoba as the Supreme God. In
praise of Lord Vithoba Tukarama composed about 4,600 Abhangas (religious lyrics). He was a most popular Vaishnava in the Marath country.

Tukarama repeatedly went through the works of Jnaneswara, Ekanatha and Namadeva. During his time the Varkari sampradaya came into prominence. In a dream, Tukarama was initiated by his Guru Babaji. In the name of God, he usually performed Kirtana at Dehu, Lohaghoan and Pune. Tukarama got by heart the Bhagavata of Ekanatha and the Jnaneswari and likewise the GitA and the Bhagavata also. Here, a famous Abhanga of Tukarama has been cited: "chaudhamachitari ghari soya re" - i.e. "at least follow these four". And these four are namely - Jnaneswara, Namadeva, Kabir and Ekanatha.

From his Guru, Tukarama got a mantra for his meditation as - "Rama-Krsna-Hari". He had been a Varkari of Pandhari throughout his family lineage. God Viithala was the tutelary deity of the Varkaris of Pandharapur. He believed it heart and soul that the 'name of God' is the only pathway to the heaven.

There was Vaishnavism in the nook and corner of Maharastra. Some other Vaishnava bhaktas and saints, who were blessed themselves in their lives by the grace of
God Vitthala (Viṣṇu). In this regard, the names of Gorā Kumbhara and Rāmadāsa may be mentioned.

Gorā-Kumbhara - the 'potter': Gorā Kumbhara was a contemporary saint of Jñānadeva and Nāmadeva. He was a potter by profession, and a diligent and sincere worker. He was a person of self-confident. God Vitthala was his adorable deity. His deep devotion made him able to please the Lord. Here, one example of sublimity of his devotion is mentioned - one day. Gorā, unknowingly trampled his child while preparing clay under his feet, while he was dancing in ecstasy (chanting the name of Lord Vitthala), but fortunately by the grace of God the child's life was saved.

Rāmadāsa: Rāmadāsa, was the another saint of Mahāraṣṭra. Once he visited Pandharapur, where God Vitthala is installed, he did not discriminate the God Vitthala and Rāma, rather considered them identical. In the name of God Vitthala and Rāma he composed a significant song.

A.K. Majumdar writes - that 'in the line of the great saints of Mahāraṣṭra Rāmadāsa is notable. Rāmadāsa (1608-1681) was a teacher of Sivāji. Rāmadāsa's influence on Sivāji's career had been a matter of some dispute, but there can be no doubt, that he was Sivāji's spiritual guide and teacher.'
Ramadasa has left several works of which the most important is the Dasabodha, a comprehensive work combining metaphysics, mysticism and activism. Indeed, his gospel of action distinguished him from other Maratha saints, and proved a decisive factor in building up the Maratha nation.

(iii) Northern Vaisnavism - (Ramananda, Kabir, Narasimha, Tulasidas, Mirabai, Suradas and Others):

Ramananda: After the demise of Sri Ramanujacarya, the Southern Vaisnavabhakti movement gained momentum in the north. In one sense the Southern-bhakti movement is the main source of the bhaktimovement of the north.

In North India, Ramananda, a follower of Ramanuja's school was the bridge between the bhakti movement of the south and the north.

Ramananda was born at Prayaga (Allahabad) in 1300 A.D. He belonged to a Brahmana family of Kanyakubja. The name of his father was Punyasadana and mother's name was Susila. He was said to be the fountainhead of the Bhakti movement in North India. Ramananda had his education at Varanasi. After finishing his education, he became a disciple of Raghavanka. Raghavanka was a teacher of the Visistadvaita school of Ramanuja. He (Ramananda) preached his Visistadvaita doctrine in a new form. To make it convenient for all he remoulded the doctrine and instead of...
Nārāyaṇa and Lākṣmī he placed Rāma and Sītā. He was a man of liberal principle, so he simplified and generalized the method of the worship. He brought a radical change in his religion. His chief reform was removal of cast barrier. He made no difference between high caste and low caste. Being himself a Brāhmin, without any hesitation Rāmānanda took his meal with non-Brāhmins Vaiṣṇavas.

"It is true, that the Vaiṣṇavas had always taken a more liberal attitude towards the lower caste. Rāmānuja had gone to the extent of allowing the lower caste to imitate the customs and habits of the Vaiṣṇavas and to study the Pravandhas. But the lower castes were never taken into the inner fold and treated on terms of equality. They were not allowed to read the Vedas and wear the sacred thread. Rāmānanda brought about a radical reform making no distinction whatsoever between the Brāhmaṇas and the lower castes." Majority of his followers were from the degraded classes. Thirteen (13) of them became noted. They are named gradually - (1) Anantānanda, (ii) Surasaraṇanda, (iii) Sukhānanda, (iv) Naraharīyānanda, (v) Yogānanda, (vi) Pipā (a Rājput ruling chief), (vii) Kabīr (a weaver), (viii) Bhavānanda (ix) Senā (was a barbar), (x) Dhannā (was a jāt peasant) (xi) Gālavānanda, (xii) Raidāsa (was a coboler) and Padmāvatī (was a women).

In the history of religion, Rāmānanda became able to acquire great achievement. One of the reasons behind his
success was, the use of vernacular language for the propagation of the new creed in lieu of Sanskrit.

The followers of Rāmānanda is known as Ramanandins. He is stated to have died in 1467 of Vikrama-samvat corresponding to 1411 A.D.

Kabir: Kabir was the most famous disciple of Rāmānanda. Regarding the date of Kabir Westcott says that he flourished within 1440-1518 A.D. But according to Macauliffe, Kabir was born in 1398 A.D. T.N. Sarmah also says that Kabir was born in 1398 A.D. Actually Kabir was an illegitimate son of a Brahmin widow, but he was brought up by a Mohamedan couple, named Niru and Nima. They were weaver by profession. Being nourished in a weaver's family, Kabir automatically followed the same occupation.

As a disciple of Rāmānanda, Kabir was a devotee of Rāma. He did not believe in image or icon worship; but he "allowed adoration to be paid to Visnu or Rāma as names of one God." According to him, the temple ought to be only the house of prayer. He rejected every malevolent distinction of caste, religion and sect. His ideas and creed were not sectarian. Kabir believed that to go to the realm of salvation, the Supreme Being is to be worshipped, to whom devotion (bhakti) is due. Kabir became inspired by the mantra 'Rāma Rāma', poured from the mouth of Rāmānand. By this 'Rāma' mantra Kabir inwardly initiated by Rāmānanda.
Kabir was indifferently acquainted with the Muslim man theology, but he was not influenced by the Koran or Sufism, but he was well acquainted with the Vedanta.

Kabir founded a Pantha or a sect, and the Matha or establishments of that sect exist in several parts of India. The Principal one is at Beneras, with a branch at Meghor in the Gorokhpur district. 161(a)

Narsi Mehta: Narasi Mehta, also known as Narasimha Mehta, a pure Vaishnava, was a contemporary to Mira Bai. He was not only a Vaishnavabhakta but also a preacher of ethical and moral principles. He composed many songs full of morality and spirituality. One of these famous songs in the form of Bhajana was regularly sung at Mahatma Gandhi’s prayer meetings. It was a most favourite Bhajana of Mahatma Gandhi. Therefore on the day of Gandhi Jayanti, this very song (Bhajana) is sung.

Tulasidas: In real sense Goswami Tulasidas is deserved to be called as the main representative of Ramananda. Tulasidas is famous for us for his famous work Ramacaritamanasa. Vinaya Patrika is another devotional work of Tulasidas. Except these two, he also wrote ten (10) more works.

Tulasidas belonged to the Saravarya or Sarayupan caste of Brahmanas and was born in Samvat 1589, corresponding to 1532 A.D. under an inauspicious constellation. 161
At his very early age, like an undesirable child, Tulasidāsa was abandoned by his parents, and by the grace of God, he was picked up by a Śādhu or a pious person. In his company, Tulasidāsa visited many sacred places of India. His father's name was Ātmārāma Śuklā Dube and mother was Hulasi Devi and his own (name was) Rāma Bolā. Regarding his own name (popular name among the masses) Rāma Bolā, A.K. Majumdar says that (Tulasidāsa) while begging alms, he chanted the name of Rāma, hence he was called 'Rāma Bolā'.

Tulasidāsa was a devotee of Rāma. He insisted on the worship of Rāma and Sītā (as the Śakti of Rāma). Though in his writings Rāma was excelled as Supreme Deity, but never neglected the gods and goddesses of Hindu religion. One most notable distinguishing feature of Tulasidāsa's work as mentioned by A.K. Majumdar, is "the blending of bhakti with action and idealization of the homely virtues, in contrast with the Gauḍīṅga Vaiṣṇava works, which idealized the madhurārasa that is love of Kṛṣṇa and the Gopis. The result has been the Tulasidāsa's bhakti never degenerated and throughout the ages has rested on the noble pedestal on which the Master placed it".

On the basis of pure monism Tulasidāsa preached his 'Rāmabhakti'.
Mārābāi: Among the medieval Vaiṣṇava preachers, reformers, saints, poets and poetess, the name of Mārābāi is unique one. The seed of Vaiṣṇavabhakti was sown in her mind by her grand-father Rao Dudaji, when she was a tender aged girl. In time, it sprouted, effloresced.

Mārābāi was born in 1492 A.D. at Meḍtā, a small principality in Rājputanā. So, Mārābāi was the princess of the Royal house of Mewar. She was given in marriage to one Bhojarāja, belonged to royal household of citor. She vehemently opposed her marriage, but under compulsion she had to obey her elders. Unfortunately, she became widow after five years of her marriage. Thereafter Mārā's ardour towards the Vaiṣṇavism increased and all kinds of agonies with herself, surrendered at the feet of Giridhārī Kṛṣṇa. She was tormented and tortured by her husband's people, as she worshipped the Lord Kṛṣṇa. She left Citor and settled at Vṛndāvana, in search of mental peace.

Mārābāi, being a royal princess relinquished all regal comforts and pleasure. She sought only the bliss of Kṛṣṇa and to be united with Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa was worshipped by her, as her husband (pati).

Her compositions were blended with the languages of Gujārī, Brajāvali and Rājasthāni. A lot of devotional songs (bhajana) were composed by her, in the name of Giridhārī Kṛṣṇa. In the Indian devotional literature, the
songs (bhajana), composed by Mirabai, occupied a vast area, and unique place.

Sūradāsa: Sūradāsa was born in 1479 A.D. He was a dweller of Vraja. Vallabhācārya was his preceptor. He became blind in his youth. Behind his blindness there is a short story: 'one day Sūradāsa was drinking the beauty of a beautiful lady, and the lady came to him and gave a slap on his cheeks. Then Sūradāsa took two needles from the woman and he pierced his eyeballs and became blind'. Thenceforth he was known as Sūradāsa. The word 'Sūra' means 'blind'. The sightless Sūradāsa immediately got the divine-sight. By the grace of God he composed his immortal work 'Sūrasāgara'. To say in the words of T.S. Rukmani "such a bhakta was Sūradāsa, who was a native of Vraja, who was blind and who was forsaken by his parents and relatives. His only solace was his devotion to the Almighty and having learnt Sanskrit somehow he started composing songs. It is said that Vallabhācārya, while passing that way, met Sūradāsa and accepted him as a disciple. Under Vallabhācārya's guidance he started singing the episodes of SriKṛṣṇa. His work is known all over the country as the 'Sūrasāgara' which contains about eight thousand songs, dealing apart from prayers, with almost all topics mentioned in the Bh.P."

In a Hindi couplet, Sūradāsa is described as the Sun and Tulasidāsa as the moon, among the poets.
VI. Eastern Vaisnavism (Vidyapati, Candidas, Caitanya):

The diffusion of Vaisnavism gradually entered the North-east region and ultimately spread widely among the common people. In this respect, the following names of the Vaisnavas are worth mentioning: Vidyapati, Candidas and Caitanya.

Vidyapati: Vidyapati Thakura was an inhabitant of Mithila. His time was 1350-1450 A.D. He composed the erotic theme of Radha and Krsna in the form of a lyric. These are excellent one. He was a pre-Caitanya Vaisnava poet.

It is said that Vidyapati was the earliest singer of eastern India, who raised vernacular language to the level of a literary language. He was somehow instrumental in popularising 'the cult of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa', which was described in a peculiarly sensual manner in some of the Purāṇas, and developed into one of the highest literary achievement in Sanskrit by Joydeva. Not only Vidyapati, but also other poets of Mithila, wrote on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa topic. Among them Nandipati Jayananda, Caturbhujya, Kaviśekhara, Bhaṅjana and Cakraṇi.171

Vidyapati composed some Maithili songs, such as Kṛtīlītā Kṛtīpatokā and specially the anthology of padavali songs created ebb and tide amongst the Vaisnava writers and preachers of Bengal. From the study of Padavallis, composed by him, it can be assumed that he wrote
these songs in praise of Ganesa, Siva, Visnu, Ganga and Sakti. To him there is no discrimination in between two Gods - Visnu and Siva.

The western scholar Grierson tried to give an allegorical explanation of the Padas i.e. the Padavalis of Vidyapati. According to him Radha is 'Jivatma', the soul of living beings, and Lord Krishna is 'Jagadisvara' i.e., the Lord of the world.

Candidasa: Candidasa is the another name of north-east Vaisnavism. He is famous for his Vaisnava Padavalis (Poems). But regarding Candidasa, there are too many controversies among the scholars. Scholar like S.P. Basu says that there are more Candidasas in the north-east Vaisnavism, viz Badu Candidasa, Anantabadu Candidasa, Sudhu Candidasa, Adi Candidasa, Dina Candidasa, Dinahina Candidasa and Dinakrshna Candidasa. All these Candidasas belong to the pre-Caitanya era. But whatever it may be he is Candidasa with the surname Badu, who composed the devotional work 'Srikrsna Kirtana'. From another source, it can be known that according to the Srikrsna Kirtana, Ananta is the name of Candidasa. The source of this writings was the blessings of the Goddess Vasuli. He (Candidasa) used the title Badu. He was the devout devotee of Vasuli Devi.

S.P. Basu wants to say that Candidasa was not a pure Vaisnava. Its evidence is found in his Ramistuti.
Candidasa is said to be a Vaisnava of Sahajia cult. The influence of Sahajia cult has been seen in his Padavalis, where Radha and Krsna are extolled. According to Dr. S.B. Dasgupta, the purification of Sadhana is merely the first sadhana to the Sahajiias. In this case, his religion was named as 'Sahaja-tattva' and he is called as Sahajia Candidasa. His Padavalis bear the testimony of Sahajia-cult. In this cult men and women appear in the guise of Radha and Krsna. In Assam also the ladies and gentlemen belonging to Vaisnava cult do the same thing in the wake of Ras. Moreover, the Vaisnava Padavalis, composed by Candidasa, are nothing but a love episode of Radha and Krsna.

Caitanya: Bengal Vaisnavism got the maturity at the hands of Caitanyadeva. He was the propagator of the religion of Radha Krsna cult.

Caitanya was born in 1485 A.D. at Navadvipa (Nadi), a renowned centre of learning in West Bengal. He was the son of Pdt. Jagannatha Misra and Saci Devi. He was also sobriqueted as Nimai, Visvambhara and Gauranga. Born in a high Brhma family he got the opportunity to learn Sanskrit. He was sent for higher education to Pdt. Gangadasa's tola. He got married Laksmi Devi, at his eighteen. Soon after he set out for a visit to Eastern Bengal. When he was out of doors, his wife Laksmi died of snake-bite, and on his
return Caitanya married Viṣṇupriyā. In the year 1503 A.D. when Caitanya was about twenty-three (23) years old he went to Gayā with the professed object of performing the Śrāddha ceremony of his father. Thereafter he visited Cakrabeṇa, to see the footprint of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the temple of Gadādhara. On his return from Gayā his course of life took another turn.

Caitanya was influenced by one Īśvarapuri, a famous Yogi, whom he met in Gayā. Īśvarapuri initiated him and gave him Dikṣa-mānta. According to A.K. Majumdar Īśvara Puri gave him Mantra-dikṣa, and the young man returned home surcharged with emotion. Soon he closed his school and at the age of twenty-four (24) he was initiated as a monk by Keśava Bhāratī, at Katwā near Nadia. In this regard U.N. Goswami says that Caitanya was initiated by Īśvarapuri and gave him 'Dasākṣara Mantra' (Kṛṣṇa mantra). Eversince Caitanya became a devout devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Caitanya vehemently disregarded the ritualistic system of the Brāhmaṇas and condemned the discriminations of caste and creed. Yavana Haridāsa, a Muslim, was, one of his important disciples. According to Caitanya Kṛṣṇa is the highest and Supreme God. Renouncing his household life Caitanya was so passionate towards the Kṛṣṇabhakti that he hardly paid any heed to anyone or anything else of this world. With his pupils he frequently performed Saṃkīrtana. Off and
on, he shrieked as 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa', and like a lunatic person wandered within himself in search of his absolute and Supreme God. His mental view made him an incarnation of Rādhā, and he was overwhelmed with joy and pleasure. Regarding the doctrine of Caitanya R.G. Bhandarkar says, that Kṛṣṇa is the highest god is so beautiful that he excites love for himself even in the heart of the God of love, and is enamoured of himself. His Parabrahmaśakti (power) pervades the universe and assumes a corporeal form by his wonder-creating power (Māyāśakti), though he is the soul of all. He possesses a self-multiplying power (Vilāsaśakti) which is of two kinds. By one of these, in sporting with the cowherdesses, he became as many Kṛṣṇas as were sufficient to give one to every two of them (Prabhavavilāsa). By the other self multiplying power (Vaibhavavilāsa), he assumes the forms of four Vyūhas viz. of Vāsudeva, Saśkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

In the year 1510 A.D. Caitanya became a Śaṃnyāsin, or an ascetic, and was initiated into the order by Keśava Bhārati of Katvā. After this he first went to Puri to visit the shrine of Jagannātha, and thence wandered about the country for six years preaching his new faith. Caitanya had six (6) principal disciples, of which Rūpa Goswami, Sanātana Goswami and Jiva Goswami are worth mentioning.
The Caitanya Sampradāya is known as 'Acintya Bhedābheda'. Dvaita and Advaita's juncture has been occurred in his bhakti. Bhakti in the Caitanya school, is not an 'austere concentration of the mind on absolute reality', but loving adoration of a personal God.

The whole system centered round the love of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa which emphasizes the madhurabhāva of the bhakti rasa.

Caitanya did not compose any work or any commentary in support of his doctrine, but only a work he composed in Sanskrit is known as 'Śikṣāstaka'.

During his time, Vaisnavism spread over in west Bengal. Later on it became influential religion amongst the common people of East Bengal also.

In 1533 A.D. Caitanyadeva disappeared from this world.

Caitanya's Vaiṣṇavism is also known as Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism does not want emancipation. Their most desirable thing is to serve the God for e v e r. They followed the instructions of the Bh.P. T.S.Rukmani also mentions that it (Caitanya school of Vaiṣṇavism) regards the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, as the Supreme authority and as the quintessence of all śāstras.
(v) Vaiśnavism in Assam:—

(1) Its Origin and Development (from 5th Century A.D. 14th Century A.D.):—

As to Vaiśnavism in Assam, it is difficult to discover its source and origin. It is not easy to know as to how it germinated in Assam. It can only be assumed through assumption. Sages, of all ages, have already recognised the most sacred, mystic and monosyllable term 'Om', as the fundamental seed of creation.

From the very dawn of the Vedic era, up till now, India passed on towards religious activities through the catastrophic politics of religions. The utterance of the monosyllabic 'Om' and the recitation of 'Gāyatri' mantra is going on from temple to temple in this holy and religious country.

The antiquity of the origin of Viṣṇu-Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa and Nārāyaṇa in Assam, even in India also is a matter of disputation. In Assam, Hinduism has been streaming in three different forms: viz. Śākta, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava. These three different religions, in different times got the regal support. So, before going to discuss the Vaiṣṇavism is Assam, Śāktism and Śaivism should be touched here.

In Kāmarūpa (Assam) the 'Kāmākhya Pitha' is held as the most sacred place of the Śākta religion. According
to the Kālikā Purāṇa, and the Yogini Tantra, in other places the cult of Devī is rare, but in Kamarūpa, she dwells in every house.

Before the rise of Vaiṣṇavism in Assam, no doubt a gross form of Tantricism prevailed in this part of the country. In Assam there was a sect, known as the 'Rāti-khowā' or 'Purandharia' which was evidently a mixture of Tantric Buddhism and tribal customs. Sir Edward Gait said that there was a class of persons in Kamarūpa called Bhogins (enjoyers).

Goddess Kāmākhyā is the most dominating name in the early history of Assam. Up to the advent of neo-Vaiṣṇavism Śaktism occupied an important place in ancient and medieval Assam, and side by side Śaivism also. Historians guess it, that the date of composition of the KP is twelfth century A.D. Dr. B.K. Kakati could not give any certain date of the KP, so, at that time Śaktism was a dominant cult of Assam. Almost in all the Purāṇas and the Upa-Purāṇas, Śakti appears as an important Reality. Her importance can be seen from the fact that Śakti was given a position higher than that of Viṣṇu and Śiva in such Purāṇas as the Devi Bhāgavata, the Devi Purāṇa, the Kālikā Purāṇa and the Mahābhārata. According to Varāhī Tantra, one, who is Durgā, is Viṣṇu and is also Śiva. The wise persons, do not make any discrimination amongst these three.
"Śaktism is considered to be an offspring of Śaivism by some scholars, but in fact an independent cult of the female principle, existed with some relations to Śaivism. From the historical point of view Śaktism seems to be a combination of Aryān religion with non-Aryān belief".\textsuperscript{197}

The Kālikā Purāṇa and the Yogini Tantra are the two most authentic works of Śaktism, prevailed in medieval era if not in ancient Assam. The most powerful scripture is the KP appears to be earlier than the YT. M. Neog thus writes, "this sect was most powerful one in Kāmarūpa by the twelvth century, by when its chief scripture in that land 'the Kālikā Purāṇa was written. But when the YT came to be written in Kāmarūpa probably in the last part of the sixteenth century, if not seventeenth much of the 'left-hand' excesses was toned down".\textsuperscript{198} The Kāmākhyā temple contains no icon or image, but a symbol of Yoni representing the procreative force of the mother Goddess.\textsuperscript{199}

The two sacred scriptures of Śaktism in Assam are the Kālikā Purāṇa and the Yogini Tantra which belong to the 'left hand' (Vāmācāra) school and impose bloody sacrifices and various cryptic (occult) rites. In this Vāmācāra system, 'Paṇca Nakāras'\textsuperscript{200} are used. "Generally, it is thought that in Vāmācāra, woman plays an important
role. But this is only partially true in the case of those Sadhakas, who worship Sakti according to Vāmācāra rites. But amongst the Vāmācārins there are even Brahmacarins, Sadhakas, all followers of the Nāthas, who never indulge in this type of Sakti worship. The Kālamukhas and the Kalavisas worship, the Kumāris only only upto the age of nine and the Brahmakaulas refrain even from the wine and meat. Now this means that this kind of worship is restricted to one section of the Vāmācārins, namely the Vīra class, while the Pasu and Divya classes are prohibited performing it.

To attain the final goal, the Vāmācārins practiced the Pañca-tattvas or Pañca Makāras. The esoteric meaning of the five Makāras are given below:

(1) Madya: The nectarine stream that issues from the cavity of brain, is called Madya or wine.

(2) Mānṣa: This term indicates the control of speech, which is only possible in case of the Yogins.

(3) Matsya: This term 'fish' indicates the system of respiration, drawn in and sent out. So the worshipper of fish means one who has controlled his vital breaths, otherwise it known as Prānāyāma.

(4) Muirā: It means the residing place of soul in the body who acquires the knowledge of this charming soul is the worshipper of Muirā.
(5) Maithuna: The most important of all those is the practice of Maithuna. It is observed like thus: 'co-habitation is at the root of creation, preservation and destruction. It is regarded as a great principle in scriptures and it achieves all ends and confers the most difficult knowledge of Brahman'.

The meaning of Maithuna here is the recitation of the various attributes of God, or unification with the God. The goddess of Śakti is worshipped in many forms in different places of this region. Below the principal shrine of Kamakhya and to its west is the smaller temple of Bhairavi, Bāla Bhairavi or Tripurā Bhairavi. Another forms of Her is Tāmreswārī (Ekajātā). She is also called Ugratārā. The shrine of goddess Tāmreswārī is situated near Sadia in the north-eastern frontier. She was enshrined in a copper temple and called Tāmreswārī. She is also known as Mākkaravāsinī and is popularly known as Kecāikhāltī (eater of raw flesh) for there occurred annual human sacrifice. Jayantēśwari of Jayantāpura is also worshipped with human sacrifice. Jayanti (Jaintiā) is noted as one of the sacred placed to the Devi by the Yogini Tantra. Human sacrifice continued there down to 1835, when it was stopped by the British by dispossessing the king of that territory. Besides, the goddess Śakti is worshipped in the form of Durgā and Kālī. Practically there is no difference in between Tārā and Kamakhya, or Tārā and Kālī.
Shivism: Among the temples in existence at present in Assam, the Thānas or Śiva temples are highest in number. "Śiva temples have always outnumbered the temples associated with other individual gods and goddesses. The Kālikā Purāṇa is recounting the sacred places of ancient Kāmarūpa mentions, fifteen places sacred to Śiva, against five sacred to the Devī, and five sacred to Viṣṇu".  

Āgamas are the foremost works of Śaiva cult. Within the 4th to the 12th century all the Hindu kings of Puṣyavarmā Śālastambha and Brahmāpāla dynasties, were the stern devotees of Lord Śiva. Bhāskara Varmā , the king of Kāmarūpa was also an ardent devotee of Śiva from his childhood. Even Harsavar-dhana was heard about the Śiva-śakti of Bhāskara Varmā from his massanger Haṃsadūta. Śiva was also praised by Bhāskaravarmā in his copper plate as "śaśiśekhaṃ priyam pīnākinam bhasmakapairvibhūsitam". M. Neog writes that Rīnakapāṇi was extolled by Harjara Varmā in the early period of ninth century. So also, Banamālavarmā, Valavarmā and Ratnapāla were the devotees of Lord Śiva.  

In Kāmarūpa, the worship of Śiva is being continued from a very remote age. "On the basis of an old tradition, Gunābhīrāma Baruah quotes, that in Jalpaiguri of earlier Kāmarūpa, a king named Jalprāvara established a Śiva temple and preached Śaiva dharma.  

Rai Bahadur K.L. Baruah mentions that, in the YR which must have been compiled in the early part of the
sixteenth century, it is recorded that a Śaiva king named Jalpeśwara ruled over Kāmarūpa, and that it was he, who built the Śiva temple of Jalpeśha in Jalpaiguri. According to the KB (History of Kamarupa)—"Prthu was the name of Jalpeśwara. Not knowing that, Jalpeśwara and Prthu were identical, Buchanan, alluding to the so-called prophesies in the YT, wrote as follows: "The worship of the Linga, according to the prophecy would begin in the 19th year of Śaka. Some indefinite time after that period, a Brāhmaṇa born of the Korotoyā river, and named Nāgaśankara, would be king and preach the doctrine. After him, but at what interval is not mentioned, would be a Rājā, named Jalpeśwara, who would still further encourage that worship and who would build the celebrated temple of Jalpīśa. Very considerable ruins are found at no great distance from that place, as will be hereafter described, but they are ascribed to a Prthu Rājā, who may however, have been a person of the same family".

Śaiva religion was fostered during the rule of Ahom kings. Śaiva cult was patronized by the Ahom kings and as a consequence a good number of Śaiva temples were constructed during their reigns at various places of Assam. King Pratāpa Sinha (1603-41) renovated the Śivadol at Negheriting near Dergāon. The present Śiva temple of Umānanda amidst the river Brahmaputra was constructed during the reign of
Gadādhara Simha (1631-96).

The KP and the YT have mentioned several places sacred to Śiva, and there still exist many Śiva temples, in Darrong and Kāmarūpa districts; some of which have been in existence at least since the time of the composition of the KP. The Śaiva temples at Hājo(Kedāresvara, Kāmeśvara and Kamaleswara), Viśwanātha, Śingeri (Gopeśvara) Bilvesvara, Negheriting and Dubil (Parihareśvara) are existing from ancient times.217

Moreover, attached to every Devī temple, there invariably find a temple dedicated to Śiva, in the form of Bhairava. Śiva is worshipped in these temples in two forms - Bhogi Śiva and Yogi Śiva. The former is worshipped, in the form of Ardhanarīśvara. The Ardhanārīśvara form is worshipped with offerings consisting Sāmīga victuals218, and the later in the Yogin form is worshipped with offerings consisting of rice and vegetables.219

But, the non-Aryan tribes, mainly the Kachāris, practise a form of primitive Śaivism, where the worship was carried by sacrifice of buffaloes, he-goats, pigeons, ducks and cocks and by offerings of rice and liquor. Bāthau-Brai, the god of the Bojō-Kachāris can be equated to Śaivas of the Hindus.220
During the resurgence of neo-Vaisnavism in Assam, the existence of Śaivism was quite evident. In early Assam, Śaivism occupied a vast area amongst the aboriginal and the Aryānised people.

In some Tantras, Śiva is considered as a Guru of highest quality. In the Kāmākhya Tantra, Śiva is extolled in a beautiful manner.

Madhvacārya has mentioned four main branches of Śaivite viz. Nakulīśa, Pāśupata, Śaiva-pratyabhijñā, and Rāmeśwara. The Śaiva religion has been running in Assam and other places of Northern India is of Pratyabhijñā class.

Vaisnavism, in Assam, was established at a time when Sūrya worship and Brāhmaṇical culture made considerable progress, and as the evidence shows, the worship of both Viṣṇu and his incarnations was prevalent in the land from early times. The association of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa with Prāgjyotisā is well-known. In the Mbh, Viṣṇu is called Prāgjyotisā-Prāgjyeśṭha.

At the advent of Vedic-religion and culture in Assam, the Viṣṇukathā or Vaisnavism entered this region along with them. So, it is not possible to determine the exact location and existence of Vaisnavism in Assam. It can only be surmised that whenever the
'vedadhvani' was ringing in the air and space of Assam, thenceforth Vaiṣṇavism occupied a vast area in Assam.

Maharṣi Pālakāpya was the author of the famous work 'Hastiāyurveda'. The worship of Lord Viṣṇu is mentioned in this work. Hara Prasad Śāstri opined that, 'the date of this work 'Hastiāyurveda' was 5th or 6th century B.C.'.

"The stone inscription of the king Mahābhūtivarmā, is discovered in Baragangā of Nowgong. The date of this inscription was 554 A.D. Here, in this stone inscription, king Mahābhūtivarmā is described as the "Asvamedhayāji" and "Paramabhāgavata".

At that time, the title 'Paramabhāgavata' could be used only in the case of a Vaiṣṇava king. So also, the title 'Paramamāheśvara' only applied in order to identify a devout worshipper of Lord Śiva. Therefore, the word Paramabhāgavata could be proved the Viṣṇu-bhakti of the king Mahābhūtivarmā. It is also clear, that the worship of Lord Viṣṇu was in vogue by and large of then period.

"Regarding the kings of Kāmarūpa, the Harsacarita of Bāṇabhaṭṭa and several others copper plate inscriptions of the 7th century A.D. mention in details. Specially, the kings of Varmā-dynasty and Pāla dynasty are mentioned as the descendant of 'Viṣṇu' in his Varāha incarnation."
Cakrāpāṇi Viṣṇu is mentioned as the establisher of Varmā dynasty in the Nidhanpur Copper Plate inscription. In the Dubī Copper Plate inscription, the king Puṣyavarmā (355-380 A.D.) is compared with Viṣṇu, the husband of Lakṣmi. Nārāyaṇa-Varmā (495-510 A.D.) the another king of Varmā dynasty is regarded as an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa. The greatness of the name Nārāyaṇa is also described as the destroyer of all sin.

Moreover, another instance, in this respect, has able to bear the evidence that Lord Viṣṇu, the enemy of the demons, took birth as Lord Kṛṣṇa in the womb of Devakī.

Thus, by dint of these above mentioned instances, it can be known that within this period (4th - 8th century A.D.), the worship of Viṣṇu was prevailed in ancient Assam.

The copper plate inscription of Harjara Varmā, has been found out of order. The names, recorded in the plate viz. Janārdana, Govinda and Madhusudana indicate the existence of Vaishnavism of the 8th century A.D. In the copper plate inscription of Vanamāladeva, Harjara Varma was identified with Kṛṣṇa, the lover of the Gopis and the husband of Lakṣmi.

Lord Viṣṇu is mentioned as Purusottama and Janārdana, in the first copper plate inscription of the
king Ratnapāla of 10th century A.D.\textsuperscript{235}

The second copper plate inscription of Ratnapāla the name Kāmadeva, is recorded, whom Brahmottara land is given. This inscription also records the two names - Vāsudeva and Baladeva, respectively, Kāmadeva's father and grand-father. So, these three names help to know about the Vaisnavism of that family.

The 'ardhanārisvara' form of Lord Śiva is eulogised in the first copper plate inscription issued by Maharaja Dharmapāla of twelfth century A.D. But the Boar incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, is recorded in the second copper plate inscription.\textsuperscript{238} (Puṣpabhadra inscription). And these two inscriptions prove the indiscriminating attitude of the king, regarding 'Harihara'. Madhusūdana is said to be a Vaiṣṇava Brāhmaṇa, whom Brahmottara grant is given by this inscription.\textsuperscript{239}

In addition to these 'Lord Viṣṇu is found as 'Hari' in Gauhati grant, Borgāon and Midhānpur. As 'Upendra' Viṣṇu is mentioned in the Nowgong grant. As Nārāyaṇa, in Khonāmukhi grant, and as Acyuta in Guākuchi grant and as Kṛṣṇa in Tezpūr grant.\textsuperscript{240}

'Harihara' is eulogised in 'His' indiscriminating form, in the mangalācarana (preliminary invocation) of the books \textit{Ṣaṁhitāratnākara} and \textit{Makharadrīpa} by its authors.
"Sri Satyanārāyana was the king of Sadhāyapuri. His dynasty was known as Suraripu. In Śaka 1314, in the copper plate inscription of the king, Brahmottara is given to a Brāhmaṇa of Kāśyapa gotra, named Nārāyana. This copper plate inscription is discovered in North Lakhimpur. The inscription is recorded the names of Gaṇapati, Vāsudeva, Īśāna and Ambā (Durgā) (probably the name of Sūrya was wiped out from the inscription). Still, the inscription indicates the worship of five deities."

However, the copper plates, which were discovered till date, convey the evidences, that the worship of Viṣṇu and Śiva (generally as Harihara) was continued from the 4th century A.D. to 15th century A.D.

The antiquity of the worship of Viṣṇu and 'His' incarnations have been supported by epigraphy also. If we go through the archaeological survey throughout Assam, some remnants of temples, dedicated to the Lord Viṣṇu, and his incarnations would have come to our vision. Those remnants prove the antiquity of Viṣṇavism throughout the period of fifth to sixth century A.D.

Both the literary and archaeological sources, therefore point to the worship of Viṣṇu and His incarnations. It was established in the land, from early period.

An icon of Viṣṇu (made of stone) has been found in Deopāni, near Golāghāṭ.
A line (in Sanskrit) is written on the back of the icon. The specialists of archaeology indubitably say, that this icon is dated as ninth century A.D.

Another icon of Lord Viṣṇu made of brass has been discovered from an old temple, near Dibrugarh. The date of this icon was probably 11th to 12th century A.D. The 'Anantaśāyī' image of Viṣṇu stayed at Aśvakṛānta, seemed to be of 10th century A.D. The Janardana Viṣṇumūrti of Śukrēśwara, on the bank of the river Brahmaputra belongs to 8th to 9th century A.D.

One icon of Vāsudeva has been discovered from Burdowā. It was found, when a plinth of Kīrtanāghara was dug up at the behest of Śāṅkaradeva. 246

Above all, in the year 1970 A.D. an excavation was conducted in the 'Āmbari region' of Guwahāti. During the year 1987-88 A.D. another excavation was carried on. It bears the testimony to the ancient civilization, scattered on the Brahmaputra valley. As a result of the said excavations, many icons of Viṣṇu, Durgā, Śūrya and Śīvalingas were found. The age of these icons is determined to be in between 8th to 10th century A.D. Thus, hereby it has been proved, that in ancient Kāmarūpa, not only the worship of Viṣṇu, but also the worship of other gods and goddess was prevailed. Specially, the huge figure of images of Viṣṇu,
discovered in Āmbārī, establish the preponderance of the worship of Viṣṇu."

The five Vaisnava seats (piṭhas) are mentioned in the KP (11th century A.D.). It identifies the constant influence of Vaiṣṇavism since the beginning of Gupta era.

Śridhara Bhaṭṭa was an essayist on Smṛti (Smrti-nivandhakāra) of Kāmarūpa. His date was (probably) 14th century A.D. Vargā-pradīpa was a complete Vaiṣṇava work written by him. This work begins with a salutation to the Paramātmā. The book is mentioned the vow of Vaiṣṇavas, worship of Viṣṇu, Harinama-mahatmya etc. Moreover, to express the greatness of the name of Hari some ślokas are borrowed from the Bh.P.

Another work, regarding the expiation (prāyaścitta), named Smṛtipadma, has been found in Kāmarūpa. The exact date of this work is not known. Dāmodara Miśra (14th century A.D.) mentions the name of this book. Here, in this work also, Viṣṇu is invoked, in the benedictory verse.

As an essayist on Smṛti, Dāmodara Miśra, also known as Rājaguru Dāmodara Miśra, wrote several works on Vaiṣṇavism. His works are Gangājala (1355 Saka) and Smṛtisāgara (1356 Saka) and the commentary on Śāntiśataka named Subyaktapañjika (1375 Saka).

Thus, it can be surmised that the writer belongs to 15th
century A.D. Lord Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavite rites and rituals are the subject matter of his works. Probably, the writer was not a Vaiṣṇava, but a devotee of goddess Umā (Pārvati).

So, it can be surmised that in Assam (5th - 14th century A.D.), Vaiṣṇavism was in vogue, in a splendid characteristics.

(2) Pre-Sankara Era - Harideva:

Among the four Mahāpuruṣas, born in Assam, who firmly have founded the 'Bhāgavati Sanātana Vaiṣṇava Dharma' amidst the simple minded people of Assam, the name of Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Harideva comes first. The other three Mahāpuruṣas are Śrī Śrī Sankaradeva, Śrī Śrī Madhavadeva and Śrī Śrī Dāmodaradeva. But the seniority of Harideva does not want to accept by the hagiologists of Sankaradeva. Bisvanārāyana Śāstri comments that "regarding the controversy of seniority, Mahāpuruṣa Harideva is undoubtedly the seniormost, amongst the Vaiṣṇava Gurus of Assam". Moreover, Sankaradeva himself, admits the superiority and seniority of Harideva.

Mahāpuruṣa Harideva is known to have been born at the village Nārāyaṇapur in the district Laksimpur, in 1348 Śaka. Dvija Ajanābha was his father and mother was Pārijāti Devī.
Harideva was the adherent of Bhaktimārga and Lord Viṣṇu was his tutalary God. Not only of Harideva, but also his ancestors were the worshipper of Viṣṇu.

It is worth mentioning here, that the ancestors of Śrī Śrī Sānkaradeva, were the followers of Saiva and Śakta and the line of Mādhavadeva was the staunch follower of Śakti. On the other hand, in regard to the family tradition of Śrī Śrī Harideva and Śrī Śrī Dāmodaradeva were the followers of Vaiṣṇavite sect. Vaiṣṇavism, of course, was prevalent in this country before them. Therefore, the neo-Vaiṣṇavite religion propagated by Śankaradeva, was the main stream of Vaiṣṇavite religion, in Assam. But, the Vaiṣṇavadharma in Assam does not mean the religion propagated by Śankaradeva. He was a reformer. He polished the Vaiṣṇava dharma and gave a new shape. At the same time the two Brāhmaṇadhamarmagurus, Śrī Śrī Harideva and Śrī Śrī Dāmodaradeva preached the new-Vaiṣṇava dharma without losing its Vedic origin and ways and means of older tradition.

A good relation existed between Harideva and Śankaradeva. Such an attitude can be surmised from the Harideva Carita257 of Dvīja Dhaneśwara and Vāneśvara.

Practically, there is no difference between the two sects of Haridevi and Dāmodaradevi. Along with
Visnubhakti, both the sects lay emphasis on daily rituals as directed by Sruti and Smrti. Both the sects do not interfere in the worship of gods and goddesses, other than Viṣṇu. To allow to worship any god or goddess is the sign of their magnanimity, liberal attitude in religious aspect.

Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Harideva was a promulgator of Vaidika Bhāgavatī Vaiṣṇava Dharma in medieval Assam. He was a pious Brāhmin of Kāsyapa family (gotra). He lost his parents in his early life. He was persecuted by the Ahom king. To get rid of the oppression of the Ahom king, he had to leave for Kāmarūpa. Thereafter he travelled for pilgrimage in different places of India. Bahari was the hometown of his predecessors. So, after his return from pilgrimage, he settled at Bahari (now, in Barpeta district). There, in the year 1375 Saka or 1453 A.D. Harideva first established Bahari sattra. From Bahari, he came to Pāṭbāusi to meet Sankaradeva and Dāmodaradeva. The distance between Bahari and Pāṭbāusi is fourteen (14) kilometres. Harideva easily trudged to recite the Bhāgavata and to take share in the religious discussion with Sankaradeva and Dāmodaradeva. Harideva shifted his residence from Bahari, to the bank of the river Kālindī (the northern course of the river Brahmaputra). The place was named as Haridevāgrāma, first. Later on, it was named as Gurudevāgrāma. In 1481 A.D., Banganyāgiri, the brother of Sankaradeva, took shelter at the feet of Harideva. Mānerī
was the another sattra, established by Harideva. But, unfortunately, this sattra was inundated by the river Brahmaputra. The icon and some other valuable things of this sattra had to be shifted to the village Bortolā. Like the Dāmodariā sattras, the Haridevl sattras also installed the icons in the Manikutas.

Guru, Bhakta, Bhāgavata and Vigraha - these four are the emblems of Brahmasamhati. Śrī Śrī Harideva and Śrī Śrī Dāmodaradeva were the pioneers of this Brahmasamhati. According to them, 'nāsti vedāt paraṁ satyam na devah keśavāt'.

In Assam, the Haridevl and Dāmodariā sattras and side by side the disciples, are greater in number, than the sattras and disciples of Sankaradeva. But, because of this, there is no enmity or antagonism between the two sects. From the philosophical standpoint of their religious view - 'ākasāt patitam toyam vathā gacchanti sāgaram, sarvadevān namsktṛya keśavam pratigacchati'. So, this is the motto of both the gurus, Harideva and Dāmodaradeva.

Harideva composed two works viz. Bhaktirasatarangini and Saranasiddhanta. During the time of his pilgrimage, Harideva became able to acquire the titles as Vedadarsanācāryya at Kaśidhāma and Bhāgavatācāryya at Puri.
Mahāpuruṣa Harideva did not innovate any new religion. With the help of nine elements of the Bh.F., he duly preached the Sanātanadharma. His main followers (disciples) Yadumanideva, Haricaranadeva, Nārāyaṇadeva and Gopināthadeva (Jagannātha) were commanded by him to preach this Bhārayati Vaisnava dharma. For that, they were also mandated to establish sattra in the convenient places to convert the masses in his dharma. All his bhaktas and disciples were advised to conduct the sattrās with strict discipline without any exception.

Hariguru preached his religion with the help of Miśra Paddhati (mixed system) as quoted in the Bh.F. According to the Bh.F., the Purusa-sūkta is most essential in Vedic worship; and the Gautamiya tantras Pañcarātra, are used in Tāntrika worship. The Dvādasāksara or Aṣṭāksara mantras are used in the worship of mixed system. It is noteworthy, that the Pañcarātra systems are followed in the temple of Hayagrīva Mādhava of Hajo, in the Āsvakānta Devalaya in Guwāhāti and in the Āuniāti sattra while, elsewhere worship is performed with mixed system.

Mahāprabhu Harideva was a worshipper of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa. He neither intercepted nor inculpated any other worship or worshipper of other gods and goddesses. According to Harideva "a non-initiated (adikṣīta) and non sheltered (asārana) person has no right to worship the
Lord Viṣṇu Kṛṣṇa. The Sātvata-tantra enjoins, to take refuge in Absolute Supreme Brahman, considering Him as an incarnation of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa. The Supreme Reality (Parama tattva) is recognised in the Vaishnavite religion as the Advitiya Parama Brahma. Mahāpuruṣa Hari-deva too, followed the same path.

The śarana (shelter) dharma is completely Vedic. In Buddhism too, in a slightly different manner, tri-śarana is accepted. The Bh.Gitā also mentions about śarana. Thus, it has been seen, that, the course of shelter (śarana) is an eternal wealth (sanātana sampada) to the religion of India. The Sarana dharma is also quoted in the Bh.P.

Both the gurus, Harideva and Dāmodaradeva preached the Ekaśarana dharma, the source of which is the Veda and the Bhagavata.

The utterences of the path of devotion, include the sāstras like - the Vedas, the Upanisadas, the Bh.P. and the Gitā, of which the principal mantra (mūlamantra)relates the Bhāgavati dharma. Bhakti is the easiest process to realise the nature of Supreme Being, so, what is unattainable by the path of action (Karma) and knowledge (jñāna), can be conceived by the path of devotion.

Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Bh.P. and Prakṛti and Puruṣa in Sāmkhya, are the same deity. Śri Śri Harideva to
reiterated it in such way - krśna-prakṛti, krśna-pruṣa
jānībhāhā sāra kari, paraspare pūjā, praspare sevā,
dekhibā sāstra bicāri.273

Regarding the guru (preceptor) of Harideva,
Rāmānandadvīja274 mentions in his Śrīgurucarita, that
Rāmarāmaguru was directed by Śankaradeva to give Sarana to
Harideva. But, it is quite impossible and totally baseless
argument. Banganyāngiri, the brother of Mahāpruṣa
Śankaradeva said 275 that the Lord Janārdana in the guise
of a Sannyāsī gave dikṣā-mantra in the temple of
Janārdana, in Guwāhāti.

In the Haridevi nāmāgharas, three prasāṅgas were
carried on, but now and then, nāma prasāṅgas are running
for twice daily. Except the nāma-prasāṅgas and worship etc.
nāmāgharas are used to discuss the social matter also.

In the year 1382 Saka or 1460 A.D., Harideva got
married to Tilottamā, the daughter of Janārdana Adhyāpaka.
Tilottamā gave birth to two daughters and a son. They are
respectively - Bhuvanesvāri, Banalatā and Dāmodara by name.

But, unfortunately, after the sacred thread ceremony,
Dāmodara was drowned in a deep Bil.276

Harideva preached his religion and made social
reformation among the Hindu people. He allowed both men and
women to enter in his religion and side by side nāmāghara.
or Kirtanagaha also. In addition to these, it is a matter of great pleasure, that Haridevi sect pleads for the women's liberalisation. As for instance, Bhūvanēśvari, the daughter of Harideva, assumed the authority on religion. She was an educated and pious lady. To carry over the heavy load of Vaiṣṇava dharma, she did not enter into the worldly life. But, she was also advised by her father to adopt a male child.

It is reiterated that, practically, there is no difference between Haridevi and Dāmodariā dharma. To remove the clumsiness from the minds of masses S.D.S. tried to make it clear. He said that, the Dāmodariā sect is a scholarly branch of Vaiṣṇavadharma, because it enabled to strengthen the sect through the arguments of the Vaiṣṇava śāstras. But, on the other hand, the Haridevi branch never allowed any śāstra vacana, without visible evidence, (Cāksuṣa pramāṇa). Such kind of persons rushed towards Harideva after getting some visible evidences (through the power of Yoga of Harideva) and took shelter under him. However, these two branches stepped towards the same goal and with the same way.

Mahāpuruṣa Harideva left this transient world for another in the year 1566 A.D.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. RV. 1/190/5

2. RV, 1/12/18/, 1/154/4; 1/156/6; 3/55/10; 7/180-1-2


4. tisra eva devatā iti nairuktāh, agnih prthivisthano vāyurvedra vā antarikṣa sthānah sūryo dyusthānah
   (as quoted in the Ved.P. (Assamese) by Dr. Basu, J.R. APP, Guwahati, 1976, p. 106)

5. Read, RV. 10/158/1
   sūryo no divaspātu vātohantarikṣaṇadagnirnāh, pārthivebh-yeoh.

6. Read, Nir. 7-4
   'devatāyā eka ātmā bahudhā stuyate'.

7. Read, RV. 1/164/46
   ekām sadvipra bahudhā vadanti agним yamām materisvānamāhuh.

8. RV, 10/114/5
   'ekām santam bahudhā kalpayanti'.

9. particularly the Vāmana Purāṇa, describes at great length about the dwarf incarnation of God Viṣṇu.

10. RV. 1/22/17
11. Read, RV. 1/22/17
'idam visnuvicakrame tredha nidadhhe padam.'

12. Gonda, J; AEV; MLBD, 1969, p.56

13. RV. 1/139/11

14. RV. 1/154/4

15. MM, - Translation of Rgveda; Vol.I, 1869, p. 117

16. Read, RV. 1/154/2
'uru yajnaya cakruthru lokam jayayante - suryamushasamagnim'.

17. As quoted in the AEV. by Gonda,J. MLBD, 1969, p.5

18. RV.4/18/11

19. RV. 1/154/4

20. As mentioned in the Rgveda Samhitā (Bengali translation) (taken from the almost torn leaf), p.46

21. Sanskrit Texts; Vol.IV, 1863, p.55
(it has already been mentioned in the footnote of the Rgveda Samhitā (Bengali Translation) (taken from the almost torn leaf)

22. Ghosh,J.C., Śrī Gītā (Bengali), Calcutta-12,1959, p.6
23. RV. 10/82/3

24. RV, 3/55


26. Ghosh, J.C., quoted in his Sri Gītā (Bengali)
Calcutta-12, 1958

Calcutta, A-126, College Street Market, p. 303

28. RV, 1/164/4, 5, 6

29. Read, RV-3/62/10
"bhūrbhūvah svah, tat saviturvareṇyam bhargo,
devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah praccodayat.

30. Vitsaxis, G. Vassilis; HRMLPI, OUP, 1979, p. 82

31. RV. 10/82/2

32. Read, RV, 1/156/3
"tamustotārah pūrvyam yathāvidā
tasya garbham januṣā pipartana
asya jānanto nāma cidvivaktana
mahaste viṣṇo sumatiḥ bhajāmahe".

33. RV, 10/121
34. Read, RV, 10/125
   aham rudrebhirvasubhiscaramyamahaṁadityairuta
   viśvaevaṁ, aham mitrāvaraṇeṣbvibharmyamahaṁindragni
   ahamāścinobha.

35. ŚV, 32/1


37. Tait. Ā. 10/11

38. Read, Ch.Up. 3/17/6
   'tadhaitadghora angrasaḥ kṛṣṇāya devaṁ -
   putrāyettvovacapipāṣa eva sa vabhūva; sohantavenāyametat trayam pratipadyetāksita -
   māsyacyutamasi pṛaṇasamātmasiti

39. RV, 8/85

40. Alt. B.1/1

41. Rām. (B. Kanda) 18/10

42. Ibid.,29/19, 20

43. Read, Rām 1/45, 22-24
   evamuktastato devaṁdevaṁeṣvaram prabhūh
   pradurāśītatoutraiva śankhacakraḥarho harīh
   uvacainām smitam kṛtvā rudram śūladenām harīh
dalvataṁ māthyaṁāṇe tu yatpūrvaṁ samupasthitam,
tattvādiyam surasreṣṭha surānāmagrato hi yat
agrāpūjāmiha sthitvā gṛhāṇedam viśaṁ prabhō.
44. (i) A charming or infatuating woman
   (ii) A charming female guise was assumed by Visṇu at the churning of the ocean by the Devas; and at another time before Mahādeva, (according to the Candrakanta Abhidhana, G.U., 1988, p. 782).

45. Rām 1/45/42-43
46. Ibid, 75/76
47. Ibid, 7/6,7,8,13

48. Read, Rām 7/8/24
   'sarva ēte mahābhāgā Ravanādbalabattarāh'.

49. Read, Rām. 8/25
   na cānyo rākṣasāṁhantā surarind evakantakān, ēte nārāyaṇāṁ devāṁ śankha-cakra-dādharāṁ.

50. Read, Rām. 7/110/8
   tataḥ pitāmaho vānāṁ tvantarikṣāt abhāṣata; āgaoccha visṇo bhadram te distyā prāpto asi Rāghavāḥ

51. Read , Rām 7/110/13
   tato visṇumanyāṁ devāṁ pūjayaṁ sma devatāṁ sādhyā marudāgarṇāścaiva sendrāṁ sāgni-purogamah.
52. Read, Bh. Gita 4/7-8
Yadayadahi dharmasya glānirbhavati bhārata
abhyuthānāmadharmasya tadātmānam srjāmyaham;
paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ vināśāya ca duskrām
dharma samsthāpanārthāya sambhāvāmi yuge yuge.

53. Mbh. 12/43/1,2,3

54. Read, Mbh. 12/43/5
visvakarmannamasteastu visvātmanvāsasambhava,
visno jisno hari kṛṣṇa vaikuntha purusottama,

55. Ibid, v.16

56. Mbh. 12/339

57. Read, Mbh. 5/49/20
'eṣa nārāyaṇah kṛṣṇah phālgunaśca narah smṛtah',

58. Mbh. 14/149/, 1-2

50. It is found tn the Mbh 12/340, v (103)
Haṁsa kurma Matsya, Barāhā, Narasimha, Vāmana
Parasurāma, Dāsarathi Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Kalki

60. Read, Bh.P. 1/3/28
ete cāṁsakalāḥ puṁsah kṛṣṇastu bhagavāna svayam,
indrāri vyākulaṁ lokam mrdayanti yuge yuge,

61. Bh. Gītā, 10/21

62. Ibid, 18/66
63. Read, Mbh. 12/46/12
yasminvisvani bhutani tisthanti ca visanti ca.
gunabhutani bhutesa sutre maniganana iva,
yasminnitye tate tantau drdhe sragiva tisthanti.
cf. also Bh. Gitā, 7/7

64. Mbh. 12/47/59
65. Ibid., V. 61
66. Read, Mbh. 12/328/33
'tvam caiyaham ca kaunteya naranarayanaau smrtau,
bharavataranartham hi pravistau manusim tanum'

67. Read, Bh. Gitā, 7/19
bahunam janmanamante jnahnavanман prapaalyate,
vasudevah sarvamiti sa mahatma suviralabhah.

68. Vidyabhushana, A.C., BSUD, pp. 344-383
(as it is already quoted in the DDGD by Goswami,
N.N.D., Guwahati-8, 1983, p. 91)

69. Goswami, U.K. (ed.) S’S. of Sukakavi, Muktapura,
Sattra, Loch, Kamarpūpa, 1963, p. 27

70. Bhandarkar, R.G., VSMRS, Vol. IV, BORI, Poona,
1982, pp. 54-55

71. Bh.P. 1/14

72. Cf. The Nārāyaṇiya sec. of the Ś.P. and Viśvopā-
khyāna, sec. of the Bhis.P., of the Mbh.

74. Mahanta, B.C., APMS, Jorhat-1, 1987, p. 58

75. Ibid.


77. RV, 10/81/5,6

78. Bh.P. 10/14/14


80. Mbh. (Ād. P) 218-12

81. Read, Pād.T. 1.1.88

'srutimūlam idam tantram pramāṇam kalpasūtravat'

82. Dasgupta, S.N., AHIP, (vol.III),MLBD, 1975, p.17


85. Ahi.S. 2/3-5

86. Read, Ahi. S. 8/34

'sṛṇu nārāda tattvena ya ādāra udrīyate
yenedam dhriyate visvam tantunā maṃayo yathā.

87. Read. Ahi. S. 2/56

'ajaḍam svātma sambodhi nityam sarvāvagahanam,
jñānam nāma guṇam prāhūḥ prathāman guṇa cintakāh.

88. jñāna, sakti, aisvarya, bala, vírya and tejas

89. Ahi. S. 2/28
90. Ahir. S. 21/44, 45


92. Read, Mbh. 12/335/19

93. Schrader 'Introduction to the Panca-rātra and Ahirbudhnyā Samhitā, p. 25


95. Read, Bh p. 4; 24/34-36


97. Ahir. S., 14/14

98. This book is published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

100. Read, Ahl. S. 11/64
sudarśanāḥbhayo yo asau saṃkalpo vaisnavah paraḥ,
sa svayam bibhide tena pañcaḥ pañcavaktragah.


102. Sarmah, T.N., AASB, Æuniāṭi sattra, 1975, p.1

103. Read, Sankara Carita-2883 by Rāmacarana
suniyoka dvijottama labhi bhāratata janma
bhakati karilā pañcarāti
nāi nāī tāka sari jānive niścaya kari,
devato adhika sito āti.

104. KG (Oreṣa-Varnana), Pada. 2174

105. Read (Vis. P. 1/2/62
srstiṣṭhitiantakaranād brahmāviṣṇusivātmikām,
sa saṃjñāṇ yāti bhagavāneka eva janārdanah.

106. Ibid. 1/16/1

107. Ibid. 1/1/35

108. Ibid. 2/15/35

109. Ibid. 1/9/43

111. Vis. P. 3/1/46
112. Ibid. 3/3/27
113. Ibid. 11/54
114. KP 83/90 (as quoted in the MGK by Kakati, B.K., PBA, Assam, 1989, p.70)
115. KP, 25/26
116. Kakati, B.K., MGK, PBA, Assam, 1989, p.66
   (This above-mentioned manifestations of Viṣṇu mentioned in the body of writings have been found in the KP as (a) 81/75, (b) 82/50, (c) 82/65, (d) 82/74 and (e) 83/90
118. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., B.V.B., Bombay, 1979, p.53
119. Ibid.
120. Indian Antiquity: Vol. XXXV, p. 223 (as quoted in the AHIP (Vol.III) by Dasgupta S.N., MLBD, 1975, p. 66)
122. Ibid, p. 69
124. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVB, Bombay, 1979, p.54
126. Ibid, p.81
126. (a) Ibid, pp.98-99
128. Sarmah, C.D., CSIP, p. 349
129. Bhandarkar, R.G., VSMRS, BORI, Poona, 1982, p. 77
130. Ibid, p. 80
131. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R. BVB, Bombay, 1979, p. 37
132. Prasthānatrayī are - Vedānta Sūtra or Brahma Sūtra Upaniṣada and Gītā.
134. Ibid, pp. 91, 92, 93
135. Ibid.
137. Ibid.
139. Ibid, p. 85
140. Sarmah, B.N.K., MTHOW, BBU, 1961, p. 96
142. Ranade, R.D., PGML, Bombay, 1961, p. 16
143. Rukmani, T.S., ACSBP, CSSO, Vārānasi-1, 1970, p. 244
Also, see, the book, VSMRS by Bhandarkar, p. 126
144. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVB, Bombay, 1979, p. 60
145. Ranade, R.D., PGML, Bombay, 1961, p. 32
146. Jñānesvarī, XIV, 383-88 (as mentioned in the Bh.R. by Majumdar, A.K., BVB, Bombay, 1979, p. 60)
147. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVB, Bombay, 1979, p. 60
149. Ranade, R.D., PGML, Bombay, 1961, p. 16
151. Ranade, R.D., PGML, Bombay, 1961, p. 208
152. Ibid., p. 213
153. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVB, Bombay, 1979, pp. 63-64
154. Ibid, p. 65
160. Sarmah, T.N., AASB, Āuniāti Sattra, 1975, p. 9
161(a) Bhandarkar, R.G., VSMRS, BORI, Poona, 1982, p. 104
162. "Vaiṣṇava janato tene kahiye ye pīḍa- parāyi jānere paraṇukhe upakāra kare toye mana abhimāna na āne re.
  sakala loka mām sahane bandhe nindā na kare keni re.
vaca kācha mana niścala rākhe dhana dhana jananī
tenī re.
sama drṣṭi ne ṭṛṇā tyāgi parastrasī je ne māt re,
  etc."
163. The 2nd October is observed in every year as Gāndhi Jayantī, as it was the birthday of Mahātmā Gāndhi who is called, "Father of Nation", i.e., 'Jātirpitā'.


165. Ibid.

166. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVR, Bombay, 1979, p. 69

167. Ibid.

168. Međta was a small principality in Rājputanā (as mentioned in the Bh.R. by Majumdar, A.K. BVB, Bombay, 1979, p.72)


170. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVB, Bombay, 1979, p. 70


172. Ibid, pp. 144-45

173. Sen, T.S. Vaiśṇava-Sāhitya (Bengali) Calcutta-9, p.(-)

174. Basu, S.F., CV, B.L. Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta-6, p.3

175 Alman, A.A., Padaksep, p.37

176. Basu, S.P., CV, B.L. Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta-6, p.18
177. *śuna rajakini rāmī,*
   O'duti, carāṇa, śītalā jānīā
   śaraṇa laīlu āmi
   rajakinīrūpa kīṣorī svarūpa
   kāma garīha nāhi tāya,
   rajakini prema nīkāṣita hema
   Baḍu candīdāsa gāya.

(as quoted in the CV, by S.P. Basu, p. 18, 19)

178. Ibid, p. 20

179. Ibid., p.17

180. Majumdar, A.K., Bh.R., BVB, Bombay, 1979, p. 45

181. Ibid.

182. Goswami, U.N. VBASK, p. 88

183. Bhandarkar, R.G., VSMRS (Vol.IV), BQRI, Poona, 1982, p. 120

184. Ibid, p. 119


186. Ibid

187. Read, Bh.P. 3/29/13

śālokya sārṣṭī śāmīpya sārūpyaikatvamupundyate
dīyamānām, na grhnanti vinā mat sevanam janāṁ.
188. Rukmani, T.S., ACSBP, CSSO, Varanasi-1, 1970, p.20

189. 'Om' is the union of three particular letters, viz., a, u and m.

The letter 'a' indicates Brahmā (the creator of this whole universe); and 'u' indicates Visnu (the protector of this universe) and the rest is 'm', it indicates Maheśvara (the destroyer of this universe).

190. Read, K.P. 60/41

'anyatra viralā devī kāmarūpe gṛhe gṛhe'.


192. Gait, Sir Edward, H.A., Ch.IV, p. 59


194. Kakati, B.K., MGK, (quoted in the preface) PBA, Assam, 1989

196. 'yathā Durgā tathā viṣṇuryathā viṣṇustathā śivaḥ,
etatrayanāmekaṁ eva na prthibhāvayet sudhi. (It 
has been taken from the book - 'Asamat Saktipūjā' ,
by Bhattacaryya, D.N., Guwahati, 1977, p. 47) 

(as already mentioned in the SCAI, by Kumar Pus-
pendra, B.P.H., Vārānasi, 1974, p.1 


199. Kakati, B.K., MGK, PBA, 1989, p.38 

200. madyam māṃsam tathā matsyaṃ mudrāmaithuna mevaca,
makāra pañcakam kṛtvā punarjanama na vidyate,
(It has been taken from DDG by SDS ed. Goswami,
N.N.D., Guwahati-8, p. 4) 

201. Kumar Puspendra, SCAI, BPH, Vārānasi, 1974, p. 165 

202. PTT, p. 1041 

203. Ibid, p. 1343 

204. Kumar Puspendra, SCAI, BPH, Vārānasi, 1974, pp.166-67 

205. KP, 83/39 

206. Kakati, B.K., MGK, PBA, Assam, 1989, p.61 

207. Ibid, p.62 

208. YT 1//11/67 

(As mentioned in the MGK, by Kakati, B.K., PBA,Assam, 
209. Ibid.

210. KP, 81/82; (as quoted in the MGK; by Kakati, B.K., PBA, Assam, 1989, p. 11)

211. Read, H.C. (7th Ucchvāsa, p. 63)

('ayamasya ca saśāvādārābhyaḥ sāmkalpaḥ stheyaṁ sthāṇu-padāravinda dvandātra-te nāhamanyām namaskuryām iti'.

212. As quoted in the SSSD by Neog, M, C.P. Tihu, 1987, p.11


214(a) Neog M.(ed), P.A, LBS, Guwahati, 1969, p. ('29) and

(b) Kakati, B.K., MGK, PBA, Assam, 1989, p.11


217. Sarmah, S.N., NVMSIA, 1966, p. 4

218. Non-vegetable food.

219. Sarmah, S.N., NVMSIA, 1966, p. 3, 4

220. Ibid.

221. Read, Kāmākhyā-Tantra

Jñānam yatra samābhāti as guruh Śiva eva hi,
aṅgaṁm varjayitvā śaraṇam jñānīnaṁ vṛajet
Madhulubho yathā bhrṅgam puṣpātm puṣpāntaram vṛajet
jñānulubhastathā śiśyō gurugurvāntaram vṛajet,
(it has been taken from 'Asama Gaurava', APP, Guwahati).

223. Acarya Sastri M.R., AVDRR, VP, Guwahati-1, 1991, p. 4


(Acarya Sastri M.R. has referred to, about the Visnu Pujā, mentioned in the Haṭhāyurveda (a work on elephant-lore) written by Pālakāpya. But, respected Acarya has not mentioned any evidence like sloka etc. regarding the worship of Visnu in his work AVDRR. Therefore, we could not represent such evidence, which can bear the testimony of Visnu -Pujā of G' Then period)


226. 'svasti śri paramadaivata paramabhāgavata mahārājādhirājaśvamedhayājina' (nām), (as mentioned in the AVDRR - by Acaryya Sastri, M.R. VP, Guwahati-1, 1991, p.3)

227. Ibid

228. Ibid, p.9
229. Ibid.

230. Caṇḍalāpi yamāśādyā patim Viśnumivaparam
lakṣmīḥ pāṇīghśitā śādhvi jātā nirākula ā
(as quoted in the AvDRR) by Acaryya Sastri, M.R.,
p.9

231. 'tasyāmadītyāmiva cakrapānirnārāyaṇamānusatām
prapadya,
tenaiva nāmā kalijān niḥantum doṣān prājāyā iva
parthipoabhut ā
(It has been taken from the foot note of book
AvDRR) by Acaryya, Sastri, M.R., p.9)

232. 'Krṣṇenaiva ca devakī bhagavatā dāityārīṇā śrīmatā'
(J.A.R.S. vol XII, No.1 and 2, pp. 16-32
(As quoted in the AVDRR, p.9)m. The abbreviative
word AVDRR is used in detail, more than once, now
hereafter it will be used as AVDRR)

233. Ibid, p.10

234. Read, KS, p. 60

gopijanānanditā mānasasya dvēṣyeva vāksāhparihṛtya
visnoh,
niḥsēsarāmājanadēhasamsthānādāya saurāryaṁ
ihājagāma ā
(as quoted in the AVDRR, p.10)

235. See, KS, p. 98

puruṣottamaḥpāpyajanārādanah' (quoted in the AvDRR)
p.10).
236. Land, free of rent given to a Brähmana for religious purpose.

237. Bhattacāryya, P.N., KS, p. 112

238. KS, p. 171

(Quoted in the AVDRR)

239. See, KS, p. 106

'Yo bālyataḥ prabhṛti mādhavapāda paḍmapūjā
capancaśacanaṃ suciṛam caśāra.'

(as quoted in the AVDRR, p.11)

240. Chaudhury, P. C., H C PATC, Department of H. and A.S. 1966, Guwahati, p. 412

241. Read, Smṛtiratnākara:

'trikālodbhavapāpānaṃ smaranād yasya nodayaḥ
namastasmai jagadhātre namo hariharātmane.

242. nūtnāmbhodharaśītabhānu rucirāṃ barhendu khandot-
jjvalam;
bhāsvatkaustubhakālakūtalalitāṃ Śrī vatsabhasmā

kitam.
rājadindrāgrśendravāhanagatam padmānvikālingitam,
yattamādhavaśankaratmakamidam deham subhāyāstuvah. Mākha pradīp

(The two above mentioned verses are quoted in the AVDRR p.11).
243. namo gaṇapataye x he xditisūtanivaham
  vāsudevanīsanām sannatanāmahimata
  tuhinagirisūtanityādi.
  (as mentioned in the AVDRR, p. 11)

244. Choudhury, P. C. HCPATC. The Govt. of Assam of the
  Deptt. of H. and AS, Guwahati-1, 1966, p 413

245. "bhagavato nārāyaṇasya sañīl pratimābhaddayantam
  (bhaktanam)"
  (As quoted in the AVDRR, p. 12)

246. Lekharu U.C.(ed), KGC, Dutta Baruah & Co., 1987,
  p. 34

247. As quoted in the AVDRR, p. 12

248. KP. 81/75
  82/50, 65, 74
  83/90

249. praṇāmya paramātmānamālokya granthasāṃhatim,
  varṣaprādipah kriyate bhatta śrī śrīdharena vai.
  (as quoted in the AVDRR, p. 22)

250. Ibid, pp. 22-23

251. Laksmi karāvjasamrāṣṭa divyāpādāya jignave,
  samsārārṇavaduspāsētave viṣṇave namah
  (as mentioned in the AVDRR), p. 24

252. śaka pañca pañca tricandrake (1355 Śaka).
252. (a) Ṛtvuṇāna trayodāse ) (1356 saka)
(b) Trayodaśaśte śāke pañcasaptatikādhike (1375 saka)
(as quoted in the AVDRR, p. 24)

253. Read, 'Smṛtinivandha' (the Mangalacaraṇa)
pranamya paramātmānamamunaṁca paramesvarīm, 
dāmodara mahāmiśrah kurute sārasamgraham, 
pranamya paramātmānam prasādyā paramesvarīm, 
prasyascittamaham vākṣye samksipyā granthavistaram.
(It has been taken from the AVDRR, p. 24)

254. Sarmah, S.N. "Haridevi vaisnava sampradāya" an article 
from the Souvenir named "Sri Sri Harideva Jyoti" ed. 
by Goswami, S.N., Rehabari, Guwahati, p. 1. 1988

255. Goswami, N.N.D., SSHDPP (quoted in the preface) 
Rehabari, Guwahati 8, 1995, p. 0.10

256. Read, MPSSHD of Banganyāgiri (Bahari - Barpeta,1976, 
pp. 6-7).

'mota hante tumi bayase adhika jñānato adhika tumi, 
vidyāyī adhika varṇasreṣṭha dvija trivarnara guru tumī.'

257. Read, Harideva Carita - Dvija Dhanaśvara and Vāneśvara, 
p. 37
Śrī śrī Śankara nāme āsi avatāra haiva, 
jñāna bhakti upadeśe loka mātrāvīra, 
loka tārivāka hetu prthivika āsi
Harideva brāhmaṇaka kahiva prakāsi.
(as quoted in the article "Haridevi Vaisnava Sampradaya", included the souvenir Sri Sri "Haridevajyoti" ed. by - Goswami, S.N., Rehabari, Guwahati, 1988, p.2).

258. Harideva was persecuted by the Āhom king Cucenphā in 1364 Śaka or 1442 A.D. During his reign a good number of his subject were attracted by the tenet of Harideva. They left 'topoliābhātā', i.e. boiled rice in a bundle, and timely came to Harideva, to listen the teachings of Śāstras from him. Once, an war occurred between Cucenphā and Tungeu Nagā at Saumāra. Most of the soldiers of Cucenphā were died in this war. The king wanted to know the reason of their defeat, from his minister. The minister expressed, that, due to the lack of topoliābhātā, their soldiers became weak and as a result they could not win the war. The minister also added that, this topoliābhātā was prohibited to take, by a Brāhmaṇa named Harideva. So, Harideva was persecuted by the king.

259. (as quoted in the article "Śri Śri Hariśaragam" (by Sarmah Kalinath) included the souvenir 'Śri Śri Harideva Jyoti' Rehabari, Guwahati, 8, 1988, p. 15.)
260. Read, **MPSSHD** by Banganyāgiri, p. 216
ākāśāra hante yata jala pare samudre kare gamana;
anyānya deva kā seva kariteo keśave kare gamana.

261. See, **Bh.P. 7/5/23**

262. Read - **MPSSHD** by Banganyāgiri, p. 172
kalita saundika madhye jātibheda eri,
ekelage calibāhā moru ajnā pāli.
bivāhādi nijaniha jātita calibā.

263. See **Bh.P. 11.27.7**

264. Read - **RV. 10/90/1**
'O sahasrasārśaḥ puruṣaḥ sahasrāksaḥ sahasrapāt
sabhūmiḥ sarvataḥ sprītvātyatiṣṭhaddaśāngulam'.

265. Goswami ,N.N.D. **SSHDPP**; Rehābari , Guwahati-8,
1995, pp. 46-47

266. Read. **Ś.Si (4th stavaka)**
dīksāhīna jane kriyā karaya yatamāna;
saveo asāra hove jānā sarvakṣaṇa.
adīkṣitu deha hante pasu janma hove;
Ajanābha sūta ehi bhaṇe śrīHarideve.

267. Read - **Sattvata-tantra**
sarvamūlaṁ jyṛṣa-pāda śaraṇam parikūrtitam ;
yat vinā śravate bhaktirāmabhāṅgāt payoyathā,
(as quoted in the **SSHDPP** by Goswami, NND, Rehābari,
Gueahati-8, 1995, p.76).
268. Read - ś.Śi (3rd stavaka)
sarva bhakti kṛṣṇapada sāraṇa jāniva,
yata sādhu nara matre ihāka kahivā;
śaraṇa bihane jānā bhakti najanmaya,
anāpakva bhānde yathā jala nāhi raya.

269. See, RV., 2/33/8; 2/35/11; 9/96/16, 8/11/5.

270. In Buddhism, the tri-sāraṇa means - Buddham sāraṇam
gacchāmi, sangham sāraṇam gacchāmi, and Dharmam
sāraṇam gacchāmi.

271. See, Bh. Gītā, 18/66

272. See Bh.P., 1/14/41; 1/3/9; 7/11/6; 9/24/61

273. Banganyāṅgiri - MPSSHD, Bahari-sattra, Barpeta, 1986,
p. 217

274. See, Śrīgurucharita (Pada nos. 859, 860, 862, 863, 864)
(As mentioned in the - APMS, by Mahanta B.C. Jorhat 1,
1987, p. 124)

275. Read - MPSSHD, by Banganyāṅgiri, p. 74
mandirata yito āche sannyāsī ratana
sannyāsī kahanta mota śunā dvija sūta,
dikṣā vinā tīrtha phala nahe kadācita
etekate dikṣā tumī kario grahanā,
sannyāsīra vākye dikṣā karilu grahanā
śūna guruputra sannyāsīra kīvā nāma
yādi jānā thāke kahiyoka guṇadhāma
śuni Harideve kahe janaṁdana nāma.

276. A large and deep body of still water.

277. ‘mohara duhitā bhūvana īśvari mālāka dilo śirata
suddha satya dharma mora bhaktī diā thailo jānā
manērita’.

(as quoted in the - 'Harideva Jyoti' a souvenir,
ed. by Goswami, S.N., Rehabari, Guwahati-8, 1988,
p. 53)

278. Read, MPSSHD - by Bangayangiri, pp. 214-215
śunioka pītādeva, tomāra āśrama pāli thākibuhu
mai āśramata;
sehise kārane mai, svāmī grahaṇa nakarilo
āśramata thākāra kārane.

279. Read, MPSSHD by Bangayangiri, p. 215
śuna Bhūvaneśvari āi, Upadeśa dilu mai paśyaputra
karibā pālana.

280. S.D.S., D D G , ed. by Goswami, N.N.D.,
Guwahati-8, pp. 7-8.