CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION -- SCOPE OF COMPARISON BETWEEN SURDAS AND MADHABDEV -- NATURE OF COMPARISON -- TECHNIQUE OF THE THESIS AND CONNECTING MATTERS
I. INTRODUCTION:

Since the beginning of the thirteenth century of the Christian era, there had been a gradual growth and development of almost all the regional languages in India as a result of the Vaishnabite Bhakti Movement. Several saintly writers began to translate the Ramayana and the Puranas, particularly the Shrimadbhagawata into regional languages during this period. Shri Shunkardova and his great disciple Shri Madhavdeva in Assam (the then Kangra) during the fifteenth century, and Shri Chaitanyakadeva in Bengal during the sixteenth century translated the Shrimadbhagawata into Assamese and Bengali respectively; while the Vaishnabite poet Balaram Das in Orissa translated the Ramayana into Oriya. In the same manner Sarala Das translated the Ramayana and Jagannath Das translated the Shrimadbhagawata into their own languages. Such a translation not only infused the spirit of religion but added a great dimension to the regional languages. Now on one hand the people understood the religious scriptures move since they were written in a language known to them and on the other hand it enriched the treasure of the regional languages. In the mean time the Vaishnava sect was sub-sects namely — the Ram Bhakti and the Krishna Bhakti cults. These Vaishnava poets not only translated the Puranas and other holy books but composed
several poems whereby they enriched their own languages and literatures.

In the case of Hindi literature of the ancient period, the names of the 'Nirgun Panthi' Kabir Das and the 'risuna Bhakta' Surdas are worthmentioning here. In Assam Shri Shankardev, the great saint and social reformer and his worthy disciple Shri Madhabdeva, enriched Assamese literature and gave a new life to Assamese culture.

Sant Surdas, saint and literateur was born in a village Sitahi in the year 1535. But there is a difference of opinion regarding his date and place of birth. Scholars have taken the help of internal as well as external evidences to ascertain the date of birth of Sant Surdas. As an internal evidence (antah sakshya) the following 'Padas' are usually cited:

(a) 
Muni Muni Rasan Ke Ras Lekh;
Dasan Gauri Nand Kav likhi Juwal Sanbat Dekh;
Nand Nandan Mas Chai Te Hin Tritiya Dar;
Nand Nandan Janam Te Hai, Ban Sukh Ayar."

(b) 
Tritiya Ricch Sukam Yog
Bichari Sur Navin,
Nand Nandan Das Hit,
Jahitya Lahari Kin."

Under such circumstances, Acharyya Ram Chandra Shukla came to the conclusion that Surdas was 67 when he wrote
the Sur-Sarawali. The terms "Muni Muni Rasan Ke Ras Lekh" have been interpreted as the year 1607. From this he wanted to establish that Surdas was born in 1540 —

"Yah to Manna Hi Parega Ki Sahitya Krida Ke Woh Granth (Sahitya Lahari) Sur Sagar Se Chutti Pakar Hi Sankalit Kiya Goya Hoga. Eske Do Varsh Pahle Yadi Sur Sarawali Ki Rachne Huwi to Kah Sakte Hai Ki Sanvat 16 '5 Surdas jee 67 Varsh Ke the. Ab Yadi Unki Ayu 67 Varsh Ki mane to unka Janm Kal Sanvat 1540 Ke Lag bhaat Tatha Dehavasan Sanbat 1620 Ke As Pas Hi Anumit noting Hai."¹

Dr. Ram Kumar Verma is also of the same opinion with Acharyya Shukla. He took up the internal evidence from the Sur-Sarawali and Sahitya Lahari when he wrote:

"Yadi Ham Sur-Sarawali Aur Sahitya Lahari Ke Rachne Kal Ek hi mane To Sanvat 1607 mein Surdas jee Ki Ayu 67 Varsh Ki Rohi Hogi, Arti ke Jiski Sanvat 1540 mein Hua Hoga."²

Dr. Mansi Ram Sarma interprets the 'Padd' of the Sur-Sarawali in a different way and from the terms "Muni Muni Rasan Ke Ras Lekh" he concluded that the time of the composition of Sahitya Lahari was Sanvat 1627. It was because Vallabhbacharya met Surdas in 1461, then Surdas was 67. Calculating from this he ascertained the birth date at 1515.

¹. Deshraj Bhatti, Sur Aur Unka Sahitya, p. 11
². ibid.
On the other hand, Dr. Dindayal Gupta ascertained the birth date of Surdas from the traditional stories of the 'Pustis'. It is, according to him, the year 1535. According to the tradition of the Pusti community, Surdas was younger to Ballabhacharya by ten days. Since the Acharyya was born on the eleventh day of the 'Krishna Baisakhi', 1535, Surdas was born on the fifth day of the 'Shukla Baisakhi', 1535. So, this day has been regarded as the birth date of Surdas in Shrinath Dwar:

"Shrinath Dwar mein Surdasjee Ka Janmotsav Shri Ballabhacharyyajee Ke Janm Din Baisakh Badi ilke Bad Baisakhi Sudi 5 Ko Manaya Jata Hai. Surke Es Jan Divas Ko Manane Ka Utsav Sampraday mein Naya Nahin hai. Yeh Parampara Bahut Prachin Hai."

In the same manner there are also different opinions about the span of his life. Some scholars like Abul Fazl believes that Surdas lived for one hundred and two years while for Acharyya Ram Chandra Shukla,
lived only for sixty-seven years. We do not want to go to the controversies about the span of life as well as about the date of birth here on two grounds. First, we are concerned only with his works and, second, these need considerable research and they can be the subject matter of another research paper. Besides, it is meet and proper to measure the life of such scholars with the deeds they performed and not with the years they lived.

Surdas was born to a Sarswat Brahmin family in the dynasty of Chandbar Dayee, the first Hindi poet. In the words of Shri Hital:


Munshiram made the following observations:

"Sur Brahman the Aur Mahakavi Chandbar Dayee Ke Bansh Mein Utpann Huwe the. Ye Na Parthaz Gotra Ke the Aur Na Jagat Bansh Ke."

All these controversies arise only because there were no authentic biographer of Sant Surdasjee and as such we have to depend upon the traditional stories only.
While describing the childhood of Surdas, Dr. Bhatti said that the family to which he was born was extremely poor. Unfortunately Surdas blind since his birth for which his father was very sad and had little affection for him. A story goes that a very interesting and strange thing happened when Surdas was quite young. Father of Surdas received two gold coins from his 'Yajmanas' which were subsequently lost and nobody could find them. But the blind Surdas was able to foretell the exact place where the lost coins were kept hidden by the mouse. In the meantime Surdas left his father's house and began to live at the end of the village. Fortunately, when the Zaminder of the village lost his six cows, Surdas gave correct informations. Being pleased the Zaminder constructed a hut for Surdas where he began to live now. Through his knowledge of the 'Sakuni Vidya', Surdas became popular among the people and most of them became his followers. He spent about eighteen years in the village and then accepted 'Vairagya' — a life of celebacy and abandonment of the world. He then left for Mathura and began to live at Gaughat near Mathura.

There is another controversy about the blindness of Surdas. Although he has been described by some as since his birth yet some other scholars are of opinion

3. Dr. Deshraj Bhatti, Surdas Aur Unke Sahitya, p. 14
that he was not blind at the time of his birth but lost his eye sight afterwards. According to Mishra Vändhu:


According to Shyam Sundar Das:

"Sur Vastav Mein Janmandh Nahin. The Kyonki Shringaar tatha Rang Rup Adika Jo Varnan Unhone Kiya Hai Waisa Koi Janmandh Nahin Kar Sakta." 5

The description of some beautiful things became so lively in the writings of Surdas which can never be illustrated by a person who never experiences the sight of these things only by hearing about their beauty. Under such circumstances it is well-believed that at some time at least Surdas had his eye sight. We donot like to go this controversy also since our subject matter of the thesis is a different one which has no connection with this point.

Surdas authorised several books. There is a controversy about the number of his books also. Scholars like

4. ibid, p. 20
5. ibid, p. 21
R.R. Pandey believed that he authored twenty-five books.

They are:

I) The Sur-Sagar
II) Sur-Sarawali
III) Sahitya-Lahari
IV) Bhagwat Bhasa
V) Sur-Ramayana
VI) Dasm-Skandh Bhasa
VII) Sur-Sagar-Sar
VIII) Maan-Lila
IX) Radha Ras Keli Kautuhol
X) Gobardhan Lila
XI) Daan-Lila
XII) Bhanwar Geet
XIII) Nag Lila
XIV) Byahalo
XV) Pran-pyari
XVI) Dristi Kud Ke Pad
XVII) Sur-Satak
XVIII) Sur-Sathi
XIX) Sur Pachchisi
XX) Sewa-Phal
XXI) Surdas Ke Vinay Adile Sfut Pad
XXII) Ekadasi Mahatma
XXIII) Hari Das Vans Tika (Sanskrit)
XXIV) Nal Damayanti and
XXV) Ram-Janma
But some other scholars like S.S. Mishra and others believed that Surdas has written only seven books of which some are published and others are not.\(^7\) There is another third opinion. It is according to B. Verma who said that the books which are ascribed to Surdas are not all written by him. Only the Sur-Sagar, the Sur-Sarawali and the Sahitya Lahari are his creation, while others excepting these three are ascribed to him by later writers.\(^6\) According to these views there is yet another view about this point. Some scholars like M. Gautom believed that some books like the Hari Vans Tika, the Ram Janm, the Ekadashi Mahatma, the Nal Damayanti etc. were written by some other Surdas and not by the Sant.\(^9\) Of these books no scholar points a finger of doubt to the authorship of three books the Sur-Sagar, the Sur-Sarawali and the Sahitya Lahari, and therefore they are definitely composed by Surdas.

The Sur-Sagar is the masterpiece of Surdas, while the other two — the Sur-Sarawali and the Sahitya Lahari are his important creations. The Sur-Sagar has been divided into twelve cantos following the tradition of Shrimad Bhagawat. B. Mishra described the Sur-Sagar as the ocean of child-psychology.\(^10\) The Sur-Sarawali is his second work. It is composed in the 'Doha' metre.

\(^7\) S.S. Mishra, Sur Ka Sahitya Chatna, p. 35  
\(^8\) B. Verma, Surdas, p. 99  
\(^9\) M. Gautom, Surki Kavya Kala, p. 17  
\(^10\) B. Mishra, Surka Sahitya Sachana, p. 52
Here there are about eleven hundred and seven 'Dohas'. The Sahitya Lahari is his third work. It is also an illustration of the 'Krishna-Lila' like that in the Sur-Sagar. He used the 'Kavya-Shastriya' method here in the Sur-Sarawali and through it he expressed his emotion of Bhakti. We shall discuss about the subjectmatter of these books in appropriate places.

During the mediaval ages, Surdas is the greatest expounder of the Vatsalya Rasa in Hindi literature. All his writings are dominated by the 'Omnipresent Lord Krishna'. This Bal Krishna made almost all the poems of Surdas quite enjoyable and lively. In the Sur-Sagar his description of Bal Krishna excels all the description of other poets.

1.02 Shri Madhabdeva, a Saint literateur and the greatest disciple of Shri Shankardeva is known as a 'Mahapurusha' (an incarnation) and can be regarded as the greatest poet of the Vaishnavite period of Assamese literature. He was born in 1489 A.D. (Saka Era 1411) in the district of Lakshimpur in Upper Assam.

"Jeshtya Mah Ravibar Amabashya Tithi, Bhari Naksitra, 1411 Adin Jayete Lui Prar Nisha Chhadma Narceha Bekat Hoise Gurujan." 11

Parents of Madhabdeva were very poor and had to be supported by others.

-- "Gunanta Tiniyojan Pache Maha Dukh Mane,
    Khaiba Khutibak Ako Naye
    Esta Kutumbayo Nai Parthibo Goi Tar Thai."

They, therefore, had to spend few years in the house of one Hari Singa Bora and then of one Ghaer Majhi.

-- Abhibuli Mahamoti Borak Bulila Prati
    Kam Mor Nahi E Kavyyat,
    Tomar Prasad Sukhe Achilaho Kuto Din
    Abe Mol An Thanee Jao." 

-- "Majhiye bole Atia Aru Parar Griha Bole Najaba Tomare
    Shar Bari, Go, Moh, Das-Dasi Jakalo, Naye Das, Kuri
    Varsha Thaka Jok, Eko Chinta Nay."

Gobinda Giri his father then took young Madhabdeva to their ancient homeland Banduka, now in Bangladesh where he was admitted to the 'Tol' (educational institution) of one Rajendra Adhyapak. As soon as his education was finished he came back to Assam with his mother Manorama and his sister as in the meantime his father Gobinda Giri was dead. While they were returning his mother fell ill for which Madhabdeva decided to sacrifice one goat in the name of the goddess Durga for her cure. The charge of collecting

12. Daityari Thakur, Mahapurush Shri Shankardeva Aur
    Shri Madhabdeva Charita (ed. H.N. Lutta Baruah) p. 32
13. ibid, p. 31
14. Katha Guru Charit (op.cit.), p. 75
the goat was given to one Ramdas, brother-in-law of Vishnudeva. But in stead of buying a goat for sacrifice, Ramdas tried to convince Madhabdeva that sacrifice of animals is quite futile. Ultimately Ramdas led Madhabdeva to Shri Shankardeva. There was a 'debate royal' between the Shakta Madhabdeva and the Vaishnava Shri Shankardeva. Both of them were authorities in different Shastras. But Madhabdeva accepted his defeat and took shelter at the feet of the great Guru Shri Shankardeva:

--- "Sat Kathi Than Deva Shankarak Diya,
    Shankardevak Guru Madhabe Maniya.
    Krishnar Abhoy Pade Lailanta Sharan
    Ahimote Ekthan Bhaila Duyujan."15
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--- "Chota Ata Bole Age Ji Karilo Bar
    Bhuya Bishoy Mani, Atia Ji Kariche
    Abhoy Paad Pankajat Bikrai Jiwa
    Kari Guru Mani."16

Madhabdeva now devoted his whole attention for the service of his Guru and the Vaishnabite religion. Shri Shankardeva was fully satisfied with the knowledge of Shastras of his great disciple Madhabdeva.

Madhabdeva was a versatile genius and within a short time his good qualities began blooming. He wrote

a number of books, mostly rendered from the holy scriptures of the Hindus. He was at once a religious reformer, an authority in Sastras, a poet, a dramatist, a 'Shakta' and a true Vaishnavite of all his creations the "Naam Ghosa" is the masterpiece. Besides the Naam Ghosa the following are his creations:

I) The Rajsuya,
II) The Adi Kanda Ramayana,
III) The Janma Rahasya,
IV) The Bhakti Ratnawali,
V) The Jhumuras:
   a) Chor-chara,
   b) Pimpasa-Guchowa,
   c) Bhojan Vihar,
   d) Bhumi Letowa,
   e) Gobardhan Yatra,
   f) Nrisingha Yatra, and
   g) Ram Yatra.
VI) The Naam Malika, and
VII) The Bargeets (157 Bargeets).

Like in the case of the writings of our sages, there is a controversy about the number of books written by Shri Madhabdeva. Some scholars wanted to include three other 'Jhumuras' in the list. They are the 'Ragab Jhumura', the 'Bhushan Herowa' and the Kotorak Khela. But some
scholars like Dr. Maheswar Neog rejected this idea. According to Dr. Neog:

"Roas Jhumura, Bhushan Herowa Aru Kotora Khela naat Konor Note Madhabdevar Rachit Haleoo Sei Bishaye Sandeher Jathesta Sthal Ache. Ei Samaye Madhabdeva 'Gobardhan Yatra, Nrisingha Yatra Aru Ram Yatra name Bhawona Karaichil. Kintu Tar Naat Aji Pabalai Nai. ...

... ... Madhabdevar Bhanaita Yukta Dhyanbarnaranar tritiya Kirtan Ati Powa Goise. Tene Bhanaita Thaka 'Amulya Ratna', 'Gupta Moni', 'Adi Charit' Aru Alekh Deh Bichorar Geet Khatangoi Tewar Rachit Nahay."17

Certain books after Madhabdeva contained the 'Bhanita' (Epilogue added to poems or dramas at the end) of Madhabdeva, yet there is a doubt about the authorship since it becomes customary to use such 'Bhanitas' after Madhabdeva in their own writings of different writers.7

Following the way of his great preceptor, Madhabdeva composed a great number of 'Bargeets' — a kind of noble and devotional songs in praise of the Lord. These Bargeets give expression to the faithfulness and devotion of a 'Bhakta'.18

"Janilo Kewal Tumi Bhakatar Bashya,
Sakal Nigame Prabhu E Bar Rahasya.

17. Dr. Maheswar Neog, Sahityar Ruprekha, p. 121
18. Bargeet, ed. by H. N. Dutta Baruah (Geet No. 107), p. 128
These 'geets' have a very high literary value. At the same time there has been a very high and clear depiction of the 'Vatsalya Rasa' in them. According to Dr. B.K. Kakati the Vatsalya Rasa is the 'Summum bonum' of his (Madhabdeva's) religious life.19

In almost all his writings, particularly in the Bargeets and the 'Jhumuras' Madhabdeva depicted the 'yal Krishna' (Young Krishna) as the hero.20

— "Kanthe Keli Kadambaku na, Kahaya Madhaba Goti BAL GOPAL".

Although Madhabdeva was a bachelor throughout his life, yet he could analyse the psychology of a child very well. Therefore the psychology of the child is reflected very clearly in his writings, particularly through the picture of 'Bal Gopala'. Lord Krishna of Madhabdeva behaves with his mother Yasoda like a very common child. Sometimes He pretends sullenness —

— "Tuhu Yaba Mai Uchit Bujata Nahi
Kahabo Pita Keri Thai."21

and sometimes He told her (Yasoda) that He would go to 'Kansa' his dreaded enemy if certain demands of His are not fulfilled. Again He dances to please not only His

19. Dr. B.K. Kakati, Purani Assamiya Sahitya, p. 76
21. ibid, p. 90 (Geet No. 65)
parents but the 'Gopis' also

"Dekhata Re Gopini Mela,
Karata Chor Chaturi Rasa Khela.
Paramananda Lila Parakashi,
Bahu Rase Rangala Gokulabasi.
Sab Rasasagar Nandaku Lala,
Kahaya Madhaba Goti Mukuti Gopala."22

But Madhabdeva does not forget to ascribe 'omnipotence' and 'Godliness' in Lord Krishna:

"Kahaya Madhaba Kaee
Kino Tapassila,
Trijagata Pati Hari
Rakhowala Paila."23

Or

"Baikuntharapati Prabhu Bane Chare Dhenu,
Kahaya Madhaba Goti Kanu Pada Renu."24

In addition to these characteristics, the songs of Madhabdeva are quite devotional (Bhakti Rasamak) in their spirit:

"Ratana Jarita Moni Manjira Ranjita
Pada Pankaja Parakasha
Bhakata Parama Goti Bhave Majok Moti
Madhaba Ahu Abhilasha."25

Madhabdeva excels all the other 'Bhalta Kavis' in his expression of the Vatsalya Rasa and in the devotional

22. ibid, p. 179 (Geet No. 169)
23. ibid, p. 147 (Geet No. 130)
24. ibid, p. 150 (Geet No. 133)
25. ibid, p. 166 (Geet No. 152)
spirit which will be dealt with in appropriate places in the following chapters of the thesis.

1.03 Now it is evident therefore that there is a great scope of comparison between Sant Surdas and Shri Madhavdeva as regards to their writings and more specially as regards to their depiction of the Vatsalya Rasa. These two, on the first place, are great writers in their respective literatures — Hindi and Assamese. Secondly both of them belong to the same cult — the Krishna Bhakti Cult. Thirdly both of them can be regarded as the greatest writers in their respective literatures giving expression to the Vatsalya Rasa. In addition to these there are similarities between them in some other aspects of life.

In Hindi literature Sant Surdas, who is the greatest poet of the Krishna Bhakti Cult, occupies a unique place in giving expression to the Vatsalya Rasa. Although Sant Surdas was blind in the later period of life yet his description of the child and its psychological analysis is so vivid, natural and appealing that it touches the heart of every reader. In the same manner, the eternal form of the child Krishna (Bal Gopal) becomes so vivid and living in the writings of Shri Madhavdeva that no other writer could draw such a picture of Lord Krishna till now. In brief, the skill and maturity in depicting
the Vatsalya Rasa in Assamese literature by Shri Madhabdeva can only be compared to the expression of the same Rasa in Hindi by Sant Surdas.

In the same manner both these two writers are primarily writers of the Bhakti Cult. Under no circumstances they forget about their Lord Krishna as the 'Omnipotent' and the 'Omnipresent force'. Such ideas made the writings of both of them quite devotional:

--- "Prabhu Kou Lekhau Ek Sabhaye, Ati Gambhir Udar Udadhi Hari, Jan-Siromani Raye."²⁶
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--- "Rama Paramadhana Chintahu Manabhai, Tanu Chintamoni Biphalehi Jai."²⁷

As regards to most of their literary creations both Sant Surdas and Shri Madhabdeva took up Bal Krishna as the central figure of their books. Several activities of the young Lord are depicted in their writings.

Strangely enough, both these two saints were life-long bachelors, and as such they are not supposed to know anything about a family or marital life. But both of them are quite successful in depicting the 'Bal Lila' of the young Lord. In this connection Dr. Maheswar Neog remarked

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²⁶. Surdas, Jor-Jaagar (Pad No. 4)
²⁷. Madhabdeva, Bargeet.
that Madhabdeva wanted to show the path of Moksha through simple love of a child. Even after realising that Krishna is none but the Lord incarnate yet both the writers ascribe human characteristics on him. In case of Madhabdeva he becomes a common human child with its virtues and vices:

— "Bhumi Luti Kande Gopinath
Bhandati Maware,
Churi Kari Kshir Lawanu Khowe
Bhand Mijre." 29
++  ++  +++  +++

"Lawanu Bhunjia Nachhe Trijat Pati,
Kahaya Madhaba Hari Pada Renu Goti." 30
+++  +++  +++  +++

"Parabhate Shyam Kanu Dhenu Loiya Sange,
Banshira Nishwane Brindabane Chale Range,
Jagatare Guru Hari Kachi Gopa Kache,
Abhira Baleka Berhi Chale Aga Pache." 31

There are hundreds of such examples in the writings of Madhabdeva where Lord Krishna lived like a common child.

28. Dr. Neog, Sahityar Ruprekha, p. 121
30. ibid, p. 184
31. ibid, p. 149
Child psychology has been dealt with very successfully by both these saint writers. Bal Gopal acted so mysteriously that he attracted the attention of all the elders. But sometimes a child behaves in such a manner that elders donot find any logic behind it. Bal Gopal also did it. Such a picture of a child has very clearly been depicted by both these writers. Here it is evident that the 'Bhakta Kavi' forgets everything -- all about his 'Shakti Rasa' and takes refuge in the Vatsalya Rasa alone.

There are differences between these two saints as regards to their creations. Sant Surdas wrote only in poetry; but did not write in other forms of literature like plays like the 'Jhumuras' of Shri Madhabdeva. Shri Madhabdeva wrote a number of one-act plays known as the 'Jhumuras'. At the same time, Surdas didnot preach any religion like Madhabdeva. Shri Madhabdeva actively preaching the Vaishnabite religion; the 'Ek Sharan Scharwati Dharma' propounded by his Guru Shri Shankaradeva. Surdas was simply a devotee of Lord Krishna. But one thing is quite certain that both of them expressed their devoted 'Bhagawat Prem' in their poetry. Interestingly both of them were gifted with a sweet voice. Singing of the hymns in their melodious voice was another source of their attraction of the people.
In case of Shri Madhabdeva his was the 'Dasya Bhakti' expressing through 'Vandana' and 'Atmanivedana'.

— "Kahaya Madhaba Das Kathin Pamor, 
Tomhar Dasaro Das Bhailo Damodar."

While in case of Surdas it is 'Premlakshana and Rasti-margiya Bhakti'.

— "Prem-Bhakti Binu Mukti Na Hoy Nath, 
Kripa Kar Dejai Soye, 
Aur Sakal Ham Dekhyau Soye, 
Tumhari Kripa Hoye So Hoye."

Adding to these, Surdas had the knowledge of astrology (Jyotisha) and there are certain supernatural stories about him. But in case of Madhabdeva, there is no such knowledge of astrology; yet there are certain supernatural stories about him.

In depiction of the Vatsalya Rasa also, Surdas has given us a lot of such poems (Padas) where this Rasa has been intensively used. But in case of Madhabdeva his composition is more for Sanyog than for Biyog Vatsalya Rasa. He has given a very clear picture of Bal Gopala when he behaves as a child with his parents and other Gojis.

— E Nadi Yamuna Kule
Khelaye Kadamba Mule
Manmatha Moha Muraro,
Kahaya Madhaba Hari
Lila Naratenu Dhari
Bhakati Nidan Abataru Re."

32. Madhabdeva, Bargeet, Geet No. 106
33. Surdas, Sur-Sagar, Pad No. 4919
34. ibid,
Under such circumstances, there is enough scope for comparison between these two Saints particularly in the case of their expression of Vatsalya Rasa along with their primary Rasa i.e., the Bhakti Rasa. We therefore, make our every effort to institute of a comparison in the chapters to follow.

1.04 As regards the technique and method of the thesis, we can humbly mention that the comparative method has been followed here largely. Available datas on the both saints are placed side by side to show their similarities and dissimilarities if any.

1.05 Now under such circumstances, it can easily be concluded that there is enough scope for comparison between Sant Surdas and Shri Madhabdeva as regards to their writings, since both of them are:

a) great writers of two major regional languages of India which were mainly developed from the mother language Sanskrit, namely Hindi and Assamese respectively, in their formative periods;

b) writing on the same theme — the Krishna Bhakti theme, adopted from the Shrimadbhagawata;

c) known for their devotion to Lord Krishna;

d) giving exposition to the Vatsalya Rasa, which led them to the Bhakti Marga or which led them to the Bhakti Rasa;
e) Using the verse form in their writings largely:

f) remaining life-long bachelors in their personal life;

There are some differences between them. They are:

a) There is a difference in their attitude of Bhakti towards the Lord. It is a 'Leśya Bhakti' in case of Shri Madhabdeva while it is a 'Prem Bhakti' for Sant Surdas;

b) Sant Surdas did not preach any religion. But Madhabdeva was preaching the 'Ek Sarania Sanatana Dharma' propounded by Shri Shankardeva.

c) Surdas wrote only poems while Madhabdeva wrote not only poems but some one-act plays known as the 'Jhumuras'; and

d) Surdas had the knowledge of astrology while Madhabdeva had none of such extra knowledge excepting those of religious scriptures.

A humble attempt has been made to discuss all these similarities and dis-similarities in this thesis in due places, laying particular stress on the exposition of the 'Vatsalya Rasa' in the chapters to follow.