

Literary Works of Aniruddhadeva: Special Reference of *Bhakti Mangol Ghosa*

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ABSTRACT

This Paper is about the Literary Works of Aniruddhadeva, a Neo-Vaishnavite Saint of Assam. Aniruddhadeva wrote plenty of Literary work in relation with *Eak Saran Nam Dharma* of Sankardeva, which is also known as Neo-Vaishnavite Movement of Assam, his Literary work include the translation of the fifth *skandha* of the *Bhagavata* as well as of the twentieth to the thirty-first chapter of its fourth *skandha* under the title *puranjan Upakhyan* and composition of 182 divine songs. Besides, he composed a work on the principles and philosophy of *Bhakti* called *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* which is the holy text of his disciples and another called *Nij-sastra*. The recitation of the last which is done in secret is, however, confined to the disciples of superior rank only. *Bhakti-Mangal Ghosa* is based mainly on Madhavdeva's *Namghosa* which contains the essence of all *Nigama Sastras*. The text of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* contains 805 verses of six different meters - 167 verses of *Chabi* meter, 176 of *Dulari* meter, 139 of *Lechari*, 236 of *Pada*, 74 of *Chanda* and 13 of *Namghosa* metre. The 805 verses cover 36 subheadings (*bhag*) or topics. On these 36 sub-headings, the verses on *Ninda*, *Prasamsa* and *Upadesa* are found to be repeated thrice in different places. In a like way verses pertaining to *Ndm-Mahima*, *Mahima-Yukta Upadesa*, *Atmaninda*, *Atma upadesa*, *Prarthana*, *Mahima* and *Sarana* are found to be repeated twice. This paper is only a humble attempt to discuss the main teachings of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* in its general literary from.

1. Introduction

Sri Sri Aniruddhadeva of upper Assam is one of the greatest Vaishnava Saint to Propagate the Eak Saran Nam Dharma of Sankardeva. He was born 104 years after the birth of Sankardeva, 64 years after the birth of Madhavdeva and 15 years after the birth of his Guru Gopaldeva. Aniruddhadeva wrote plenty of Literary work in relation with Eak Saran Nam Dharma of Sankardeva, which is also known as Neo-Vaishnavite Movement of Assam, his Literary work include the translation of the fifth *skandha* of the *Bhagavata* as well as of the twentieth to the thirty-first chapter of its fourth *skandha* under the title *puranjan Upakhyan* and composition of 182 divine songs. Besides, he composed a work on the principles and philosophy of *Bhakti* called *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* which is the holy text of his disciples and another called *Nij-sastra*. The

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Division/Bhag	Serial No. of the verses	Total No. of the verses
1. <i>ninda</i> (revile)	73 - 100	28
- do -	618 - 651	34
- do -	792 - 797	6
2. <i>prasamsa</i> (eulogy)	101 - 123	23
- do -	316 - 340	25
- do -	570 - 583	14
3. <i>upadesa</i> (advice)	124 - 150	27
- do -	372 - 375	24
- do -	549 - 564	21
4. <i>nam mahima</i> (greatness of of the Name of God)	16 - 28	13
- do -	151 - 174	24
5. <i>mahimayukta upadesa</i> (advice full of greatness of Bhakti)	40 - 50	11
- do -	728 - 751	24

6. <i>atma-ninda</i> (self-revile)	175 - 188	14
- do -	786 - 791	6
7. <i>atma-upadesa</i> (advice to self)	212 - 221	10
- do -	752 - 757	6
8. <i>prarthana</i> (prayer)	253 - 275	23
- do -	717 - 725	9
9. mahima (greatness)	304 - 315	12
- do -	518 - 529	12
10. <i>sarana</i> (initiation/taking refuge)	- 3 -	1
- do -	189 - 211	23
11. <i>bhajana</i> (religious service)	- 1 -	1
12. <i>namaskar</i> (salutation)	- 2 -	1
13. <i>guru nirnay</i> (ascertainment of and - 4 - 15 determined devotion to <i>guru</i>)		12
14. <i>isvar nirnay</i> (determined devotion of God)	29 - 36	8
15. <i>samprada</i> (established usage)	37 - 39	3
16. <i>bhagavata prasamsa</i> (eulogy of the Bhagavata)	51 - 72	22
17. <i>kakuti nivedana</i> (humble offering)	222 - 241	20
18. <i>mahanta acarar raye anyatra acare ninda</i> (revile of other rites barring those of the Mahantas)	241 - 252	11
19. <i>kali-dharma nirnay</i> (ascertainment of the dharma of the Kali Yuga)	276 - 303	28
20. <i>bhagirathar agat parasar vacan</i> (Parasar's statement before Bhagirath)		
a) <i>karma yuga bhakti</i>	341 - 351	11
b) <i>jnana yuga bhakti</i>	352 - 362	11
21. <i>bhakti yugar ghosa</i> (hymns of the Bhakti Yuga)	363 - 371	9
22. <i>bharat-bhu prasamsa</i> (Glorification of India)	396 - 403	8
23. <i>nama prasamsa</i> (Eulogy of nama)	404 - 419	16
24. <i>bhaktir mahima</i> (Greatness of bhakti)	420 - 433	14
25. <i>bhakti dvesik ninda</i> (revile of those hostile to Bhakti)	434 - 456	23
26. <i>khed</i> (repentance)	457 - 473	17
27. <i>stuti</i> (song of praise)	474 - 478	5
28. <i>baddha mukutir hetu</i> (for unflinching devotion only)	479 - 504	26
29. <i>nrdeh prasamsa</i> (glorification of the human body)	505 - 517	13
30. <i>pathak prasamsa bipathak ninda</i> (appreciation of the right way and revile of the wrong way)	530 - 548	19
31. <i>paramartha sar</i> (essence of spiritualism)	584 - 617	34
32. <i>tatparya</i> (significance)	652 - 695	44
33. <i>sat-sang a prasamsa</i> (appreciation of the company of the pious)	696 - 716	21
34. <i>upakar smaran</i> (recollection of benefit)	726 - 727	2
35. <i>namghosa</i> (hymns of God's name)	758 - 785	28
36. <i>sambodhani</i> (address)	798 - 805	8

Thus the 805 verses of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* dealing with 36 different topics spread over 50 small sections or sub-headings.

2. Sources of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*

The *Srimadbhagavata* is the main source of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*. The author takes 55 *slokas* from I-IV and X-XII *skandhas* or sections of this work and makes their Assamese rendering in 90 verses. Other sources include the *Naradiya-purana*; *Padma-purana*, *Brahmanda-purana*, *Visnu-purana*, *Isa-Upanisad* etc. Sri B. K. Konwar has identified the source of nearly 150 verses of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*, Aniruddhadeva also borrows from Sankaradeva's *Bhakti-Ratnavali* and largely from Madhadeva's *Namghosa*. His other sources include the

Santi-Sataka, *Mahabharat Sravan-Mahatmya*, *Rg-Veda*, *Bairagya Sataka*, Sankaracharya's *Mohamudgara* etc.

3. Similarity with Madhadeva's *Namghosa*

In literary style, Aniruddhadeva's *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* bears close similarity with Madhadeva's *Namghosa*. As in the *Namghosa*, so also in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*, six kinds of meters - *Chabi*, *Dulari*, *Pad*, *Lechari*, *Chanda* and *Namghosa* are used. The number of letters used in the first four are same with those of Sankaradeva and Madhadeva. In the *chabi* meter, there are three different uses of the number of letters (a) 12 + 9+14 (b) 11 + 11 and (c) 11 + 10. There are altogether 32 verses of the first category, 40 of the second category and 2 of the third category totalling 74.

In a like way there are three different numbers of letters in the meter called *Namghosa* (a) 19 + 14 (b). 14 + 14 and (c) 57 + 10. Of the 36 topics discussed in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*, 20 like *bhajana* and *paramartha sar* are exactly similar with those of the *Namghosa*. But topics, like *Vastu prakas* (manifestation of God in matter), *namanay* (singing the name of God), *karunya* (compassion), *yoga-dharma nirnay* (ascertaining the *dharma* of the age), etc. are not there in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*. However, the contents of the *vastu prakas* of the *Namghosa* are to some extent covered in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* under the topics *Samprada*, *Guru-Nirnay*, *Prasamsa* and *Stuti*. In the *Namghosa*, the meters are used in a systematic manner. In other words only one kind of meter is used to explain one topic. In the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* on the other hand, even in small topics like *Guru nirnay* containing 12 verses, three kinds of meters - *Chanda*, *Chabi* and *Dulari* are used. In place of unison of four - *Kali Yuga*, *Bharatvarisa*, *Ramanama* and *Satguru* of the *Namghosa*, in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* there is unison of the last three only.

Another point to be noted is that while Madhavdeva speaks of *cari purusartha* (*dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksa*) Aniruddhadeva speaks of *Panca purusartha*.

There is close similarity between the verses of the *Namghosa* and the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* dealing with the doctrines of *bhakti*. For ex. there is no distinction between Hari and Harinama, as Hari can kill all sins and sorrows so also *Harinama* can do); *cariveda Ramayana purana*, *bharata / namakehe kahe matra samaste sastrata*- (v. 695). (In the four *Vedas*, *Ramayana*, *Puranas*, *Mahabharata* and in all religious texts, only *nama* is glorified). Sankardeva has elaborately discussed *Candalini Indra sarwad* in the *Bhagavata*; this is summarised in four verses in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa*. In a like way the essence of the tale of Ajamil described elaborately in Sankardeva's *Kirtana* and the *Bhagavata* is presented in the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* only in six verses (16-21) to explain the greatness of God's name. As Madhavdeva does it in the *Namghosa* so also.

4. Conclusion

Sri Sri Aniruddhadeva of upper Assam is one of the greatest Vaishnava Saint to Propagate the Eak Saran Nam Dharma of Sankardeva. His *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* is based on the teachings of the *Bhagavata*, which can spread as much light as that of one crore suns and hence is the best of all religious texts. An in-depth study of the *Bhakti Mangal Ghosa* brings to light Aniruddhadeva's mastery over different religious texts, his quality both as a philosopher and as litterateur, his unalloyed humility and his devotion to God.

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