

# ***Evolution of Rādhā in Bengali Literature***

[12<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.]

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The allegory of Rādhā - misunderstood

The restriction more increase -

Lust is the death of Love

Self is the death of Love

Individual to General

Concrete to Abstract - to Absolute<sup>1</sup>.

- Swami Vivekananda

The salient feature of Vaiṣṇava Literature of Bengal is the concept of Rādhā since 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Famous Vaiṣṇava poet Jayadeva composed his famous lyric **Gītagovinda** based on the love-affair of Lord Śrīkrṣṇa. Subject of this love-song is Śrīkrṣṇa and its foundation is Śrī Rādhā. Having based on Rādhā, all the other love-songs have been flourished in later ages. On account of being locus of the main subject Śrīkrṣṇa, Rādhā has become foundation of all the Vaiṣṇava *pada* literature also. Although main theme is almost the same, yet on account of being handled by different poets, the same character appears in new and different dimensions.

Numerous poets are there, who composed on the same theme, but we have selected only six poets to analyze the evolution and development of the concept of Rādhā in Bengali literature.

1. Rādhā in Jayadeva's **Gītagovinda** (12<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)
2. Rādhā in Caṇḍīdāsa's **Srīkrṣṇa-kīrtana** (15<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)
3. Rādhā in Vidyāpati's *Padāvalī* (15<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)
4. Rādhā in Caṇḍīdāsa's *Padas* (15<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)
5. Rādhā in Jñānadāsa's *Padas* (Late 16<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)
6. Rādhā in Govindadāsa's *Padas* (Early 17<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)

Among these six, first two have a story; in other cases, Rādhā appears in fragmentary poems. Here main theme is prohibited love-affair of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and in that theme, (1) germination of Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa;

(2) its slow development/nourishment;

(3) various manifestation of their love-affair, viz. separation, union. etc.

- these are different facets. Both Jayadeva and Caṇḍīdāsa had woven those events with slight variation. In *padāvalī* literature, all these points are there but no set pattern/order has been followed.

Another notable thing is earlier poets have stressed on depicting sensual pleasure (*sambhoga śṛṅgāra*); therefore in their composition, love has become passionate; whereas Vaiṣṇava poets stressed on narrating separation (*viraha*) and created a divinity and sublimity in love. This superfine, still deep melody of love based on *viraha* has elevated Rādhā's love from this rough and coarse world to supra-natural world, from mundane to super-mundane level<sup>2</sup>.

### **Rādhā in Gītagovinda:**

Rādhā has become crazy for Kṛṣṇa's love. Her friend informs her that Kṛṣṇa is toying with another girl<sup>3</sup>, Rādhā felt insulted and started recounting sweet reminiscences. But this separation is very short-lived because Kṛṣṇa's mind is fixed in Rādhā<sup>4</sup>. He requested Rādhā's friend to bring Her at meeting place<sup>5</sup>. But the friend asked Her to meet Kṛṣṇa at Mādhavī bower<sup>6</sup>. Rādhā waits there accordingly, but Kṛṣṇa is missing. Rādhā felt worried that Kṛṣṇa has deceived again<sup>7</sup>. The whole night passed away. In the morning Kṛṣṇa appears bearing all the signs of a rogue hero (*dhṛṣṭa nāyaka*)<sup>8</sup>. Rādhā's pride has been hurt and she refused him rudely<sup>9</sup>. But pangs and prickings of refusal multiplied her pain. She repented and lamented poorly<sup>10</sup>. Being informed of Her pain, Kṛṣṇa returned back<sup>11</sup> and allayed over Her huff. Both were united.

In order to relate these events, twenty-four songs have been inserted in this lyric. The list of canto names is noteworthy; all the names hint Kṛṣṇa<sup>12</sup>, but almost everywhere Rādhā is a predominating character. Jayadeva, in his **Gītagovinda**<sup>13</sup>, has presented Rādhā in different moods (e.g. *khaṇḍitā*, *vāsakasajjikā*, etc.) according to the description of Sanskrit Rhetorics<sup>14</sup>. But, whether in pangs of separation or in pleasure of union, basically Rādhā appears as a full-fledged heroine as she is found in other classical poems. Excessive beauty-consciousness, indulgence in sensual pleasure - these are the salient features of Her character. Therefore, in Jayadeva's imagination Rādhā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, is entirely a human character; by no means she can be called Vaishnavite Goddess<sup>15</sup>. S.C.Mukherjee<sup>16</sup> in his work has written : "Jayadeva's sole concern was to compose a lyric kāvya depicting Divine Amours of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and not a religious treatise based on later Vaiṣṇava dōgmas." The presiding sentiment of Jayadeva's **Gītagovinda** is erotic *mādhurya* and this erotic aspect of Jayadeva's work

was not a new development, for since the days of Hāla - the author of **Gāhā Sattasai** - the common characteristic of songs on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa was eroticism. Almost similar is the opinion of Dr. S.K.De<sup>17</sup> who says: "although Jayadeva was a staunch Krishnaite (from Daśāvātāra-stotra it is clear), yet his devotion to Kṛṣṇa had nothing to do with this poetry. Both his Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are considerably humanized in an atmosphere of passionate poetic appeal."

### ***Rādhā in Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana by Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa:***

In the early decades of 20th century one Babu Basanta Ranjan Ray Vidvadvallabha discovered Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana (belonging to 14<sup>th</sup> cent. describing Kṛṣṇa's triumph over Rādhā in love-affairs) from a village of Viṣṇupur, Bankura ascribed to the name of Caṇḍīdāsa or Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa in their *bhaṇitās*. Except *caryāpadas*, it is by far the earliest known record of Bengali literature. Identification and date of this Caṇḍīdāsa is a separate problem of Bengali Literature. We are, however, not concerned with this problem. Still, it is fairly certain that Caṇḍīdāsa of **Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana** supposed to have flourished before Śrī Caitanya, but after Jayadeva. Therefore, in the composition of **Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana**, he followed **Gītagovinda** and not the works like **Ujvalanīlamanī**.

Though Baḍu was influenced by Jayadeva, still he did not follow him blindly. He innovated many new sequences in the love-romance of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. There are many episodes in the **Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana**, which are not traced in the other classical sources of Kṛṣṇa's life, e.g. **Viṣṇu-Purāṇa**, **Bhāgavata-Purāṇa**, **Harivaṁśa**, etc. The entire text has thirteen parts, viz. (1) *janma*, (2) *tāmbūla*, (3) *dāna*, (4) *naukā*, (5) *bhāra*, (6) *chatra*, (7) *vṛndāvana*, (8) *kāliyadamana*, (9) *hāra*, (10) *vāṇa*, (11) *yamunā*, (12) *vaṁśī* and (13) *viraha*.

In Caṇḍīdāsa's composition, Rādhā is found in the midst of rural realities. Prof. Asit Kumar Bandyopadhyay<sup>18</sup> in his article on Rādhā has written: "in this poem Rādhā is entirely a human being," A close study of the text brings out some features of Rādhā's character. In the beginning, we find Rādhā as a typical village girl or a teenaged milk-woman (daughter of Sāgara and Padmāvati) but very strong and quarrelsome, who, in spite of Kṛṣṇa's repeated proposal and Baḍāi's instigation, did not agree to make love with Kṛṣṇa. On the contrary, she quarreled with them to avoid the situation. In the second phase, we find her as a romantic heroine, absent-minded, absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's thought and overwhelmed with passion and emotion. Thus, Caṇḍīdāsa has shown a dynamic change in her psychology.

In the whole **Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana**, some time-indicating phrases have been used,

which indicate that the text describes Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's two years' love-affair<sup>19</sup>. In the beginning, Rādhā is described as a girl of eleven years (*egāro vatsarer bālī*), that means at the end she has reached thirteen. This time is called *vayaḥsandhi* (adolescence). It brings a change not only in the physique, but in mind also. It arouses sex-consciousness as well as longing for beloved. But then, she has already got married with Āihana, a hermaphrodite. Caṇḍīdāsa described her: 'नयंसक आइहनेर रानी'. At the start of *tāmbūla khaṇḍa*, Caṇḍīdāsa<sup>20</sup> has given an excellent description of Rādhā's beauty. Āihana was fully aware of it (Rādhā's beauty) and about his own impotence. Therefore, he appointed an old aged distant relative through his mother<sup>21</sup>. But Baḍāi did not honour their faith. On the contrary, she acted as Kṛṣṇa's agent and instigated Rādhā to make love with Him<sup>22</sup>.

This Rādhā is a remarkable creation. Being an adolescent young girl, she is really unique. In spite of Baḍāi's instigation, Kṛṣṇa's allurements and threatening, she resisted Kṛṣṇa's overtures<sup>23</sup>. At the end of *dāna-khaṇḍa*, she was almost compelled to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Thus, Rādhā's quarrel with Kṛṣṇa and Baḍāi and at last surrender to Kṛṣṇa's force, her intelligence to utilize Kṛṣṇa<sup>24</sup> (as an attendant by compelling Him to carry her load up to the market and carry umbrella over her head) and deceiving Him at last<sup>25</sup>, description of their romance in *yamunā-khaṇḍa*, *hāra-khaṇḍa*, *vaṁśī-khaṇḍa*, - are totally description of love in human plane, by no means it could cross the boundary of mundane world. In the latter half, she has got interested in Kṛṣṇa, but then He has become totally indifferent.

Thus, we find Rādhā of earlier *khaṇḍas*, (i.e. in *tāmbūla*, *dāna* and *naukā*) is a different one from Rādhā of later *khaṇḍas*, (i.e. *vaṁśī* and *viraha*). Indeed a radical development has been noticed in Her character - both in earlier part, where She resisted Kṛṣṇa and in latter part, where She loved Kṛṣṇa whole-heartedly<sup>26</sup>. "The Rādhā of this poem is a real woman and not the sentimental and emotional abstraction that She often became in the later Vaiṣṇava poetry of post-Caitanya age<sup>27</sup>. Hence, it appears that Baḍu in his **Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana**, instead of following **Bhāgavata**, etc. gave literary form to the tradition, which might have been popular in his own locality<sup>28</sup>. Prof. Ashutosh Bhattacharya<sup>29</sup> in his work states: "Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa of **Śrīkṛṣṇa-kīrtana**, are not the characters of Vaiṣṇava *padāvalī*, but they are the hero and heroine of folk-song (*lokasāhitya*)".

### **Rādhā in Vidyāpati's Padāvalī:**

Next comes the famous *padāvalī* composer Vidyāpati, an erudite rhetorician.

He wrote books on Smṛti, Nīti and Pūjā, but mainly his collection of *padas*, especially lovesongs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa made him immortal to his readers. Very naturally, he was influenced by Jayadeva's **Gītagovinda**. His prayer songs clearly indicate that he considered his Mādhava as *parabrahma*.

“कत चतुरानन मरि मरि जाओत  
 नही तुआ आदि-अवसाना  
 तौहे जनमि पुन तौहे समाओत  
 सागर लहरी समाना” —प्रार्थना, विद्यापति

But that Mādhava, when he appears as a hero in the love-songs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, is a separate character, same is the case of Rādhā. MMP H.P. Shastri<sup>30</sup> thought that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa of Medieval period were not divine beings, they were rather imaginary persons. The purpose of this statement is to make the readers realize that there is a little scope to consider love-songs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as the allegory used in *Bhakti* literature. "In these love-songs, Rādhā symbolizes devotee, Kṛṣṇa the Lord Himself and Rādhā's love is the expression of devotee towards Lord - this would be a forcible interpretation<sup>31</sup>."

By religion, Vidyāpati was not a Vaiṣṇava, but a *pañcopāsaka smārta* (a devotee of five gods, viz. Gaṇeśa, Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Durgā and Śiva). Further, he was a court-poet of Dvarbhanga king Śivasimha and that is why, writings from his pen became excellent poems, not the essence of later Vaiṣṇava Philosophy and Religion. Being a court-poet, his sole concern was to please his patron king and entertain his rich, educated and aristocrat courtiers. Therefore, intellectualism, paronomasia, elegant expression and decorative language - these are the salient features of his composition. Excessive beauty-consciousness, sensuality and his own aesthetic sense - these are the ingredients, which helped him to depict Rādhā's character<sup>32</sup>.

Now, Vidyāpati's collection of *padas* may be classified under some head, viz. *vayaḥsandhi*, *pūrvarāga*, *anurāga*, *viraha*, etc. At first, *vayaḥsandhi* (adolescence), a juncture of *kaiśora* and *yauvana*, first blooming of youth. Tagore in his *Ādhunik Sāhitya* illustrated this Rādhā.

"the first dawn of youth, everything is full of mysticism. Her just bloomed mind is feeling its own fragrance - so being puzzled in embarrassment, worry, joy and anxiety, She cannot determine whether to express or conceal herself."

'Vidyāpatir Rādhikā, *Ādhunik Sāhitya*, pp. 58-59

Vidyāpati<sup>33</sup> expressed Rādhā's psychology beautifully.

After *vayaḥsandhi* comes *pūrvarāga* - first arousing of youth and a hazy sensation of love in Rādhā's mind. In first sensation of love nimbleness of a maiden, her sportive movement (*līlāvilāsa*) and intelligence have become distinct, e.g. after having bath, when Rādhā was on her way to home, she longed to see Kṛṣṇa and tore off the pearl-string; and when her friends were engaged in collecting the scattered pearls, her wistful glances to Kṛṣṇa..... such events are scattered in *padā*<sup>34</sup>.

Gangopadhyay<sup>35</sup> in his work has stated: "in the beginning Rādhā is a teenaged girl, but in the next phase, she appears as a full grown young lady. In critic's words, Vidyāpati's Rādhā is a cultured aristocrat woman whose expression is intelligent, glances are meaningful and ornaments are precious producing alluring music." From an innocent girl, Rādhā has become a bold and confident woman. Now she is no more a village woman, but represents a member of rich and aristocrat society. She is very much beauty-conscious, her expressions are intelligent, cultured and witty<sup>36</sup>. To imagine and conceive such a character is possible for a court-poet only.

But in spite of all these things, Rādhā's love is not artificial. In the poems of union, she is fascinating in love, lit up with smile and bright<sup>37</sup>; while in the poems of *viraha* category pangs of her separation are really pathetic<sup>38</sup>. In the songs of union, she has scattered her ecstasy of joy all around and in the songs of lamenation, she has flooded away the reader with her pains and sufferings.

"Being an erudite rhetorician, Vidyāpati depicted his Rādhā tallying well with the heroines described in Sanskrit Rhetorics"<sup>39</sup>. Sukumar Sen<sup>40</sup> in his *History of Bengali Ligerature* has stated: "the niceties of *gopīprema* were not understood by Vidyāpati. He did not consider his Rādhā as *hlādinī śakti* of Kṛṣṇa.... Therefore, both his Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were not diving being, rather they are the creation of his own aesthetic sense." Hence, Vidyāpati's Rādhā cannot be interpreted from the angle of *bhakti*.

### ***Rādhā in Caṇḍīdāsa's Padāvalī :***

In the chronology of *Padāvalī* literature, next to Vidyāpati comes Caṇḍīdāsa. In the history of Bengali Literature, there is a well-established problem regarding Caṇḍīdāsa's indentification. We are, however, not concerned with this point. But one or two points we must mention here. In the collection of Vaiṣṇava *padas*, we find a large number of *padas* bearing the name of Caṇḍīdāsa (in their *bhaṇitās*), which are totally different in scheme and taste from **Śrikrṣṇa-kīrtana**, ascribed to the name of Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa. At the same time, all the *padas* are not composed by the same person, because some of them are most excellent in quality, while some are most ordinary.

Therefore, it is certain that there are two or more authors bearing same name and belonging to contemporary age. Among them, one was *sahajiyā*, who composed a large number of excellent *padas* on the theme of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's romance. On the one hand they are different in character from **Śrikrṣṇa-kīrtana**, on the other hand these are not at all influenced by Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy. We will discuss about Rādhā, conceived by this Caṇḍīdāsa.

Caṇḍīdāsa had faith in *sahajasāadhanā* and composed many poems based on love-affairs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Later critics interpret his composition from the angle of Śrī Caitanya's philosophy. As a result, Rādhā's romantic beauty and human character have been subdued. But if we consider the point more deeply, it will be clear that Caṇḍīdāsa's view do not tally with the *rasa* theory propounded by Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava teachers. But he was influenced by *sahajiyā* sect who do not bother for social code of conduct or conventions, nor they are interested in any profit or loss of practical life. Having neglected these wordly affairs, they only search the way to love and remain absorbed in themselves. Love is their religion, virtually the *sumumbonum* of their life<sup>41</sup>.

Having been influenced by these concepts Caṇḍīdāsa has depicted his Rādhā. Sometimes it appears that the poet himself has got lost in Rādhā. Rādhā's lamentation appears to be his own experience. Like Vidyāpati he has not seen and felt Rādhā from a distance, he has created Her with his own imagination, feelings of pleasure and pain. Further, in Caṇḍīdāsa's Rādhā emotionalism is very much prominent, neither there is a reason nor any intellectualism<sup>42</sup>.

Therefore in Caṇḍīdāsa's Rādhā (character) there is no evolution/development. Similarly, her love also cannot be categorized in different phases, like *pūrvarāga*, *anurāga*, *viraha*, *milana*, etc. Here pathos of separation has been combined with *pūrvarāga*'s feelings. Caṇḍīdāsa's Rādhā is always a matured young lady. But this youth does not mean any sensuality. The combination of her emotionalism and depth of love has turned into a deep inquisitiveness<sup>43</sup>. Gangopadhyay<sup>44</sup> states in his work: "Rādhā's love has been elevated to such a height, where this material world (consisting of *rūpa*, *rasa*, *varṇa*, *gandha*, etc.) have become single focused and have lost their identity in the depth of mind". Quoting Tagore he says, - "at last all the paths meet in the same point, same goal - a strange feeling named Kṛṣṇa".

This Kṛṣṇa, whom Caṇḍīdāsa's Rādhā meditates on, He is not a human being, but an imaginary person, poet's own creation. This Kṛṣṇa is combined creation of Rādhā's entire desire and poet's aesthetic sense<sup>45</sup>. Kṛṣṇa is Rādhā's dream person; She mutters His name only and reaches a Paradise (comprising romance, union and

separation<sup>46</sup>). The poet has conceived an ideal Beauty and ideal Love - which is never available in this practical world. Caṇḍīdāsa has converted himself into Rādhā and felt beauty, union and separation of Kṛṣṇa within himself. Therefore, in Caṇḍīdāsa's *padas* there is no difference between union and separation<sup>47</sup>.

### ***Influence of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas on Padāvalī Literature :***

With the advent of Śrī Caitanya and his Bhakti movement, the *padāvalī* literature turned a new direction. Followers of Śrī Caitanya, i.e., Goswamīs of Vṛndāvana and their great devout Krishnadasa Kaviraja laid down the foundation of Vaiṣṇava Philosophy, especially their *rasa* theory. The **Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu**, **Ujvalanīlamanī**, **Ṣaṭṣandarbhā**, **Ṣaṭtrimśat Tattvasandoha**, **Śrī Caitanyacaritāmṛta** are the pioneer texts in this direction, which directed not only later aspirants and philosophers but the poets also. Obviously post-Caitanya poets were very much influenced by the decisive guidelines of their predecessors. Although, we are not concerned with the complexities of these theories, still before going through the *padas* of Jñānadāsa and Govindadāsa, we should be acquainted with the outline of this philosophy, which is related with *śrīrādhā tattva*. Because under these guidelines our concerned poets depicted Rādhā.

1. The essence of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Philosophy is the concept of Rādhā, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja has described Her: महाभावस्वरूपिणी महाभावशिरोमणि राधा ठाकुरानी।
2. Almighty God Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not Indeterminate Brahman beyond all powers, attributes and limitations. He is the matrix of all the *guṇas* and powers, superb is His beauty. But all His attributes, beauty and power, everything is supra-natural<sup>48</sup>.
3. The unlimited power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be conceived as having three aspects; (1) internal essential power (*antaraṅgā svarūpaśakti*), (2) external (*vahiraṅga*) *māyāśakti* and (3) *taṭasthā jīvaśakti*. Again this *antaraṅgā svarūpaśakti* has three aspects, *sandhinī*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī*. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *pūrṇa saccidānanda*. He is *sat* (ever-existing) in *sandhinī* part, *cit* (consciousness) in *saṁvit* part and *ānanda* (bliss) in *hlādinī* part<sup>49</sup>.
4. The essential function of essential power of God is *hlādinī śakti*. According to Vaiṣṇava exponents essence of this *hlādinī śakti* is Rādhā which is the nature of Pure Bliss<sup>50</sup>.
5. Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys Pure Bliss in this *hlādinī śakti*. In the opinion of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, this is the culminating point, where other two *śaktis* are merged in. That means Rādhā is *pūrṇaśaktisvarūpā*<sup>51</sup>.
6. Moreover, in their view the affection of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is to illustrate Lord's

highest and most intense form of Love with His own internal and inseparable *hlādinī śakti*. They opine that there's no metaphor, this is Eternal Truth and since time immemorial, this Divine Amour has been continuing in *nitya Vṛndāvana*<sup>52</sup>.

7. Lord Himself is one, He has become two in the form of Rādhā and numerous in the form of *gopīs* to relish the divine sport. Vaiṣṇavas have no faith in the theory that Rādhā is the metaphor of devotees. But she is Essence of His Internal Power, which is inseparable from Him, just as the burning power is inseparable from the Fire itself<sup>53</sup>.

But a speciality of Rādhā is, She can guide *jīvas* to their ultimate Goal. Through this Divine Amour of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, *jīva* should realize the intensity and depth of Rādhā's love for which She could surpass all the social obstacles, proceed towards Her Lover and surrender to Him. The aspirants should practise their Fervor and proceed towards the Supreme Soul with that sincerity and intensity of Love. The love of Rādhā is *premabhakti* for devotee; that should be their accomplishment to achieve the Supreme Reality<sup>54</sup> (*bhagavatsādhanā*), Swami Vivekananda in his article on *Bhakti* states: "Rādhā embodies true Spirit of a devotee" (Complete Works, Vol. - III, p. 364).

### ***Rādhā in Jñānadāsa's Padāvalī:***

Obviously, post-Caitanya poets, viz. Jñānadāsa, Govindadāsa etc. were very much influenced by the philosophical guidelines laid down by their predecessors. Having imagined themselves as *mañjarī* (subordinate attendants of Rādhā, who inspite of being devotee of Kṛṣṇa cannot be directly involved with Him), they depicted *Rādhā* and Her love affairs in their *padas*. Apart from philosophical treatises they were influenced by the *rasa* theory of Vaiṣṇava theologians and Sanskrit Rhetoricians (who dealt *nāyikā prakaraṇa* very competently). That is because *padāvalī* of these poets are categorized according to various stages, viz. *pūrvarāga*, *anurāga*, *abhisāra*, *sambhoga*, *viraha*, *bhāvasammilana*, etc.

Among the two Jñānadāsa is senior. In depicting Rādhā, Jñānadāsa was influenced by Caṇḍīdāsa's Rādhā, but not totally. At the same time he was inspired by Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava idealism. Jñānadāsa was expert in the poems on *pūrvarāga* and *anurāga*, especially in *ākṣepānurāga*, where Rādhā's tragedy is prominent. The poet has felt this world and life, feelings of love - its pathos and anxiety - everything from the view point of Rādhā and not Kṛṣṇa. Like Caṇḍīdāsa's Rādhā, Jñānadāsa's Rādhā is also reflection of poet's own internal feelings<sup>55</sup>. Jñānadāsa has been identified with his Rādhā; that is why Rādhā's tragedy has stricken the strings of our poet's mind<sup>56</sup>. In true sense

Jñānadāsa was a lyric poet. The lyric poet always feels and depicts everything according to his own feelings, pleasure and pain. Rādhā's love is actually poet's own love and devotion for the Supreme Soul<sup>57</sup>.

Another point, Jñānadāsa was influenced by Caṇḍīdāsa. Both of them depicted Rādhā's love with similar depth and intensity. This intensity and sublimity is not only Rādhā's perplexity, but the expression of poet's own lacerating pain<sup>58</sup>. Jñānadāsa's Rādhā is absorbed in Herself. Having realised the intensity of Her love she is overwhelmed. That is why even in Kṛṣṇa's absence she feels Him in Herself and even during union She laments (दुँह कोरे दुँह काँदे विच्छेद भाविया). But, inspite of their similarity in style, Jñānadāsa has some originality also. The main difference between two is, Caṇḍīdāsa is not at all interested to depict any sensual beauty of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. But in Jñānadāsa, we find Rādhā's tragedy is more prominent when She is describing Kṛṣṇa's beauty<sup>59</sup>. In short, Jñānadāsa's Rādhā's sensuousness is unique.

### **Rādhā in Govindadāsa's Padāvalī:**

Govindadāsa was a learned poet. On the one hand, he was well-acquainted with Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophical theories; on the other hand, he was very keen in Vaiṣṇava Aesthetics and Rasaśāstra. From the point of stylistics, Govindadāsa followed both Jayadeva and Vidyāpati. He had adapted rhythmic beauty from Jayadeva and style of beautiful depiction from Vidyāpati. His contemporary poets commented upon him '*racanā rocana śravaṇavilāsa*'.

Rādhā appears in Govindadāsa's *padas* as superb, Super-natural Beauty and seems to be the presiding deity of entire world's Beauty. Wherever She appears, the poet finds a flash of lightning; wherever She steps in lotuses are bloomed. Waves of Kālindī are burst out in Her postures<sup>60</sup>. It is Her lustre that lightnings are lustrous, these are Her footprints that made the land lilies so much delicate<sup>61</sup>. Rādhā's beauty is not only poet's emotional outburst or poetic exaggeration, but his profound thoughts also are lying herein. Rādhā in Govindadāsa is not only a beautiful woman, but embodies an excellent power of World Aesthetics.

Govindadāsa was a direct disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. He was not only well-acquainted with Vaiṣṇava philosophy, but well-versed in it. He has described Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Divine Love as a Vaiṣṇava devotee. Therefore, Vaiṣṇava concepts are very much prominent in his *padas*.

In his poems of *abhisāra*, Govindadāsa narrated Rādhā's ardent desire for Her Lover Kṛṣṇa. But a point should be noted here; Her human mentality has been subdued

under the arduous zeal of a devotee<sup>62</sup>. Rādhā's *abhisāra* (love tryst) for Kṛṣṇa is a difficult endeavour of a devotee to reach the Ultimate Goal *Kṛṣṇabhakti*<sup>63</sup>. Rādhā will have to meet Kṛṣṇa. All the probable difficulties are lying ahead Her path. In a dark stormy night She will have to proceed towards Her Lover. So having poured water in the courtyard She is practising how to step in the slippery way. She has scattered thorns on Her way, wrapped Her anklets and covered Her eyes within palms. The *nāyikā* Rādhā has been converted to *sādhikā* Rādhā<sup>64</sup>. Thus, the poet has shown us *ārādhayati yā sā Rādhā*.

In another poem, we find in the dead of night it has been raining cats and dogs. All the beings are alarmed with frequent lightnings and heavy spell of shower. Having transgressed all the difficulties, Rādhā will go to Her Lover. She has a strong determination to meet Kṛṣṇa. No circumstance can create any bar on Her way. Even probability of death is a trifling matter<sup>65</sup>. She is ready to die for the sake of Her Love. Hence, She easily declares: '*premaka lāgi upekhavi deha*'.

In Govindadāsa's *pada*, Rādhā is not a heroine but a determined meditator, who is on Her way to attain Supreme Beautitude<sup>66</sup>. In the poems of *viraha*, Rādhā is equally beautiful<sup>67</sup>. Rādhā is absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's thought. She is looking at dark cloud and does not pay any attention to any word<sup>68</sup>. Or, She has lost Her taste of food and clad in red garments like a female ascetic<sup>69</sup>. Sometimes, in the pangs of separation, She has fallen faint and with the utterance of *Kṛṣṇanāma*, She regains Her sense<sup>70</sup>.

### **Conclusion:**

After the foregoing survey of the development of Rādhā's character from Jayadeva to Govindadāsa, we may reach a conclusion relating to the representation of Rādhā in the Bengali Vaiṣṇava Literature. Rādhā has been viewed from two angles - (1) as a vivacious young lady, and (2) as the spirit of Vaiṣṇava devotees. The first aspect of Rādhā is clearly delineated by Jayadeva in the manner and style of classical tradition. Consequently, Rādhā of Jayadeva is clearly a human one and represents the love-pangs of an *uttama-nāyikā*. Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa adds to it a social background, obviously influenced by the local folk tradition, and as such, to him Rādhā appears as a young milkwoman - married to Āihana but drawn to Kṛṣṇa with whom Her love-affair has been shown very minutely. Up till now, the super-natural aspect of Rādhā is rather subdued.

On the contrary, in the hands of Vaiṣṇava poets, Rādhā becomes a mixture of human and supra-human elements. Rādhā, here, ceases to be neither fully human nor fully ideal. She gets attuned with the feelings of the poets as well as the Ultimate object

of the Ultimate surrender of man to the Inscrutable Divine Essence known as *hlādinī-śakti*. What has been so far a poetic creation of inspired poets, now becomes a means of Self-Realization. To the Vaiṣṇava poets, Rādhā is not something external, but a matter of intense personal feeling and identification with Highest Reality. The entire Gauḍīya philosophy provides the philosophical basis for this assumption. The Vaiṣṇava poets do not weep for the pangs of Rādhā, they weep for their own feelings of separation from the Supreme Lord.

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2. *ŚrīRādhār Kramavikāśa*, Sashi Bhushan Dasgupta, p. 158.
3. *Gītāgovinda* 1.26-27, 1.37-38. 1.44.
4. *Ibid*, 3.1-3/
5. क्षम्यतामपरं कदापि तवेदृशं न करोमि।  
देहि सुन्दरि दर्शनं मम मन्मथेन दुनोमि॥ *Ibid.*, 3.9
6. *Ibid.*, 5.1-7
7. *Ibid.*, 7.1-11
8. *Ibid.*, 7.31-35
9. *Ibid.*, 8.1-10
10. *Ibid.*, 9.1-5
11. अत्रान्तरे मसृणरोषवशामसीम -  
निःश्वास निःसहमुखीं सुमुखीमुपेतया  
सत्रीडमीक्षित सखीवदनां दिनान्ते  
सानन्दगद्गदपदं हरिरित्युवाच॥ *Ibid.*, 10.1
12. The chapter names are सामोददामोदरः, अक्लेशकेशवः, मुग्धमधुसूदनः, साकाङ्क्षपुण्डरीकाक्षः, धृष्टवैकुण्ठः, नागरनारायणः, etc.
13. (1) Rādhā as *Khaṇḍitānāyikā*: Gīta, 2.11  
(2) Rādhā as *Vāsakasajjikā*: *Ibid.*, 7.13  
(3) Rādhā as *Virahotkaṇṭhitā*: हरिरिति हरिरिति जपति सकामम्।  
विरहविहितमरणेव निकामम्॥ *Ibid.*, 4.17
14. *Khaṇḍitā nāyikā* - *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* 3.89  
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19. *Madhyayuger Bāṅglā kāvye Nārīcaritra*, S.N. Gangopadhyay, p.75
20. तीन भुवन जनमोहिनी।  
रतिरस कामदोहनी।  
शिरीषकुसुम कोंअली  
अद्भुत कनकपुतली।। *Śrī Kṛṣṇakīrttana, tāmbulakhaṇḍa*
21. देखि राधार रूपयौवने।  
माअक बुयिल आइहने।  
बड़ाइ देह एहार पासे। *Śrī Kṛṣṇakīrttana, tāmbulakhaṇḍa*
22. *Ibid.*, Loc. Cit.
23. *A study of Vaiṣṇavism in Ancient and Medieval Bengal*, S.C. Mukherji, p. 133
24. (I) तोम्हे जबे बोल बड़ाइ हेन स्वतन्तरे।  
आम्हार निस्तार तबे नाहिक दुतरे।।  
सुनिले आइहन मोरे करिव आपोष।  
तोम्हे एकभिते हइवे आम्हा लजां दोष।।*Śrī Kṛṣṇakīrttana, dānakhaṇḍa*
- (II) भार रहिल एवे देहो आलिङ्गन।  
.....  
आसिते तोम्हाके दिवो कोल। *Ibid.*, *bhārakhaṇḍa*
- (III) छत्र धरो कान्हाइ दिव सुरति। *Ibid.*, *chatrakhaṇḍa*
25. *Ibid.*, Loc. Cit.
26. (1) केना वांशी बाए बड़ाइ कालिनीनईकूले।  
केना वांशी बाए बड़ाइ ए गोठगोकुले।।  
केना वांशी बाए बड़ाइ से ना कोन् जना।  
दासी आम्ह तार पाए निशिवों आपना।। *Ibid.*, *baṁśīkhaṇḍa*
- (2) तोम्हे जबे जोगी हैला सकल तेजिआ।  
थाकिव जोगिनी हजा तोंहाक सेविआ।  
ना जाइवों घर आर तोम्हाक छाड़िआ।  
बड़ दुख पाइलों तोर बिरहे पुड़िआ। *Ibid.*, *rādhāviraha*
27. *A Study of Vaiṣṇavism in Ancient and Medieval Bengal* S.C.Mukherji, p. 133
28. *Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal*, S.K.De, p. 15
29. Bāṅglā Loksāhitye Rādhā, Ashutosh Bhattacharya in *Bhāratīya Sāhitya Me Rādhā*, p. 240
30. H.P.shastri, *Kīrttilatā*, Introduction, p.19
31. *Madhyayuger Bāṅglā kāvye Nārīcaritra* S.N. Gangopadhyay, p.81
32. *Ibid*, Loc. Cit.
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कबहुं बांधये अङ्ग कबहुं उघारि।। *padāvalīsaṁgraha*, Vidyāpati
- (2) खने खन नयन अनुसरइ।  
खने खन वसन धूलि तनु भरइ।।  
खने खन दशनक छटाछट हास।  
खने खन अधर आगे परकास।। *Ibid.*

34. *Pūrvarāga*: अवनत आनन कए हम रहलिहुं बारल लोचन चोर।  
पिया मुखरुचि पिवए धाओल जनु से चांद चकोर॥ Ibid.
35. *Madhyayuger Bāṅglā Kāvye Nārīcaritra*, S.N. Gangopadhyay, pp. 82F
36. पिया जब आओव इ मझु गेहे।  
मझल जतहुं करब निज देहे॥  
बेदिकरव हम आपन अङ्ग में।  
झाडू करव ताहे चिकुर बिछाने॥  
आलिपना देओव मोतिम हार।  
मझल कलस करव कुचभार॥ *padāvalīsaṅgraha*, Vidyāpati
37. Union: (1) पीन पयोधर अपरूप सुन्दर उपर मोतिम हार।  
जनिकनकाचल उपर विमल जल दुइ वह सुरसरि धार॥  
(2) नववृन्दावन नवीन तरुगण, नव नव विकसित फूल।  
नवीन वसन्त नवीन मलयानिल मातल नव अलिकुल॥  
नव युवराज नवीन नव नागरी मिलिए नव नव भाति।  
निति निति ऐछन नव नव खेलन विद्यापति मतिमाति॥ Ibid.
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48. *History of Indian Philosophy*, S.N.Dasgupta, Vol. IV, p. 432
49. सच्चिदानन्दमय हय ईश्वरस्वरूप। तीन अंशे चिच्छक्ति हय तीन रूप॥  
आनन्दांशे ह्लादिनी सदंशे संधिनी। चिदंशे संवित् जारे ज्ञान करे मानी॥
50. *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava mate Rādhā*, J.K. Chakrabarty in *Bhāratīya Sāhitya me Rādhā*, p. 64
51. राधा पूर्णशक्ति कृष्ण पूर्ण शक्तिमान्।  
दुइ वस्तु भेद नाहि तत्त्वेर प्रमाण॥ *Caitayacaritāmṛta*, *Ādilīlā*, IV<sup>th</sup> ch
52. *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava mate Rādhā*, J.K. Chakrabarty in *Bhāratīya Sāhitya me Rādhā*, p. 63
53. मृगमद तार गन्ध जैछे अविच्छेद।  
अग्रिते ज्वालाते जैछे नाहि कभु भेद॥  
राधाकृष्ण ऐछे सदा एकइ स्वरूप।  
आस्वादिते लीलारस धरे दुइ रूप॥ *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, *Ādilīlā*, IV<sup>th</sup> ch

54. *Madhyayuger Bāṅglā Kāvye Nārīcaritra*, S.N. Gangopadhyay, p. 91

55. *Ibid.*, p. 93

56. (1) आमार मनेर कथा सुन लो सजनि।  
श्याम नागर मने पड़े दिवस रजनी॥

(2) ज्ञानदास कहे मुजिं कारे कि बलिब।  
बन्धुर लागिया आमि सागरे पशिब॥

*Vaiṣṇava kavītā saṁgraha*, Jñānadāsa

57. (1) रूपेर पाथारे आंखि डुबि से रहिल।  
यौवनेर बने मन हाराइया गेल॥

(2) रूप लागि आँखि झुरे गुणे मन भोरा।  
प्रति अङ्ग लागि कान्दे प्रति अङ्ग मोर॥  
हियार परश लागि हिया मोर कान्दे।  
परान पिरीति लागि धिर नाहि बान्धे॥

*Vaiṣṇava kavītā saṁgraha*, Jñānadāsa

58. किवा रूपे किवा गुणे मन मोर बांधे।  
मुखे ना निःसरे वाणी दुटि आँखि कान्दे॥

चितेर आडनि कत चिते निबारिब।  
ना जाय कठिन प्राण कारे कि बलिब॥  
कोन विधि निरमिल कुलबधू बाला।  
केवा नाहि करे प्रेम कार एतो ज्वाला॥

*Ibid.*

59. चिकन कालियारूप मरमे लागियाछे धरने ना जाय मोर हिया।

कतोचांद निडारिया मुखानि माजियाछे ना जानि ताय कत सुधा दिया॥

*Ibid.*

60. जहां जहां निकसय तनु तनु ज्योति।

तहां तहां विजुरि चमकमय होति।

जहां जहां अरुण चरण चल चलइ।

तहां तहां थलकमलदल खलइ।

जहां जहां भाङ्गुर भाङ्गु बिलोल।

तहां तहां उछलइ कालिन्दी हिल्लोल॥

*Vaiṣṇava kavītā saṁgraha*, Govindadāsa

61. नील अलकाकुल अलिते हिल्लोलत नील तिमिरे चलु गोइ

नील नलिनी जनु श्यामर सायरे लखइ ना पारइ कोइ॥

*Ibid.*

62. कण्टक गाड़ि कमल सम पदतल मञ्जीर चीरहि झांपि।

गागरि वारि द्वारि करि पीछल चलतहि अङ्गुलि चापि॥

*Ibid.*

63. माधव तुआ अभिसारक लागि।

दुरतर पन्थ गमन धनि साधइ मन्दिरे जामिनी जागि॥

*Ibid.*

64. *Madhyayuger Bāṅglā Kāvye Nārīcaritra*, S.N. Gangopadhyay, p. 97

65. *Ibid.*, *Loc. Cit.*

66. *Ibid.*, *Loc. Cit.*

67. बिरहे व्याकुल धनि किछुइ ना जाने।

आन आन बरण हैल दिने दिने॥

कम्पपुलक स्वेद नयनहि धारा।

प्रणय जड़िमा बहु भाव विथारा॥

*Vaiṣṇava kavītā saṁgraha*, Govindadāsa

68. कि हैल राधार अन्तरे व्यथा।  
सदाइ धेयाने चाहे मेघपाने  
ना सुने काहारो कथा॥ *Ibid.*
69. बिरति आहारे राडा वास परे  
जेमत जोगिनी पारा॥ *Ibid.*
70. गुरुजन अबुध मुगधमति परिजन  
अलखित विषम वेयाधि।  
कि करव धनिमणि मन्त्र महौषधि  
लोचने लागल समाधि॥  
खेने खेने अङ्ग भङ्ग तनु मोड़ई  
कहत भरममय वाणी।  
श्यामर नामे चमकि तनु झांपई  
गोविन्ददास किये जानि॥ *Ibid.*

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