

CHAPTER-II

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The doctrine of Śrīkr̥ṣṇa Caitanya's Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism:

Śrīkr̥ṣṇa Caitanya was never eager to compose any doctrine for his religious faith. People around him were attracted towards him simply because of his glaring personalities and became his votaries. He was never desirous to build up a cult or sect consciously nor did he deliver any lecture in the public meeting for this sake. If such a cult or sect gathered itself round him it was because of his impressive personality and powerful appeal of his ardent devotion. He never composed anything for his Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism save and except eight Ślokas popularly called Śikṣāṣṭakas. But occasionally he instructed his followers and devotees of Śrīkr̥ṣṇa Caitanya's different subjects. In this connection we may mention Śrī Caitanya's instruction to Advaita to redeem the downtrodden human beings, the women folk and the illiterates. Although Śrī Caitanya was not conscious of the fact that he had initiated a social movement, nevertheless, he worked like a social reformer. During the cāturmāsya at Puri he instructed his devotees to have enough of self-control over the mundane desire. Śrī Caitanya's instruction to Śanātana Goswāmī at Vārānasi is called Sanātana Śikṣhā. Śrī Caitanya first advocated his theory of Acintya Bhedābheda tattva to Sanātana Goswāmī. According to Śrī Caitanya Kṛṣṇa is the sun and Jīva is the Sun's rays.¹ Śrī

Sundarānanda Vidyā Vinod had classified the teachings of Śrī Caitanya into ten separate principles. These were the fundamental advices of Śrī Caitanya to his devotees. They are as follows -

1. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavata is the essence of the Vedas and the connotation of the Vedāntas.
2. Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate reality.
3. Kṛṣṇa is all powerful.
4. Kṛṣṇa is the source of all the Rasas.
5. Jīva is the atomic ingredients of Kṛṣṇa.
6. Jīva is the taṭastha Śakti of Kṛṣṇa and therefore he is susceptible to be influenced by Māyā or delusion.
7. Only by the chanting the name of Hari one can be released from Māyā
8. Jīva and Jaḍa are both separate and again both are same with Hari. Jīva is bheda as well as abheda from Hari.
9. Arden devotion is the only means or penance for the Jīva.
10. Devotion to Hari or Kṛṣṇa is the only Śādhana or penance for Jīva.²

These are the ten fundamental principles of Śrī Caitanya as advised to Śanātana Goswāmī. Śrī Caitanya also advised to Śanātana Goswāmī not to have crowd of followers list, it would detract from the principle. One should always be liberal to other's religion and should not hurt the

sentiment of others. Besides, one should observe non-violence at any cost and should lead a pure and simple life.

These are the general instructions of Śrī Caitanya to his devotees. Śrī Caitanya observed these principles throughout his life. So the life and activities of Śrī Caitanya were the guiding principles for his followers or votaries. Kavi Karṇapura in his drama styled “Caitanya Candrodaya” clearly expressed that Caitanya wrote nothing about his doctrine.⁽³⁾ Of course Rādhā Govinda Nath, an eminent scholar in Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇvism is of the opinion that Caitanya personally wrote eight Ślokas popularly known as Śikṣāṣṭaka. These are the only writings of Śrī Caitanya and toward the later part of his life at Puri he enjoyed these Ślokas along with two of his friends Swaropa Dāmodor and Rai Rāmānanda.⁽⁴⁾ These eight Ślokas are nothing but an ardent devotion to Kṛṣṇa. These eight Ślokas run thus –

Śloka – 1

cetodarpaṇamājanam bhavamahādāvāgni nirvāpanam|

śreyaḥkairavacandrikāvitarāṇam vidyāvadhū jīvanam

ānandāmvudhivurddhanam pratipadam purnāmṛtāsvādanam|

sarvātmasnapanam param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa samkītanam

Śloka – 2

nāmnāmakāri vahudhā nijasarvaśakti-
statrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ|
etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavanmamāpi
durdaivamīdṛśamihājani nānurāgaḥ

Śloka – 3

tṛnādapi sunīcena taroriva sahiṣṇunā|
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyā sadā hariḥ

Śloka – 4

na dhanam na janam na sundarīm kavītām vā jagadīśa kāmaye|
mama janmāni janmanīśvare bhavatādbhaktirahaitukī tvayi

Śloka – 5

ayi nandatanuja kiṅkaram patitam mam viṣame bhavāmvudhau|
kṛpayā tava pādapañkajasthitadhūlisadṛśām vicintayā

Śloka – 6

nayanam galadaśrudhārayā vadanam gadgadaruddhayā gīrā|

pulakainicitam vapuḥ kadā tava nāmagrahaṇe bhaviṣyati

Śloka – 7

yugāyitām nimeṣeṇa cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam|

śunyāyitam jagat sarvam govindavirahaṇa me

Śloka – 8

āśliṣya vā pādaratām pinaṣṭu mā-

-madarśānmarmahatām karotu vā|

yathā tathā vā vidadhatu lampāṭo

matprāṇanāthastu sa eva nāparaḥ

1. Glory, eternal glory to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Samkīrtana! It wipes and polishes the dust laden mirror of the soul, extinguishes the raging forest-conflagration of worldly life, endows the lily of righteous living with benevolent moonlight, bride of the true knowledge, swells the ocean of divine bliss, adds the full relish nectar to every syllable of the holy Name, loves and chastens the entire self with the supreme spirit glory, rest with such a Holy Name!
2. The names are indeed legion, endowed as they are with potent powers. Thou hast mercifully ordained that never shall there be barriers of time

or clime for chanting of thy Names. But alas! My luck is so low that love of Thy Holy Name had dawned not yet in me.

3. By humility lowlier far than that of a blade of grass, by forbearance more enduring than that of a patient tree, seeking no honour for self, showing respect to others that is due, thus does one prove worthy to chant the name of Hari at all times.
4. I covet no wealth, nor retinue nor even lovely poesy. Let me only hug thee to my heart in every successive life, be pleased to grant me, O Lord, such selfless devotion and love.
5. Oh son of Nanda, I, thy servant, have fallen into the vortex of the terrible worldly ocean. May Thy mercy but make me a speck of dust on Thy Lotus feet.
6. When will tears overflow my eyes, when will my voice husky with love choke all utterances on my lips and all limbs vibrate with ecstasy to hear the chant of Thy sacred Name?
7. One wink appears like ages tears stream down from eyes like showers in rainy season and the entire world itself appears like a dreary void to me bereft of the sight of Govinda!
8. Let Him hug me, His beloved or crush me if He so wills, let Him kill me outright or banish me from His sight, or in whatever other ways let Him gratify His passion yet this loving cheat or lampata none else, shall remain the darling of my heart.⁵

In the first Śloka the fruit of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Samkīrtana is revealed. It merits mention here that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya's greatest contribution to Indian culture is Samkīrtana. The method of his cult is Nāma-Samkīrtana. Thus says in the Caitanya Caritāmṛta –

samkīrtan pravartaka Śrī Kṛṣṇa caitanya|

samkīrtan yañje tare bhaje sei dhanya⁽⁶⁾

In the second stanza, it is said that in each name of Kṛṣṇa there exist His all comprehensive powers. Nāmā Japa and Samkīrtana is Śrī Caitanya's special method and this method generates prema bhakti.

In the third Śloka the method of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtana is depicted. Humility is a salient feature of the devotees of Caitanyaism. It is popularly called Vaiṣṇavavinaya.

In the fourth Śloka it is stated that a true devotee must cling to Kṛṣṇa with unalloyed devotion towards Him without any reason whatsoever as his only support.

Kṛṣṇa's blessing is sought in the fifth Śloka. Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī explains in the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta thus-

kṛpa kari' kara more padadhūli' sama|

tomār sevak, karoñ tomār sevan

punaḥ ati utkanthā, dainya haila udgam|

kṛṣṇathāñ māge prem- nāma samkīrtan |⁷

In the sixth Śloka the external sign and in the seventh the internal indication or symptom of the pure prema-bhakti (loving devotion) are delineated.

In the last Śloka (eight Śloka) the absolute clinging or attachment to Kṛṣṇa of the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu is described. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is considered as the heart's jewel of the true devotee, since most of the Ślokas are based on simple unalloyed devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Hence devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the essence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya's Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. However, over these super structure the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism was erected by the associates and immediate followers of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

The cult of Śrī Caitanya is of two sides, one practical philosophical and the other is imaginative. He did not allow scepticism on the practical philosophical side while on the imaginative side Śrī Caitanya was a faithful votary of Kṛṣṇa. He also advised that Jīva should worship Kṛṣṇa. Thus it is said

jīver svarūp hay kṛṣṇer nityadās|

kṛṣṇer taṭastha śakti bhedābhed prakāś⁸

The entire teachings of Śrī Caitanya's Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism were compiled by Ṣaḍ Goswāmī (Sixth Goswāmīs) of Vṛndāvana particularly Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī, the author of the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta. The Ṣaḍ Goswāmīs of Vṛndāvana were Rūpa Goswāmī, Sanātāna Goswāmī, Jīva Goswāmī, Gopāla Bhatta, Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī and Ragunāth Bhatta. Their works contain the entire teaching and theology of Śrī Caitanya's Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. So, one has to go to the works of the Ṣaḍ Goswāmī in order to know the Caitanyaism. According to Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Śrī Caitanya instructed his doctrine to Rūpa Goswāmī at Prayāga and Sanātāna Goswāmī at Vārānasi. P. Mukherjee also recorded this fact in his history of the Caitanya faith in Orissa. He said that Caitanya instructed to Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātāna the conception of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult, since both Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātāna Goswāmī and Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī were closely associated with him. ⁽⁹⁾ They simply compiled the basic tenets of Caitanyaism as directed by Śrī Caitanya himself. Sanātāna Goswāmī and Gopāla Bhatta wrote the ritualism and devotional practices of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in their famous book styled Hari-bhakti Vilāsa. Besides, Rūpa Goswāmī depicted the theory of Rasa of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in his two famous books entitled Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu and Ujjvala Nīlamani. Rūpa Goswāmī's theory of Rasa is the unique contribution of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in the realm of devotion. He propounded Bhakti as a Rasa and produced ultimately a

systematic Bhakti Rasa Sāstra. His Vaiṣṇavatoṣimī, a commentary on the tenth chapter of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, is an important contribution to the literature of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. His nephew and disciple Jīva Goswāmī was also a great scholar of Vaiṣṇva philosophy. His six Sandarbha, such as, Tattva- Sandarbha, Bhagāvat-Sandarbha, Paramātmā Sandarbha, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha, Bhakti Sandarbha and Prīti Sandarbha are dealt with mystical and metaphysical dogmas of Caitanyaism.

However, the entire Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇva philosophy is the contribution of the Vṛndāvana Goswāmīs. The Six Vṛndāvana Goswāmīs, Kṛṣṇadās Kabirāj Goswāmī, the author of the Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī, Kavi Karṇapura, Bṛndaban Dās and also Viśwanāth Chakraborty and Baladeva Vidyābhūsan of the 18th century actually produced the religious and philosophical doctrines of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism otherwise called Bengal Vaiṣṇavism.

The philosophy and the theology of Caitanya's Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is based on the Upaniṣads, Brahmasūtras and the Bhāgavatpurāṇa. The doctrines of Śrī Caitanya are similar with those of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa as it is based on the pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa. According to Śrī Caitanya the Bhāgavata is the essence of the Vedānta. Apart from this, the Bhāgavata is replete with Bhaktā Rasa. Śrī Caitanya preferred Śrīdhara Swāmī's commentary on the Bhāgavata Purāṇa since

Śrīdhara Swāmi was a Monist. According to S.K. Maitra, Caitanya's system is a type of idealistic Monism which reconciles all contradictions and dualities in a super logical unity in a whole that surpasses strictly logical comprehensions.¹⁰ To all the earlier Vaiṣṇava schools are opposed to Śankara's Absolute Monism. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is also like previous Vaiṣṇava schools a protest against Śankara's Monistic philosophy. The school of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas advocates the doctrine of Acinta-bhedābheda or the doctrine of inscrutable identity and difference. Or in other words, this doctrine is inconceivable dualistic non-duality. The exact nature or relation between Kṛṣṇa and the living beings of the world is something of a mystery or unthinkable (Acintya) in the sect's philosophy. The Acinta-bhedābheda is maintained by the Brahman's Swarupa Śakti and Māyā Śakti. The Brahman conceived of as Kṛṣṇa pervades the universe and by the Vilāsa Śakti becomes as many Kṛṣṇa as there are gopies. By Prābhava vilāsa He becomes Vāsudeva, Sankarṣaṇa, Pradyamna and Aniruddha.

prābhava vilāsa - vāsudeva, sankarṣaṇa |

pradyamna, aniruddha – mukhya cārijan |¹¹

It is to be noted here that Nimbārka, who lived in the 12th century A.D. maintained Svābhāvika Bhedābheda. The Brahman within and without the world is identical and different from the world. It is identical

with the world of animate and inanimate beings which depends on it for existence and action. It is different from it by its very nature. The Brahman has attributes (Saguṇa) and has a spiritual form made of beauty and bliss called Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. Devotion and self-surrender are the paths of salvation. Nimbārka, however, recognised Rādhā as an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa's energetic power or Śakti and his spouse in the divine sports. In Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism also Rādhā is the highest manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's chit power and the delight (Ānanda) of Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā is the Hlādinī or Ānanda of Kṛṣṇa.

According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism the Lord Kṛṣṇa is to be approached only through devotion based on love and that is why, it is said that Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu introduced Rāgānugā Bhakti i.e. the devotion of loving attachment. That is a devotee should love God Kṛṣṇa as his own kith and kin. Just as a son loves or regards his father, ever so a devotee should devote or love God at his own accord without any reason whatsoever i.e. devotion of loving attachment or Rāgānugābhakti.

The fundamental principle of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is nothing but pure devotion and emotionalism. In this connection we may refer to those eight Ślokas which Śrī Caitanya personally composed. These Ślokas are based on pure devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. To the Caitanya school of Vaiṣṇavism, Kṛṣṇa of Braja is the eternal Reality or Para Brahma or

Ultimate Reality. Moreover, Kṛṣṇa of Braja is the source of all energy, strength, wealth, beauty and Rasa. ⁽¹²⁾ As Brahman is the Supreme Reality of Monist, even so Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate reality to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. According to Caitanya School the perfect form of Bhagavān is Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is Pūrṇa Brahma or Bhagavān to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava School of philosophy.

kṛṣṇastu bhagavān svayam¹³

īsvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ saccidānandā bigrahaḥ |

anādirādirgovindaḥ sarvakāraṇakāraṇam¹⁴

rādhā pūrṇa śakti kṛṣṇa pūrṇaśaktimān |¹⁵

advayjñān-tattva-vastu kṛṣṇer svarūp|

‘brahma’ ‘atmā’ bhagavān – tin tāñr rūp¹⁶

svayam bhagavān Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa sarvāśray|

parama – īśvara- Kṛṣṇa sarvā śāstre kay¹⁷

kṛṣṇa svayan bhagavān sarva avatamsa

pūrvapakṣa kahe tomār bhālata vyākhyān|

paravyoma – nārāyan svayam bhagavān¹⁸

The cult of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa is non-Vedic for the first time. We find Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa is identified with Nārāyaṇ-Viṣṇu in the great epic Mahābhārata. Thus we see that Kṛṣṇa by degrees becomes Vedic Brāhmanical God. And according to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava school Kṛṣṇa in Dwārakā is pūrṇa, in Mathurā Pūṭṇatara while in Braja Dhām or Vṛndāvana Pūṭṇatama- the most loving God of Caitanya school of philosophy. Kṛṣṇa of Brajalīlā is the most perfect form of supreme reality. The Supreme Reality of Kṛṣṇa of Brajalīlā is endowed with three types of Śakti such as Svarūpa Śakti, Māyā Śakti and Jīva Śakti.

kṛṣṇer ananta śakti ta'te tin pradhān |

cicchakti, māyā śakti, jīva śakti nām

antarangā, vahirangā taṭasthā kahi yāre|

antarangā svarūpśakti savār upare¹⁹

Again Svarūp Śakti is of three attributes, viz. Sat, Cit, Ānanda. Among these three attributes Ānanda or bliss is the best.

saccit – ānandamay kṛṣṇer svarūp|

ataeva svarūp śakti hay tin rūp

ānandāmśe hlādinī sadamśe sandhinī|

cidamśe sāmvit ya're jñān kari māni²⁰

Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of these three Śaktis.

svayantvasāmyātiśayastryadhīśaḥ svārājyalakṣmśyāptasamastakāmaḥ

valim haradbhiściralokapālaiḥ kirītakotoḍita pādapīṭhaḥ²¹

Rādhā is the Ānanda or Hlādinī Śakti of Kṛṣṇa. However, all the Śaktis of Kṛṣṇa are unthinkable or Achintya. In the explanation of these three Śaktis or attributes Vaiṣṇavism differs from Vedantic interpretation. To Vaiṣṇavism, the attribute Ānanda is the main source in the explanation of Supreme Self or the Supreme Reality. The Ultimate Reality is Supreme bliss and source of all life and the devotional feelings. Bliss or Ānanda is the Ultimate Reality. In the 'Kṛṣṇa Karṇamṛta', Lilā Śuka Villamangal expressed the peculiar Vaiṣṇava feelings towards Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa with a single term 'Madhura'. The link between the God and the true devotee is the Madhura-Bhakti – the best amongst the different types of Bhakti. Vaiṣṇavas enumerate five kinds of Bhakti, such as, Sānta, Dāsya, Vātsalya, Sakhya and Madhura.

sānta, dāsya, vātsalya, sakhya, madhura – rasa nāma

kṛṣṇabhakti-rasa madhye e pañca pradhān²²

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism accepted the theory of incarnation as it is described in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa Kṛṣṇa is described as Supreme Reality. Likewise, Jayadeva also in his Gītagovinda praised Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme God and the source of all incarnations. In the Śrīmad Bhagavata Gīta also it is said that in every age Kṛṣṇa is incarnated –

yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati bhārata|

adbhutthānamadharmaḥ tadātmānam sṛjāmyaham|

paritraṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām|

dharmasamsthapanārthaya sambhavāmi yuge yuga²³

However, according to Caitanyaism Kṛṣṇa of Brajalīlā is the most perfect God - Pūrṇatama.

According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism Prema-bhakti or the loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the only means for getting salvation. So, salvation of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is unlike the Mukti as advocated by the monist or nirvāṇa as propounded by the Buddhist. Hence according to Caitanyism one has to serve Kṛṣṇa earnestly (sincerely) in order to be emancipated from the worldly bondage.

kṛṣṇa mantra haite have samsār-mocan|

kr̥ṣṇa nāmhaite pāve kr̥ṣṇer caraṇ²⁴

kalikāle nāmrupe kr̥ṣṇa avatār|

nām haite hay sarva jagat nistār

nām vinā kalikāle nāhi ārdharma|

sarvamantrasār nām ei śāstra marma²⁵

There is no other way but to chant the name of Kṛṣṇa always only
to be liberated –

nirantar kara Kṛṣṇa nām samkīrtan|

helāy mukti pāve, pāve premadhan²⁶

This is the ultimate aim or sādhya of a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava.

According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, Rādhā is the ideal and the best devotee of Kṛṣṇa since she worshipped Kṛṣṇa with Priti or prema-bhakti or loving devotion. And according to Rai Rāmānanda Rādhā's love to Kṛṣṇa is the best amongst all the Gopies of Brajadhām or Vṛndāvana.

ihār madhye rādhār prem sādhya śiromaṇi |²⁷

Rādhā's devotion to Kṛṣṇa is much more superior than the devotion of other Gopies of Braja to Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā is the highest revelation of Kṛṣṇa's cit Śakti. Rādhā is the delight of Kṛṣṇa; or in other words Rādhā is the

Ānanda or Hlādinī of Kṛṣṇa. Hence, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the same. According to Rādhāgovinda Nāth Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa-amśinī – a part of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī also in his C.C. writes –

RādhāKṛṣṇa ek ātmā dui deha dhari|

anyone vilāse ras āsvādan kari

rādhikā hayen Kṛṣṇer praṇay vikār|

svarup śakti- hlādinī nām yāñhār

hlādinī karāy Kṛṣṇe ānandāsvādan|

hlādinī –dvārāy kare bhakter poṣaṇ

saccidānanda-pūrṇa kṛṣṇer swarūp|

ekai cicchakti tāñr dhare tin rūp

ānandāmśe hlādinī sadamśe sandhinī|

cidamśe samvit ya're jñān kari māni²⁸

Among the attributes of Kṛṣṇa, hlādinī is the best than sandhinī and Samvit. Besides, according to Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī the essence of hlādinī Śakti is love or prema. Rādhā is the personified form of devotional feelings. She is the foremost amongst the lovers of Kṛṣṇa and the best amongst devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

māhabhāv svarūpa ŚrīRādhā thākurānī |

sarvaguṇakhani Kṛṣṇakāntā śiromani²⁹

In this manner Rādhā-tattva of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava school has been elaborately depicted by Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī in his Caitanyacaritāmṛta. In fine it can be concluded that Rādhā is the part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. She is the same as Kṛṣṇa.

RādhāKṛṣṇa ek ātmā dui deha dhari|

anyone vilāse ras āsvādan kari³⁰

Rādhā is within Kṛṣṇa; they are one soul in two bodies. Besides, Rādhā's way to worship Kṛṣṇa is the best and hence Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism school glorified Rādhā's devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

To the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, Śrī Caitanya embodied in him the quintessence of both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and is both the realiser and the realised in the same personality. To them Śrī Caitanya is worshipped as the dual incarnation of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Caitanya said to Rāi Rāmānanda his essential categories Līlā and Rasa and also revealed his form to him. According to Śrī Caitanya his complexion is not fair it appears fair but due to its contact with Rādhā. She touches none except Kṛṣṇa. Śrī

Caitanya concentrates his mind on Rādhā's emotional feelings and in this way he tastes the Mādhurya rasa or delicious sweetness of Kṛṣṇa.

gaur anga nahe, mor Rādhāṅga sparśan|

gopendra sut vinā tinho nā sparśe anyajan

tānr bhāve bhāvita āmi kari atmaman|

tave nij mādhurya-ras kari āsvādan³¹

In Śrī Caitanya the devotees get a glimpse of the mystery of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Līlā which Śrī Caitanya himself has revealed to Rāi Rāmānanda –

tave hāsi tareprabhu dikhāilā swarūp|

rasarāj mahābhav due ekrūp³²

Śrī Caitanya was both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This is the ideal of Vṛndāvana school. Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj also writes in his Caitanyacharitāmṛta regarding Śrī Caitanya that –

sai rādhā bhāv laiye caitanya avatār³³

According to the Goswāmīs of Vṛndāvana externally Śrī Caitanya assumed the features and emotions of Rādhā, but internally he was Kṛṣṇa. During the later period Śrī Caitanya became the dual incarnation of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to the Vaiṣṇavas of both Vṛndāvana and Navadvīp.

Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī also wrote Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya prabhu svayam bhagavān. ⁽³⁴⁾ That is, Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya are one and the same. Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj also writes Śrī Caitanya is Nārāyaṇa himself.

śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya han śāksāt nārāyaṇa³⁵

Hence, the Vaiṣṇavas of Vṛndāvana later on accepted the practice of worshipping the images of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

The Navadvipa Vaiṣṇavas also recognised the rituals and theology of Vṛndāvana school of Vaiṣṇavism and ultimately this gave the foundation of entire system of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism.

Another notable contribution of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is the Nāmā-Samkīrtan. Though before the advent of Śrī Caitanya kīrtan was there among the Vaiṣṇavas, but it was Śrī Caitanya who made Samkīrtan very popular among the mass people. He advised his devotees to perform Samkīrtan. He made the Nāmā- Samkīrtan as the medium of propagation of his religion. It is the Samkīrtan which made the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism very popular among the common run of people of Eastern India. Just as the kīrtan has a spiritual side, even so it has a social impact. The Samkīrtan which Śrī Caitanya introduced was a protest against the old society. The new religion of Śrī Caitanya declared all are equal before God. The poor, the fallen and the low-caste people got a new social status

with the rise of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. At first, Śrī Caitanya advised the people for family Samkīrtan and then he started Nagar Samkīrtan for the sake of his religious propagation. Everybody was welcomed to his Nagar Samkīrtan irrespective of his caste or creed. This is the main contribution of Śrī Caitanya to the religious life of the country.