

Chapter - 1

An Outline

of

Origin and development

of

Vedānta & S'uddhādvaita Brahmavēda

of

S'ri Vallabhācārya

(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 householder¹. 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 (āś'ramas). 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.

दितव्यम्

1. vide... प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः।.. भूत्ये मा प्रम... 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'uddhādvaita Brahmavāda popularly known as Puṣṭimārga is such a sect, having its own vast literature², 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 Vallabhacharya, 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 Saptā - Sindhu 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 Rcs 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 Brāhmana - texts contain the subject-matter of such different sacrificial activities. On the other hand, when there arose a legion of gods, questions like कस्मै देवाय हविष्ठा विधेम were asked. The Vedic Seer thought, which of the gods would be ^{the} 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 Rv. attempt to find out the origin of the Creation. For example, the Ap-Sūkta, the Hiranya - Garbha - Sūkta, the Purusa - Sūkta etc., tell us that it is the water, the Hiranyagarbha and the Purusa 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 Truth³ is one, and is variously described by the learned. The Purusa-Sūktā points out that the Purusa

3. Cf. एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति । - - - - RV-I-164-46

is all pervading and the sole creative agency, while the Nāsadiya - Sūktā is a bold attempt to show ^{that} 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 ^{vā} Vedic age. One of them developed into a full-fledged sacrificial cult, - the Karma-Kāṇḍa 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 sacrifice⁴. 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, - Jñāna-Kāṇḍa of the Vedic religion.

The Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads form the Jñāna - Kāṇḍa 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 Upaniṣads, but they agree in one point that Brahman is the creator of this Universe and He is omni-present

4. Cf. प्लवा इयेति अदृष्टा यत्तूपाः । - Mundakopaniṣad I-2-7:

...7...

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.⁵ 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 death⁶ 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.⁷

Different Upanishads treat of the way to realization and describe the abode of the Highest Reality, the Brahman.⁸ 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. यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते.... I-TU 3-1 and

सर्वं सत्त्विदं ब्रह्म । - Cāndogya U3-14-1

6. Cf. अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे Katha U.1-2-18

7. Cf. स वै नैव रेमे तस्मादेकाकी न रमते स द्वितीयमिच्छत्। Brhadā.1-4-3

and तदेकान्तं बहु स्यात् प्रजायेयेति । - Cāndogya U.8-2

8. Cf. न तत्र सूर्यो धाति - - । - 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 ācāryas 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 nut-shell. These attempts were made during the period, called the Sūtra-period. During that period, Śrauta, Grhya, 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, Sāṅkhya etc. were propounded. Of these schools, the Uttara-Mimāṃsā is the most important school, known as Vedānta. In it, we find an attempt to summarize and systematize the teachings of the principal oldest (eleven or thirteen) Ups. Uttara-Mimāṃsā is also known as Vyāsa-Sūtra also, but the popular name is ^{the} Brahma-Sūtra. 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 Bhāṣya - period

The Sūtra-period was followed by the Vṛitti and Bhāṣya-period. This period saw attempts to interpret the sūtras as well as formulate systems out of them. A number of writers - Vṛitti-kāras and Bhāṣya-kāras are mentioned in the Madhva-Vijaya-prakāś'ikā of Nāvāyāṇa Paṇḍitācārya and in the Yatindra-mata-dīpikā of S'rīnivāsa.⁹ Out of these, Bodhāyana is well known as Vṛitti-kāra. There are also Upavarṣa (who epitomised Bodhayan's Vṛitti), Brahmanandī (who wrote Vārtikas and is known as Vākya-kāra), Dravida (who wrote a Bhāṣya on Brahmanandī's Vārtika), Brahmadatta (known as Tikā-kāra and propounder of ज्ञानकर्म समुच्चयवाद and ब्रह्मवादाद), Bhartr̥ - prapañca (who wrote a bhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras, not not available now, and who propounded भेदाभेदवाद and ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चयवाद), Bhāskarācārya (whose philosophy is known as गौपीयिक भेदाभेदवाद or सत्योपाधिवाद and whose period is circa 800 A.D.), and Yādavaprakāś'a (who flourished in the 11th century and propounded a view similar to that of Bhāskarācārya). 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 - Anubhāṣya, 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 S'arīraka-Bhāṣya, on the Brahma-Sūtras was by S'ankarācārya (788 - 820 A.D.). His doctrine is known as Kevalā-dvaitā and also as Vivartā-vāda or Māyā-Vāda. According to S'ankara, Brahman is the only and ultimate Reality and all the apparent phenomena of this universe is but a Māyā, a mirage. ^{The} soul is the reflection of the Brahman into Māyā. Truth is पारमार्थिक and व्यावहारिक . He does not believe in the soul being a part (ams'a) of Brahman. True knowledge is the means of realization of Brahman.

Rāmānuja (1017 - 1137 AD.) wrote S'ribhāṣya on the Brahma-Sūtras, in which he criticised the Vivartā-Vāda of S'ankara. His doctrine is known as Vis'iṣṭādvaita. According to him, ^{The} soul is a part of Brahman, but after realisation, The soul does not merge in the Brahman. The soul does not lose its individuality, but maintains its separate individuality. Rāmānuja maintains identity between ~~ak~~ cit and acit and says that the Brahman is cid-acid-vis'iṣṭa .

Nimbārka (circa 1200 A.D.) wrote a Bhāṣya called Vedānta - pārijāta , on the Brahma-Sūtras, and propounded what is called dvaita-advaita-vāda or bhedābheda-vāda. Bhāskara's doctrine is sopādhika bhedābheda, while Nimbārka's doctrine is real bhedābheda. According to him, there are three elements - cit, acit and Brahman. The first ^{two} are in a way, one with Brahman,

but differ from Brahman, because they have no ānandāms'a and cid-ams'a fully developed in them. Hence the doctrine is called dvaitādvaita-vāda

Madhvācārya (1197 - 1276 A.D.) wrote a Bhāṣya, called Purnaprajña-Bhāṣya or Anta-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 realisation.

Ś'ripati paṇḍita (1160 A.D.) is said to have written Ś'rikara-Bhāṣya, Ś'rikanṭha is said to have written a commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras and Vijñānedra-bhikṣa has written Vijñānāmṛita 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 scintya-bhedābheda-vāda. After the passing away of Caitanya, Baladeva-Vidyābhūṣaṇa wrote Govinda - Bhāṣya and gave a philosophical system to the Caitanya Sampradāya.

Vallabha (VI) 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 ways¹⁰.

The term is a कर्मधारय compound, i.e. it is to be dissolved as शुद्धं च तद् अद्वैतम्, i.e. one and only element Brahman is quite pure, untouched by māyā and it is both cause and affect. The term is also a पक्षी लक्ष्यरूप compound, i.e. it is to be dissolved as शुद्धयोः अद्वैतम्, i.e. oneness of (or absence of duality between) Brahman and the world¹¹. This philosophy is also called Brahmavāda or S'uddhādvaita Brahmavāda, because it recognises ^{only} Brahman, (and no other entity,) which manifests itself into this diverse universe.¹²

१०। शुद्धाद्वैतपदे ज्ञेयः समासः कर्मधारयः। अद्वैतं शुद्धयोः प्रारुः षष्ठीतत्पुरुषं बुधाः॥
मायासंबंधरहितं शुद्धमित्युच्यते बुधः। कार्यकारणरूपं हि शुद्धं हि ब्रह्म न मायिकम्॥

— S'ri Giridharaji's S'uddhādvaita Mārtanda, st. 27, 28.

११। अनन्यत्व अधिकरणः — AnBl 2-1-14, 15, 16.

१२। आत्मैव तदिदं सर्वं सृज्यते सृजति प्रभुः ।

व्रापते व्राति विश्वत्मा द्विपते हरतीश्वरः ॥

आत्मैव तदिदं सर्वं ब्रह्मैव तदिदं तथा ।

इति श्रुत्यर्थमादाय साध्यं सर्वैर्यथाप्रति ।

अयमेव ब्रह्मवादः शिष्टं मोहाय कल्पितम् ॥ — TON II - 183, 184.

(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 Bhaṭṭas of Telāṅgānā i.e. Andhra, when 100 Soma-yāgas were over. VL's father Lakṣmaṇa Bhaṭṭa 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 1535 V.S. (C.1479 A.D.) on the 11th day of the dark half of Vais'ākha, (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 Kalyāṇa Bhaṭṭa.

His fore-fathers lived in a small village, called Kāṅkarvāra, in Andhra, and belonged to Taittirīya branch of ^{the} Black Yajurveda, and to the Bhāradvāja Gotra. The Bhaṭṭas, viz. Yajña Nārāyaṇa, Gaṅgādhara, Ganapati, Vallabha and Lakṣmaṇa Bhaṭṭa, performed 100 Soma-Yāgas in all and it is said that when Lakṣmaṇa Bhaṭṭa 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 vraja region and so VL learnt, from Mādhava Tīrtha, the

philosophical systems of the day. When Lakṣmana Bhaṭṭa came to Vijaynagar, VL stayed at the Sarasvatī Bhandāra and learnt fully well both the Mīmāṃsās. It is said that he came to be known as a learned philosopher by then, and wrote Tattvārtha-dīpa-nibandha at a young age.

His father started for a pilgrimage in 1545 V.S. and died in 1546 at Lakṣmana Bālāji. 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 Dāmodardāsa Harasāni and Kṛṣṇadāsa Meghana and accepted them as his disciples, who always accompanied him at all places. When he was travelling in Zarakhanda, he experienced some mystic call for going to vraja and having a dars'ana of S'ri Nāthajī. He went to Gokula, where, on the 11th day of the bright half of S'rēvaṇa (1548 V.S.)¹³, he had a vision of S'ri Nāthajī who taught him the Gādyā-Mantra and asked him to initiate divine souls with the mantra¹⁴ and teach them the mode of worship. Here he heard of the event of

~~13. Cf. Siddhānta Rahasya~~

13. Cf. Nija Vārtā No.5, where the year is given as 1549 V.S. and also, ^{11.}84 Vārtās: P.12 (Edition by Dvarkadas Parikh).

14. Cf. Siddhānta Rahasya.

the manifestation of S'ri Govardhana-nāthajī on the mount ^lgirirāja (near ^lJatipur) and he went there. He knew the whole event in details from Sadu Pānde of a small village Anyon,¹⁵ and experienced a similar divine call as he had ~~experienced-e-simila~~ heard in Zārahanda. He stayed for some days there and worshipped the Lord S'ri Nāthajī.

He travelled in India thrice. He ~~went to~~ started from Vraja-region in 1549 V.S., went to Vidyanagar in Utkal, defeated ^{the} Pandits in the assembly of the learned and established his doctrine. He went to ^lPuri, ^lśetubandha and other sacred places and read the Bhāgavata at many places and ultimately came to ^lgirirāja and celebrated the anna-kūṭa festival there. Then he went to Badrikā-S'rama and returned to his native place, ^{via} 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 Nāthajī was ^{the} destroyed by Muslims. He got another temple prepared and instituted S'ri Nāthajī again in the new temple. During this pilgrimage Sikandar Lodi came to know of VL's greatness and got his portrait (with three

15. Cf. Kalyāṇa-Bhatt's Kallola I-4-st.19 to 25

disciples) prepared by the painter Honahāra, which is still found in Kishangarh. It is said that when he went to Pandharpur, God Vithobā asked him to marry, so that He could take birth as his (VL's) son.¹⁶ Then in 1560 V.S. he married Mahālakṣmi, the daughter of Davan Bhatt¹⁷ of Kāshi. During his further journey, he came to Vijaynagar, where Kṛiṣṇa Deva (who ruled during the period 1509-1529 A.D.¹⁸) invited him for S'astrārtha, going on in his court. He defeated all other Pandits and was honoured as an Ācārya. This incident is known as Kanakābhiseka. 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 एकं शास्त्रं देवकीपुत्र गीतं¹⁹ 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 Kashi.

16. Cf. Second Vallabhākyana of Gopāldas

17. Cf. Kallola I - 4 - 39, 40

18. Cf. Ishweriprasad : - History of Medieval India,
P.564 foot note No.127

19. Cf. T.D.N. I-4.

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*, *Subodhinī* , etc. During his pilgrimages, he read the *Bhāgavata* at some places and these places are known as the 84 seats (bethakas).

He had two sons Gopinātha (birth 1567 or 1570 V.S.) and Viṭṭhalanātha (birth 1572 V.S.). It is said that he had divine calls²⁰ to leave this mortal world. In 1597 V.S. he went to Kashi and became a *Sannyāsi*. Once he called his sons, gave them the best massage known as *S'ikṣā-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 *Kriṣṇa* himself appeared there and added 1½ stanzas to the 3½ stanzas of VL and completed the *S'ikṣā-S'lokas*.

There is no unanimity of opinion as regards the number of works of VL. No one has given full list of his works²¹. The *Yadunāth-digvijaya* notes that VL

20. Cf. *Antahkarana - Prabodha* 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 *Tippanī* are ascribed to him.

has written 84 works.²² But the number of his ~~xxx~~ 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 :

अणुभाष्य	पूर्वमीमांसा कारिका
बृहद्भाष्य	पूर्वमीमांसा भाष्य
तत्त्वार्थदीप-सप्रकाश	श्रुतिगीता
अमवत्पीलिका	श्रुतिसार
सुवीधिनी	दशमस्कंधानुक्रमणिका
सूक्ष्मटिका	मधुराष्टक
षोडश ग्रन्थाः	परिवृढाष्टक
पुरुषोत्तमनामसहस्रस्तोत्र	गिरिराजधर्मश्लोक
शिक्षाश्लोकाः	श्रीकृष्णाष्टक
सुदर्शन	गोपीजनवल्लभाष्टक
गायत्रीभाष्य	
त्रिविधनामावली	
पत्रावलंबन	

Dr. Dasgupta²³ ascribes to VL., आचार्यकारिका, आनंदाधिकरण, आर्या, एकान्तरहस्य, पद्य, and परित्याग but nowhere in Sāmpradāyic literature, these works are found noted. प्रतिबोध is noted to be the work of VL by

22. Cf. चतुरशीति तद्ग्रंथाः ।

-Quoted by H. Tandan:
Vārtā Sāhitya, P.120

23. Cf. History of Indian Philosophy Vol. IV, P. ~~373~~ 373

S'ri Vasantaram Shastri²⁴. In an old monthly, titled
वैष्णववैभव, ²⁵, व्यासविरोधलक्षण, चित्तिप्रबोध, वेदवत्सल,
निबंधस्यैकादशस्कंधकारिका, श्रीकृष्णप्रेमामृत, पंचश्लोकी -- --
-- -- -- are mentioned as VL's works. Similarly
- पुष्टिभक्तिसुधा²⁶ mentions, among others, शरणागतआर्या
लौकिकालौकिकभेद and आत्मनिवेदन पद्धति as VL's works,
on the strength of an old MS.

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-bhāṣya, the Nibandha, the Sixteen Treatises and the Subodhinī.

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 realisation, 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

24. Cf. Anugraha Vol. 17-10 (October 1954), P.3.

25. Cf. Part I No.10-11, (1981 V.S.)

26. Cf. Vol. II - No.11.

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

According to VL, soul is atomic, but pervading (Vyāpaka) and a part 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 ānanda. Souls are made of the same stuff as Brahman, but they differ from Brahman in degrees. Souls have the attribute of ^{bliss} (ānanda) unmanifest or suppressed in it, and therefore, they do not experience bliss. They are eternal, jñātā 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 (ābhāsa) ^{of anything,} but have true existence. They are one or identical with Brahman by the relation of part and a whole (ams'amsi).²⁷

According to VL, the manifest universe is not non-being or non-existent (mithyā). It is as true as the souls and not māyā. Ś'rutis like सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म, यतो वा इमानि सु-भूतानि जायन्ते, etc. state that the universe is not different from Brahman. The non-sentient world has the चिदांश and आनंदांश 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 Himself²⁸. Modern research in Neuclear Physics has proved that atoms in an element always move and some Indian Scientists haseshown that synthetic products evince attributes of life.²⁹

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

28. Cf. ~~UDN~~ The प्रपंची भगवत्कार्यः तद्रूपो मायया भवत् । - 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 animo-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 sentiency 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 महताममतात्मक . When the soul realises 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 भगवत्स्वरूप and its affairs appear as भगवत्लीला, the sport of the Almighty.

Brahman is Almighty, absolute, eternal, changeless, all-pervading, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and self-satisfied (apta-kāma or pūrṇa-kāma). It is nirākāra as well as sākāra . It is rasākāra or ānandākāra, and has no physical attributes and body. It is nirguṇa because He has no mundane qualities. He is saguṇa because He has divine, superhuman qualities.³⁰ His attributes are endless (aniyata-dharma). He is of the form of sat, cit and ānanda³¹. So VL describes Brahman as having contradictory

30. Cf. प्रमेयं हरिरेवैकः सगुणो निर्गुणश्च सः ।- TDN.II.84.

31. Cf. सच्चिदानंदरूपं तु ब्रह्मव्यापकमव्ययम् । सर्वं शक्तिं स्वतंत्रं च सर्वज्ञं गुणवर्जितम् ।- TDN.I.65.

attributes³². This is not baseless. VL derives this attribute of Brahman from apporisms like - -
 उभयव्यपदेशात् त्वहिकुंडलवद् - 33 and आत्मनि त- चैव
 विचित्राश्च हि - 34~~35~~ and S'rutis like एकं
 रूपं बहुधा यः करोति 35 and अणोरणीजान् महती
 महियान् 36 and आसीनो दूरं व्रजति शयानो -
 याति सर्वतः ।³⁷

Brahman creates the universe with all its diversity and variety out of himself. The S'ruti says that स रंतुमिच्छत्, स एकाकी न रमते एकीऽहं बहु स्याम् प्रजायेयेति । - 38. So, He is both the instrumental and material cause of the universe.³⁹ But He

32. Cf. विरुद्धसर्वधर्माणामाश्रयम् । - - - - - TDN . I-71.

विरुद्धोभयधर्माश्रयत्वाद् भगवतो मयिमा । - Sub.2-6-17.

विरुद्धसर्वधर्माश्रयत्वं ब्रह्मणो भूषणाय । - AnBh.1-1-3.

33. Cf. Vide Brahmesūtra , 3-2-27.

34. Cf. Ibid , 2-1-28.

35. Cf. Vide Katha , II-5-12.

36. Cf. Ibid , I-2-20.

37. Cf. Ibid , I-2-21.

38. TU - 2-6-1, Chāndogya, 6-2-3, Brhadāranyaka, 1-4-3 .

39. Cf. जगतः समवायि स्यात् तदेव च निमित्तकम् । - TDN, I-68.

is not affected by the diversity of the universe. It is only His sport.⁴⁰ 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 अविकृतपरिणामवाद, as against the विवर्तवाद of S'ankara. The relation between Brahman and the universe is true and the effect i.e. the universe is true. Hence, both सत्कारणवाद and सत्कार्यवाद 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. लीलाकवित्तु लीलाकवित्तु । - BS- 2-1-33. The Modern seer Shri Aurobindo, too, believes in this theory:

" अरविंदके अनुसार पुरमत्त्व सत्चित्तु आनंद ब्रह्म है । - - - विशुद्ध सत् ही मूल तत्त्व है, किन्तु गति, शक्तिप्रक्रिया वगैरे भी उतनी ही मौलिक और उतनी ही सत्य है । सत् और प्रक्रिया, दोनोंका स्वीकार करना आवश्यक है । - - - ब्रह्म निर्गुण और सगुण, एक और अनेक, स्थाणु और गतिशील सभी कुछ है । अरविंद कहते हैं, जगत्की सत्ता शिवका आनंदनृत्य है, वह उस अवदात सत् की जैसा का तैसा जहाँ का तहाँ, उसका एकमात्र और निरपेक्ष लक्ष्य केवल नृत्यका आनंद है । - हिंदी साहित्य कोश पृ० ५०

(आविर्भावतिरोभाववाद)⁴¹ Māyā is a power of Brahman.⁴² 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 ānanda concealed in them. The soul has ānanda concealed in it. As long as, the soul is संसारी, ब्रह्मत्व is unmanifest in it. By the powers of āvirbhāva and tirobhāva, Brahman goes on sporting. The gigantic universe is explained by this theory in the S'uddhādvaitā Philosophy.

Brahman has three forms: आधिदैविक, आध्यात्मिक and आधिभौतिक. The first form is Lord Kṛṣṇa, Puruṣottama, the Pūrṇānanda,⁴³ and can be attained by his grace. The second is Akṣara-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 Puruṣottama, 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. Akṣara

41. Cf. आविर्भाव तिरो भावः मोहनं बहुरूपतः । - TDN, I-72

आविर्भावतिरोभावी शक्ति वै मुरवरिणः । - TDN, II-140

42. Cf. चम भगवतो ज्ञानरूपस्य वशवर्तिनी काचिच्छक्तिमयिति, Sub-2-5-12.

43. Cf. कृष्णिर्भूवाचकः शब्दो णश्च निर्वृतिवाचकः - - - इति
सदानंदः कृष्ण उक्तः । - Sub-10-1-12.

creates ĩada and jīva and antaryāmin accompanies each soul and becomes witness. Like Akṣara Brahman, it has some bliss concealed. Each soul has, therefore, a capacity to experience bliss. The first अविदेविक form remains पूर्णकाम and all bliss, but when there is a desire to sport, He becomes Akṣara Brahman, but He remains greater than Akṣara Brahman.⁴⁴

VL has accepted the traditional प्रस्थानत्रयी as the means of proof (pramānas) 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 Anu-bhāṣya and TDN, the identity of of view in the trio. But, at the same time, he accepts one more pramāna, viz., [†] Bhagavata and therefore in the Ś'uddhādvaita philosophy प्रस्थानत्रयतुष्टयी is considered to be the pramāna,⁴⁶ and the later is to be taken as more prevailing than the former⁴⁷. He accepts the usefulness

44. Cf. Gita XV-18; Harivamśha - Bhaviṣya Parva 17-65 and 10-69 (Gita Press edition); and TDN-II-94 and also Siddhānta-muktāvali.

45. Cf. S.Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy Vol.II.P.756.

also वेदश्च परमाप्तौ अक्षरमात्रमप्यन्यथा न वदति। - अणुभाष्य -१-१-२

46. Cf. वेदाः श्रीकृष्णवाक्यानि व्याससूत्राणि चैव चिद्वि।

समाधि भाषा व्यासस्य प्रमाणं तच्चतुष्टयम् । - - TDN-I-7

47. Cf. उत्तरं पूर्वसदेहवाहकं परिकीर्तितम् । - - - 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 avidyā, which can be destroyed by the five-fold vidyā 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 Bhakti⁵⁰ is the only means to please God. According to VL, bhakti is different from upāsana. The latter has predominance 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 sādhana-bhaktis.

प्रेमलक्षणम् is the sādhyā-bhakti.⁵² It has three stages: प्रेम (love), आसक्ति (complete attachment to the Lord) and व्यसन (intense passion - the stage of forgetting mundane existence and seeing the Lord everywhere).⁵³ In

48. Vide Sub. 10-26-33 and TDN-51 5 56 & 83.

49. Cf. यमेवैषो गुणुते तेन लभ्यः - - - - - Katha 1-2-33 & Mūṇḍaka 3-2-3.

50. Cf. भक्तिश्च प्रेमपूर्विका सेवा । - - - - - Sub 3-29-12.

51. Cf. माहात्म्यज्ञानं पूर्वस्तु सुदृढः सर्वतो ऽधिकः ।

स्नेहो भक्तिरिति प्रोक्तः तथा मुक्तिः न चान्यथा ॥

- TDN-I-42 .

52. Cf. TDN - II - 220 and 226

53. व्यावृत्तो ऽपि हरीं चितं श्रवणादी यतेत् सदा ।

ततः प्रेम तथासक्तिर्व्यसनं च सदा भवेत् ॥ - BhV st. 3.

this case, ^{the} Gopis are to be followed as an example. Those who have knowledge in predominance, reach the Akṣara-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 Para-brahman S'ri Kṛṣṇa. Highest mukti, according to this doctrine, is not complete absorption into Brahman, but it is सायुज्यमेव with Kṛṣṇa⁵⁴ Sevā, then, turns to be the sādhya itself.⁵⁵ 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,⁵⁶ hence this sect is called Pūṣṭimārga i.e. कृपामार्गः.

According to VL there are three categories of souls: Pūṣṭi, Maryādā and Pravāhi,⁵⁷ 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, jñāna and karma of the souls.

54. Cf. सर्वत्यागेऽनन्यभावे कृष्णमात्रिकमानसे।

सायुज्यं कृष्णदेवेन शीघ्रमेव पुत्रं फलम् ॥ - - - - TDN-II-218.

55. Cf. पुष्टिमार्गं स एव यत्र फलं स्वयमेव साधनमित्यसकृदुक्तमाचार्यैः।

- हरिरायजी कृत - ब्रह्मवादे - - - - (K.S.S.No.61) P.19.

56. Cf. भगवती हि ज्ञानं गदितमपि कृपाव्यतिरेकेण न प्राप्यते Sub-2-9-30.

57. Cf. Vide पुष्टिप्रवार मयादिभिः।

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'uddhādvaita Puṣṭi-mārga , TDN and Patrāvalambana and Subodhinī 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 Puṣṭimārga is Vedic, but he asked his disciples to read mainly the Bhāgavata and serve the Lord with profound and pure love. The world (Śamsāra) leads the soul to commit sins and hence it should do all activities with a sense of dedication (samarpaṇa-bhāvenā). 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 dānatā and ananyās'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 patience⁵⁸, thinking that it is also the sport of the Lord.⁵⁹ VL asks his followers to act with the spirit of, what we, in modern times, call, a trustee.

58. Cf. त्रिदुःखसहनं धर्मम् - - | - विषेकधर्मश्चि - - St-6.

59, Cf. तथैव तस्य लीलेति मत्वा चितां द्रुतं त्यजेत् ॥-नवरत्न

VL says that sevā is of three types: tanujā, vitkajā and mānesī , out of which the third is the ideal one. From another point of view, sevā is of two types: svarūpa-sevā (worship of the Lord) and nāma-sevā (reading the scriptures). He attached importance to both of them. VL led a very simple and unassuming life, devoting most of his time to sevā, smarana and chintana and set an example for his disciples.

It is said that VL appeared in the hierarchy of Viṣṇusvāmin. Nābhāji, author of Bhakta-māla, mentions VL as the follower of Viṣṇusvāmin.⁶⁰ In the sampradāya, there are two views: one view holds that VL follows the doctrine of Viṣṇusvāmin.⁶¹ Another view holds that, VL has no connection with Viṣṇusvāmin.⁶² I infer that

60. Vide Parquhar: Religions Literature, P.317.

61. Vide (i) पुष्टिभक्तिसुधा वर्ष - २ - १०, पृ० १५३ : बलभद्रसर्मा -
पुष्टिमागधि आचार्य परंपरा । । गदाधरकृते संप्रदाय प्रदीपे:

श्रीवल्लभप्रोक्त-विष्णुस्वामीसंप्रदाये - पृ० १०३ (कांकरीली प्रकाशन सं० १९९२)

(iii) Bethak - Nigā-vartā Prasanga 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 Gattulalji
(Guj. Ed. 1956 A.D.) Chap.36 where Purusottamji is quoted.

62. Vide (i) निर्भयराम भट्ट : अधिकरण संग्रह । । विष्णुस्वामी
संप्रदायके विल्वमंगल आप- निजवातर्त No.4 (L.C.Desai's edition)

in the family of VL, Gopālopāsana propounded by Viṣṇusvāmin was followed and he might have been the traditional guru. Therefore, VL might have been placed in the hierarchy of Viṣṇusvāmin and he might have mentioned himself as his follower.⁶³ 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 विष्णुस्वामीमतानुवर्ती, - otherwise how can he be called पुण्यक्षरणमार्गीपदेष्टा ? - Again, he himself says that his doctrine is different from Viṣṇusvāmin : शास्त्रं पुरस्कृत्य त्रिविधो भक्तियोगः उक्तः। ते च सांप्रतं विष्णुस्वाम्यनुसारिणः तत्त्ववादिनः रामानुजाश्चेति तमोरप्रःसत्त्वैर्भिन्नाः । अस्मत्प्रतिपादितः - निर्गुण्यः ।⁶⁴..... 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 Viṣṇusvāmin.⁶⁵"

63. Cf. श्री वेदव्यास विष्णुस्वामीमतानुवर्त्यः श्री बल्लभाचार्यः

मयादानुगामिना बल्लभेन अवन्तिकायां नरोत्तम शर्मापीरोहित्येन

संमाननीयः। - सं० १५४६ चैत्र शुक्ल प्रतिपदि । - -

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

64. Vide Sub. . 3-32-37.

65. Glasenapp: Doctrines of VL, P.108.

(viii) S'ri Vitthalanāthajī alias Gosāijī

—VL's first son Gopināthajī passed away in young age.⁶⁶ 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 ^{the} Pustimārga. He travelled to Gujarat six times during his life time, and initiated many people into the Pustimārga. He had to move from Adel to Gadha on account of Akbar's military activities, from Gadha to Mathura and other places and ultimately he settled at Gokul in 1628 V.S. He was a worthy son of a worthy father, a great scholar, ^{and} administrator and propagator ^{propagated} of religion, ^{with} having ~~the~~ 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 AnBh (from Sūtra 3-2-34), left unfinished by his father VL and wrote Vidvan-mandana to prove the correctness and rightness of the doctrine of pure monism.

66. Gopināthajī is said to have written

सेवाविधि, साधनदीपिका, नामनिरूपणसंज्ञा and वल्लभाष्टक,
which are not identified to-day.

His other works⁶⁷ are as follows:

सुबोधिनी - टिप्पणी

भक्तिबंध

भक्तिहेतु - भक्तिहेतुनिर्णय

Tikas on some of the sixteen treatises,
several stotras such as सर्वोत्तम, स्वामिन्यष्टक,
गुप्तरस, ललितत्रिभंग, वल्लभाष्टक,
शृंगार रसमंडन (including रससर्वश्व or व्रतचर्या
and दानलीला),

उत्सवनिर्णय

विज्ञप्ति

आर्या

गीतागीविंदटीका

न्यासादेश विवरण

गायत्र्यर्थ कारिका

वृत्रासुरचतुःश्लोकी विवृति

चौरचर्या

चौरस्वरूपनामलीला

गीतातात्पर्य

स्फुरत्कृष्ण प्रेमामृत

अष्टाक्षरनिरूपण

अष्टाक्षर मुक्ति तारतम्य निर्णय

षट्पदी

प्रबोध

67. Vide बृहत्स्तोत्र सरित्सागर (BSSS) and the periodical
वेष्णवविवरण - - - (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. Sevāmārga. His son VT raised a grand structure of religion on the foundation laid by his father. He expanded the sevā-prakāra (aṣṭa-dars'anas etc.) employed different fine arts in the Bhagvat-sevā, started celebrating different festivals in the temples, for उत्सवप्रियाः क्लृप्ता मनुष्याः ।⁶⁸ He preached a detailed way of sevā, which can be done with pleasure by all the house~~s~~ 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 Pūsti-mārga

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 kartā - these six are required for Vedic rituals and they were not available in purity. The vajra-yāna sect was reduced to vāmamārga. 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, new monotheism and equality of all as regards the religions 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 agast 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 Kṛṣṇā's'rayā of VL and also TDN - II-211-213.

70. Vide Kavi Nahnalal, 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. ^{the} Pustimārga, in which complete dedication and surrender was to be made and all anxieties were to be left to the Almighty. He declared:

सर्वमार्गेषु नष्टेषु क्ली च खलधर्मिणि ।

पाषाण्ड - त्रचरे लोके कृष्ण एव गतिर्मम ॥^{७१}

People found a great solace in कृष्ण एव गतिर्मम । 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,

~~70, Vide Kavi Nahnalal, quoted on P.17 in preface of Mahāprabhu - stuti - muktāvali - I (ed. 1940).~~

71. Eṛiṣṇās'raya St. 1. Cf. also

माहात्म्यज्ञानं दुर्लभमिति तदर्थं प्रयासमकृत्वा, केवलं

भगवते नमनं कर्तव्यम् ।... कृष्ण। तादृशं मां परिपालय । -

Sub 3 - 6 - 40.

to merge their will into God's will.⁷² 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 ^{the} Puṣṭimārga, all people irrespective of their caste or status or sex. He said that the duties of Varnās'rama might be performed,⁷³ but service (sevā)^{of} 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.⁷⁴

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

लक्ष्यरूपमांधी जे स्थूल शरीररत्न धारण कर्तुं तेने उत्तमसंस्कारोधी
परिपाकवत् सूक्ष्मरूप आपी ज्यांधी उद्भव्युं त्यांज समर्पित करवुं एज तेनी
साक्षी अंत छे।
73. Cf. यावद्देशोऽयम् तावद् वर्णाश्रम - धर्माः । - - - - Sub 3-28-2.

74. Cf. किरातादयस्तत्तद्देशगिरिवासिनः अन्त्यजाः जातिनः कार्यतः च
दुष्टाः भक्तिसमाश्रयमात्रेण शुद्धाः भवन्ति।

The Brahmins and the S'udras were accepted in the Bhakti-mārga on the same level. In this way, it was a challenge to the Sanātana 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 Puṣṭimārga did not refute the Varnās'rama-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 ~~for~~ towards life, a new gospel of bhakti, was a novel approach to the problem of the day. VL's Puṣṭimārga 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 meer intellectual diversion and not serious thinking."⁷⁵ VL rightly understood the spirit and instinct of the age and gave a philosophical system, acceptable to all but the prejudiced. Later, VT spread the sect widely in the regions, which are to-day called,

75. Indian Philosophy P. II (ed. 1948), P.659.

Western U.P., Rajasthan and Gujarat;⁷⁶ and made 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 forwards and a new purpose ~~ea~~ of life, and the way of Bhakti (S'arana - mārga), 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 Puṣṭimārga,⁷⁷ and was highly respected by the followers of other sects and religions. He travelled to Gujarat six times during his life-time, ^{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 -

श्री विठ्ठलदीक्षिते राजमाने महीतले । वैकुण्ठमनेच्छा कुंठिता
वैकुण्ठवासिनाम् ॥

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 vaishnavite dress and put on the marks and thus showed a liking for the sect. He issued royal firmans⁷⁸ and allowed a free grant of land round about Mahavana to Vī alias Gosāijī, for cattle-grazing and no sort of tax was levied on the Gosvami's, and they were allowed to worship the Lord in their own way.

In this connection, Shri Durgashankar Shastri rightly observes: १० मा शतक्या जीरमां आवती विष्णुभक्ति १५मा शतकमां पूरजीरमां अनेक रस्ते उभराती हती..... पण भागवत जेवा पुराणीए, गीतगीविंद जेवां काव्यीए के नरसिंह महेशा जेवा भक्त कविमीए मात्र भक्तिने जगाडी, पण एने चालवा माहे सामान्य लोकीने पण अनुकूल जेवा कीई रस्ती - चीली बताव्यो नहीं। वल्लभाचार्य रस्ती बताव्यो। गुजरातनी वेपारी वस्तीने ए रस्ती कस फावी गयो। वल्लभाचार्यना बरूतमां ज - १६ मा शतकना आरंभमां ज गुजरातमां वल्लभाचार्यने अनेक अनुयायीमी मळ्या हता अने पछी पण बहु झडपयी गुजरातमां वल्लभमत प्रसरी गयो। बीजा वैष्णव मतो झांखा पडोने क्षीण थई गया, अने एकाद शतकमां ज वल्लभमतनुं एवुं बीर थई गयुं के वैष्णवमतनो पर्यार्य ज वल्लभमत मनावे लाग्यो ।^{७९}

78. Vide the Imperial Firmans edited by the late Divan Bhandar K.M. Zaveri.

79. Vaisnava Dharma no samksipta Itihase, p. 184.

(x) Bhaktimārga 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 Varuna hymns of Rgveda. It is also found in some of the UPs., but it is considered only in a small proportion. Gītā, which is considered to be a kind of synopsis of the UPs. and some dars'anas, is pre-eminently a ~~work~~ 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 Nārāyaṇa or Vāsudeva was considered to be the Highest Deity. Later, Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa were ~~indeed~~ identified. That stage is noticed in the Bhāgavata.⁸⁰ 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 Nārada and S'āndilya became the chief S'āstras 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.Bhandarker's Vaishnavism Shaivism and minor religious systems.

Nārāyaṇīya Parvan, (Chapters 334-347) of the S'ānti Parvan of the Mahābhārata. For example, we find in it, the description of S'veta-dvīpa,⁸¹ the abode of God, which is similar to the Goloka. We find the avikṛta-pariṇama - 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 jñānamārga⁸² and that attainment of jñāna rests on the grace of God⁸³ are also found in the Mahābhārata. The Bhāgavata speaks of the nine types of bhakti and the resultant parā or prema-lakṣaṇā⁸⁴ bhakti and also of the sādhanā - and sādhya bhakti.⁸⁵

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'ānkarācārya, there was a new trait noticed. Lest the cult of Bhakti be called

81. Sānti-Parvan Chap. 335-336

82. Cf. न स शक्यस्त्वभक्तेन द्रष्टुं देवः कश्चन ।

S'āntiparvan St. 336-53 and also vide St.356-64.

83. Cf. यस्य प्रसादं कुरुते स वैतं द्रष्टुमर्हति।

S'āntiparvan St.336-20.

84. Cf. केवलेन हि भावेन कीप्यो गावो नत्रा मृगाः.....मामीयुरंजसा।

— Bhāgavata XI-12-8 also Bhāgavata VII-5-24.

85. Cf. Bhāgavata III-29-11 to 14.

un-Vedic, āchāryas like Rāmānuja wrote commentaries on the Brahma-Sūtra, Gītā 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 Rāmānuja and Nimbārka.⁸⁶ What VL did, was to synthesize the scattered ideas, sift out the dvaita-bhāva 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 Bhaktimārga and the Puṣṭimārga or the s'aranamārga.

(xi) Misrepresentation of ^{the} Puṣṭimārga

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."⁸⁷ M.M. Williams has disparaged this doctrine in his "Brahmanism and Hinduism." The

86. Vide the ninth stanza of the Das'a-s'loki, 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 ^{Mad} Meel Vallabhacharya)

greatest disparagement is found in the 'Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics', which stigmatizes the doctrine as hedonistic tenets. This work says, "The Vallabhacharyas 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."⁸⁸ 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."⁸⁹ This is quite wrong and contrary to the doctrine and its practice. The work has lost completely the meaning of the 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 Gosvāmī Mahārājas. Such works have done much harm to the prestige of the sampradāya, through its misrepresentation. VL has described the ideal guru in the TDN and has even stated that a devotee may do without a guru if an ideal one is

88. Vol. XII P. 581 (Edited by James Hastings in 1921 A.D.).

89. Ibid P - 582.

not available, and may worship independantly by instituting an idol.⁹⁰ Who can be more progressive than this? In the sampradāya, VL is considered the guru and ācārya. Purusottamajī (birth 1724 V.S.) has stated in his commentary on the verse कृष्णसेवापरं....., that स्वस्मिन्नेवैतन्मागमि - गुरु त्वंनियच्छन्तः - - - - 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 'puṣṭi' 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 sampradāya commanded respect of disinterested writers like Prof. H.V.Glasenapp and Mr. P. Johanns and Manilal C. Parekh, who have in their own way, evaluated the Śuddhadvaita

90. Cf. कृष्णसेवापरं वीक्ष्य दंभारहितं नरं।

श्री भागवततत्त्वज्ञं भजेज्जिज्ञासुरादरात्॥

तदभावे स्वयं वाऽपि मूर्तिं कृत्वा हरेः क्वचित्।

परिचर्यां सदा कुर्यात्तद्रूपं तत्र च स्थितम् ॥

doctrine.⁹²

(xi) Descendents 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 ṡustimārga 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. Descendents 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 Çidrūpa. Go was followed by Harirāyajī (1646-1772 V.S.), son of his nephew. He too, was a great bhakta and writer. Then, there were other Goswāmīs such as Kākā Vallabhajī (birth 1703 V.S.), Purusottamjī (birth 1724 V.S.), Yogī Gopes'varajī (birth 1836 V.S.), Giridharajī (birth 1847 V.S.) and Pandits like Īlūbhāṭṭa, Balabhadra, Govardhana, Gaṭṭulāle and Ṣṭa-chāpā poets and Dayārāma who wrote important works on S'uddhādvaita Philosophy.⁹³ Among these, Purusottamjī wrote many commentaries and articles, defeated his antagonists and proved the sound footing of the S'uddhādvaita Puṣṭimārga. 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 S'ri Nāthajī was instituted at Nāthadvārā near Udaipur in Mewar, the sampradāyagot 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 Nānālal in the preface to his translation of the Sixteen Treatises.

religious 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 ^{the} Pustimārga. Many times it so happened that the main purpose of the doctrine is forgotten in the philosophical squabbles. GO, therefore, saw his duty in ^{emphasizing} ~~bringing out~~ the Prameya, rather than pramāna and sādhanā. He wrote a number of expositions (vivarānas), 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.