Chapter 1

An Outline

of

Origin and development

of

Vedānta & S'uddhādvaita Brahmasāda

of

S'ri VallabhaCārya

(i) Introductory

Max Muller once rightly remarked that an average Indian is a philosopher. But it is also equally true that an Indian is not totally averse to worldly happiness. He is taught to be a man of means, a happy householder. But at the same time he is asked to keep in mind his true nature, his true home, and not to be attached to and entangled in the mundane existence. A balanced outlook of life is noticed in the institute of the four stages of life (ās'rmas). Hundreds of saints have preached in their own way, the religious path of life and kept the lamp of spirituality burning. There is, consequently, a diversity of faiths and practices, but there is also the unity of purpose among all, viz., the chief aim of life is self-realisation.

1 vide... प्रवात्यस प्रशस्त्यस: | पृष्ठम ना प्रमाण- T.U.1.11.1
In India, there are a number of religious sects and faiths. They have their own philosophical and theological literature. S'uddhādāvaita Brahmāvāda popularly known as Puṣṭimārga is such a sect, having its own vast literature, mostly produced in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and a little of which is still being produced. S'uddha-advaita philosophy was propounded by Vallabhācārya (VL) in the first quarter of the 16th century A.D., which witnessed a great spiritual awakening in India. Before we look into that philosophy, we would survey the development of Vedānta in India.

(ii) Human search of Truth in the Vedas

The ultimate aim of human existence is to find out the root cause of Existence, to fathom the mystery of the gigantic phenomenon of this universe, and thereby to search for lasting happiness. What we are, whence we come and why we exist and what is our end - these are the eternal questions arising in human mind and search for the answers to these questions has

2. Cf. "It is doubtful if any family in the history of the entire world has produced so much literature, within a period of two or three centuries as that of his." M.C. Parekh: Shri Vallabhachary, P-302.
not ended upto date. This search forms the subject of philosophy and Religion.

The Origin of Philosophy and Religion is shrouded in mystery. It is not known when man started to inquire into the mystery of the universe and human existence. But the latest studies in this field have shown that the earliest attempts to solve the mystery are noted in the Rgveda, the oldest document, religious as well as literary.

Man turns to the realm of thought, when his physical needs are satisfied. The Vedic seer, it is said, lived in the fertile region of Saptāśindhu and therefore, did not find much difficulty in satisfying his physical needs. There was enough time for him to turn his eye towards the different universal phenomena. He observed the regular sunrise and sunset; he looked with wonder at the canopy of the sky studded with star-jewels, and enjoyed the beauties of dawn. He heard the singing rivulets and saw the regular changes of the seasons. He noticed with interest the regular growth of grass and herbs even after destruction. At the same time, there was another experience too. There were, at times, sweeping torrents of rain and devastating floods; there were at times droughts of rain, all-consuming fall of lightning and destructive gales of wind. The elements
were at times agreeable (anukūla) and at times cruel and unfavourable (pratikūla). He had no control over the unconquerable mighty powers of nature. He experienced the inability of human being to set right the wrongs wrought by nature. He was at the mercy of these different moods of nature. This led him to think that every phenomenon of nature has something superhuman, something divine within, it. He thought of some divine power, underlying each and every natural phenomenon. There were thus, different gods and goddesses presiding over the different forces of Nature. There was the sun-god, Vāyu and Maruts (wind-gods), God Agni, Rain-gods Parjanya and Indra, goddess Sarasvati and others. Even the plant Soma was looked upon as a god. These gods and goddesses were fancied to have human forms, paraphernalia and aspirations too. But everything connected with them was divine, superhuman. Personification of the natural phenomena, or anthropomorphism, thus, was the first stage towards understanding the universal phenomena.

These gods were propitiated with different offerings for happy and prosperous life. Hymns were composed in praise of their exploits and many Rōs give us an account of such incidents. As time passed, a vast mythology was created around the gods.
The simple way of offering to gods, later developed into intricate rituals, called sacrifice, and a definite set of rules and regulations was formed to invoke and propitiate gods. The Brāhmaṇa texts contain the subject-matter of such different sacrificial activities. On the other hand, when there arose a legion of gods, questions like कौन देवाय हिंदुता विषय were asked. The Vedic Seer thought, which of the gods would be mightiest and the highest and who would be the agent of the universe. Some hymns described that Indra was the highest god, some described Varuna as the highest and some pointed out that Prajāpati was the Lord of the universe. Thus, Henotheism or Kathenoism seemed to be the second stage towards understanding the universal phenomena.

Some Sūktas of the Rg. attempt to find out the origin of the creation. For example, the Ap-Sūkta, the Hiranyagārba-Sūkta, the Purusā-Sūkta etc., tell us that it is the water, the Hiranyagarbha and the Purusā respectively, who is the prime cause of the universe. The riddle-hymn, which presents the problem of the Universe, tries to solve the problem, by saying that Truth is one, and is variously described by the learned. The Purusā-Sūkta points out that the Purusā

3. Cf. एवं घ्राव विप्र विघ्न पदलि | -- -- RV-I-164-46
is all pervading and the sole creative agency, while
the Nasadiya Sukta is a bold attempt to show the
mystery of creation and existence still demanded
explanation. Rv., thus, presents the polytheistic,
monotheistic and pantheistic tendencies in the development
of philosophical and religious thought in India.

Two lines of thought were clearly visible
during the Vedic age. One of them developed into a
full-fledged sacrificial cult, the Karma-Kanda of the
Vedic religion. According to this line of thought,
sacrifice was the sole aim of life and the right
performance of sacrifice leads to bliss in the life
after death. But doubts were raised as regards the
efficacy of the sacrifice. And the other line of thought
noticed in the first and the tenth Mandalas of the Rv.,
by the time, develops into the cult of the knowledge
of Truth, the Jnana-Kanda of the Vedic religion.

The Aranyakas and the Upanisads form the
Jnana-Kanda of the Vedic literature. They are really
the glory of ancient India. They are the bold attempts
at solving the mystery of the Universe. At places, one
may find contradictions in statements of different
Upanisads, but they agree in one point that Brahman is
the creator of this Universe and He is omni-present

Ommi-Scient and Ommi-potent. All the elements, the nature and all the beings are forms of Brahman, are created from Brahman and ultimately merge into Brahman. Thus, if the objective universe is Brahman, the reality in the individual beings, men as well as animals, is the self, and is not different from Brahman. This Highest Reality is beyond death and the summum bonum of life is the realization of the self or the Brahman.

Then, the question arises, why Brahman creates the Universe? He creates it, because He wants to sport.

Different Upas treat of the way to realization and describe the abode of the Highest Reality, the Brahman. They also describe the svarupa of the soul, the world and god. Herein we find some contradictory statements, which are responsible for the origin of the different systems of Vedanta philosophy later on. The Vedic seers never attempted to form a definite system of philosophy. Different seers taught their pupils what they realised to be the Truth through their meditation and intuitive

5. Cf. सति वा विद्यार्थी मूलानि वाचर्यावे... I-TU 3-1 and सति विद्यार्थी ग्रहव... - Čandogya U.3-14-1
6. Cf. वर्णो नित्य: शारवतोऽवे पुराणो न इत्येति उत्पादने मूलावेच् Katha U.1-2-18
7. Cf. यथा नेन रहे तस्मादकामो न समस्य दित्योपेयत् Brhadā.1-4-3
and तद्वेषत बहु स्वात् प्राप्येति... - Čandogya U.8-2
8. Cf. न तः सूर्य पारि - -... - Katha U. 2-5-15
experiences. So, it is futile to chalk out a definite system of philosophy from the Up.s. But then, why have the different later philosophers done so? The answer lies in the convention in ancient India. It was accepted that the source of knowledge is the Vedas and every philosopher had to base his philosophical doctrine on the Vedas i.e. Up.s. Not only that, but later on, it was considered imperative on all philosophers to prove one-ness of the Ups., Gītā and the Brahmasūtras. Hence, all the acāryas have adopted the same method.

(iii) The Sūtra - period

After the Upanisadic period was over, attempts were made to systematise the vedic knowledge and religion and put into a nutshell. These attempts were made during the period, called the Sūtra-period. During that period, S'rañṭa, Grīhya, Dharma and other Sūtras were composed, because that was the easiest way to remember the rules and regulations and the doctrines in the absence of any other way like writing and printing. During this period different schools of philosophy, such as Nyāya, Svākyya etc. were propounded. Of these schools, the Uttara-Mimamsā is the most important school, known as Vedānta. In it, we find an attempt to summarise and systematise the teachings of the principal oldest (eleven or thirteen)Ups. Uttara-Mimamsā is also known as Vyāsa-Sūtra also, but the popular name is Brahmasūtra. The date of this period cannot be settled in the absence of any authentic evidence.
It is generally conceded that the period falls between 600 B.C. to 200 A.D.

(iv) The Bhasya-period

The Sutra-period was followed by the Vritti and Bhasya-period. This period saw attempts to interpret the sutras as well as formulate systems out of them. A number of writers - Vritti-karas and Bhasya-karas are mentioned in the Madhva-Vijaya-prakāśīka of Nāyāyaka Pandita-cārya and in the Yatindra-mata-dīpīka of S'rinivāsa. Out of these, Bodhāyana is well known as Vritti-kāra. There are also Upavarsa (who epitomised Bodhayan's Vritti), Brahmanandī (who wrote Vartikas and is known as Vākysākāra), Dravida (who wrote a Bhasya on Brahmanandi's Vartika), Brahmadatta (known as Tika-kāra and propounder of Śrīnārī and Bārthābādavāda and Sāra-nābādavāda), Bārtṛ-prapācāra (who wrote a Bāṣāya on the Vedānta-Sutras, not not available now, and who propounded Pādenādīvāda and Śrīnārī and Bārthābādavāda), Bhāskarācārya (whose philosophy is known as Śrīnārī and Bārthābādavāda or Śrīnārī and Bārthābādavāda and whose period is circa 800 A.D.), and Yādavaprakāśa (who flourished in the 11th century and propounded a view similar to that of Bhūskarācārya). They have rendered a great service to the cause of the Vedānta philosophy, but unfortunately all of their works are not available.

9. Cf. G.H. Bhatt: Brahma-Sūtra - Aṇubhasya, Chapter one (Gujarati Translation 1945 A.D.) and P.V. Kane’s article in the Fifth Oriental Conference Report (P.937-953), titled, Commentators of Brahma-Sūtras.
to-day. The first complete and marvellous Bhāṣya, known as Saṇkaracārya-Bhāṣya, on the Brahma-Sūtras was by Saṇkaracārya (788 - 820 A.D.). His doctrine is known as Kevala-dvaita and also as Vivarta-vāda or Māyā-vāda. According to Saṇkaracārya, Brahman is the only and ultimate Reality and all the apparent phenomena of this universe is but a Māyā, a mirage. Soul is the reflection of the Brahman into Māyā. Truth is the means of realization of Brahman.

Rāmānuja (1017 - 1137 AD.) wrote Śrībhāṣya on the Brahma-Sūtras, in which he criticised the Vivartavāda of Saṇkaracārya. His doctrine is known as Vis'istadvaita. According to him, soul is a part of Brahman, but after realization, the soul does not merge in the Brahman. The soul does not lose its individuality, but maintains its separate individuality. Rāmānuja maintains identity between cait and acit and says that the Brahman is cid-acid-vis'īṣṭa.

Nimbārka (circa 1200 AD.) wrote a Bhāṣya called Vedanta-Parijata, on the Brahma-Sūtras, and propounded what is called Dvaitādvaita-vāda or Bhedabheda-vāda. Bhāskara's doctrine is sopādhika bhedabheda, while Nimbārka's doctrine is real bhedabheda. According to him, there are three elements - cait, acit and Brahman. The first are in a way, one with Brahman,
but differ from Brahman, because they have no ānandāms'a and cid-āms'a fully developed in them. Hence the doctrine is called dvaitadvata-vāda.

Madhvācārya (1197 - 1276 A.D.) wrote a Bhāṣya, called Pūrṇaprajñā-Bhāṣya or Māh-bhāṣya, on the Brahma-Sūtras, and propounded the doctrine of duality (dvaita-vāda). He is the first bold philosopher to say that the soul, the world and God are not identical, but quite different from one another. He showed duality between God and the soul, God and the world, the soul and the world, one soul and another soul and also different forms of the world.

These three Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas vehemently criticise Ś'ankara's doctrine, consider the world as real and the Brahman as the Highest Reality, and preach Bhakti i.e. Bhagavat-prapatti, (of course, combined with knowledge,) to be the means of realization.

Ś'rīpati pandita (1160 A.D.) is said to have written Ś'rīkara-Bhāṣya, Śrīkantha is said to have written a commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras and Vijnānedra-bhikṣa has written Vijnānamrīta on the Brahma-Sūtras, but their doctrines have not become so well known. Caitanya did not write any philosophical work, but preached bhakti. The followers of his school believe in acintya-bhedābheda-vāda. After the passing away of Caitanya, Baladeva-Vidyābhūṣaṇa wrote Govinda-Bhāṣya and gave a philosophical system to the Caitanya Sampradāya.
\( \text{Vallabha (VL) wrote Anu-bhāṣya and probably Brhad-bhāṣya on the Brahma-Sūtras and propounded the doctrine of S'uddhādvaita, pure monism. It is one of the principal schools of Vedānta and is important as it surveys all other previous doctrines and established its doctrine after refuting other views.}

(v) The term S'uddhādvaita

The term S'uddhādvaita is explained in two ways.  

The term is a भूर्धवर्य compound, i.e. it is to be dissolved as युध्व च तद्व अद्वितम्, i.e. one and only element Brahman is quite pure, untouched by mayā and it is both cause and effect. The term is also a भूर्धवर्य compound, i.e. it is to be dissolved as युध्वोऽ अद्वितम्, i.e. oneness of (or absence of duality between) Brahman and the world. This philosophy is also called Brahmatvāda or S'uddhādvaita Brahma, because it recognizes Brahman, (and no other entity,) which manifests itself into this diverse universe.

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101 युध्ववर्यपदेभे: सःसाः: कौःतर्यः। बहुः युध्वोऽ अद्वितम्। ग्राह्यं: वाच्योत्तप्तिप्रभां। तुष्टं।
111 मायाविद्ययुध्ववर्यपदेभे: सःसाः: कौःतर्यः। बहुः युध्वोऽ अद्वितम्। ग्राह्यं: वाच्योत्तप्तिप्रभां।

- S'īrya Giridharaśī Ṣ'uddhādvaita Mārtanda, st. 27, 28.
(vi) **Vallabha's life and works**

As stated above, the propounder of pure monism is VL. According to the belief of the Sampradāya, he is the incarnation of god's face. It is said that God promised to take birth in the family of the Bhattas of Telangana i.e. Andhra, when 100 Soma-yāgas were over. VL's father Laksmana Bhatta completed the number, by performing 5 Soma-yāgas.

There are two views about his birth date. The most popular view is that he was born in 1555 V.S. (0.1479 A.D.) on the 11th day of the dark half of Vaiśākha, (Caitra, according to Gujarati Calendar). Another view, which is corroborated by the Caitanya school, is that he was born in 1529 V.S. The earliest reference to this view is found in the Kallola of Kalyāna Bhatta.

His forefathers lived in a small village, called Kānkārava, in Andhra, and belonged to Taittirīya branch of Black Yajurveda, and to the Bharadṛja Gotra. The Bhattas, viz. Yājña Nārāyaṇa, Gāṅgādhara, Ganaḍti, Vallabha and Laksmana Bhatta, performed 100 Soma-yāgas in all and it is said that when Laksmana Bhatta completed the 100th Soma-yāga, VL was born.

His father stayed at Banaras when VL was five years old. He was sent to Mādhavendra Puri of Madhva school for study. After 1½ years, Mādhavendra went to Vṛṣṇi region and so VL learnt, from Mādhava Tīrtha, the
philosophical systems of the day. When Lakṣmīnāraṇa Bhāttā came to Vīsyānagar, VL stayed at the Sarasvatī Bhandāra and learnt fully well both the Mīmanāsās. It is said that he came to be known as a learned philosopher by then, and wrote Tattvārtha-dīpa-nīpāda at a young age.

His father started for a pilgrimage in 1545 V.S. and died in 1546 at Lakṣmīna Bālājī. VL's elder brother had become an ascetic and so he had to bear the burden of the family.

After some time, with the consent of his uncle Janārdana, he started for a pilgrimage in North India. During this pilgrimage, he initiated Dāmodardēsa Harāsāni and Kṛṣṇāsāsa Meghāna and accepted them as his disciples, who always accompanied him at all places. When he was travelling in Ārakhandā, he experienced some mystic call for going to Vraja and having a dārsana of Śrī Nāthājī. He went to Gokula, where, on the 11th day of the bright half of Śrāvana (1548 V.S.) 13, he had a vision of Śrī Nāthājī who taught him the Gadya-Mantra and asked him to initiate divine souls with the mantra 14 and teach them the mode of worship. Here he heard of the event of

13. Cf. Nīja Varta No. 5, where the year is given as 1549 V.S. and also, Bāṇa Varta: P.12 (Edition by Dvārakadas Parikh).
the manifestation of S'ri Govardhana-nathaji on the mount giriraja (near Jatipura) and he went there. He knew the whole event in details from Sadu Pande of a small village Anyor, and experienced a similar divine call as he had experienced in Zarkhanda. He stayed for some days there and worshipped the Lord S'ri Nathaji.

He travelled in India thrice. He started from Vraja-region in 1549 V.S., went to Vidyanagar in Utkal, defeated Pandits in the assembly of the learned and established his doctrine. He went to Vrindavan, Jetubanda and other sacred places and read the Bhagvata at many places and ultimately came to giriraja and celebrated the anna-kuta festival there. Then he went to Badrika-S'rama and returned to his native place through Gujarat.

After staying for one year with his mother and uncle, he started for the second pilgrimage, with his mother. He went to Vraja and found that the temple of S'ri Nathaji was destroyed by Muslims. He got another temple prepared and instituted S'ri Nathaji again in the new temple. During this pilgrimage Sikandar Lodi came to know of VL's greatness and got his portrait (with three...
disciples) prepared by the painter Honahāra, which is still found in Kishangarh. It is said that when he went to Pandharpur, God Vithoba asked him to marry, so that he could take birth as his (Vithoba's) son. Then in 1560 V.S. he married Mahālaksmī, the daughter of Dāvan Bhatt of Kāshi. During his further journey, he came to Vijaynagar, where Kṛṣṇa Deva (who ruled during the period 1509-1529 A.D.) invited him for sāstrārtha, going on in his court. He defeated all other Pandits and was honoured as an Acārya. This incident is known as Kanakabhiseka. This incident took place in 1561 V.S. according to some and 1569 V.S. according to others, when VL was moving on the third pilgrimage.

He came in conflict with many scholars in Puri and he composed the verse 'पक्ष गर्भो देव्यायु गीत' and put it in the temple of Jagannātha to get his consent. It is reported that Lord Jagannātha showed his consent to the verse written by VL and all the pandits were made silent. Similarly, he defeated his opponents by Patrāvalambana in Kāshi.

18. Cf. Ishwarpriyasaad: History of Medieval India, P.564 foot note No.127
In 1566 or 1567 V.S. he made a permanent residence at Adel near Allahabad. During his travels he wrote some works, but it was mostly at Adel that he wrote his important works, such as the Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya, Subodhini, etc. During his pilgrimages, he read the Bhāgavata at some places and these places are known as the 84 seats (bēthakas).

He had two sons Gopinātha (birth 1567 or 1570 V.S.) and Vīttalānātha (birth 1572 V.S.). It is said that he had divine calls to leave this mortal world. In 1587 V.S. he went to Kāshi and became a Śānyāsī. Once he called his sons, gave them the best massage known as Ś'ikṣa-S'lokas, and plunged in the waters of the Ganges. People saw a brilliant flash rising high into the sky. It is reported that Lord Krishna himself appeared there and added 1½ stanzas to the 3½ stanzas of VL and completed the Ś'ikṣa-Ś'lokas.

There is no unanimity of opinion as regards the number of works of VL. No one has given full list of his works.21 The Yadunāth-digvijaya notes that VL

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20. Cf. Antahkarana - Irābhota of VL
21. Cf. S.N. Dasgupta: History of Indian Philosophy Vol. IV. He has not mentioned all available works of VL and has even wrongly mentioned some works, e.g. Sarvottam-Stotra and Tippani are ascribed to him.
has written 84 works. But the number of his available works is smaller than that. It is possible that the mystic number was attached to his (VL's) works on account of his greatness, without any respect for the correct figure of his works. At present the following works are ascribed to him:

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Dr. Desgupta ascribes to VL, शाबाध्यकारिका, बानंदाधिकरण, बार्त, एकान्तरक्त, वद, and परित्याख, but nowhere in Sampredyic literature, these works are found noted. प्रतिवीष is noted to be the work of VL by

22. Cf. चुरसेतिर दासाय: I —Quoted by H. Tandans Vārtā Sāhitya, P.120
23. Cf. History of Indian Philosophy Vol.IV, P.373
Sri Vasantram Shastri. In an old monthly, titled "Vrishi," are mentioned as VL's works. Similarly - 

All of the above-mentioned works are not available to-day, and we have no authentic proof to decide the veracity of their authorship. The most important of these works are the Anu-bhasya, the Nibandha, the Sixteen Treatises and the Subodhini.

The study of the works of VL reveals that he was a great philosopher, an original thinker and an inspiring religious preacher. In his system of philosophy, he has shown oneness of the soul, the world and god, and has well interpreted the vast phenomenon of the universe. He has indicated the true purpose of life and the path to realization, i.e. supreme bliss, the summum bonum of life.

(viii) Vallabha's Philosophy

VL's philosophy is, in short, as follows:

His philosophy attempts to show the true nature of the soul, the objective universe and the universal power

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i.e. Brahman which controls the whole sentient and non-sentient world, and also their relation. VL treats this subject in his Anu-bhashya and Nibandha.

According to VL, soul is atomic, but pervading (Vyapaka) and apart of Brahman (just as a spark is of Agni). When Brahman desired to manifest Himself and sport, He created the souls. Brahman has three attributes sat, cit and ananda. Souls are made of the same stuff as Brahman, but they differ from Brahman in degrees. Souls have the attribute of ananda, unmanifest or suppressed in it, and therefore, they do not experience bliss. They are eternal, jiva and sentient. They have the capacity to do actions and have to experience fruits of those actions. They are not the reflection (pratibimba) or the appearance (abhasa), but have true existence. They are one or identical with Brahman by the relation of part and a whole (amsamsi).

According, VL, the manifest universe is not non-being or non-existent (mithya). It is as true as the souls and not maya. S’rutis like, ब्रह्म ब्रह्माण्ड ब्रह्म, यदि का इमानि पूर्व भूलानि ब्रह्मवत्, etc. state that the universe is not different from Brahman. The non-sentient world has the विदेश and भान्दरं unmanifest. VL has severely

27. Cf. TDN Chap. I., St. 28-30, 54, 55 and 57.
criticised the S'ankara School on this point. He was bold enough to say that the apparent non-sentient
world is nothing but Brahman Himself. Modern research in Nuclear Physics has proved that atoms in an element
always move and some Indian Scientists have shown that synthetic products evince attributes of life.

VI gives an original interpretation of what is untrue in the world. He shows that what is untrue
is बन्धु and not the बन्धु, which is ब्रह्मस्वरूप. He shows a clear distinction between बन्धु and बन्धु.
बन्धु is the effect of the cause, which is Brahman, Brahman
is Truth and therefore the effect.

28. Cf. तद्भव-प्रृत्येक प्राप्ति भवत्कारः: तद्भव मायमथवत्वं । - ibid St. 23
29. Cf. Vide in this connection a new item in the Times of India, dated 24.4.63. The scientists, Dr. Krishna
Bahadur ...(etc.).. found that amino-acids formed from simple
gaseous mixtures in the presence of sunlight continued
their chemical activities, forming peptides and proteins,
from which evolved eel-like structures having some
attributes of life.

In this connection, an article, "Where did we
come from?" by Bryant Evans, in the Times of India, dated
20.11.63, is worth reading.

This shows that the apparent non-sentient
things have sentience unmanifest in them.
must be true. संसार is the effect of ne-science of the soul. The soul forgets its true form and nature and cultivates untrue relations between soul and soul, on account of its avidyā, its ego and sense of mine-ness.

संसार is thus भएतामनवात्मक. When the soul realizes its true form and nature, ego and mine-ness are destroyed and hence the संसार, too, gets destroyed but the jagat remains as it is. So, we find that when a person becomes jīvan-mukta, no worldly event touches him and he remains like a lotus-leaf in water, and the world goes on with its own affairs. To him, the jagat becomes भगवत्ववृष्टिक्ष and its affairs appear as भगवत्वीत्. The sport the Almighty.

Brahman is Almighty, absolute, eternal, changeless, all-pervading, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and self-satisfied (सप्त-कृमा or पूर्व-कृमा). It is nirākāra as well as sākāra. It is rasākāra or anandākāra, and has no physical attributes and body. It is nirguna because He has no mundane qualities. He is saguna because He has divine, superhuman qualities. His attributes are endless (अनियोत-भर्मा). He is of the form of sat, cit and ananda. So VL describes Brahman as having contradictory

30. Cf. प्रायं दरिद्राय: अयुण्डो निर्मुः स्व: ।- TDI.II.84.
31. Cf. वर्णयार्थं तु वा भूमययायमयमयम । सर्वं सत्यं स्वतं । स्वर्णं नु भूयवयत्व ।- TDI.I.65.
attributes. This is not baseless. VL derives this attribute of Brahman from aphorisms like उपमन्युपदेशातुि त्विर्हुःसत्पि — and वात्मनि स-चिवः निगमार्थ रिहि — and स्रूतिति like एकै रूप बुध्या: क्रोति 35 and क्षण-शरीरीवातु महति पहुँचान् 36 and कालोनि दु:सब व्रष्टि सप्नानि —

Brahman creates the universe with all its diversity and variety out of himself. The स्रूति says that व रंगृपछ्छा, व एकयो न रमि — एकै बुधु स्थायु प्राणुपेित। — 38 So, He is both the instrumental and material cause of the universe. 39 But He

32. Cf. विर्गुलवशस्यके नामाश्रया — TN. I-71.
विर्गुलवशस्यके नामाश्रया भागवती महिमा। — Sub. 2-6-1-7.
विर्गुलवशस्यके नामाश्रया भुजा जाय। — AnBh. 1-1-3.
38. Tu — 2-6-1, Chandogya, 6-2-3, Brhadāraṇyaka, 1-4-3.
is not affected by the diversity of the universe. It is only His sport. After creating the universe for His sport, Brahman does not undergo any change, just as a spider weaves a web out of its mouth but does not undergo any change. So, VL's theory of causation is called विनिर्माणवाद, as against the तक्तहार्यवाद of S'ankara. The relation between Brahman and the universe is true and the effect i.e. the universe is true. Hence, both तक्तहार्यवाद and तक्तहार्यवाद - are accepted in the philosophy of VL. VL does not believe in the theory of new creation (उत्पत्तिवाद) but believes in the theory of self-manifestation and self-concealment.

40. Cf. श्री आरोबिंदो - BS- 2-1-33. The Modern seer Shri Aurobindo, too, believes in this theory:
Maya is a power of Brahman. The whole universe is nothing but Brahman with some attributes and qualities manifest and some concealed. For example, the trees, grass and other static things are Brahman, with cit and ananda concealed in them. The soul has ananda concealed in it. As long as the soul is concealed, the world is unmanifest in it. By the powers of svirbhava and tirobhava, Brahman goes on sporting. The gigantic universe is explained by this theory in the Suddhadvaita Philosophy.

Brahman has three forms: bhedavı́dik, bhedātmaik, and brahmacarik. The first form is Lord Kṛṣṇa, Pūruṣottama, the Purnānanda, and can be attained by his grace. The second is Aksara-Brahman, and can be attained by true knowledge. The third is the jagat, the world of human experience. The second form has all the qualities of the Pūruṣottama, minus some bliss. It is, in a way, lower Brahman which acts and becomes manifest in the form of conscious and unconscious universe. There is also another form of para-brahman, called antaryāmin. Aksara

काशीरतीरिया भाषा: महत्वः — TDN, II-140
42. Cf. सम भगवदो जान्नयतो बस्यस्माती भ्रात्स्थितयथा: Sub-2-5-12.
creates jada and jiva and antaryamin accompanies each soul and becomes witness. Like Aksara Brahman, it has some bliss concealed. Each soul has, therefore, a capacity to experience bliss. The first form remains purusha and all bliss, but when there is a desire to sport, He becomes Aksara Brahman, but He remains greater than Aksara Brahman.44

VL has accepted the traditional prasthana as the means of proof (pramanas) for establishing his philosophy. He accepts their authority in their literal sense, for "our reason cannot protest against its dictates"45 He has proved in his Anubhava and TDN, the identity of view in the trio. But, at the same time, he accepts one more pramana, viz., Bhagavata and therefore in the Suddhadvaita philosophy prasthana is considered to be the pramana, 46 and the later is to be taken as more prevailing than the former 47. He accepts the usefulness

44. Cf. Gita XV-18; Harivamsha - Bhavisya Parva 17-85 and 10-69 (Gita Press edition); and TDN-II-94 and also Siddhantamuktavali.
also वैदिक परमात्मा बलार्यमािमयम्या न बदति। - वास्माश -१-१-२
46. Cf. वैद्य: कृष्णवास्तवानि वामास्त्राणि लञ्च लञ्च चै। समाजि भागणा भाषायण प्रमाणं तदांतुष्टयम् ! -- TDN-I-7
47. Cf. उल्लरं पूर्वबद्धवास्तव परिवर्तनितः ! -- - TDN-I-8
of the smrtis, epics, purānas, etc. inasmuch as they help the devotee in his path of devotion. 48

The soul, as stated above, has bliss latent in it and therefore it experiences misery in life. It is circumscribed by the five-fold avidya, which can be destroyed by the five-fold vidya and gets emancipated. The sole aim of life is, therefore, to know the nature of one's true being, i.e. to attain salvation. That can be done only by the grace of God. 49 āhakti 50 is the only means to please God. According to VL, āhakti is different from upāsanā. The later has predominence of rules and regulations, while the former has selfless love predominant in it, 51 and rules and rituals have no importance. VL has accepted the nine types of bhakti in his system, but they are taken as śadhana-āhaktis.

प्रेमकिरण is the śadhya-āhakti. 52 It has three stages: प्रेम (love), बाह्यकिरण (complete attachment to the Lord) and व्यक्ति (intense passion - the stage of forgetting mundane existence and seeing the Lord everywhere). 53

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48. Vidyā Sūtra 10-16-33 and TAN 51 4, 56 & 83.
50. Cf. भक्तिवर्ण प्राप्युक्तिका ख्यास | — — — — Sub 3-29-12.
51. Cf. भाष्ट्रप्रशस्तिपुर्वकुस्तु: चर्याप्रकाशक:।
लेही भक्तिविद्वति प्रोक्तः तथा पुरुष: न जान्यता।।
TDN-I-42.
52. Cf. TDN - II - 220 and 226
53. व्याप्तुभवं विद्ये सिद्धि श्रवणं विदेशं सदा।
तत: प्रेम व्याप्तिभविषयं व सदा भवेत् ।। - BhV st. 3.
this case, Gopis are to be followed as an example. Those who have knowledge in predominance, reach the Aksara-brahman and those who have bhakti i.e. pure love for the Lord, are qualified to be partners in the divine sport, in the company of S'ri Krsna. Highest mukti, according to this doctrine, is not complete absorption into Brahman, but it is \\n
In spite of the efforts of the soul, the highest goal can be achieved only by the grace of the Lord, even knowledge can be had only by His grace, hence this sect is called Pustimarga i.e. \\n
According to VL there are three categories of souls: Pusti, Maryada and Pravahi, which can be interpreted as the three stages of development in the path of realization. There are sub-categories also, in accordance with the degrees of bhakti, jhansa and karma of the souls.

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54. Cf. सर्वध्यायं कृणाणां वरेण्यं नमस्ते। \\

55. Cf. पुष्पिन्द्रवर्ग च एव गयं कर्तरं स्त्रयायेऽस्माय भक्तिनिष्ठस्मातार्थम्। \\

56. Cf. भगवद्गीता च संकल्पं सदाय भक्तिमहत्वप्रर्थितं न प्राप्तं। \\

57. Cf. Vide पुष्पिन्द्रवर्ग पर्यायसमिदस।
Every religion has three aspects: philosophical, theological and ethical. Of course, religion and philosophy and ethics are inseparable in India, but it may be said that AnBh and TDN represent the philosophy of S'uddhadvaita Puṣṭi-marga, TDN and Patrāvalambana and Subodhini represent its theology and TDN (Chap. 2) and some of the Sixteen Treatises represent its ethics. VL wrote AnBh in order to show that the doctrine of Puṣṭimarga is Vedic, but he asked his disciples to read mainly the Bhāgavata and serve the Lord with profound and pure love. The world (samsāra) leads the soul to commit sins and hence it should do all activities with a sense of dedication (samarpaṇa-bhāvanā). For that purpose, VL consecrated his disciples with the divine incantation, called gadya-matra and ushered them in the path of Puṣṭi-sevā. The disciples are asked to cultivate attitude of dīnātā and anānyās'raya and to enjoy food and drink after they were offered to the Lord. (i.e., to observe the vow of asamarpita-tyāga). They are asked to bear all calamities with patience, thinking that it is also the sport of the Lord. VL asks his followers to act with the spirit of, what we, in modern times, call, a trustee.

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58. Cf. फ्रूट खराब हैं फल्क - - - विजयांत्याशित्र - - St-5.
59. Cf. जीव तत्त्व शीतिति नत्त्वा चितां दूत त्येशु ||-नवरत्न - St.3
VL says that seva is of three types: tanuja, vitrāja, and mānasī, out of which the third is the ideal one. From another point of view, seva is of two types: svarūpa-seva (worship of the Lord) and nāma-seva (reading the scriptures). He attached importance to both of them. VL led a very simple and unassuming life, devoting most of his time to seva, smarana, and chintana and set an example for his disciples.

It is said that VL appeared in the hierarchy of Vīṣṇuśūrī. Nābhāji, author of Bhakta-māla, mentions VL as the follower of Vīṣṇuśūrī. In the sampradāya, there are two views: one view holds that VL follows the doctrine of Vīṣṇuśūrī. Another view holds that VL has no connection with Vīṣṇuśūrī. I infer that...

60. Vide Narquhar: Religions Literature, P.317.
61. Vide (i) Pūrṇākṣhara Sūtra 1 - 10, P. 111: Kavaṭ-phārmana - Pūrṇākṣharamīnimāma-vārtā-parpaṭa | | gadā婆祇吉 संप्रदाय प्रदोषः: 
दीप्वलविश्वविज्ञानसंप्रदाये - पु. १०१ (कारकोवी प्रकाश सं. १९९२)
(iii) Bethak - Nīcva-varta Prasānga 4 (L.C.Desai's edition) 
(iv) Bethak - Charitra No.36, 49, - Pp.189, 200, 231,232
(L.C.Desai's edition) (v) C.M.Vaidya's Life of Gattuśālī (Guj. Ed. 1956 A.D.) Chap.36 where Puruṣottamājī is quoted.
62. Vide (i) विष्णुक्षारमणम भवे : विष्णुक्षारमणम संप्रदायके विष्णुश्वामप्राप्ति - विष्णुक्षारमणम संप्रदायके विष्णुश्वामप्राप्ति No.4 (L.C.Desai's edition)
in the family of VL, Gopalopāsana propounded by Vīṣṇusvāmin was followed and he might have been the traditional guru. Therefore, VL might have been placed in the hierarchy of Vīṣṇusvāmin and he might have mentioned himself as his follower. But it is possible that later, most probably after the divine vision in 1548 or 1549 V.S., he might have ceased to mention himself as Vīṣṇusvāmin: सास्त्र पुरुस्कृतम् विष्णुपरमात्मारिणः तत्त्वादिनि:। रामानुजार्थि तमोर्षिनि:स्तैर्यविधिनि:। वस्मतप्रतिपादिति:। नैहृधः।।

In this connection, what Dr. H.V. Glasenapp says, is quite right:

"A final decision of the question may be anticipated when there will be a definite progress in our knowledge about the doctrines and the sect of Vīṣṇusvāmin."

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63. Cf. श्री बल्लभाचार्य विष्णुपरमात्मारिणः श्री बल्लभाचार्य:

मर्यादामाध्यमा वर्तमा वर्तनित्यायों नरोत्तम सर्वपीरोहितेन संपाननीयः।।

quoted by H. Tanden in his Vārtā-Sahitya, P.144-145.

64. Vide Sub. 3-32-37.

(viii) S'ri Vitthalanāthajī alias Gosājī

Vī's first son, Gopānāthajī, passed away in young age. So, his second son, Vitthalanāthajī, who proved to be an illustrious one, had to carry the burden of the sect and he did it ably and well. He lived a long life of 90 years and became the main cause of the spread of Pustimarga. He travelled to Gujarat six times during his life time, and initiated many people into the Pustimarga. He had to move from Adel to Gadā on account of Akbar's military activities, from Gadā to Mathura and other places and ultimately settled at Gokul in 1628 V.S. He was a worthy son of a worthy father, a great scholar, administrator and propagator of religion, having true missionary spirit. He had to face the challenge of the age on two fronts: philosophical on the one hand and practical and social on the other. He proved equal to the task. He finished the Anāh (from Sūtra 3-2-34), left unfinished by his father Vī and wrote Vidvan-mandana to prove the correctness and rightness of the doctrine of pure monism.

66. Gopānāthajī is said to have written

śvānibhipa, śārṇadīipika, nāma-nirūpanākha and kālākāsta,
which are not identified to-day.
His other works are as follows:

- गौरीन्द्र: दिमेध
- मिथिलेश्वर
- मिथिलेश्वर निरोदम

Tikas on some of the sixteen treatises, several stotras such as ख्वाल्म, स्वायत्नेतक,
गुप्तरूप, विज्ञातिकिय, वल्लभात्तर,
शूरमनर (including रश्मिब्रह्म or वृत्तवर्ण
and दानलीला,

- उत्सवनिर्वाचन
- विनाश
- नार्त्तर
- गीतागीतिकी
- अन्यायायुप विवरण
- गायनवर्ण कारिका
- कुञ्जाचुरुचुर विवृति
- चौरंगा
- चाराध्यासुरपाल्लिस

67. Vide गृहस्त्तोत्तर भरतचर्यार (BSSS) and the periodical
- वैष्णवविज्ञान - - - (Vol. II - 5,6). There is no
unanimity of opinion about the number of the works of
VL.
VL propounded the doctrine and indicated a way of religion, viz. Sevāmarga. His son VT raised a grand structure of religion on the foundation laid by his father. He expanded the sevā-prakāra (aṣṭa-dars'anās etc.) employed different fine arts in the Bhagvat-sevā, started celebrating different festivals in the temples, for उत्सवप्रिया: खुप मनुष्या:।

He preached a detailed way of sevā, which can be done with pleasure by all the house house-holders. Like his father, VT, too, did not adopt the path of renunciation, but led the life of a house-holder and set an example of an ideal devotee of the Lord.

(ix) The Age of VL and spread of Pusti-marga

The type of bhakti, preached by VL and VT proved to be very popular. The age demanded a new approach to and a new way of life. After the Muslims vanquished the Hindu kings and established an empire in India, and persecuted the natives, the whole nation was politically lost and drowned in pessimism. Hindu culture received a fatal blow and feared disintegration and extinction. Religious practices could not be performed with peace and pleasures and social duties could not smoothly be carried out smoothly. Tirthas

68. Kalidasa's S'akuntala, Act VI-4-12.
and temples were polluted and destroyed. Religions preachings were hindered. 69 There was a social chaos. Economy of the Hindus was disrupted. Crops were destroyed and villages were looted by the armies. Posts of political influence and economic benefit were snatched away from the Hindus. It was during the reign of Akbar that justice was done to the Hindus.

Place, time, money, mantra, karma and karta - these six are required for Vedic rituals and they were not available in purity. The vajra-yana sect was reduced to vaśamārga. The Nāthas and the Siddhas went on their own secluded way and could not inspire the Hindu Community. On the other hand, social connections of the Muslims, absence of any high and low castes in their society, monotheism and equality of all as regards the religious practices, etc. stood as a challenge to the Hindu society. Moreover, the sufis, brought in India a new religion of pure love. The Hindus stood against and agape before that powerful new current of Islam.

VL flourished during the turbulent times of the Lodis, when the Hindu society stood in a fearful and disintegrated mood. 70 The path of bhakti was there,

69. Vide Kṛṣṇa's rayā of VL and also TDN - II-211-213.
70. Vide Kavi Nahmalal, quoted on P.17 in the preface of Mahāprabhu - Stuti - muktāvali - I (ed.1940).
running throughout the ages. VL, in these times, preached a new way of bhakti, viz., Pustimarga, in which complete dedication and surrender was to be made and all anxieties were to be left to the Almighty. He declared:

सर्वा रूपायणं नक्षत्रेण नली च उल्लासितमिति ।
पुष्टिभट्ट - 'चुपचाप' लोकोऽक्षणं पुष्टिभट्टरम ॥३५॥

People found a great solace in it. VL preached that the Lord knew what was right or wrong for the soul. He was the master, and the soul, only a servant (dāsa). The soul had to dedicate to Him whatever it did. VL stated that the world was but a sport of the Almighty and the souls were the actors, the instruments only, for which they should not be sorry; their only duty was to serve the Director of the stage,


71. Krishnas'raya St. 1. Cf. also

मात्रात्मकाः मुलामिन्ति तद्वर प्रपाधमक्षण, कैलां
भगवद्यां नमस्ते कार्तिक्यपु । ३५५५ श्रीकृष्ण। ताकृते माः परिपत्रम ॥ —

Sub 3 - 6 - 40.
to merge their will into god's will. There was no necessity to renounce the world and search peace in solitude. In the eyes of god, VL said all were equal, whatever be their caste or status in society, and he accepted into Puṣṭimarga, all people irrespective of their caste or status or sex. He said that the duties of Vārnas'rama might be performed, but service (seva) to the Lord was the supreme duty of the soul. Old Vedic religion did not allow the women and the S'udras to read the Vedas and perform sacrifices. VL did not touch the problem of allowing the women and the S'udras to read the Vedas and perform sacrifices, but instead of that, he said that all, irrespective of their caste or sex, have a right to worship God and attain liberation.

72. The same view appears to be expressed by Shri G.M.Tripathi in Lakṣya-alakṣya-Mīmāṁsā in Sarasvatičandra, with a change in emphasis and phraseology. Vide V.R. Trivedi's article ( in Buddipraśāsa, Vol. 107 - 9, p.290-291:

73. Cf. याबद्धोऽयुत तासव वर्णांश्रम — पर्वत:। ऐ — ऐ Sub 3-28-2.

74. Cf. फिरादापस्तल्लेखगिरिपावलिः बनन्तः बालिन: कार्यतः च दुःखा: भक्तिमयाध्यक्षमेण गुहा: भवितः — Sub 2-4-18
The Brahmins and the S'udras were accepted in the Bhakti-marga on the same level. In this way, it was a challenge to the Sanatana Hinduism, for it accepted in its fold the downtrodden, the untouchables and even the Muslims. Was it not an attempt, conscious or unconscious, to remove the gulf between the Hindus, both the savarnas and the a-savarnas, and the Muslims? The Pustimarga did not refute the Varnasrama-Dharma and did not ask its followers to discard Varna-dharmas, but accepted all people into its fold and preached that Bhakti was the supreme duty of the soul.

This type of attitude towards life, a new gospel of bhakti, was a novel approach to the problem of the day. VL's Pustimarga gave a new system of worship and people grasped it. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan rightly states, "Philosophy has its roots in man's practical needs. If a system cannot justify fundamental human instincts and interpret the deeper spirit of religion, it cannot meet with general acceptance. The speculations of philosophers, which do not comfort us in our stress and suffering, are mere intellectual diversion and not serious thinking." VL rightly understood the spirit and instinct of the age and gave a philosophical system, acceptable to all but the prejudiced. Later, VL spread the sect widely in the regions, which are to-day called, 75

75. Indian Philosophy P. II (ed. 1948), P.659.
Western U.P., Rajasthan and the structure of the sampradāya, deeprooted and steadfast. He taught how to live domestic life and also serve the Lord. He, too, initiated people of different castes high and low, in the religious fold. The age demanded a new outlook towards and a new purpose of life, and the way of Bhakti (Sārana-marga), furnished the answer. VT erected temples at Mathura, Gokul, etc. and gave a detailed mode of worship. This system gave people a personal God, with whom they could have a direct reference and contact. It scattered, to a certain extent, clouds of pessimism and instilled enthusiasm in the hearts of the people. VT was, thus, instrumental in bringing about a kind of renaissance in Hindu society—or rather a section of Hindu society. He, therefore, became very popular with the followers of the Puṣṭimarga, and was highly respected by the followers of other sects and religions. He travelled to Gujarat six times during his lifetime and initiated many men and women. When he made

76. Caitanya and Tulsidas did the same thing in Eastern U.P., Bihar, Bengal and parts of Orissa.

77. Some one said in his connection that —

śrī bhubandīśvarā ṛṣya śrī pāṛṣādī | bhūkṣaṇaṁ labhita bhūkṣaṇaṁ labhita

||
Gokul his permanent residence in 1628 V.S., he became very well known in the region of Mathura. Even Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor, was influenced by him to a very great extent. He (i.e. Akbar), sometimes wore the vaisnavite dress and put on the marks and thus showed a liking for the sect. He issued royal firmans and allowed a free grant of land round about Mahavan to VT alias Gosājī, for cattle-grazing and no sort of tax was levied on the Gosvāmi's, and they were allowed to worship the Lord in their own way.

In this connection, Shri Durgashankar Shastri rightly observes: 78 Vide the Imperial Firmans edited by the late Divan Bhandar K.M. Zaveri.

78 Vaisnava Dharma no Samsipta Itihasa, p. 184.
Bhakṣamārga in Old Scriptures

The cult of Bhakti, preached by VL & VT, was not an absolutely new one. Bhāgavata-Dharma is very old. Attitude of devotion is a natural human trait. In the history of religion, it is first noticed in the Varuṇa hymns of Ṛgveda. It is also found in some of the UPIs, but it is considered only in a small proportion. Gītā, which is considered to be a kind of synopsis of the UPIs and some dars'anams, is pre-eminently a work propounding Bhakti. The Mahā-Bhārata, of which Gītā is only a part, is more inclined to the path of Bhakti than the paths of action and knowledge. In ancient times, the cult of Bhakti was called Sātvata-mārga or the Bhāgavata-Dharma, and Narayana or Vasudeva was considered to be the Highest Deity. Later, Vasudeva and Kṛṣṇa were identified. That stage is noticed in the Bhāgavata. The Bhāgavata, whose date is not conclusively settled, seems to be the great movement of the Bhakti-cult. Particularly, its eleventh book, the aphorisms of Bārada and Sāndilya became the chief Sāstras for the propagation of the Bhakti-cult. It is difficult to trace the development of the different principles of the Bhakti-cult, but we do find many of the first in the

80. Vide for detailed study, Dr. R.G. Bhandarkar's Veishnavism Shaivism and minor religious systems.
Hsrayanlya Parvan (Chapters 354–347) of the S'ānti Parvan of the Mahābhārata. For example, we find in it, the description of S'veta-dvīpa, the abode of God, which is similar to the Goloka. We find the svikṛta-parināma-vāda propounded in chapter No. 339. The four vyūhas, which have been accepted in the Vaiṣṇava schools, are also described in the same chapter. The principles that Bhaktimārga is superior to the jñānamārga and that attainment of jñāna rests on the grace of God are also found in the Mahābhārata. The Bhāgavata speaks of the nine types of bhakti and the resultant para or prema-laksana bhakti and also of the sādhana- and sādhya bhakti.

Thus, the cult of the Bhakti is very old. The Alvars of South India were much responsible for its spread in the age after the Guptas. After S'ankarāchārya, there was a new trait noticed. Lest the cult of Bhakti be called

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81. S'ānti-Parvan Chap. 335–336
82. Cf. न व शक्तिस्थापितं दुष्टे देव: क्र्यचन।
83. Cf. मल्य प्रवादं कुरुते व भैरव सुचिमादिति।
84. Cf. कैलेन वि भावक कौण्ठी गावो नण्णा मुग्गामामीपुरवत।
un-Vedic, aeljiaryas like Ramanuja wrote commentaries on the Brahma-Sutras, Gita etc., and proved that the cult of Bhakti was Vedic. Thus, the philosophical trait was added to the theological part of the cult of Bhakti. VL got such a valuable legacy. He appears to be influenced by Ramanuja and Nimbarka. What VL did, was to synthesize the scattered ideas, sift out the dvaitsa-bhava and lay emphasis on complete surrender to and the grace of the Lord. He emphasised that other means of liberation were of no use and hence service to the Lord with pure and deep love was the only duty of the soul. He preached that life should not be only lived in God, but also for God, and that the devotee had to look for the comforts of the Lord. VL and VT gave a perfect philosophical and theological system.

That is the difference between the age-old Bhaktimarga and the Pustimarga or the saranamarga.

(xi) Misrepresentation of Pustimarga

Here I would like to refer to the misrepresentations that are made about VL and his system of religion, particularly in the West. Mrs. Annie Besant had stated that VL was "the most illiterate." M.M. Williams has disparaged this doctrine in his "Brahmanism and Hinduism." The

86. Vide the ninth stanza of the Desa-slokas, where emphasis is laid on ‘dainya’ and kripā.

87. Vide Mrs. Annie Besant; Esoteric Christianity, p.369 (quoted by Shri L.P. Parekh in his shree Madh Vallabhacharya)
greatest disparagement is found in the 'Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics', which stigmatizes the doctrine as hedonistic tenets. This work says, "The Vallabhbhacharyas have often been called the Epicureans of India, and the history of their cult can be traced through stages similar to those which worked the development of Epicurean morals. ... His life was not unlike those of the other founders of religious sects in his time... his teaching contained the hedonistic root from which all subsequent evils were to spring." This work makes many wrong statements about the life of VL and states that "the dedication in the first instance, ... is that which takes place when the offering is made to the guru." This is quite wrong and contrary to the doctrine and its practice. The work has lost completely the meaning of Sr. The Encyclopaedia has drawn on the authority of the work, called, 'History of the sect of Maharajas', which has ignored the original doctrines and concluded them from the behaviour of one or two Gosvami Maharajas. Such works have done much harm to the prestige of the sampradāya, through its misrepresentation. VL has described the ideal guru in the T DN and has even stated that a devotee may do without a guru if an ideal one is

89. Ibid P - 582.
not available, and may worship independently by instituting an idol.⁹⁰ Who can be more progressive than this? In the sampradāyas, VL is considered the guru and ācārya. Purusottamaji (birth 1724 V.S.) has stated in his commentary on the verse ॠणेष्वापरः that स्वतंत्रनेिङ्लत्वालि - मुल त्वंविनिवङ्क्षः - - -- etc.⁹¹ It is utterly wrong and even malicious to call VL an epicurean and a propounder of hedonistic doctrine. In every religion, there are some persons, who have tendency to demoralise and who utilise particular situations for their selfish ends. Even in India, the word 'pusti' is understood, by ignorant persons, to mean nourishment of the body, while the correct meaning is Divine Grace. But impartial observers and writers should not be led away by such black sheep. Fortunately, in this century, the sampradāyas commanded respect of disinterested writers like Prof. H.V.Glansenapp and Mr. F. Johannes and Manilal C. Parekh, who have in their own way, evaluated the S'uddadvaita.

⁹⁰ Cf. कृष्णेष्वापरं वीक्षं दंगारहितं नरं। श्री भागवतद्वारं भजेत्विज्ञ्यायुरादङ्रातू।।
लदभासे स्वर्य बालपि यूवि कृत्य हरे: क्रयचि।
परिश्रमं वदा कृपालुर्म तन व स्थितम् ॥

TDN-II-227, 228.

(xii) Descendants of VT

As stated above, the system of VL which was later perfected by VT, satisfied the demand of the age to a considerable extent and therefore the śūtāmārga spread rapidly. Progeny of VT became instrumental in its widespread. VT had seven sons. All of them were learned in the scriptures and well trained to propagate the doctrine. Descendants of the seven sons later established their different seats at different places in India.

GO, the fourth son of VT, (study of whose works forms the subject of this thesis), was very illustrious and stood

92. "Cf. "VL helps us to understand better this ideal world. Rāmānuja considered this world as an expansion of God. VL does away with this inconsistency. The ideal world is but a self-analysis of God which does not increase the Absolute, but only shows what it is.

It is, however, in his practical philosophy that we find the most valuable contributions of VL. It is even in his school that we meet with the perfect definition of the love of God, for it states that we must love God for His own sake and ourselves and everything else for the sake of God. A better definition is impossible."

- P. Johanns, To Christ through the Vedanta, Part III, Vallabha (Third Impression), P.1.
the challenge of an asectic named Gidrāpa. Go was followed by Harirāyājī (1646-1772 V.S.), son of his nephew. He too, was a great bhaṭṭa and writer. Then, there were other Gosvāmīs such as Kākā Vallabhājī (birth 1703 V.S.), Purusottamājī (birth 1724 V.S.), Yogi Gopes'vārājī (birth 1836 V.S.), Giricharājī (birth 1847 V.S.) and Pandits like Ḫāṭūbhāṭṭa, Bālābhāṭṭa, Govardhana, Gattulāla and Māṭa-chāpā poets and Dāyeśāsla who wrote important works on Suddhādvaita Philosophy. Among these, Purusottamājī wrote many commentaries and articles, defeated his antagonists and proved the sound footing of the Suddhādvaita Pustimārga. During the 18th and the 19th centuries, a large section of people (masses as well as princes) embraced this religious sect and many temples were erected in different parts of the country. When the temple of Śrī Nāthājī was instituted at Nāthadvārā near Udaipur in Mēwār, the sampreddāya got a great impetus and it spread widely in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

In the galaxy of these writers, GO is a star of no mean magnitude. Before him, his father and grandfather had firmly established the doctrine and his father had given an almost perfect practical way of

93. Vide in this connection a tribute given by the celebrated Gujarati poet Nāhmās in the preface to his translation of the Sixteen Treatises.
religions life. GO's task was to interpret and advocate that way of life and inculcate, on the minds of the followers, the true essence of Purusha Srama. Many times it so happens that the main purpose of the doctrine is forgotten in the philosophical squabbles. GO, therefore, saw his duty in bringing out the Purusha, rather than pramana and sadhana. He wrote a number of expositions (vivaranas), tracts and articles in Sanskrit, but preached in the popular tongue. We shall evaluate his works in the following pages, but before we turn to his works, we should have a look at his life too, for it would help understanding his mind.