V. THE SAGUNITE EXPERIENCE: THE WAY

All men are in search of supreme joy but most of them are on the wrong track. In Saguna Bhakti there is no such deliberate cultivation of aversion towards the affirmative aspects of life that we find in the ascetic or the puritan. Bhakti is essentially the affirmation of joy not in the objects of the senses but in the Lord. The Lord of the Bhakta is not merely an impersonal Ananda in which all distinctions are dissolved. This Ananda of whom the Upanishads say that but for it the universe will cease to exist is personal. The personalization of this joy is not the subjective fancy of the devotee. The longing of the devotee has its warrant in the nature of things. This Joy which manifests itself in the plurality of individual agents and perceptors cannot be absolutely impersonal. It is not possible for an impersonal essence to give birth to the category of the personal. The Bhakta refuses to believe that the rich personal life of love with its devastating joys and sorrows is a hollow dream. There is a Supreme Person at the heart of the universe who responds to the soul's quest. This Person is the Lord of love and joy. It is the will of the Lord that brings the love-play of the soul and her longing for her Master into existence. In the Bhakta there is no conscious rejection of diversity in order to arrive at the underlying unity. That is the quest of the Vedantic Absolutist. Prahlad prays that he may come to have the same love for the Lord which ordinary mortals give to the passing goods of the unregenerate life.

1. वे लेख-प्राचर क साहबाज येदर अंबेडकर जी द्वारा 
(तथिकथा पृ. 7)
2. गौटम भिक्षु के अनुसार (God) cannot be called non-personal since persons are part of its manifestation.” Mrinalini Sarabhai: The English Mythos, p. 99
3. विष्णु पुराण I-20.19 (या जीवनसंसार विश्वासश्चापिल)
The Bhakta does not condemn the world as a cheat. He does not regard all joy as a pathway to evil. But he does not want that muddled joy which is found in the puddles of egoistic human experience. He will go to its source in the high mountains. This joy personalized is the Lord. When this Ananda goes, the mind becomes restless. It is this Ananda which calms the mind. The passions are still only when we attain the blessedness of this Ananda; mere moral effort cannot give complete victory over the forces of evil lodged in the mind.

Saguna Bhakti is from the human and a process of re-integration of personality round the supreme person. This Person is the motive and the resting-place of our knowing, willing and feeling. Saguna Bhakti is based on a deep insight into the psychology of human nature both in its unthinking somnolent adherence to the life of cravings and daydreams and its endeavour to attain to a transfiguration of receptive and reactive life. The nine names of Bhakti known traditionally as Navadhatu seek to organize our life round the Supreme Lord. These comprehend almost the entire range of mystic life and experience and may be regarded as the various grades or intensities of a single aspiration.

The restless mind of man is subdued to a single-eyed intensity of endeavour and conception and in transcending its own manifold nature transcends the contradictions and discords of ordinary human life. The one attitude that does not find favour with the Indian Devotee is one of fear or of recoil before His majesty. This is because the Divine is never regarded as absolutely incommensurable with the human.

1. The Navadhatu Bhakti is regarded as an instrument for the full fruition of Bhagavata. They are, expanded variously. The Bhagavata (7.5.23), the Adhyatmika-Niyana (Avamya Kanda, 9.1-27), and Rathacarika-Niyana (P. 64) have their own versions.
It is the Semitic mind that seeks to approach the Divine through a lingering recollection of its own weakness, impotence and the dread aspect of the Lord of thunders and lightning who is very jealous of his powers and can brook no challenge to his majesty. There are passages in Sagunite literature where the devotee approaches the Lord with the long narrative of his misdeeds on his lips, but he does not do so out of fear of a wrathful master. The misdeeds are recounted to help the soul shed its egoism. The Supreme Light disinfects the soul and renders it pure. On the other hand when we make a virtue of remorse we only strengthen our egoism. For then we come to believe that with the expression of remorse our part is done and that we need not make any serious effort to modify the quality of our consciousness.

In Saguna Bhakti there is a clear recognition of the value of the means that lead to the supreme end. It is enough that we should conceive the goal in clear terms and grasp intellectually the nature of the Divine. We cannot wish the finitude of the mind away nor are passions amenable to the fancies and desires of the ego. Theology, ceremonialism and symbolism are relevant as long as we choose to stay in the mundanities. These are not the fabrications of a greedy sacerdot class out to cheat the people and keep its grip on their souls. It is not possible for the soul in its worldly estate to comprehend the Divine for "we behold only what we are."

1. विषयांशः ४२, ९२, ९३, ९४, ९५, ११७, ११८, १२५,
   चरणांशः ८ प्रथ (४२, ९६ तर १०३)

2. चरित्रः (उमेश्वर ८, ६३०, ६६६, ७४); एवं हरिकुमार, पृ. १२०, १७२, २६०
   द्रष्टव्यां (चित्रकृती तथा चित्रकृती), पृ. १३६, १७०, २६५, २०१
   देवधर्म तथा साहित्य (२०६४, २०६५, २०६६, २०६७) पृ. ६४० (१३४२)
Saguna Bhakti, by its faith in an elaborate ritual dogma and ceremonial seeks to wean the soul away from its lower involvements and educate it to a perception of what is not teachable, like the contents of secular curricula. Tulsi Das recognizes the efficacy of pilgrimage, of the worship of Brahmans and of other beliefs of Brahmanical orthodoxy. There is no deliberate attempt on the part of Knower of the doctrine to hold it as a monopoly; but they must needs take into account the capacity of the student or the listener to understand and assimilate. The Scriptural texts are full of warnings against dispensing the saving knowledge to all and sundry in a spirit of democratic liberalism. He who identifies himself in a particular way cannot in the very nature of things understand the meaning of God as a formless, nameless reality. It would, however, be wrong according to the Sagunite to reduce the human personality to the level of what the Buddhists call sātna. By the abstractive method we discover within ourselves the nameless essence that is beyond all empirical knowing. But our personality does not fulfill itself by passing beyond the reach of all predicates. There is the Saguna aspect of our personality, too. From among a host of attributes we select some and choose to manifest them in our daily life. Similarly the ultimately real is also the nameless Void in a very real sense; but we too select a few out of his infinite attributes and choose to manifest them in his cosmic ideation that we know as the world. He is thus not only but also Saguna Bhakti represents the effort of the human mind to approach this, this Divine Person who is the locus of infinite attributes.

1. & 2. & 3. &
Standing in the world of relativity we cannot take the Divine in one giant stride. The path to the summit is graduated.

Infant souls require their baby carts. While only a few can come face to face with the Divine in His full splendour, the rays from the central light can be focussed on such as the Guru, the God-intoxicated saint, and holy spots and thus mediated to us. One who knows something of the psychology of spiritual life cannot regard with contempt the part that symbolism plays in giving us a glimpse of the mysteries of Divine Nature. The Godward flow of love is the very essence of spiritual life.

Spiritual experience does not exclude the instincts but sublimates them. Nirguna Bhakti was a corrective to the Nath Panth with exclusive stress on intellectual and volitional faculties; it realized the inadequacy of their approach and admitted the claim of love. Saguna Bhakti tells us how this love can be evoked, sustained and fulfilled.

What then is the traceless ground of all becoming for the Absolutist becomes for the Sagunite the Manifest Lord of love. The Nameless one becomes the ultimate referent of all the names. The Formless and Ungraspable One becomes the omniscient fullness comprehending all the forms from Brahma to a gnat in His self-multiplication. The moveless Principle of the universe stirs into activity and fills the universe with the exuberance of His spontaneous love-play. He who is nowhere chooses a local habitation and makes it radiant with His glory. The Saguna Lord is thus characterized by Name and Form. Lila and Dharma are Infinite are His names. He is the God of countless forms. Measureless is the glory of His abode. But the Sadhaka as an individuated expression of the Real cannot take in the infinite attributes of the Lord. He chooses to give His devotion to some one form among...
This form is the vehicle of those qualities which evoke his spontaneous love and devotion. It is thus that the concept of Ista Devata emerges. All the forms and activities are His—the flute and the merciless Sudarsana, the fragrant Vrndavana and the gory Kuruksetra, the wedding song and the funeral dirge. But the mystics of the Saguna school give their love and devotion to the Lord of the Gopis or the Sustainer of the world. It is not to Indra and Kali but to Krsna and Rama that their work dedicate. They symbolize the beneficent aspects of Divine activity. From a strictly philosophical point of view the Ista Devata is an aspect of the Absolute. But the mystic discovers eternity in a grain of sand. The Vedic poet beheld the infinite glory in Indra, Varuna and Agni by turns. MaxMüller called it Henotheism. In the Ista Devata, too, the Transcendent and Immanent Reality dwells whole and unimpaired.

Both the Nirgunites and the Sagunites are full of praise for the name of the Lord. But the Nirgunites have not much to say about Rupa (the Form Divine) and Dhamma (the Divine Abode). Perhaps they thought that to give him a local habitation and a name would bring Divinity too near the plane of earthly grossness. The Sagunite would, however, say that the Lila of one who is formless is inconceivable. About the efficacy of the name of the Lord however both hold similar views. Tulsi regards the name of Rama as a more powerful agent for spiritual good than the Transcendent Brahman and the incarnate Lord, the son of Dasharatha.

1. Religion of the Vedas (Blumfield), 1, 1938.
3. तुलसी, तालाब, के. ५५ ( \textit{नन्द्व्य, अभम अभम नामदेव } )•
The immutable Brahman dwells in the heart of all and is declared to be Pure Bliss itself. But this Indweller seems to be helpless against the misery of the world. The human soul finds the earth to be a penal colony. It is the name that brings the Unmanifest into manifestation; it is the magic incantation on the lips of love that draws Brahman out of the "abyss of Nothingness" and sends it on its mission of love and redemption. Even the achievements of the Saguna Lord Rama compare ill with those of the Name. Here Tulsi Das accepts the mystic doctrine that historical life-processes are of necessity finite and give but a fragmentary view of truth. Rama (the son of Devaratha) the incarnate Lord, performed the miracle that is his life but once; but the Name has performed countless miracles. "It was but once that Rama redeemed the curse of the daughter of an ascetic; the name has led thousands along the path of rectitude and that too times without number. It was but one forest Dandaka that was cleared by Rama; the name has purged the hearts of countless men. Rama killed the hosts of demons but once, but the name continues to wipe out the arrayed forces of the sons of Kali. Rama granted deliverance to some of his select followers like Sabari and Jatayu but the name has liberated millions from the bonds of Destiny. Rama gave asylum to Sugriva and Vibhisana but thousands thrive under the protection of the name."

1. "सल उगु सरक, दुहू आभाणी। तम आग वर ताली दुहानी।"
2. "राम एक लाजपत दिन आरी। नाम मरं अज दुहानी।"

नाम, वार 56-57.
It was quite a task for Rama to organize his invasion of Lanka—he had to assemble the forces and to build a bridge across the ocean, but the name of the Lord makes the ocean of worldly existence ebb and dry up. This is how the name excels both Hirugna and Saguna Brahman.

In the Krṣṇavata school there is a similar emphasis on the Name. The Name is the Redeemer par excellence. When Kṛṣṇa went away to Mathura leaving the Gopis disconsolate, they were thrown into an agony of grief for they could no longer feast their eyes on his beauty. It was the name which sustained them in that hard hour. The name is the boat which carries us across the ocean of the world. It is the Philosopher's stone which turns the lead of ordinary human mentality into gold. All these devotees agree that in the Kaliyuga the name distances all other means—Yoga, austerities, knowledge—in its power to bring the soul to the threshold of the Lord. In the Kaliyuga the mental vigour of man slackens and he is no longer capable of putting forth that effort which raises the soul to the unitive state. Men long for short cuts to grace. Even men hardened in vice can win to the farther shore by the mere utterance of the name. There is no healer like the name for the dissipated mind. It is the sovereign remedy for physical, mental and spiritual malaise. Both Sura and Tulsi abound in examples from the Purāṇas where the mere utterance of the name of the Lord brought within reach of those who had lost all hope.

1. ॐ राम ॐ राम ॐ राम बोलो। तेहरे हें हार त्योहरे ।
   मारदेह सहायता शुभार्थी। तत्रु चिह्नानु ज्ञानम आर्थी।
   सामस: बलात् । प. 57

2. कृष्ण, पृ. 99, 90, 91 (भगवद्गीता 11.90)
   परन्तु प्रसंस्कृत: प्रसंस्कृत, 1923, 829

3. The tradition of चक्षुआ of युक्ति out of this grief.

4. षूरिण ओ तार गुरू, महा त्रिकृष्ण। जो भोले होरे करते इतिहास नाम ते भव्यि होरे।
   सामस, उत्तर, प. 963, प. 7
The man who asked Shakespeare what's in a name has entirely missed the significance of this Sadhana. For him a name is just a sequence of sounds. But for the Bhakta the name is the verbal image of the Lord. It does matter to him whether the Lord is named as Kamāri or Gopīvallabha, the darling of the Gopis. The name seizes the desirable qualities of the Lord in one convenient image. The verbal image can be as effective as the visual image. The anthropomorphic form may focus our attention on the all too human traits that the poets of the Kṛṣṇa Kala discover in Kṛṣṇa; it may blind us to what is supra-human in him. Tulsi and Sura could not become fetishists of this type, for whom the tangible exhausts all the values of the image. But the danger is there for those who have not been initiated into the mysteries of the Divine image, whether visual or audible. The name says Tulsi, is the interpreter between Nirguna and Saguna. It is the link between the creature and his source. As long as love is a progress towards a goal and has not become a fulfilment, as long as the Lover and the Beloved are not lost in that durationless moment where each is both, the name has to serve as a remembrancer. Although there is no place where He is not He manifests Himself only where we entertain an image of Him. The Name thus is the verbal embodiment of the deity.

The remark of Tulsi that the Name is an interpreter between Nirguna and Saguna is very significant. Heraclitus said that the Supreme is
willing and yet unwilling to be called by the name of Zeus. This unwillingness gives us the concept of Nirguna. But the passage from the Nirguna to the Saguna lies through the assumption of attributes. Tulsi says that Name and Form are the two attributes of the Lord. An "Upādhi" in Sāṅkara Vedanta is something super-imposed on the stark nakedness of the Real, something brought into existence by the operation of Avidya or Nescience. It is only when the Upādhīs are done away with that the Real is revealed in its fullness. But for Tulsi the Upādhīs are the suprarational attributes of the Lord which are revealed only to the pure in mind. The Name is subtler of the two attributes for what is presented to the eye is comparatively gross and the Name is presented to the ears. Love does not operate in vacuo. Its objects get invested with name and form in spite of ourselves. Even Kabira talks of the Form Beautiful and smiles in open-eyed joy. The Lord is love's bond. He is responsive to the call of those who utter His Name in purity of heart. To the observer the name and the bearer of name are one and the same reality and yet the name is the mightier of the two, for when His name is pronounced the Lord becomes manifest.

The name of the Lord is a cloud of love. Tulsi asks his mind to become a ātaka who will not quench his thirst except by the water shed by that cloud. All other means like austerities and the practice of Yoga are like the ponds, streams and the rivers of the earth which though full of water are by-passed by the ātaka whose insistent cry of love addressed to the cloud will not be stilled.

1. Quoted by Anurbhā in Heracleitus, p. 41
2. तत् ैं०, प. १०
3. शास्त्रवर्णन, पृ० १.
4. विद्याधर, पृ० ५२.
5. उद्ध, पृ० ५३.
The love of Name leads of itself to Yoga and Vairagya, to the stillness of the mind and indifference to the charms of the world.

Tulsi is impatient with those who would see the invisible; the Alakh

The very effort to see the invisible implies that he can become an object of knowledge. Those who think in terms of subject and object have of necessity to use some sort of imagery, visual or audible, to seize the mind above the level of empirical cognition. The Nathpanthis cannot reconcile themselves to the conception of an embodied God. They, and herein they are followed by the Nirgunites, refuse to believe that the Infinite can ever figure itself forth in finite forms. But to invest that Reality with a name is to finitize it no less than to clothe it with a form. The 'Alakh' itself is a name.

Tulsi ultimately comes to the conclusion that the Name is superior both to Nirguna and Saguna. There are passages where he seems to oscillate, not because he is not clear about the relative status of Nirguna and Saguna, but because the distinction between the two is ultimately a notion of the creaturely mind. Sometimes he regards the Nirguna as the fons et origo and Saguna a self-formation thereof. Again he accords Saguna a higher status. But ultimately he seems to think that the Name is the mightiest of them all.
In both Manichean and Zoroastrian traditions, the Gnosticism emphasizes a high status of the Gnostics, those who possess the essential knowledge and wield the secrets of the soul. Without the knowledge of a Gnosticism, the soul remains a theme owned by the intellect on its own. Yet, one in addition to have accomplished would have seen that the help of the Gnostics is even more essential for the Gnostics than they can be for the soul.

The following steps are complete with the Gnosis but only of place, since the essence of the entire action to unfold.

The Gnosis, the Gnosis, is realized that the essence of the Gnosis is essential to the evolution of individual experiences. To be the cause of the Gnosis that is inside the Divine essence, the cause of the Gnosis is an essential feature of that of the Gnosis. The Gnosis to the Gnosis.

The Gnosis, the Gnosis, the Gnosis, the Gnosis, the Gnosis.

the cause of Gnosis is the cause of the Gnosis to the Gnosis.

1. [Reference 1]
2. [Reference 2]
3. [Reference 3]
4. [Reference 4]
The Vaisnava cult seeks to give a sacramental quality to all experience. Sankara's interpretation of Vedanta seemed to be secular of all worldly values and accepted codes of social conduct. It is true that a deeper reading of Sankara will prove the falsity of the charge that he is out to condemn all worldly experience as mere futility. But new faiths and the philosophic sanction which they claim should be judged by their influence on the common people unable to grasp the subtleties even if that influence is based on a wrong interpretation of the original teacher. The Vaisnava creed recovers for the ordinary man some of the values that seemed to be threatened by Sankara. The Vaisnava does not think the world revealed to sensitive consciousness is absolutely imical to the intent of the Sadhaka. An integral Sadhana can educate even the senses to participate in the Ananda or Joy that is manifesting itself creatively in the world-process. The instincts are not to be crushed but tutored to find their delight in things as they are, that is, as the figures and symbols of Divine activity, love, and beauty. A famous sloka of the Bhagavata says: Lord, may my speech enliven in celebrating your infinite qualities; may my ears find their delight in listening to the narrative of your excellent deeds; may my hands discover their joy in serving you and in meditating upon your feet; may my head keep bowing to this world which is your abode; and may my eyes feast themselves on those sainted souls in whom you stand embodied. "It is thus all the levels of human personality are transmitted by the Divine Touch."  

1. As Vader than 10 him Bhikkhun, with the conviction that the Divine is a person capable of accepting and reciprocating love, Radhakrishnan says: "These (i.e., the Vaisnava Schools) are all agreed in rejecting the conception of Maya and in regarding God as personal." (Indian Philosophy, II, pp. 661-62)  

2. "Kari' Khane Abhishek Yatati Mitho" (Repeat: Three times)  

2. "Kari' Kaf' Khane Khari! Kaf' Kaf' " (Repeat: Three times)  

10.10.38
The technique of Saguna Sadhna thus caters for the needs of the whole man who is not merely a body craving for food, mate, and raiment, not only a soul reaching out for her source in knowledge and devotion but also a spirit of kindred essence with the Divine.

Ordinarily our estate is like that of a much married man pulled and pushed in many directions by his possessive wives. The urges of the carnal mind, the senses bent on making hay while the sun shines, and the drives of ambition lay claim on us and us to dissipate ourselves in a variety of futile pursuits. It is in this light that we have to understand the ninefold Bhakti which transfigures the mind and gives birth to a new dimension of consciousness.

The Upanishads speak of three stages in the journey of the human soul to the Divine. The Sagunites agree with them. They accept sravana as the first step on the path. Manana consists in the unceasing contemplation of the truth of Vaisnivism till it sinks into the mind. The arguments over which we are allowed to ponder must be in consonance with the traditional Vaisnava approach to these problems. The scepticism of the intellect is not allowed to assert itself. Ordinarily Nididhyasana does not consist in the recognition of the identity of Jiva and Brahman for such a consummation seals the flow of love, robs the soul of its opportunity to serve the Lord, and stands in the way of its participation in Divine Lila.

1. "अहंकारसे गृहस्तीका नाते तरी श्रीमानना-यतनसः-वालयाने प्रवचनं कुलदेवसः। धार्मिक-वयस्वायनसे-वादः-म्याम्यायुमानसे-भृपेतः। यस्मात् यस्मेव आन्तः। धर्मनास, 7. 9. 40"

2. "तुलसी, दत्ता और परमदायताने (क्रृषि 0 7. 7, 8. 4, 5)"
Those who betake themselves to sravana admit the Divine into their hearts through the ears. They give up their addiction to idiotic gossip and scandal-mongering. They hear of the glorious deeds of the Lord and of the Divine birth takes place for the sake of the Bhaktas. They hear His name and are rapt into ecstasy. Both Sagunites and Nirgunites acknowledge the importance of this mode of approach to the Divine but the Nirgunites are by the nature of their belief barred from taking any deep interest in Divine actions. It is true that even Nirgunites especially Kabira refer to Pauranic tales which illustrate the emancipative nature of Divine action but their heart is not in these episodes. The Sagunites, however, reap a richer harvest through the ears and thrill to the narrative of Divine works which exemplify Divine compassion and Divine Ananda. He who knows of the greatness and glory of the Lord brings the Lord to His he sits. His names and deeds, the glories of His abode, and the charms of his Rasalila—all these can become the objects of hearing and the vehicles of Grace. The Divine is revealed in all the transactions of life, in all the modalities of consciousness.

There is thus no deliberate cultivation of aversion towards the lift of the earth. This life, however, unfolds its secret meaning to the gaze of the Bhakta. The whole of life becomes a sacrament, an outward symbol of inward grace. We are reclaimed from the life of unholy craving and made over to sanctity.

1. गृहेन्द्र भगवत उर्ध्वाला कीर्तिकृ (मारुर संवत 137)

बिषाल्य करिल उर्ध्वाला ला बिशिक्त कीकारण: उदयान वरिष्ठ होंदुर्योगिन्कर्के, जोर्डुंडुपर, तेहु, रूपरता

7 जैगिन्तह 7.7.34

P. T. O.
Hiranta Bhakti, too, is a recognised mode of approaching the Divine. The devotee does not deliberately eschew those objects and transactions of life which are ordinarily regarded as trivial to grace. He seeks to turn them into instruments for lifting the soul to higher planes. In Hiranta Bhakti, music, which is regarded by the muttana as a bond of the Divine, becomes the ally of the soul and a minister of grace. Hiranta issues out of the fulness of heart The devotees of Hiranta Bhakti are particularly noted for their devotion to Hiranta Bhakti. They sing of the names, the glory and the Lila of the Lord and are swept into ecstasy.

Such devotees approach the Lord on the wings of music, Hiranta tames the mind not by calling upon it to exercise its personal will but by raising it above the prosaic level of routine action and reaction. The joy of such music is a foretaste of Divine bliss. The attitude of Hiranta will be unintelligible to such a devotee. The philosopher may well regard the singing Bhakta as a man created of soft clay, but only if his grasp of the life of spiritual dedication is poor. The particular mystic experience accessible to Hiranta was often forced by Hiranta. The contemplative ecstasy of the muttana devotees singing in the 3rd North Temple of the Lila of the Divine Cowherd Boy, is itself a mystic experience.

1. तदेव रामं हरिसर्वं देवं देव कश्चिं समाग्नं पितास्ववं ।
तदेव शोकमार्गित शोभेऽ नूः लोकस्वरस्मरेऽमेऽधोधीर्यामहेऽ ।
स्वयंभूवाक्ष्यम् एति विदधृ उपमैश्च तु मुङ्गलम्
स्वयंभूवाक्ष्यम् एति विदधृ उपमैश्च तु मुङ्गलम्

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The process of the growth of the Self and the Consecrating the form of the Lord in the shrine of the heart and one feels as if one stood before the Presence. All consciousness of a separative ego drops away and one becomes a part of the Divine Whole.

1. पूजनार्थः: स्वयंभूतः, 306, 344 (४७२)
Padasevana is an exercise in humility. It wears away the hardness of the ego. The ego is hard to kill. The Bhakta in touching the feet of the Lord acknowledges Him as his Master. This confession of faith is made manifest in three ways. The idol of the Lord, the genuine Bhakta, and the spiritual preceptor when approached and worshipped prepare the soul for the supreme gesture when it lays itself prostrate at the feet of the Lord enshrined within. The idol is a manifestation of the Lord as the Pāncarātra tells us. We pay homage not to the metal or the stone which are its material cause but to the Lord who is figured therein. The devotees are consubstantial with the Divine as the Narada Bhaktisūtra tells us. And all esoteric tradition recognizes the high status of the spiritual preceptor. The idol is also significant in another way. It reminds us that just as the Lord is beyond the material cause, so the self is beyond the flesh that clothes our bones and assumes the status of the ego. The idol, the Guru and the Bhakta invite us to penetrate the adventitious attributes and get at the essence. In this way we are introduced to the mystery of the subtle form within the heart whom we may worship not with material flowers and incense but in humbleness of heart.

As we have seen the Lord is the ultimate Guru and the title applies to the human Guru so far as he has realized his identity with the Supreme One of all.

1. नादरात्मकसुट्रस्तंकोनं तलाक्षणमियम भगवंशी
2. परमाक नामाश्चर्तेः सवावुँदूर्दृशतहुँदुर्दृशतहुँ
3. सच्चास्थिते निष्प्रकाश, जार गृह ४१
4. देवीलु, १२५ (पुरादाशिते मुनि: कातेमानके००४००४०४०)
Arcana and Vandana: These forms of Bhakti too issue from the same impulse to reverential self-surrender. The Sadhaka worships the Lord at first with incense and flowers and other votive offerings. These are however the first steps to the altar. Ultimately the Sadhaka can think of no greater joy higher than that of total self-surrender. All the accessories of worship are discovered within and one has not to go a searching for them in the outer world. One worships the Lord with flowers etc. in the beginning intimating thereby his willingness to forego material objects for the sake of the Lord. This mental worship deepens the sacrificial impulse and brings it nearer home till one offers the more intimate aspects of the ego, the rich and varied wealth of the inner life. But the sacrifice is complete only with the surrender of the ego itself. This is Atma-niruddana Bhakti, a Bhakti that is at once self-naughting and self-discovery. What is naughted is the earth-bound mind with its silly notions of claims and counter-claims. What is discovered is a new self, a self restored to its true status as a servant, playmate, or beloved of the Lord. The offering is based upon the insight that nothing is mine. Thus the conceit of I-ness is abjured; the Jiva no longer believes himself to be an enjoyer or a doer. The Sadhaka comes to realize that the Lord is the author of all that we are merely his instruments. All that is derivative creaturely and derivative is funded back to the original source and consecrated by the touch of the Lord. Thereafter it returns to the Bhakta to be enjoyed as a token of God's grace in complete submission to His will.

1. Supra, p. 172

2. Supra, pp. 170-71

3. Supra, pp. 173-74
In Sakya Bhakt-1 the devotee regards himself as the friend of the Lord. All the diffidence, trepidation and fear so natural to the station of the servant vanish here. He is no longer a supplicant mindful of the whims and moods of his Master. If Kṛṣṇa plays foul or tries to score a point on the sly he will not meet the meek submissiveness of a servant but the loud protests of friends who are ready to take him to task for his peccadilloes and to outstate him.

True friendship has for its inevitable basis the acknowledgment of equality between those who would be friends. We do not seek to overwhelm our friends with the superiority that we may have over them in resources, strength or intelligence. If a greater measure of selflessness represents a purer form of Bhakti than Sakya stands higher than Dasya. The servant expects favours and may or may not get them, but the friend compels our response. Progress in Bhakti means the progressive revelation of the Divine nature. The divine mysteries are not unfolded to those who pray on their knees. It is personal love alone which is admitted to the arena. That is why 'Sakya, Vatsalya, and Kanta' types of devotion where the bond is one of love are deemed to be higher than Dasya. The emotion is there in Dasya but it is restrained, held in by the impulse towards obedience. It likes to roll at the feet of the Master.
In Sakhya Bhakti which is typified in the relations between cow-herd boys and Kṛṣṇa we find the Vaiṣṇava Śādhaka to be keenly alive to the divinity that hedgeth true friendship. Kṛṣṇa is the moving spirit behind the pranks of the cow-herd boys on the green banks of the Yamunā bordered with Kadamba trees. Kṛṣṇa is not the Lord of the universe competent to fulfil the desires of the craving heart; he is just one brat among others. The poetry of Aṣṭacchāpā, particularly that of Saṅga and Prasanna-praśadān contains many charming vignettes of the woodland frolics of Kṛṣṇa and his buoyant companions, their quarrels and reconciliations, and their attachment to the child of Nanda who, in spite of his young age proves equal to the critical situations brought about by the malice of Kāsaṇa. The function of Kṛṣṇa like that of other cow-herd boys is to graze the cows but there is a difference. He brings the straying cows back to the fold. Saṅga here gives us a symbolic representation of the role of the Divine in the life of the human individual. "Go" means senses and it is acknowledged by all mystic traditions that the senses longing after their objects are the mortal foes of the aspiring soul. The Śādhu does not seek to kill them out, to starve them by violent mortification, he converts them to the true faith, brings them round to a right appraisement of the nature of the world and its lure. It is the Kṛṣṇa within who brings the errant 'gos' or senses to the path of self-offering in chastened purity. The Śādhu calls upon the Lord to help him in taming these perversé cows.

1. Ā. P. 1061, 1062, 1063, 1067, 1065
Pārśva Pārśva: 119, 120, 123, 126
2. Śaṅga, p. 51
In Dāsyābhakti the devotee regards himself to be the servant of the Lord. He is aware of the distance that separates the Master from his servant. He prostrates himself before His majesty and unashes his sin-stained heart. In this form of devotion the emphasis is on the weakness of the human will and its gravitation towards sin. The attribute of the Lord that engages the attention of the devotee is His compassion. If the devotee still lingers in the realm of sin he will attribute it to the indifference of the Master. The servant often twits the Master with this indifference and tells him that His reputation as Redeemer is at stake. The devotee knows that his own efforts are futile but his confidence in the responsiveness of his Master is great. As long as one regards one's empirical personality as something substantive and enduring through the flux of time, something existing in its own right, the attitude of the Dās or the servant goes a long way in breaking down the hardness of the ego. One falls in with what happens because it is the will of the Master that prevails everywhere. It is true that this type of Bhakti represents the first steps on the path of devotion. Its limitations are obvious. As has been pointed out above we do not reveal our secrets to our servants; the distance between the master and the servant is inhibitive in character. The Divine nature too is not known in its integrality to those who approach Him with the psychology of a servant. There are however devotees who are aware of the relative status of Dāsya in comparison with other types but who deliberately take to the path of the Dāsa.

1. पदार्थिन, प्रवर्तक 138, 139, 140, 141, 144 ए.सी. (479)
   पदार्थिन, प्रवर्तक 170, 171, 182, 209, 102

2. This is the recurring theme of the Purāṇa of Bṛhadāraṇyaka 2.2.10, 128.
   2.2.10 ए.सी. (पृष्ठ 100, 101, 102, 128 ए.सी.)
The lover heeds no barriers and cares little for those social
decencies which provide the only sanction for right conduct for
the ordinary man. 'Kanta Bhakți' represents that new level of
spiritual felicity where the devotional mind transcends the fears
and scruples which are characteristic of social consciousness. The
love-play between the soul and her Divine consort are depicted in
roseate colours. There is nothing of the puritan hush-hush about
it. For the unregenerate it may be an unabashed trading in pornog-
graphic detail but the unregenerate are not admitted to the mystic
bridal-chamber. To say that this type of love rouses carnal passion
is to forget that the relation between the soul and her Divine Para-
mour is not meant to be realized on the social plane. It is in that cham-
ber that the veils are stripped and that emotion seized of which
Dasya Bhakti can catch but a faint glimpse. It is vain to say
that the suggestions thrown out by these kumārap love-passages
do violence to our conception of Divine purity. In that case we have
to revise our conceptions for the Divine nature is not cast in puritan
moulds. The Lord is the lover par excellence, as all mystic traditions
agree. It is indeed a question as to which of the various forms
of love that we know in the world can best figure forth the relation-
ship between the soul and the Divine. There are forms of love which
are socially sanctioned and there are others which are not. But in the
1. All this is an allegory, a reflection of reality in the
mirror of illusion... The relation of the millennials
with the Divine Husband is not in any sense a model
intended to be realized in social relationships.

(Commentary: The Dance of Śiva, p. 142.)
field of Vaisnava Sadhna, all forms of love become symbols of love Divine. If one type of social relationship—that between the servant and the Master—is regarded as a valid symbol of human love for the Divine, then we need not feel shocked if other more vital social relationships are called in to serve the purpose. It is customary for the devotee to call himself the servant of the Lord and to observe the ritual and assume the attitude natural to that station. Why should we look with disapprobation when the human advances towards her lover in ecstatic self-surrender, in naked purity. The worldly mind may receive unhealthy suggestions from this type of literature. But if we eschew this symbolism in order to save such minds we are not likely to achieve our aim. Our social environment is full of suggestions of eroticism of a much more palpable character. How can such minds, so small as they are, be protected from suggestions wrought into their environment?

Ultimately we have to recognize the creative character of the human mind in the act of perception. To the pure the entire world is a theophany—a revelation of the Divine. The unholy heart too knows how to re-make the world in order to suit its fancies.

A Chaitanya can go into transports over the poetry of Jayadeva but Chaitanyas are rare while the number of those who wonder how Gita-Govinda can be redeemed from the charge of obscenity continues to grow.

"The illiterate love becomes the very type of devotion for those where social convention is so strict, such love involves a surrender of all for the Lord's values. The reality is the inner life where Krishna is the Lord, the milkmaids are the souls of men, and Vrindavana the field of consciousness."

[End, Page 141, 142]
As the object of 'Vatsalya Bhakti' Kṛṣṇa is the beloved child of Yasoda and Nanda and the centre of affection of the elderly ladies of Braj, Sura's heart is a carpet for this child's walking. Yasoda going into transports over the innocent gestures of this child, rocking him in her lap, putting him to bed with lullabies, waking him with affectionate blessings, and taking him to task for his childish escapades and feigning wrath—petting, fondling and spanking him in turn—these are all glimpses of the soul of Sura, longing to be near his Lord, seeking to bring him closer to himself with silken threads of love's forging.

Though the philosophy of sexual symbolism is unexceptionable, yet there is reason to believe that it often leads to misuse. When the original impulse given by the founder of a new religious dispensation flags, quackery comes in. Leadership falls into the hands of people who have hardly the mental and moral strength to sustain themselves on the high levels of spiritual life. It is then that sexual symbolism becomes a cover for the gratification of animal appetites. The way of the ascetic looks upon bad psychology. The devotee of the Vatsalya way, however, comes to have all the ecstasy and enchantment of sexual love minus its animalism. He does not inhibit his emotions but only hitchs them to the highest Object conceivable by the mind of man.

1. "Harināma, p. 700, 'पूर्णमिहे सदा स्वज्ञा', अलंकृता सूक्ष्मिका। असोम परे ७२१, ७२२, ७२३, ७३०, ७३३, ७३७, ७४०। तो चर ते रक्तविद्या जननी से विवक्त।"
2. "त्रिभुवन, श्रेष्ठो श्रेष्ठ जयंती, अबला रूप, मिष्किसूर। असो शिरो ७४०, ७४१, ७४२, ७४३, ७५२, ७५४।"
3. "सुरीय, पर ११२०, 'अतिरिक्त आजप्राय अनात्मिक, मरने नुसमा कूटे, असो १२२, १२३, १२४, १२५, १२६, १२७।"
4. "त्रिभुवन, पर ११२५, 'सभ दें हरि बुझे पितामह।"
5. "सुरीय, पर ११२६, 'शोभा है झूम ऊपर करनी। बौद्ध'र कृपा से बांधने, एवं प्रेम करनी।"
6. "सुरीय, पर ११२७, 'लक्ष्मी देवी देवता लेडी, धर्मराथ पंडित जी।"
The attitudes and emotions proper to 'Vatsalya' Bhakti hold a high place in Vaishnava Sadhana. It is the parents who rejoice the most in their child; it is the neighbours who have the fun of his escapades. The Lila of the Lord as a child cannot be appreciated by the Bhakta unless he too assumes the role of parents and neighbours. The child is guileless; we love him not in expectation of any reward and favour because of his unassuming naïve simplicity.

In the love between sexes or even full-grown members of the same sex joy turns to frustration if there is no response.

All great religions of the world have called upon man, the wayward and designing son of the earth that he is, to grow back into childhood. "Suffer little children to come unto me for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," says Christ. "One should roam the earth like a child, like a man deaf and unfeeling," counsels Bhagavata.

This upsets our conventional scale of values. The truth is that the child has more divinity in him than the worldly-wise man who has gathered around him the dross of the earth. He knows of claims and counter-claims and of that schizophrenia which will not heal unless we unlearn much that the world counts as wise.

All devotion which is actuated by considerations of expediency and reward is a pinchbeck affair. If we love the Lord for anything less than Himself we become the victims of a species of worldly wisdom. That is why 'Vatsalya' is a superior type of Bhakti, for it follows the pattern of a love that lacks ulterior motives.


2. VII-13.10. Bhagavata
In *Santa Bhakti* - the devotion in calmness of mind - the devotee is humble and staid. Both *Dasya* and *Santa* have much in common. In both the heart is aware of its ailments, its fancy for the world and the redemptive mission of the Master. But in *Santa* there is greater emphasis on the transience of the world and the futility of all endeavours to find bliss eternal here. In *Dasya* the note of self-condemnation is very loud. The sins of the devotee bite into him and he wails aloud. As the term implies the *Santa Bhakta* is quietly confident of the response of his Master while the *Dasa* persistently knocks at his doors. There is a definite philosophic content in the *Santa* consciousness that has meditated much on the unstable character of the world and has worn to steadiness in the teeth of temptation and the impulses of the lower mind. But the mind is not as composed in the *Dasa* consciousness.

In the *Santa*, however, there is no well-defined relationship between the devotee and the Lord. Hence the characteristic note of *Vaisnava* devotion is not struck here. The *Vaisnava* *Vaisnava* does want that no stimulus from the world should agitate his mind, that he should be able to survey the temporal scene with absolute calm and dispassion. But that the mind should remain calm and stoic even when the image of the Lord rises before it is unbearable to him. He wants to greet the Lord with ecstasy of heart or with epithets that denote his personal relationship with the Master.

1. वायव्य 69, 124, 126, 162, 165 (पा. 6)
   पुस्तक, रत्नागिनी, पा 315, 316, 320, 337
Name and Form are regarded in orthodox Vedanta as the two traps for the soul. Name-Form is what breaks up the One into countless relativities. In the Upanisads and the Bhagavad-Gita, the Freed one is defined as one who is rid of name and form. As the released from name and form become one with the ocean, such is the estate of the Freed one.

The Absolute cannot be named nor can it be conceived in any likeness for it would then become one thing among many others in the empirical universe while it is by definition the originative Principle, or better still, the Ground of all phenomena. But the Vaisnavas take exception to this conception within of the Divine. They regard it as a cleverly dressed up version of Buddhist Sunyata or Void which they explain pure blankness. The Divine is not only Brahman but also Parmatman and Bhagvan. Brahman is the Absolute that does not admit of being characterized in any way. Parmatman is the highest self indwelling all objects including the heart of man and revealed to the Yogi in his contemplation. But for the Vaisnava these are abstract conceptions. For him it is the Bhagvan with His infinite energies, attributes, names and forms who is the integral Divine. The fullness of Divine nature is made manifest not in the Formless Transcendent Essence from whom mind and speech turn back baffled, but in the Lord whose Divine actions are the outbirth of His joy and power, and who incarnates again and again in order to protect His devotees and vouchsafe them a taste of His boundless bliss.

1. श्रीमान् ॥ ॥

2. विषय स्वयम् चरणवर्ष गर्भवती नामदर्श विश्राम 
   तथा विद्वैद्वारश्चादिकृतुम् पराशां उल्लघुभावित्तवेदम्।
   (हृदय ३. २. ८.)

3. तिर्थंकराणि नामदर्श शासनं तिर्थंकरम् ॥ ॥
In the worship of the Form Divine we may well see an unconfessed acceptance of the Tantric principle that the thorn should be extracted with the help of another thorn. It is the carnal suggestions evoked by the beauty of the human person that lead the mind astray and lead to bondage. The fascination brought by physical beauty upon the ignorant mind is hard to undo. The eyes and the mind have to be undeceived and cured of their suggestibility. They should be fed on the beauty of the Divine Person who lends to things beautiful a portion of His charm and enables them to snare the soul of man.

The Nirgunite saint is in principle opposed to the worship of Form. God for him has no form for form is the badge of mortality. But in the Nirgunites too what is expelled by logic is brought in by love. Although the Nirgunites refuse to invest their Lord with hands, feet, habiliments, in the manner of Sagunites, yet when love fills their hearts they too see the Form Beautiful and earn to feast their eyes on the supernatural Beauty. Discover is His brilliance that outshines the brilliance of a thousand suns. In the Nirgunites too we find a moving expansion of the intensity of passion known to mortal love. "As soon as you seat yourself in these eyes I shall close them; I won't let my eyes wander to anyone else nor shall I let you look at another. Like those aged ones pining for Kanya, Yashira, too, finds his eyes drooping and tired. Long and so intently have they been looking out on the horizon."

Lover is to follow.

1. Vide Shiva, p. 198 (Foot note 3).
2. supra, p. 33.
3. गुलाबी कैले हृदि हृदि पतले नुसरत निवास अंग करो. 
   S. B. II. p. 14
4. K. G. P. [O(33)]
5. Alid. p. 12(1)
The stab of this longing is there in both too. "Here is the bed and here is your girl dear. Come, surrender myself to you... I look out for you on thermometer - the road by life is dedicated to you... Never shall I tire of looking at your face." Here we find this Rupa Sadhana (the way to the Divine through the contemplation of His beauty) though only in an inchoate form. There is no enraptured lingering on the details of physiognomy. But the magic wrought by beauty is present here. It is this Sadhana which achieves its full-throated expression in the Sagunites for whom the Lord is not merely the Perfect Knowledge in whom the mind comes to the term of its way-faring but is also and more pronouncedly the Ananda in whom the eyes and the hunger for beauty come to rest and fulfilment and become satiate.

Fundamentally, Rupa Sadhana or the contemplation of the Form Divine is a way of practising the presence of God, as the Christian mystics would put it. The Lord is no longer a remote abstraction known to the subtle intellect only. His "humanization" is an intimation of the fact that He is closer than metaphysicians imagine Him to be. To abandon oneself to the contemplation of His Form is to loosen the hold that worldly forms have on our minds. Dr. Dvivedi has pointed out the significance of the name 'Madanamohana' given to one of the forms. The Lord bewitches the arch bewitcher of all, Kama or Cupid. He unbinds the spells wrought by Cupid. While earthly beauty is a drug, the beauty of

1. माँ श्री बाल के, सुना बैल के, बाल कुम पुर सांगे ।
   सिंह देवल के भैरी, पांडु भैरी ॥
2. रूह और दौल अपने में हैं, दुर्ग और भैरव के भैरी, पंडु भैरी ॥
3. वशिष्ठ प्रवास देवलिः, नाम उपासना अर्थात्, प. 195
of the Lord awakens the mind from its dullness and stupor. The question whether the historical Kṛṣṇa had such a form as has been sought to be portrayed by the Vaiṣṇavite singer springs out of an ignorance of the basic principles of this Sadhana. No question of physical verisimilitude is involved for portraiture is not the aim. Portraiture emphasizes the physiognomical details but the image, conceived or integrated ideally or externalized through material means such as words or stones or colours, is meant for worship. Worship achieves either the assimilation of the knower and the known or their proximity. The Saguna worshipper in the presence of his Master and dwelling upon the details of His celestial form is uplifted from the material plane to the Nakṣatram celestial one.

The Divine form resolves the opposition between the finite and the Infinite. The quest of the Infinite should not make us turn away from the interminable procession of forms that is the world. The forms can block our way only if the doorways of the senses are not clean.

"To the pure in mind everything appears as it is, infinite. We can discover the Formless in form, eternity in time, Brahmāṇa in Pinda, and the lineaments of Divinity in man because their opposition is a phenomenon of ignorance or as the Sagunite would say, 'a-bhakti' or lack of devotion.

... it will suffice to say that 'anthropomorphic' is the sense in which this word is appropriate to Indian image. It does not imply 'naturalistic.' The Buddha image is not in any sense a portrait, but a Symbol...... the image is derived of any semblance of organic structure; it is not a reflection of anything that has been physically seen, but an intelligible form or formula.

(Commentary: Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought, p. 172)
The worshipper of form is essentially an imager, and the visualization of form is an artistic act commanded by the intensity of his devotion. Herein the energies of the mind are integrated and commissioned by a divine impulse. As the God who evokes this Bhakti is the God both of Dharma and Ananda—the Lord who upholds the law of righteousness and the Divine Lover whose love is a ceaseless stream and whose delight inundates through the hearts of devotees—we have in these forms the embodiment of some of the noblest conceptions of the Divine.

The body of the Lord is not made of the five well-known elements known to Indian cosmogony, namely, earth, water, fire, air and ether. It is assumed of his own sweet will; its conception is not after the manner of mortals. The Divine form is revealed only to those who have outgrown the urges of their carnal, mutable nature, and have accepted the discipline of Bhakti. The Brahmic consciousness, the peace that comes of the intuition of one's identity with the Absolute, is pale before the joy of those who behold the celestial, Saguna form of the Lord. Janaka, the chief of Mithila, is well known as an Absolutist. He is referred to as 'Videha', the disembodied one, the idea being that he had seen through the endemic Avidya that leads us to identify our real essence with the body. Having seen through the illusory nature of this identity he had risen above the psycho-physical self and its appanages—riches, lands, social esteem—and the passions that rule the slaves of desire.

1. Ibid., pp. 151-52. "What the Sattvic quality is the detailed sequence according to which the formal cause or pattern of the work to be done is developed from its germ, from the very hint of what is required." He means that "Bhavana" or Bhakti is the germ and the mental image unfolds out of this germ and is the formal cause.
His was the impregnable calm and happiness of those who have realized Brahman. Even Janaka was thrown into an ecstasy of joy on seeing the beauty of Rama and Laksmana. "I think the incomprehensible Brahman to whom the Vedas refer as 'Neti, Neti', (meaning thereby that Brahman cannot be characterized in any way, and is beyond all empirical determination), has assumed these two forms. On seeing them my mind, free from all conceit and illusion as it is, has abandoned its Brahmic peace and is full of love."

The joy of the Saguna form is thus a higher rapture. Tulsi is more solemn than Siva, but he too is enamoured of the beauty of Rama and misses no opportunity to dwell upon it. When Rama walks the forest-path the foresters foregather to feast their eyes upon his beauty. Even the birds and the animals are entranced. Even his enemies are fascinated by his disarming beauty. He is attacked by the furious hosts of Khara and Dusana who are out to avenge the injury done to their sister by Laksmana, but they can hardly bring themselves to shoot their arrows at him. When Rama walks the forest-path the foresters foregather to feast their eyes upon his beauty. Even the birds and the animals are entranced. Even his enemies are fascinated by his disarming beauty. He is attacked by the furious hosts of Khara and Dusana who are out to avenge the injury done to their sister by Laksmana, but they can hardly bring themselves to shoot their arrows at him. The citizens of Mithila, the dwellers of the forest, and even the embattled hosts of Asuras are an example of what is known to the theologians of the Bhakti school as 'Rupa saakti'.

1. एक जी नियत बने रहे मेरे गान। उपन्यासातील, मेरी लोक उमाचा अंगरेजी बोला, मेरी देशगुरु ने कहा (कथा)।
   दानक, प. 213

2. आपने मित्र नहीं हिरणी। पाने में घोंट में हेरे अद्वोकेट
   अंगरेजी बोला, मेरी देशगुरु ने कहा (कथा)
   उद्ध, प. 425-26

3. मारा, फ़ा. 417

4. मारा, फ़ा. 216-217

5. अनुसार, फ़ा. 145-20
   मारा, फ़ा. 1. 619.
The Baganuga type of Bhakti is an instrument for the achievement of what is known as 'Para Bhakti'. The Para is its own end. Vaidhi Bhakti may lead to the dawn of knowledge or to Para Bhakti. Those who arrive at Para need go no farther. They regard the joy of devotion as higher than that of liberation or moksha. They may still outwardly exhibit the attitudes of those who have yet not passed beyond the Vaidhi stage. This however, does not compromise their status as 'adepts'. Their actions are no longer accessory to the achievement of a personal goal but are part of the Divine Līlā. This love is the highest goal accessible to human effort and exceeds the traditional schema of values - Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha - in its capacity to unfold the unfolding of the divine nature of the soul as the companion, playmate or beloved of the Lord. The difference between Śādhanā and Līlā becomes manifest here. Śādhanā pre-supposes the existence of a human agent with a given pattern of psychological and other attributes. The empirical ego is there and is conscious of its shortcomings and tries to get rid of them. Behind Śādhanā lies tension and the endeavour to transcend it. But Līlā is spontaneity itself. One is an ethical, the other a spiritual category. In Līlā the soul recovers its spontaneity, having emerged from the polarities of temporal existence. Śādhanā is a 'making' of what is not yet; Līlā is an overflowing, an emanation. The end of Śādhanā is to convert itself into Līlā.
There is much in common between Sura and Tulsi. Both are willing to reject the final deliverance from temporal existence for the sake of Bhakti. Both are enamoured of the forms of the Lord. Tulsi's narrative of the deeds of Rama may be regarded as dynamic contemplation. The various guises in which Rama appears in the narrative - a child, an ascetic on the forest-path, or in his hermitage, a leader of hosts for the establishment of dharma - all these roles are but the various forms in which Tulsi conjures up the vision of his Lord. Kaka Bhusundhi prays for repeated births in Ayodhya in order to witness the festival of navratri and the frolics of Child Rama. "Child Rama is my Istawardhini, he who with his beauty can eclipse countless Ramas."

There are charming vignettes of Child Rama in Gita Vali.

Sura's love of child Krsna is well known. His appetite for that beauty is literally unappeasable. Sura is at his best when he is singing of Krsna as a child or as a lover. His mind does not contemplate other aspects of Krsna's varied life with the same ardour.

In both Sura and Tulsi we find a great emphasis on the worship of the Guru and on that of Satdhus. But Sura tries more deliberately to conform to a tradition. For the poets of Astacchapa the Lord is Rasa and the consummation art of human endeavour lies in the perception of that super-historical Lila which articulates that Rasa. Sura's Lila is a pageant of love. This emphasis on love is not discoverable in Tulsi.

1. आधमेशकोप. 32 प. 854 (111. 4); पुरस्तार, प. 133 (उपनिषदिक भक्ति, रामात्युज्य)
2. गृहस्तिधार: प. 109, 716, 714, 711, 712, 788
3. आधमेशकोप. 32 प. 198-99; नामधारी, वालो प्र. 2, 3-17
4. नामधारी, वालो प्र. 5-15 '2' 
5. आधमेशकोप. 32 प. 13-15
6. आधमेशकोप. 32 प. 614
7. आधमेशकोप. 32 प. 614
In Astecapa the experience of the pangs of separation by the soul represents the high water-mark of love. The love of man and woman is the symbol of the trans-earthly love of soul and God. The soul is a Gopi. Only souls that have shed their assertive individuality and have made themselves into the likeness of a woman’s heart qualify for participation in the Divine Hava of Krishna. Human love is gripping both in the sweetness of union and the poignancy of separation. But for the Bhaktas both its sweetness and poignancy are images of its transactions with the Divine. In the state of separation the consciousness of the beloved grows upon the lover’s heart till it blots out all other images from the field of awareness, and a state supervenes which may well be called union-in-separation. Here the Gopi becomes Govinda; here the identity is effectuated through love, for the irrepressible urge of love is towards union. In Kabira too we discover a similar state where the Lord follows him calling out, “Stay, O Kabira, Stay a while.” In the devotees of Astacchapa such a state surpasses Nokaa in its sweetness. The mind automatically passes into dhyana. Distractions are laid to rest and consciousness is integrated round one master idea. These poets lay bare the multiple moods of love wrenched with separation—separation: its anguish, yearning, hopes and fears. It is through Racha and Gopi that the poets of Astacchapa give vent to their “alternate stress and glory”.

1. अस्ताचापा ओळी सृजन ताचाय: प. 639-63.
2. इदं, प. 636.
3. K. G. 6:4 (2)
In Pushtimarga the souls have been graded according to their progress on the path to enlightenment. There are those who are borne helpless on the stream of base creatures of impulse and fancy, who, for all their frenzied activity, stay where are—on the plane of desire. They have been called ‘Pravasi Jivas’. The second category comprises those who have come to discover some meaning in life in the light of scriptural injunction and try to shape their life in conformity with the tradition embodied therein. They stand on a level higher than that of personal claims and counter-claims and have achieved a certain measure of impersonality because of their recognition of the impersonal authority of tradition. In the conduct of their personal life they submit to the authority of the higher social vision of which the Sastras or the books held sacred by the community are the vehicle. They are the “muryada jivas”, souls who submit to law not for fear of sanctions applied by the community but because of a deeper perception of the nature of things and the resolve to bear witness to that perception in their personal conduct. The third category is that of “Puṣṭi Jivas”. Puṣṭi means favour, compassion. For these souls the seat of authority lies neither in the compulsion of the passing mood of desire nor in the voice of tradition as recorded in the Sastras. They depend on the favour of the Lord and think that what their Lord chooses is better than what their personal will fancies. But the degree or extent of their dependence is not the same in

1 History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western (George Allen and Unwin), p. 352
2 Das Gupta: A History of Indian Philosophy, pp. 367-68
3 Sahitya Dharini (ed. V. S. Aggrawal), p. 200
4 The Bhāgavata, II: 10. 4.
all cases. There are those who are essentially extraverts, of a pragmatic cast of mind, but who seek to temper their self-will with a measure of trust in the dispositions of Providence. Their faith is one conviction among others and has to adjust itself to these other contents of the mind as best as it may. William James has given a good description of this mentality, known to Pūṣṭimārga as ‘Pravāhi-Pūṣṭa Bhakta.’ ‘We hold by two anchors, looking to God, it is true, after a fashion, but also holding by our own proper machinations. In certain medical experiences we have the same point critical point to overcome. A drunkard or a morphine or cocaine maniac offers himself to be cured. He appeals to the doctor to wean him from his enemy but he dares not face blank abstinence. The tyrannical drug is still an anchor to windward; he hides supplies of it among his clothing, arranges secretly to have it smuggled in case of need. Even so an incompletely regenerate man still trusts in his own expedients.

His money is like the sleeping potion which the chronically wakeful patient keeps beside his bed; he throws himself on God, but “if” he should need the other help, there it will be also.”

Then there are the Maryada-Puṣṭa Bhaktas who count the will of the Lord to be of supreme importance but seek to discover it through adherence to ethical rule and practice. For them the operation of Grace is not automatic but requires the activity of a moral agent for its manifestation. For them the sanction behind action is not the pleasure of the personal agent but the will of a moral God who can winnow the chaff from the wheat.

William James: Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 314
(Modern Library 20 of World’s Best Books)
The devotees of the Pusti-marga, however, make the practice of the moral life an instrument for the achievement of any "goods" other than the grace of God. They do not think of the morrow. They aim at absolute unreserved surrender to the Lord. There should be no calculation of chances nor casting of probabilities.

There is the third category of Puṣṭipaṭa Bhaktas who have arrived at the goal. They can brook no intermediary between themselves and their Lord, not even the instrumentality of moral rule and practice. For them there is no higher achievement than that of the love of the Lord but this is not the result of conscious planning. It is essentially a doctrine of election. The souls who are called to the charmed circle of the Lila need not have grounded themselves in any orthodoxy. What is the terminus of the Nārāyaṇa-Bhakta is the point of departure of the Puṣṭi-Bhakta. All prudential motives are thrown overboard by such a devotee. He does not love the Lord because he will thereby triumph over the ills of life. Nor is this love born out of an anxiety to abide by the Vedic injunction. It is spontaneous. It is not the end product of a series of actions, attitude and motives which constitute Nāvāla Bhakta. Here the very restlessness of the devotee becomes his asset.

The Saddha Puṣṭa Bhaktas are those who have come to the terminal point of Puṣṭi Marga, and have entered into the kṣetra Līlā of the Lord.

In the path of Puṣṭi even the Nārāyaṇa type of devotion which presupposes moral earnestness and perseverance is dismissed along with Śāma and Yogo as being inadequate to the achievement of the highest and Gopi are the exemplars of this love.

1. भूषणम्, पद 16। (असे राजूरु तैसे रालू)। पद 16। (कहीं अंग कहीं गोवं दर आऊँ)
2. प्रस्थित सो लम्ब स्निब्ध, प्र. 39।
3. भाव, प्र. 39।
It is in Bhramara-Gita that the situation is captured in all its haunting pathos. Uddhava lectures the Gopis on the transcendent character of the Divine, on how the real Krishna dwells within, how the details of his biography so hauntingly recalled by them do not apply to the real Krishna who is super-historical and not a creature accessible to the eyes of flesh. Uddhava is a Nirgunite and believes that the final aim of life is mergence in the Absolute and it is achievable only through the meditational practices of Yoga supplemented by a discriminative grasp of the Real as distinguished from the ephemeral. He tells them that their infatuation is silly. They have wound the forms of Krishna round their hearts but these are all illusory. The supreme Principle is not in any likeness. Brahman is the Unborn, the Unmanifest Reality that dwells undivided in the little grain of sand and the heart of man. Only Yoga and contemplation can unveil this Reality. No maudlin prayer can warm or quicken it into a sentimental response to the human petitioner for unearned grace.

The pure mind is the gateway to the Absolute. Uddhava is insistent that unless the mind is redeemed and Jnanayoga resorted to, there is no hope for them. The Gopis in the Bhramara-Gita of Nanda enter into a debate with Uddhava about Nirguna and Saguna but break down in the midst of the argument on account of the uprush of their love for Saguna Krishna, who is not the conclusion of the dialectic but the romantic cow-herd boy who of moon-lit nights held revelry with them on the banks of the Yamuna echoing to the notes of the flute.

1. तदानुभावं तदानुभावं, प. 175, पर 9. Also p. 174, पर 6. He is not a man but only plays as being one.

2. हेमक के ’प्रवर्तके खरे ’ त्रिगुणांतर ज्ञान ज्ञाते हि पाये पशुबल - पद 8-9. आदि. प. 175, पर 11.

3. तस्मै अन्तु भिन्न सर्वं सत्त्वीं। तोहः जयं जयं सत्त्वि सर्वाति। अन्ते हलਪोल मधुमारीं। नवनेव इबेर विशर एवर इबेर। प्रहरीलक्ष्मे १५७.
Uddhava is overwhelmed by this love although the argument by itself could not have converted him. In Suradasa the Gopis do not pit reason against reason, but it is by giving tongue to the anguish of their heart betrayed by Krishna, who went away without telling them of his intentions, that they seek to silence the garrulous dialectician. Here we find the human soul in an agony of pain. This is love's anguish at its most pathetic. "The eyes yearn for a the sight of Hari. These vapid theories of yours seek to lessen the intensity of this yearning. These messages of Yoga only whet the edge of their anguish. Lead us to where the child is sipping milk out of his cup of fresh leaves. Don't try to ply your yogic be-at here; this stream is dry." The Gopis protest against the effort of Uddhava to pronounce the deliverances of the heart to be untrustworthy. Yoga is for them spurious stuff which they won't allow Uddhava to pass off on them. It is a bag of tricks and Uddhava is a pedlar of fraud. Uddhava can understand only the language of deification & the spiritual life for him the shedding of creatureliness. But for Gopis it is participation in the dynamics of Divine Ananda. The effort of Uddhava to persuade them to tread the 'via negativa' and to starve all the impulses which after all have been implanted in their hearts by the Divine Himself, is revolting.

1. प्रीति गोपके जो वेट तेज ऊपयोगो से पूर्यो।
   गायत्रि गुन गोपके निर्मल, उन्नति में पूर्यो।।
   श्र्यार्थानांशाशास्त्र, पा.10, अ.156

2. अज्ञात, प.20, पर 42

3. अयो गोष्ट बोधो कथोपारी।
   तरी तेषु अन ज्ञान ज्ञानी ज्ञान ज्ञानी।॥
   अलोक पा.25 अ.929

4. ऊपयो! निविन्त और निविन्त।
   तव यथा ज्ञान-मोर हम ज्ञानी हैं।॥
   अलोक पा.135, पर 135; अलोक पा.135
Uddho, the eyes are drenched in love; looking out intently on the path Krsna is to come by, it is hard for them to get even a wink of sleep. You are a shrewd person; you can well see how it is raining though the rainy season has not yet arrived. What is your will with us, poor folk? Give up this insipid talk of the knowledge of the Absolute. Find out a way whereby we may again draw nigh unto the Lord of Sura. The Brhamara-Gita is a Testament of Sura the Pusti Bhakta. The Gopis are resourceless and shiftless. Though Mathura is only a few miles away they will not up and make their way thither. This does not mean that they are a pack of idlers indulging in a luxury of grief. It is an illustration of the cardinal tenet of the Pusti school that it is for the Lord Himself to stoop, succour and lift up those who have flung themselves unreservedly upon His bosom. This state of anguish is the way as well as the goal.

1. कठोर् अनिविष्कृता, प्रहि अनुरागी
सपना मय जोगति अरो तेसरे, कृतं न लागी
बिन पापस पापस चले आरी देखर हों पवित्रान
यहू धरा दियो बाहर हो? शांतू नील ज्ञान
कृहु प्रिय समाधि शुद्ध मने के जानस त्वच तुह्याबे
ओत नित्यें तूर पर हम को लो मधु कहू उपात
धूसराग: २३ ४१७५

2. दीनराासु: , पृ४६५, विशा नून साहित्य, p.556. In the realm of sadhana the distinction between literal and anagogic levels of reference has always to be kept in mind.
It is not quite correct to say that Vaishnava tradition clung implicitly to the letter of the Veda and stood as the sentinel of that tradition which was being assailed by Nirgunite heterodoxy. Both traditions existed side by side and it would have been strange if they had not impinged on each other and rubbed the edges off each other. The Vaishnava too like the Nirgunite is sure that when love dawns all distinctions based on birth and caste go by the board.

He too knew that Divine love is not accessible to mere erudition and intellectual exercise. This love pulses in his blood, streams from his eyes, pours from his lips in strains of deathless melody. No where can the Vaishnava find the treasure he seeks except at His feet. In a well-known Bada Sarga condemns himself leaving the Supreme God Krishna runs after godlings. "Who but a nitwit will have a well dug when the celestial Gangā is flowing near by." His soul is like the bird abroad a vessel in mid-ocean who after winging the unending deserts of water has perforce to return to the self-same ship. This love is not mere adolescent effusion. It is kin to the anguish of the spirit. Only who have known the torments can taste the sweets of Divine love. He who goes in for love goes in for sorrow too. "Not till the seed dissolves itself into the earth can it blossom forth. As long as the pitcher is not baked in fire it cannot hold water. As long as the warrior does not brave the volleysing arrows on the field of battle he cannot mount the solar chariot. Even so as long as the soul is not tempered by the anguish of separation it is alien to the reality of divine love."

1. नाकाश देसु नारायणे कुजधडात्रि त्र्यग्नये (नन्देन्द्रसंहारः 072)
2. लब करि भागि एक, पल रामबन्दन रफ़ि दौरे (प्राची, प्रयोग-या 0 प. 437)
3. नूलेखार, पर 168
4. लक्ष्मी, पर 4604.
The Lord is of love all compact and it is due to love that He descends to the sphere of mortality to help his devotees. It is love which makes Him put on the mortal guise and play at being a man among men. "Mura is love's bond; at love's commandment He assumed the garb of a dancer; out of love He upraised the great mountain. Love is the cure-all for worldly misfortunes. There is nothing that it cannot accomplish, raising the mind of man above its chronic beggarliness it redeems him from slavery to external circumstance. The slaves of desire have to thank themselves for their plight; by taking to Bhakti they can walk free through the domain of time. It is the lack of Bhakti which chains us to the whirligig of transmigration. It is human life alone that gives us an opportunity to fit ourselves for the supreme joy of beatitude.

Our manhood consists in the consecration of all that we are and have to Him who is the source of all that is. The Lord does not heed the outer form and station, and the artificial grades and ranks of society. The lovers of the Lord are one fraternity.

Without the transfiguring touch of this divine passion japa and tapa, all earthly affections. The world cannot take the measure of those whose love leads them to abandon all for the sake of the Lord.

Vaisnava is one who has felt the transport of this love and has made over his being to it.

1. [citation]
2. [citation]
3. [citation]
4. [citation]
5. [citation]
The primary emotions at work in Bhakti is 'Prema' or love. The Bhakta translates all worldly relations into the terms of Divine love. For the Bhakta Divine love is not a copy of earthly love but is the archetype of which earthly love is an image and to which it tries to approximate. The love of the soul for her Lord is not after one given pattern which remains changeless whatever the variations in individual temperament and endowment. The various forms of love known to man can be used as figures to shadow forth the love of the soul for her Lord. The love of servant and master, of parent and child, of friends and lovers for each other—all these forms of love can be used as vehicles of a higher love. These four types of love (that between servant and master, between parent and child, between lovers and between friends) are known to the theologians of the Bhakti school as Vatsalya, Sakhyya, Dasyya, and Madhura. All these forms of love are to be transmuted into corresponding types of Divine love.

In the School of Vallabha the Lord can be approached by the devotee in any of the above four ways, with the characteristic mentality of a servant, a parent, a friend or a lover. When the Lord is assigned the role of a child the devotee identifies himself with one of the parents, generally with the mother for the love of the mother is of a finer grain than that of the father. Suradasa and Parmanandadasa are known for their portrayal of the childhood of Krsna.
The Sagunite Sadhaka holds that whatever the form of our approach to the Divine we cannot escape seeing Him in ways which are conditioned by our human modes of knowing. "Part of the definition of man is that he is father, master, son: these are not relations super-added to his humanity but are integral to it. To know man is to know him as the centre of a web of relations." Since to know Him as a relation-less naught is impossible, the Nirgunite, in spite of all His efforts to the contrary, does invest Him with certain attributes. Then why not hold Him with those bonds which hold human beings together, the bonds of love which, though single, assumes a multiplicity of forms in the world of human relations. The Sagunite poets again and again emphasise their orthodoxy; they tell us that they are not preaching any new-fangled doctrine and that their teachings are in consonance with Vedic tradition. They are sure that the Vedic tradition upholds the Sagunite approach to the Divine in love and reverence.

What was the motive idea behind the efforts of the devotee of the Sagunie School to portray the Divine form? The reason is not hard to seek. God is Truth and Goodness, no doubt, that is, He is the source and guarantor of those values which we seek to embody in moral conduct and in our quest for knowledge. But He is beauty, too: He is the


2. supra pp. 76, 179.

3. Vide infra 348 n (Fork-lift, No. 1).

4. *Ahir in a Dark-hum Bolte* represents He darkening.
impulsive force behind those stirrings which the sight of beauty awakens in us. Beauty evokes love; these two are inseparable like substance and shadow. Beauty as a value functions on many planes—physical, moral, spiritual—and the perception of spiritual beauty invalidates the contention of the ascetic that beauty is a trap and that the lower of the beautiful is a weakling unable to rise from the level to higher level of Sadhana. It is this fact which is not comprehended in its entirety by the orthodox Vedantin and the Nirguṇita.

The ascetic knows the weight and driving force of the moral ideals entertained by man; he knows how intense can be the aspiration of the questing spirit of man for knowledge but he disregards the sovereign status of the love of beauty in the hierarchy of man's mental endowments. Here the Saguṇita is a better psychologist. While the ascetic starves the instinct for beauty and in doing so gives an unhealthy twist to the mind, the Saguṇita feeds it on the fontai beauty that lights up things below.

Man's hunger for beauty in its various aspects is quenchless. The Puritan in his attempt to capture the Kingdom of Heaven by force tries to take a leap over the wide-flung snare of earthly beauty, but not unfrequently hurts himself. Those who have a wider vision and a sounder psychology try to turn this snare into a stairway.

1. Of the Eleven Śāstris—Types of Attachment to the Lord—

The eleven śāstras, according to [नृपिद्धा नृष (8 2) अल्पेन, सर्वबी],

- विभागार्य, दानवी, वि-वी, तत्त्वी, निर्माणी, भवानी, प्रजापति, शेष, नारायण, अतीत, नला, नन्द, नवरात्रि, समर्पित, ताराग्नि, प्रतारात्रि, राजा, राजपति, नानानाथ, नक्षत्र.
Bhakti is the way par excellence to the Divine. The Bhakta is sure that other ways known to tradition—the practice of Yoga and of austerities, the incessant mangling of His names, the various types of sacrifice enumerated in the Vedic canon—cannot compare Bhakti in their capacity to promote the theocentric life. Spinoza said that passion cannot be killed by thought but only by a more powerful passion. In a conflict between conceptual activity and some overmastering urge of our passion, passion always prevails. A dualism between thought and passion is not conducive to a healthy mentality.

The Vajrayanists taught that passion could be eradicated only by passion as is extracted from the bleeding foot by means of another thorn. The cult of Bhakti is based on a similar insight. It is not by curbing the play of the mind but by releasing it for higher objectives that we are able to escape the compulsive pressure of the satanic forces within. We are not so much repelled by the world as drawn by the Lord. Here 'vairagya' is not the end but only a by-product of Bhakti. The Sopas show us that this love can flourish even in the absence of all pretensions to intellectuality. If the Sopas have risen superior to the world and its attractions it is not by an assiduous practice of the stoical virtues. It is their love of the Higher Beauty which has protected them against the downward pull of the lower attractions.

1. शुद्धि प्रक्रिया, p. 262, 316, 362
2. "A true knowledge of good and evil cannot restrain any emotion in so far as the knowledge is true, but only as far as it is considered an emotion." (Spinoza: Ethics, IV, 7, 11, p. 152, Everyman's Library Edition)
4. नामाञ्चल रूपान्तर, 14 (नासा नर रामायण साहित्य, एनसीएस)
all the levels of our empirical existence are transited by this devotion. The lower members are weaned from their abject cravings and led to feed on the supernal beauty of the Lord. The mind contemplates His glories and the heart comes to know all the pangs of separation and the ecstasies of union, but these pangs and ecstasies are consecrated by their reference to the Lord. The ego stripped of its earthliness enters into the play of the Lord which knows no cessation or abatement. The ears thrill to the notes of the woodland flute; the hands and feet find themselves missioned to discover the ritual of worship in all that they do. Not only are the physical and psychical aspects of human nature lifted to a higher significance, but the social instincts too are sublimated. The Lord is discovered as friend, lover, son, master. In Vaishnava the passions are seen not so much consecrated as tamed by the will. In the Bhakti of the Puṣṭi Pārsa there is complete abdication of the personal will.

The concept of Divine Grace is the pivotal principle of Puṣṭi Bhakti. This concept does not stand for the complete repudiation of human endeavour, for human endeavour itself takes a particular orientation in accordance with the wishes of the Unseen.

Controller. We cannot yearn for the Lord unless He desires us to approach Him. The Grace of God and the contemplation of man are two ways of phrasing one fact.

1. "When He extends His highest Grace He keeps him near Himself to enjoy the sweet emotion of His service."
   Basu Gupta: A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol IV, p. 369

2. "According to the Śaṅkara School, sins are destroyed by the practice of the Śādhanas. . . . To the . . . . P. T. O.

3. "According to the Māyāda School, sins are destroyed by the practice of the Śādhanas. . . . To the . . . . P. T. O.
The will of the Lord can never be crossed; His power is absolute. While Maryada Parama, the operation of the Lord's will subject to the nature of individual conduct, the Lord of Pusti knows no such restrictions on His will. The way of Pusti is not grounded in aversion or in an intellectual grasp of the transient nature of the world. The perception of the futility of human endeavor is the point of departure of the conventional Bhakta. All things pass; the quest of pleasure is more often than not the pursuit of an hallucination. Pleasure when attained turns to ashes in the mouth or brings pain in its wake. That is why the ordinary Bhakta asks us to avert our eye from this sorry show and contemplate the Eternal Presence and address songs of devotion to the Transcendent Person. Such a devotion becomes sovereign over his impulses; passions cannot sway him from the path of love. Such a devotion is not ineligible for Moksa but this Moksa is insipid in comparison with the fullness of felicity that comes to the Pusti Bhakta. In Pusti's self-surrender is the keynote of Svadham; we have to offer our body, mind and intellect and what is achievable through their exercise. It is not Avidya that is the root of evil although we find an illuminating critique of Avidya in Vallabha. Ultimately it is forgetfulness of our relation to the Lord that is the cause of ill. This very forgetfulness may be regarded as Avidya which is not the benighted state of the mind but the heart's imperception of Divine grace and its felicity.

1. गौतम, जयधन्व, भक्ति नृत्य, प. 198

2. Swami Shrikrithe this note in "Vinayapada" (Vide V. C. No. 27, 46, 53, 62, 102)

3. दुर्गा, प. 199 - 200