

## CHAPTER-III

### THE LIFE AND LITERARY CONTRIBUTION OF ŚAṆKARADEVA

#### 0.3.1 Ancestors and Genealogy of Śaṅkaradeva :

The tradition of writing and preserving of the genealogy of any family is a good sign of Assamese nationality. As result of this tradition, the records of ancestors of Śaṅkaradeva have been found in black and white in his literary creations. Śaṅkaradeva himself has written about his ancestors like this: “Durlavnārāyana (the king of kamatā kingdom) had settled up Devīdās alias candibar at *Bardovā*. Caṇḍibar has a son namely Rājdhara, Rājdhara had a son-Surjyabara by name. The latter had also a son called kusumbar and Śaṅkaradeva was the son of kusumbar.”<sup>14</sup> Śaṅkaradeva describes about his forefathers in his *Rukmiṇī-Haraṇa kāvya*, besides in seven occasions in his literary creations.<sup>15</sup> It is to be noted here is that he only narrated about his forefathers starting onwards from Caṇḍibar in *Rukmiṇī-Haraṇa kāvya*. In other seven occasions he describes his genealogy downward from Rājdhara. Assamese hagiographies also mention the ancestors of Śaṅkaradeva. According to one hagiography, Śaṅkaradeva is the decendent of Atri sect. Pūrṇānanda was the first of Śaṅkaradeva's forefathers. *Brahmagirī* was the son of Pūrṇānanda, his son (the former) was Candragirī, Candragirī's son was Kṛṣṇagirī, Kṛṣṇagirī's son was Suvarṇagirī, Suvarṇagirī's son was Rāmgirī, Rāmgirī's son was Hemagirī, and

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14 Chutia, Sonaram & et.al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmr̥ta*. p.885

15 Ibid, p.819, p.317, p.348, p.409, p.546, pp.666-667, pp.973-974

Hemagirī's son was Harigirī. Harigirī had no boy child, but had a girl child, namely Kṛṣṇakanti. Her son was Laṇḍābar; *Candibar* was the son of Laṇḍābar.<sup>16</sup>

### 0.3.2 Attraction of Durlavnārāyaṇa to Caṇḍibar :

According to the description of *Guru-Carit-Kathā*, *Caṇḍibar* came to *Kāmruṇa* during the reign of Durlavnārāyaṇa<sup>17</sup> the king of Kamatā Kingdom. The said hagiography narrated that a war took place between the king Durlavnārāyaṇa and Dharmanārāyaṇa the king of gaura (gauḍa) for a boundary of land. Both of them were the ardent devotees of Devī Candī, which ultimately paved the way to appear in a treaty between them and became friends to each other. As a result of this treaty, Durlavnārāyaṇa called for a few *Brāhmiṇ* and *Kāyastha* families from Dharmanārāyaṇa, since there were no remarkable families of both the two communities. Following his request Durlavnārāyaṇa sent seven *Brāhmiṇ* and seven *Kāyastha* families of good morality to the Kamatā Kingdom. The family of Candibar was one of the seven *Kāyasthas*. Names of seven *Kāyastha* scholars migrated from gauḍa were Hari, Śrīhari, Śrīpati, Śrīdhar, Cidānanda, Sadānanda and Candibar. On the other hand, the seven reputed *Brāhmaṇas* were Puruhit Kṛṣṇa paṇḍit, Raghupati, Rāmbar, Lohār, Bayan, Dharam and Mathurā. At the time of worshiping, Candī, she herself appeared before her devotee Candibar and for that reason, King Durlavnārāyaṇa gave him the name 'Devīdās'. Being satisfied with the knowledge of the scriptures and skill of working, the king appointed Candibar as the head of all *Brāhmins* and *Kāyasthas*. Once Candibar defeated in a debate with a Beṅgalī scholar

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16 Bairagi, Cakrapāṇi. (Orator) & Neog, Maheśwar. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.3-7

17 Ibid, p. 7 (According to Adward Gait ... He would seem to have ruled at the end of the thirteenth century over the country between the Bar Nadī and the Karatoyā.' 'A History of Assam, p. 44.

(Śāntipur Nadiyā) viz. Candra Kavi, organized by Durlavnārāyaṇa in his courtyard for which Candibar's scholarship attracted Durlavnārāyaṇa.<sup>18</sup>

### 0.3.3 Settlement of Bārabhūñā :

Durlavnārāyaṇa settled the fourteen number of families (both Brāhmin and Kāyastha) in a place called leṅgāmāguri towards north of Hājo and to the upper portion of the river Barnadī and were given them the title 'Bhūñā'.<sup>19</sup> According to the Edward Gait, a British Historian, the Seven Brāhmin families and the chief seven Kāyastha families came to be known as 'Bārabhūñā'. It is to mention here is that the epithet 'Bāra' does not mean twelve.<sup>20</sup>

### 0.3.4 Permanent settlement of Caṇḍibar at Tembuvānī :

After a few years of their settling at Leṅgāmāguri, the Bhūñā headed by Caṇḍibar went upward in search of their better livelihood. They, there after settled at Bhalukāguri, which they arrived at Bhalukāguri, they had to cross through Kājalimukh. They had to reside six months at Bhalukāguri. There, at Bhalukāguri, they faced hurdles in cultivation and so they marched forwards north and began to settle at Kuthārdubi Phetāśimalu. In their new destination, they faced some of plight and so they left that place and arrived at Rowtā. At Rowtā, Candibar breathing his last in the month of puha.<sup>21</sup> Another hagiography narrates the scene in different way. According to this hagiography, Caṇḍibar could learn the conspiracy of Bhutiyā and this compelled him to meet Durlavnārāyaṇa. There after the king asked Caṇḍibar to search for a new place for settlement. In this new search, the king asked two persons

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18 Op.cit, pp.7-9

19 Goswami, Malini & et.al.(2012). *Candrakānta Abhidhān* .p.677. (The word 'Bhūñā' or 'bhūñā' is originated from the Sanskrit word 'Bhūmi'. The title 'Bhūñā' implies a master of land; there is no any relation with community.

20 Gait, Edward. (2011). *A History of Assam* .pp.40-41

21 Bairagi, Cakrapani. (Orator) & Neog, Maheswar .(1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*, p. 13

to join with Chandibar in search of new settlement. At last, Caṇḍībar found Tembuṽāni to be a suitable place for settlement. According to Śaṅkaradeva's also Caṇḍībar himself established the Tembuṽāni village which is later known as Bordovā. He and his family used Tembuṽani for their final home. Caṇḍībar, in a later period, asked other Bhūyaṅ families to be settled with him and his family at Tembuṽāni. After spending a few months at tembuṽani, Caṇḍībar met his grave. The area of Tembuṽāni was very low land for which the paddy fields were damaged due to flood. So, Rājdhār, the son of caṇḍībar left Tembuṽāni and re-settled at Ālipukhurī village.<sup>22</sup>

### **0.3.5 Birth of Kusumbar :**

Rājdhār got marry devahūti in his early period. For a considerable period of time, they had no issues. Rājdhār was a stern devotee of god Sūrya and as a result, Rājdhār became the father of a boy child. The baby was nomenclatured by Sūryabar. There after they got birth of three issues and were called Jayanta, Mādhav and Halāyudha. The former two issues were twin brothers. Sūryabar got marry Khersuti the daughter of Rām Choudhury and Jayantī. There after three sisters of Khersuti namely gutimāli, Subhadrā and Subhagā were married to three brothers of Sūryabar. Sūryabar and Khersuti spend a issueless life for a considerable period of time. They began worship deities with a desire to have a child of their own. At last, they got a boy issue which was named by Kusumbar.<sup>23</sup>

### **0.3.6 Birth of Śaṅkaradeva and determination of Time :**

Kusumbar, the grandson of Caṇḍībar was married Satyasandha, the daughter of Anirudha Bhūñā and Saraswatī. The couple gave birth no child for a long period of

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22 Thakur, Ramcaran & Duttabarua, Harinarayan (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp. 47-49

(According to Śaṅkaradeva's also *Caṇḍībar* himself established the Tembuṽānī village which is later known as Bardovā. (*Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmr̥t, Rukmiṇī Harāṇa Kāvya*, p.889, verse 529)

23 Op. cit, pp.16-17, 20-21

time; so, Kusumbar got his second marriage Anudṛti-the daughter of Śrīpati. The later also did not give birth any child for a few years. At last, worshipping Lord Śiva at gopeswar temple of śīngari, Kusumbar got a boy child. And hence, the newly born child was named by Śaṅkara.<sup>24</sup> Various hagiographies mentioned the time, date and month of Śaṅkaradeva's birth in different way. According to *guru-carit kathā*, Śaṅkaradeva was born in 1371 śaka, in the month of *Kāti*, Thursday, in Full Bright Moon of mid night, in *Śravaṇā Nakṣatra*.<sup>25</sup> But the *Bardovā guru carit* narrates that Śaṅkaradeva was born in the month of *Kāti*, in Full Dark night.<sup>26</sup> Rāmānanda Dwija provides a different picture of Śaṅkaradeva's birth in his '*śrīguru carit*'. According to the hagiographer, Śaṅkaradeva came to this world in the month of *Falgunā*, while it was midnight on the 2nd day of Bright forth night.<sup>27</sup> On the otherhand, Rāmcaran Thākur mentioned that Śaṅkaradeva was born on the 10th day of the Bright forth night. While the *Ahin* month passed its fifth day.<sup>28</sup> Dīnanāth Bezbaroā let to know slightly in a different way. He wrote that Śaṅkaradeva's date, month and year of birth were 5<sup>th</sup> *Āhin* and 1371 *śaka*.<sup>29</sup> Maheśwar Neog, on the basis of the '*Kathā-guru-carit*' received from ouguri satra fixed the time of Śaṅkaradeva's birth. Maheśwar Neog, let to know that he was born on the middle part of the month of *Āhin-Kāti* (i.e. on the *Kāti Bihu*, one of three Bihu's of Assam), Thursday, full black day.<sup>30</sup> Late Harendra Deva Goswāmī collected a few reliable documents, such as '*Śrī Śrī Śaṅkar*

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24 Bairagi, Cakrapani (Orator) & Neog, Maheswar. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.17

25 Ibid, p.14

26 Mahanta, Povarām & Borkakati, Sanjib Kumar. (2009). *Bardovā Guru Carit*. p.21

27 Dwija, Ramananda & Borkakati, S. K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. p.25

28 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p.77

29 Bezbaroa, Dinanath. (1987). *Barcarit*. p.9

30 (a) Neog, M (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. pp. 21-25

(b) Neog, M (2008). *Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Assam, Śaṅkaradeva and His Times*. pp. 21-25

*gurur carit puthi'* written by Rāmcaraṇ Thākura and preserved at the Barbari Satra, Morigaon district; genealogies of Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva found at Bardova and Korcung Bhotāi village; three genealogies found at Bālisatra, Nowgaon district and '*Gurulīlā*' a hagiography written by Caturbhuj Thākura in *tulāpāt*. In all the hagiographies mentioned above, it was stated that Śaṅkaradeva was born on the day of *Kāti Bihu*.<sup>31</sup> Cakrapānī Bairāgī, Povārām Mahanta, the records of Harendra Deva Goswamī, and the opinion of Maheśwar Neog is that Śaṅkaradeva's date of birth was *Kāti Bihu*. Therefore, this is the acceptable date of birth of Śaṅkaradeva. It is marked everybody unanimously accepted the year of his birth as 1371 *Saka* (1449 A.D). After the birth of Śaṅkaradeva, his step-mother gave birth a boy child and he was named as Haladhar alias Bangāyagirī.

### **0.3.7 Death of Kusumbar and Satyasandhā :**

Śaṅkaradeva became an orphan in his childhood and so, his grandmother Khersuti looked him up. According to Rāmcaraṇ Thākura Śaṅkaradeva lost his father Kusumbar when he was a child of seven years only.<sup>32</sup> Rāmānanda Dwija opines to the same way.<sup>33</sup> Cakrapānī Bairāgī remarked that Śaṅkaradeva's father Kusumbar left this world during Śaṅkaradeva's childhood and thereafter Kusumbar's wife also marched in the same path.<sup>34</sup> Since, Śaṅkaradeva was a child at the time of Kusumbar, he therefore, handed over the responsibility of his son to Jayanta and Mādhava, both were his uncles. Later on Jayanta took the whole charge of the Royal affairs.

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31 Q.V. Borkakati, S. K. (2013). *Pūrnānga Kathā Guru Carit*. p. 24

32 Thakur, Ramcaran. & Duttabaruā, Harinarayana. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p. 249

33 Op. cit, p.28

34 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p. 21

### 0.3.8 Childhood of Śaṅkaradeva :

Śaṅkara spent his early days with great delight. He passed his life till upto twelve years of age in plays games with his friends. His friends were Jayram, Bitupan, Canda, Titaram, Vekuri, Ketai, Haribar, Satananda, Sanatan, Ramram, Ramrai etc. Śaṅkara was deeply attracted to the natural beauty since his early days. He was seemed to be pleased to seize the birds with his friends. Śaṅkara seized more birds than his colleagues. It was the habit of Śaṅkara that after catching the birds he freed them in the forest without any harm done to the birds. Moreover, Śaṅkara caught various kinds of forest creatures like deer, tortoise etc and freed all like the birds to move freely. Śaṅkara played various kinds of plays with his friends either in the playground or by the river side. He was mastered with the skills of swimming in his childhood. The<sup>35</sup> training of swimming which he learnt during his childhood helped him to cross the river Brahmaputra by swimming and that happened in the month of Bhadra itself.<sup>36</sup> It is to mention here is that, since the river Brahmaputra flows nearby Bardovā -- Ālipukhurī, it was habituated to learn the technique of swimming of the children of that locality. In this field of learning, Śaṅkara was above all among his associates.

### 0.3.9 Schooling of Śaṅkara :

The ancestors of Śaṅkaradeva since Caṇḍibar to Kusumbar were the men of pious, religiosity, possessing good character, famous, learned and paṇḍit. Śaṅkaradeva mentioned all the qualities of his ancestors in brief in his literary creations.<sup>37</sup> Khersuti the grandmother of Śaṅkara, could realized that Śaṅkara should maintain scholarship heritage and family status of his ancestors. So, Śaṅkara was enlighten to the family status of Kusumbar. He was also taught by Khersuti that the learned and the hard

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35 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit.* p. 246

36 Op.cit, p. 21

37 Chutia, S. & et.al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmṛt.* p. 558

works are always respected by all.<sup>38</sup> He believed the advises of his grandmother and so requested Khersuti to give admission into a nearby tol. one day Khersuti took Śaṅkara to the tol of Mahendra Kandali with the intention of getting admission to Śaṅkara. Although, it took time to adjust Śaṅkara with the hard and fast rules and regulation of the tol, yet within a short period of time, he became a popular student of the teacher Mahendra Kandali. Kandali being attracted by the enthusiasm of Śaṅkara titled the latter with the epithet 'oza' student. Kandali also ordered his other students in the tol not to address Śaṅkara as such, instead he might be called as 'Śaṅkaradeva'. Kandali also kept Śaṅkaradeva out of cleaning the rooms of the tol.<sup>39</sup> The students of the tol except Śaṅkaradeva were unhappy and displeased to the Kandali's nomination of Śaṅkara as the epithet 'deva', besides debarred him from the activities of floor cleaning of the tol. So, they informed the matter Brāhmin Paṇḍit Rāghavācārya, who happened to the tol inspector of that time, relying in complaint of the students Rāghavācārya came to visit the tol and he protested to such a sympathy of Kandali shown to a Sudra like Śaṅkara<sup>40</sup>. Rāmcharaṇ Thākura describes the consequence of this event in the way that Rāghavācārya being feared by unseen element met Śaṅkaradeva next day at the tol and requested the latter to initiate him<sup>41</sup>. Povārām Mahanta also narrated the sequence in the same language as Rāmcharaṇ Thākura does<sup>42</sup>.

Śaṅkaradeva was a poet par excellence. He started his literary activities inspired by noble thoughts and ideals of Mahendra Kandali. Inspired by his teacher

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38 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.22

39 (a) Bairāgi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.20

(b) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp. 298-299

(c) Mahanta, Puvaram & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. p.26

(d) Bezbaroa, D. (1987 ). *Barcarit*. p.15

40 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp. 22-23

41 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp. 300-303

42 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. p. 26



Kandali, at the age of twelve, Śaṅkaradeva composed a poem without using any vowels depicting the beauty and attributions of Lord Viṣṇu. The poem popularly known as soft poem runs as *karatala kamala kamala dala nayana ....* He was highly praised by Mahendra Kandali for composing such an uncommon poem<sup>43</sup>. According to Dīnanāth Bezbaroa Śaṅkara composed the poem at the age of five years<sup>44</sup>. The last lines of the poem found in *Barcarit* are unavailable in the other carit puthis. As in the last two the name Śaṅkar as the composer of the poem is found, so it is obvious that the very poem was composed by Śaṅkaradeva. On the other hand, during his schooling Śaṅkaradeva composed the *Hariścandra upākhyāna* on the basis of the *Mārkandya purāṇa*.<sup>45</sup>

Śaṅkaradeva went through all the classical Sanskrit scriptures during the period of his schooling at Mahendra Kandali's *tol*. He was well versed in the texts like - four *Vedas*, fourteen number of religious texts, eighteen *purāṇas*, the same number of *kāvya*s and lexicography, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, several grammar books etc<sup>46</sup>. It cannot be asserted correctly how many years Śaṅkara had been a formal student of Kandali. It differs from scholar to scholar, hagiography to hagiography. Cakrapāṇi Bairāgi opines that Śaṅkaradeva studied under Mahendra Kandali for a period of one year only.<sup>47</sup> Rāmcarāṇ Thākura informs that Śaṅkaradeva on completion of four years study at Kandali's *tol*, he returned home at the age of sixteen years.<sup>48</sup> However, according to the *Āchārya Saṅhati*, Śaṅkaradeva studied for a period of ten

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43 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.23

44 Bezbaroa, Dinanath (1987). *Barcarit*. p.9

45 Op. cit, p. 24

46 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p. 24

47 Ibid, p.25

48 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p.306

years.<sup>49</sup> The opinion of Rāmcaraṇ Thākura that Śaṅkaradeva had studied for one year only cannot be believed, on the other hand, the remark of *Āchārya Saṅhati* also is impossible. Therefore, it can easily be granted that Śaṅkaradeva studied for a period of four years. From the above discussion it leads to come to a conclusion that Śaṅkaradeva returned his resident when he attained at the age of sixteen or Seventeen. (1465-66 A.D.) Śaṅkaradeva, after his return of Kandali's tol started learning and practicing the *yoga*. He, within a short period became well versed in *yoga sutras* of pantanjali. After acquiring the skills of *yoga*, he transformed himself a man of strong physique. After learning the doctrines of *Bhakti* (devotion), he abandoned the practice of *yoga* for long.<sup>50</sup> It can be notice that during his lifespan, he suffered from no disease.

### **0.3.10 Establishment of Kīrttanghar at Bardovā :**

On completion of his formal education Śaṅkaradeva happened to settle at Ālipukhuri. Thereafter the villages of that locality, one day, met Śaṅkaradeva and requested him that they desired to re-settle at Ālipukhuri. On their request, Śaṅkaradeva took all necessary step to transfer and re-settled them at Tembuvaṇi.<sup>51</sup> The person of Bardovā, according to Dīnanāth Bezbaroa was the growing population.<sup>52</sup> In this regard Maheswar Neog passed a different opinion. According to him, due to the disgraceful atrocious behaviours of Kacharies, it was difficult to carry out administrative activities from Bardovā. So, this compelled first to the office, shifted from Bardovā to Ālipukhuri then Ālipukhuri to Bardovā.<sup>53</sup> When Śaṅkaradeva used to settle at Bardovā, he first set-up a *Kīrttanghar* with a view to live a religious

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49 Q.V. Neog, Maheswar. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p. 30

50 Ibid, p.25

51 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p.306

52 Bezbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. p. 23

53 Neog, M. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p. 30-31

life. There seems to dispute among the hagiographers regarding the venue and time of setting up of the first *kīrttanghar*. The remark of Cakrapāṇi Bairāgī is that Śaṅkaradeva built *Harigṛha* at Ālipukhuri after he had returned from his first pilgrim, and that took place in a plot of land of Kusumbar which was known as Kathiātali.<sup>54</sup> The *Bardovā Guru Carit* does not mention the definite place of the said *Harigṛha*; however, from the narration of the hagiography, it can be assumed that Śaṅkaradeva established his first *kīrttangrha* at Ālipukhuri. The hagiographer also passed the opinion that Śaṅkaradeva setup the *kīrttangrha* just after his return from the first all India tour.<sup>55</sup> According to a description produced by Maheswar Neog Śaṅkaradeva built the *kīrttanghar* at Bardovā before he had undertaken his first itinerary.<sup>56</sup> Dembeswar Neog also stood in the same line as Maheswar Neog.<sup>57</sup> Lakṣmināth Bezboroā also passed the similar opinion regarding the establishment of *kīrttanghar*. According to him Śaṅkaradeva laid the foundation of *kīrtanghar* first at Bardovā before he had undertaken his first pilgrim.<sup>58</sup> It is narrated in the hagiography of Rāmcaraṇ Thākura that many people joined in the construction of building the *kīrttanghar*. Even the inhabitants of Ālipukhuri also associated Śaṅkaradeva in constructing the *kīrttanghar*. Śaṅkaradeva himself used spade to dig land to be used to the foundation of the *Nāmghar*. It is also narrated in Ramcaraṇ Thakur's hagiography that during the digging up the soil for constructing the said *Nāmghar*, it was strange to discover that there emerged an image of Lord Biṣṇu which was installed in the altar of the new constructed *Nāmghar*.<sup>59</sup> The setup of the *Nāmghar* at Bardovā had created an

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54 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.29

55 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S.K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. p. 31-32

56 Neog, M. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.31

57 Neog, Dimbeswar. (1977). *Yoganāyak Śaṅkaradeva*. p.312

58 Bezbaroa, Laksmīnāth. (1997). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva āru Śrī Śrī Mādhavadeva*. p.22

59 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp. 344-350.

atmosphere to the study of the scriptures and reciting of *Nāma-kirtāna* in the *Nāmghar* premises. After construction of the *kīrtanghar* at Bardovā, Śaṅkaradeva first celebrated the festival of *phāguvā* with great festivity at the age of twenty one. The festival took place in an altar made by the fellowmen nearby the *kīrttanghar*. He also composed seven number of songs for that purpose.<sup>60</sup> The celebration of *phāguvā* festival was a landmark means to propagate the *Nāmadharma*.

### 0.3.11 Formulation of *Pālnām* and Construction of *Ākāsī Gaṅgā* :

After they had settled at Tembuvāni, Śaṅkaradeva and other members of his family and followers used to spend their times singing the names of Hari with great rejoice. But due to lack of pure and sufficient water nearby area, they found in difficult to live there. They had to carry water from the ponds far away from their residences which gave them much trouble. So, they have informed Śaṅkaradeva the prevailing problem of water faced by them. Śaṅkaradeva then advised the devotees and followers to recite the names of Hari one after another group. By this way God will be pleased to them and fulfill their wants. Following the advice of Śaṅkaradeva, they have started reciting the names of God one after another group of devotees. On the other hand at mid night. Śaṅkaradeva went to forest and hit the soil by his right leg and sent an arrow toward the sky from a bow. Suddenly water began to flow from the sky making terrible sound and as a result there formed a pond. Thus Śaṅkaradeva saved the inhabitants of Tembuvāni from the scarcity of water.<sup>61</sup> The technique bringing water from the sky by unnatural process is beyond the reality which cannot be believed. Regarding the formulation of pond, the critic's wants to opine that the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, pp.352-359

<sup>61</sup> (a) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.30

(b) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp.389-391

(c) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. p.33

(d) Bezbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. pp. 38-40

same pond may be a result of earthquake or earlier there might have any pond.<sup>62</sup> It is certain that due to natural disaster, the said pond came into existence which has a scientific base.

### **0.3.12 Creation of *Cihna Yātrā* :**

One day the grandfather of Śaṅkaradeva such as Jayanta and Mādhava and noted Brāhmiṇs met him. Śaṅkaradeva was at that time a young boy of nineteen years. They all requested Śaṅkaradeva to visualize the Vaikuṇṭha through the medium of drama. He then decided to arrange a *bhāona* with that aim and view. He invited various artists and handed over them the responsibilities to each of them. He deputed Balorām *Ātai* to inform the blacksmiths of Kapīlimukh to prepare the drum. Ketāikhā was asked to collect cowskin from a cobbler. Thereafter, Śaṅkaradeva himself prepared the scene of seven Vaikuṇṭhas. He added there all the dramatic elements, such as the dialogues, dialogues of sutradhar, slokas, *Bhatimā* etc. Ketāikhā, Rām and seven others were trained up by Śaṅkaradeva with the art of Bāyan. While Śaṅkaradeva was making the scene of Vaikuṇṭha, he was for a while on the horns of a dilemma as to where to put down the Kalpataru tree in the scene. At that time, Candari, a female servant of Śaṅkaradeva's family noticed the problem of Śaṅkaradeva while she had been stretching the boiled paddies in the courtyard and approached him to indicate the position of the said tree in the scene. Sankaradeva expressed his greetings to her for that direction. All the necessary dances were being prepared to perform the drama, all the necessary mask, dresses and vehicles were made by the artists to conduct the drama. He also arranged for lighting the stage. Audience was surprised and delighted when Śaṅkaradeva used to play nine numbers

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62 Borkakati. S. K. (2003). *pūrnāṅga kathā guru carit*. p.52

of drums at a time. Six actors were prepared to be seated in six numbers of Vaikuṇṭhas in the roles of *Nārāyaṇa*. Śaṅkaradeva himself also took his position as *Nārāyaṇa* in the Seventh Vaikuṇṭha. Six male persons were dressed for the role of Lakṣmī and they took position nearby in each *Nārāyaṇa*, but in the seventh Vaikuṇṭha which is known as Paṅkaj Vilās Vaikuṇṭha, there were no female consort of *Nārāyaṇa*; since the said Vaikuṇṭha was free from maya i.e. illusion.

The extra-ordinary performance of the *Cihna-yātrā* was highly satisfied and duly astonished Mahendra Kandali, Rām Rām guru and all other Brāhmiṇ scholars and the audiences. Mahendra Kandali announced before the audience that Śaṅkaradeva is the incarnation of God himself and he should not considered as a *Sudra* rather he is the *Guru* of all the Brāhmiṇs. Thereafter Mahendra Kandali, Rām Rām guru, Caturbhuj, Karṇapur and many other Brāhmin scholars and Bhūñā requested Śaṅkaradeva to initial themselves into his sect. At first Śaṅkaradeva rejected their pray, but finally he agreed to fulfill their desire. Next day, all were initiated to the feet of Bhagavān Śrīkrṣṇa. That was the first incident of initiation to carry out by Śaṅkaradeva which took place at his nineteen years of age.<sup>63</sup> In this way Rāmcaran Thākur described as to the Cihna Yātrā very broadly. On the other hand Cakrapāni Bairāgi and povārām Mahanta confined the narration very shortly.<sup>64</sup> According to powaram Mahanta the performance of the *Cihnayātrā Bhāona* continued for seven days.<sup>65</sup> It seems that there is a dispute among the scholars regarding the year of performance. Some opines that the said *Bhāona* was performed

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63 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit.* pp. 315-343

64 (a) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā.* pp. 31-32

(b) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit.* pp. 35-38

65 Ibid (b), p. 37

by Śaṅkaradeva prior to his first pilgrim, where as another section of scholar wanted to assert the time on completion of his first pilgrim.

### **0.3.13 Handed over the post of *Śiromaṇi Bhūñā* and marriage :**

Śaṅkaradeva had been in the post of Śiromaṇi Bhūñā since his return from the tol of Mahendra Kandali. But he had been thinking of giving up that post, which may pave him the way to be engaged himself in business of going through the scriptures and propagating the doctrine of religion. With a view to this, he one day handed over the charge of '*Śiromaṇi Bhūñā*' to his grandfathers Jayanta and Mādhava.<sup>66</sup> Thereafter he devoted himself to propagate religion through artistic, cultural and literary activities. When he attained at the age of twenty one, his grandfathers Jayanta and Madhava and other member of the family proposed him for marriage. Sankaradeva agreed to their proposal. He got married to a beautiful girl Suryawatī, the daughter of Harikhā. After one year of their marriage life, Manu was born. But unluckily Suryawatī left this world when Manu was an infant of nine months only. Contrary to this, she met her grave after Manu was married to Hari at the age of thirteen years.<sup>67</sup>

### **0.3.14 Construction of Tembuvāni Dun and Rādhikā Śānti :**

The construction of Tembuvāni dun by Śaṅkaradeva in his life through Rādhikā Śānti is considered as an important event. According to the hagiographies, the paddy fields of cultivators of the locality were damaged each year by the flood flowing through a stream of water near Bardovā. Therefore one day Bāra Bhūñās and other inhabitants of the locality met Śaṅkaradeva to discuss the matter so that a solution may come out for resisting the dun. Śaṅkaradeva, after an hour of discussion with them asked all the people of the locality to come out with necessary tools to

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66 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit.* p. 359

67 (a) Ibid, p. 362, pp. 380-381

(b) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā.* p.25

construct the dun to resist the flow of water. But they failed to resist the flowing of water. Śaṅkaradeva asked all not to lose their heart and to find out a woman of pure in thought and word. He also warned them that the very chaste must bring water from the river by means of a *polo* and to pour down the water into the constructed dun. They went home with great thinking that theirs' only would be a chaste. Next day, they informed Śaṅkaradeva about their inability to find out a chaste. At that time, a couple namely Pūrṇānanda and Rādhikā were moving by a boat on *Loit*. They were Kaivarta by caste. Rādhikā somehow could understand their problem and asked her husband to direct the boat towards them. She told her husband that she would be the right woman they have been in search of. She could help in constructing the dun. They met Śaṅkaradeva and introduced themselves politely their identity. She also pressed her willingness to assist in constructing the dun. Śaṅkaradeva seems to very satisfy and asked her to bring water from the river by *polo*\*. She accordingly brought water and pour down the same in the newly constructed dun. Flowing of water to the paddy fields stopped to flow and thus Śaṅkaradeva upheld the status and dignity of a low-caste woman in the society full of hypocrites. Thereafter, Pūrṇānanda and Rādhikā became the followers and disciples of Śaṅkaradeva and they led a life full of mental peace and tranquility at the feet of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>68</sup>

### **0.3.15 First pilgrimage :**

The tradition of pilgrim in India had been in vogue since time immemorial which still continued to prevail. It is assumed that Śaṅkaradeva also followed this

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\* A kind of a bamboo-basket for catching fish

68 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp.365-372

(b) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.32-34

(c) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. pp.32-33

(d) Dvija, Dvarikanath & Hazarika, Sujya (2008). *Santāvalī*. pp.81-89

(e) Bezbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. pp.34-37



tradition in his life. Of course, his pilgrim cannot be regarded as these of other itinerants in India. He was a completely different in motto and objectives. Moreover, he never visited the holy places in India view to earn some spiritual benefits, rather his visit to the Tirthas as well as sacred places were different.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, his pilgrim cannot labelled as general pilgrim; rather it was an all India itinerary. His aim of visiting the Tirthas was not to see them rather to visit the ancient sacred places by himself and to make a deep communication with the scholars of various place of India. Thereafter, during the ripe period of *Bhakti* Movement in India, he visited the tirthas in two times. He also gained of literary and cultured activities of various saints and poets of different parts of India through his extensive all India tour.

His first pilgrim took place in 1481 A.D. when he was a youth of thirty two years of old.<sup>70</sup> Of course, Bāṇkānta Kākati had passed a opinions that the year of his first pilgrim took place in 1483 A.D. and he was then at the age of thirty four.<sup>71</sup> According to hagiographer Bhūṣan Dwija, Śaṅkaradeva lost his first wife after had given birth Manu. This incident converts his mind to pilgrim. As a part of his preparation for pilgrim, he first distributed his own three hundred cows to the Brāhmins and one hundred bullocks to the peasants. Moreover, he handover all other unmovable properties to his grandfather Jayanta and Mādhava and kept Bangayāgirī with Hari and Manu. Thereafter, he started his first pilgrim in association with a few of his followers.<sup>72</sup> Besides, Śaṅkaradeva handed over the charge of Barbhūñā to Jayanta.<sup>73</sup>

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69 (a) Chutia, Dharmeswar. (2005). *Kirttan-Ghosa*. P.27

(b) Ibid, p. 53

70 Neog, M. (2008). *Śaṅkaradeva and his times*. p.103

71 Kakati, Banikanta. (1989). *Sankar Deva*. p.37

72 Dwija, Bhusan & Borkakti Durgadhar (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. pp.29-30

73 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. P.25

The hagiographers passed different opinions in matters of his companion in pilgrim and their names. Rāmānanda Dwija opines that a few of his companions returned back home after visiting the Jagannāth temple. From Jagannāth only twelve followers were accompanied with Śaṅkaradeva. The hagiographer also mentioned the names of them.<sup>74</sup> According to povārām Mahanta seventeen numbers of followers left with him among which he mentioned the names of only eight persons.<sup>75</sup> A different view was provided by Dinanath Bezbaroa. According to him, when Śaṅkaradeva attained at the age of seventeen, he went to pilgrimage for the first occasion without knowing Khersuti.<sup>76</sup> According to Bezbaroa, only two followers were accompanied with Śaṅkaradeva. However, this is supported by no any hagiographer on the other hand; the exceptional opinion of Bezbaroa cannot be believed to be true. But Cakrapani Bairagi had narrated in this way in his hagiography that Śaṅkaradeva keeping only eight followers with him, all other itinerants including his teacher Mahendra Kandali were sent back to Bardovā. When Śaṅkaradeva Started his journey from Jagannāth to the southern pilgrim, only twelve numbers of fellow travellers were with him - they were Rāmram, Sarvajaya. Paramananda, Baloram, Balabhadra, Gobindra, Narayaṇa, Barsiram, Gopal, Cota Baloram, Mukunda and Murari.<sup>77</sup> But, according to Rāmcaran Thākur, only seven fellow travellers were accompanied with Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>78</sup>

The description of pilgrim carried out by Śaṅkaradeva varies from hagiography to hagiography. Daityari Thakur said that Śaṅkaradeva stayed more days

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74 Dwija, Rammananda & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. p.46

75 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardovā Guru Carit* p.29

76 Bezbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. pp.19-20

77 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.23

78 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru -Carit*. p.399

in purī Jagannāth.<sup>79</sup> On the otherhand, Bhūṣan Dvija in his hagiography mentions that Śaṅkaradeva visited most of the holy places in twelve years. Of course, the hagiographer mentioned only a few holly places visited by him, such as Gaṅgā, Gayā and Jagannāth.<sup>80</sup> On the other, his all India pilgrim were extensively narrated by Ramcaran Thakur, upendra Ch. Lekharu, Dinanath Bezbaroa, Ramananda Dwija, Puvaram Mahanta and Cakrapani Bairāgi.<sup>81</sup> Specially the *Kathā Carit* of Cakrapani Bairagi is full of elaborate narration of his pilgrim. The narration follows such as- Śaṅkaradeva first arrived at Telkupi with his fellow travellers and stayed there for a few days, which followed the visit of Punarbhawā. Bathing at the river kartowā, he gained took his bath Bhagīrathī river. He thereafter arrived at Gayā and returned back to Ganga Ghat. The travellers then marched downward to and arrived at Purī Jagannāth. They again moved to vṇdāvan where Śaṅkaradeva came in contact with Rup and Sanatan. From Vṇdavan Śaṅkaradeva arrived at Sītākunḍa with Rup Goswami, his wife and Sanatan. The Group of travellers then started From Sītākunḍa to the uttar bāhinī gaṅgā, varāh Kṣetra, Puṣkarinī tīrtha, Mathurā, Dvārakā and returned back to Vṇdāvan. There, they used to remain making a hut for themselves by the side of the river Kālindī. After spending a few days at that place, Śaṅkaradeva with his fellow travellers visited Hastināpur, Indraprasta and Kurukṣetra. Thereafter they arrived at Badarikāśram.

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79 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpurṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva -Mādhavdeva carit*. pp. 15-16

80 Dvija, Bhusan & Borkataki, Durgadhar. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. pp. 30-31

81 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp. 398-456

(b) Dwija, Rammananda & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Sriguru Carit*. pp.46-50

(c) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. pp. 29.31

(d) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp. 25-28

(e) Bezbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. pp.41-46

When Śaṅkaradeva had been in Badarikāṣram, Mādhavdeva was born. It is narrated in the hagiography as such-met Uddhava at Badarikāṣram, flew of right hand extended, Sarvajaya said something would happen, preceptor says: a bosom friend of mine namely Mādhavdeva was born.<sup>82</sup> The hagiography mentioned the date and year of the birth of Mādhavdeva as Sunday, full dark moon, 1411 *Saka* (1489 A.D.) in the month of *Jetha*.<sup>83</sup> *Bardovā Guru Carit* also in the same line.<sup>84</sup> Mādhavdeva was born at Bāligrām – thus mentioned in the hagiography of Rāmanānda.<sup>85</sup> This very place Bāligrām is situated in Nārāyaṇpur area at Lakhimpur district popularly known as Raṅgājān. Mādhavdeva was born in the residence of Āhom officer Hariśiṅgā uzīr. His residence was at Raṅgājān, in the mouza of Kherājkhāt.<sup>86</sup> But Maheswar Neog mentioned letakupukhurī as the birth place of Mādhavdeva. Of course, he also agrees the dispute prevailed concerning Mādhavdeva's birth place.<sup>87</sup> On the other hand Laksmīnath Bezbaroa demanded Letakupukhurī to be the birth place of Mādhavdeva.<sup>88</sup>

Thereafter, Śaṅkaradeva and his fellow travellers visited Betrakuta. From the said holly place, they entered into the holly place such as – Nepāl, Naiśadh, Kaikayā, - Kaiśalya, Drāviḍ, Pāñcāl, Śwetadvīp followed by Karmanāsā, Kāverī, Mārgakeśī, Bindukāśī Payosvinī, Kousik tīrtha, Mukundra Āśram, Kapil Āśram, purubhadra, Sonāru, Gaṇḍukī, upadwārakā, Aṅgadīyā Nagar, Candrāwati Grām, Rāmeśwaram, Sītākunda, Subād nagar, birth place of Kousik, Bidiśā nagar, Dandākāraṇya, Citrakut mountain, Godāvarī and Gomatī river, Pāñcāwatī Āśram, Ṛṣyamukh Āśram,

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82 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.27

83 Ibid, p.43

84 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardovā Guru Carit*. p.43

85 Dwija, R. & Borkakati, S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. p.68

86 Neog, Tarun Ch. (2012). *Managing Committee of Sri Sri Madhavdeva's birth*

87 Neog, M. (1978). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.38

88 Saikia, Nagen. (2010). *Bezbaroa Racanāvalī*. (Second Part). p.13

Kiṣkindhyā nagar puṣkarāwatī, Bharadwāj, Kṣetra, Haridwār, Jayadwār, Narmadā and Mahānanda river and arrived at kaṭak. From kaṭak the team of pilgrim arrived at Jagannāth Purī. In purī, they visited Śvetagaṅgā, Mārķendaya sarovba, Candan sarobar, Indradaman, Loknāth, Sindhurāj and Pātālī Gaṅgā and took birth each and every holly places. Śaṅkaradeva and his companions spent one year at Jagannāth. On their return home they arrived at the Kapilmuni Āśram and stayed there for a few days. This followed the bath at the bay of Jāhṇavī river. Thereafter, they had taken their bath at karatowā river and they returned back to Bardovā.<sup>89</sup>

The hagiographer describe his starting point of Śaṅkaradeva's pilgrim was Bardovā ; but on compltition of his tour, he arrived at Ālipukhuri.<sup>90</sup> During his long sojourn of twelve years, he happed to come in contact with various saints, scholars and sages in various place. He narrated before them the doctrines of *Eka-Śaraṇa-Harināma-Dharma*. As a result a good number of people were attracted to his scholarly personality and took initiation into his religious faith. They were happy and satisfied to accept him as a preceptor, and spiritual teacher of their lives. At the beginning of his all India sojourn, a family at a place Roumāri (Now Boṅgaigāon District) were deeply influenced by his nobility and took initiation into his feet, while Śaṅkaradeva and fellow travellers spent one night at the residence of that family. Śaṅkaradeva, during his stay at the residence of that family composed a *Bargīt* and presented to the head of the family.<sup>91</sup> Thereafter at puskar Tīrtha, a poet namely Gopināth requested Śaṅkaradeva to initiate him into his religious faith. Śaṅkaradeva fulfilled the desire of Gopināth.<sup>79</sup> Moreover while he had been at Gokul – Vṇḍāban, four persons in each place were baptized by Śaṅkaradeva. They were saints viz.

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<sup>89</sup> Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.25-28

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, pp 25-28

<sup>91</sup> Op. cit, p.412

Radha, Rup (Goswami), Sanatan (Goswami) and vṛndabān Das.<sup>92</sup> During their stay at vṛndāban,<sup>93</sup> Rup and sanātan served them with foods. Rup, Sanatan and his wife were accompanied with Śaṅkaradeva's group while he marched towards ahead of vṛndabān. But while they arrived at Sītākunda, Śaṅkaradeva asked Rup, Sanatan and his wife to return back to vṛndāban.<sup>94</sup> At Upadwārākā a pious man called Ramakanta found his way to saintly life by taking initiation into the religious faith of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>95</sup>

During the last period of his tour, Śaṅkaradeva spent one year at Jagannāth. During his stay at Jagannāth, Śaṅkaradeva narrated the Bhāgavata purāṇa before the *pāṇḍās* and other people of the temple. There at Jagannāth temple Śaṅkaradeva was felicitated by the *pāṇḍās*, by putting the holly basil and its leafs in his head, a mark of sandal of his forehead and garland in his head.<sup>96</sup> At Jagannath Kṣetra, Śaṅkaradeva initiated several *pāṇḍas* of the temple into his religious fold, they were namely Bīrūpākṣa, Rāghava Māhapātra and Madhujenā and others.<sup>97</sup> Apart from this scholars *pāṇḍās* and general audience felicitated Sankaradeva with the title 'Sarvajñān Śiromaṇi'.<sup>98</sup>

One Gobinda Nāyaka, a follower and disciple of Śaṅkaradeva came to Assam with the latter. Gobinda Nāyaka composed a biography of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>99</sup> It is learnt from the hagiography during the long all India tour of twelve years Śaṅkaradeva discussed with several personalities at various places about the tenets of religion,

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92 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.26

93 Ibid, p.26

94 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp.436-442

95 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.27

96 Nayaka, Gobinda. & Goswami, Narayan Ch. (2012). *Śaṅkar Gosñāi Carit*. p.52

97 Ibid, pp.53-54

98 Op. cit, p.54

99 Nayaka, G. & Goswami, N. C. (2012). *Śaṅkar Gosñāi Carit*. p.56

spirituality and other religious matters and as a result of this discussion and narration many people willingly took their initiation into the fold of his *Eka-Śaraṇa-Harināma-Dharma*.

### 0.3.16 Second marriage of Śaṅkaradeva :

After his return from pilgrim Khersuti the grandmother of Śaṅkaradeva requested him to get marry for second time. Khersuti, Jayanta and Mādhava requested Śaṅkaradeva for second marriage with a view to sustain the genealogy of the Bhūñā Family. Śaṅkaradeva did not show any interest to their request first. Finally, all the senior member of the family such as Jayanta, Madhava, Ketaikha, Ramkha, Rupkha, Gabharukha, Buhakha, Harikha etc requested him for second marriage and he was compelled to agree of their proposal.<sup>100</sup> He got his second marriage at the age of fifty four with Kalindi a teenager of fifteen years.<sup>101</sup> After the marriage, Śaṅkaradeva's Grandfather Jayanta, Mādhava and other relatives wanted to handed over the responsibility of Barbhūñā to him again. But Śaṅkaradeva declined to accept their propasal. Then he was appointed as a *Gomastā*. \* He latter on, handover the post of *Gomastā* to his Son-in-law Hari.<sup>102</sup>

### 0.2.17 Resettled at Bardovā :

After the second marriage, Śaṅkaradeva found Ālipukhurī uncomfortable for dwelling. So, Śaṅkaradeva and his family returned back to Bardovā. He had been at Ālipukhurī for five years only. Here at Bardovā, in consultation with Rāmrāi and

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100 (a) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā* . p.29

(b) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p.457 – 458

101 Ibid (a), p.29

\* An agent or a subordinate man of a merchant.

102 Dvija, Bh. & Borkataki, D. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.35-36

\* Colony of devotee

\* Holly companion

others established *Kīrttanghar*, *Maṇikuṭ* and four *Hāṭīs*\* (colony) to make the Bardovā Thān full-fledged. After this, he engaged himself in the service of propogating religion and studying the Sanskrit scriptures. He formulated the doctrine of his faith extracting the ‘satsaṅg’\* from the *Bhāgavata*, *Nāma* from the *Sahasra Nāma Br̥tānta* and ‘*Ekaśaraṇa*’ from the *Gītā*. He composed ‘*Bhakti Pradīpa*’ on The basis of *garuḍ purāṇa* and *Rukminī-Haraṇa kāvya* on the basis of *Haribaṇśa* during his stay at Bardovā.<sup>103</sup>

### 0.3.18 Obtaining the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* with commentary from Jagadīś Miśra :

Their after Śaṅkaradeva desired to make a lucid translation of the twelve canto of the Sanskrit *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* into Assamese Language. But he was hesitating to take the task of translating the same for fear of criticism, Since, he had no commentary with him.<sup>104</sup> of course, it is described in the hagiography that Śaṅkaradeva went through the Sanskrit *Bhāgavata* during his schooling at Mahendra Kandali *tol*.<sup>105</sup> In that situation, a Brāhman viz. Jagadīś Miśra disciple of Viṣṇupurī of Tirhut\* come to Bardovā and gave the Sanskrit *Bhāgavata* with Śrīdhar Swāmī's commentary to Sankaradeva at Bardovā. Jagadīś Miśra recited the Sanskrit *Bhāgavata* to Śaṅkaradeva for a period of one year. Of course, Śaṅkaradeva composed the ‘*Gopī Uddhav Sambāda*’ Long before, he had received the original *Bhāgavata*. He besides, translated the 8<sup>th</sup> canto of the *Bhāgavata* into Assamese. After receiving the complete twelve canto *Bhāgavata*, he started the same in full length into the Assamese. Thereafter he translated the twenty one *kīrtanas* of *ureṣā varṇan* describing the merits of Jagannāth. Jagadīś Miśra on completion of the *Bhāgavata* recitation in a period of

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103 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. P.29

104 Ibid, p.30

105 Op. cit, p.24

\* A place of modern Bihar



one year met his grave. Śaṅkaradeva performed all the rituals of the departed soul in association with Rāmrām guru and other followers.<sup>106</sup> According to Bhūṣaṇ Dwija, Śaṅkaradeva composed songs and dramas on the basis of the same from Jagadīs Miśra. He even performed the ‘ozāpālī’ – Which was a *Bhāgavata* formulation to see and enjoy Miśra. Moreover, he dramatized the ‘*Mahanāt*’ in the *kīrttanghar* for the same purpose. Śaṅkaradeva made Miśra to be surprised that creation of several songs, dramas had been placed in the *Bhāgavata*.<sup>107</sup>

### 0.3.19 Relationship of Śaṅkaradeva with Ananta Kandali :

There arose a dispute between Śākta paṇḍit Ananta Kandali an inhabitant of nanai area (present day Nowgaon district) and his wife relation to religious doctrine. So, Ananta Kandali met Śaṅkaradeva at Bardovā. Kandali, was deeply attracted by the scholarship and nobleness of Śaṅkaradeva which paved the way to Kandali to take initiation into the religious fold of Śaṅkaradeva. Therefore Kandali used to visit Śaṅkaradeva frequently to join the gospels of religion. In his latter period Kandali translated the middle and last part of the tenth canto of the *Bhāgavata*. In the hagiography this act of translation of the said portion of the *Bhāgavata* is described as the incident of ‘Feeding of left-overs’.<sup>108</sup> It is to be mentioned here is that Ananta Kandali presented the translated part of the *Bhāgavata* by him to Śaṅkaradeva while he had been at pātbaūsī.<sup>109</sup>

### 0.3.20 Left Bardovā for Āhom Kingdom :

During his stay at Bardovā a frequent battle took place between the Bhūñā with the kachārī on account of cultivation and land. Once the Bhūñās made a friendly but wicked play with kachārīs, which were united for a feast arranged by the side of

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106 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.30-31

107 Dwija, Bh. & Borkataki, D. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. pp.45-46

108 Op.cit, pp.35-36

109 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.174

*Deorā* lake. While the Kachāris took their seat for feast, the Bhūñā attacked their counterpart and beated them severely. The kachāris naturally became very much angry to the Bhūñā and prepared to attack their enemies. When they attacked Bardowā, the Bhūñās made their abscond remaining all movable and unmovable properties. They crossed the Brahmaputra and landed the opposite bank i.e the north bank of the river. Śaṅkaradeva while was swimming accross the river Bhamaputra, suddenly received the *Gītā* flowing in the wave. He Saved himself from the hands of Kachāris making a display of the *Gītā*.<sup>110</sup>

Thereafter, Śaṅkaradeva and relatives spent at śiṅgarī and ghilādhārī one night each. Thereafter they arrived at gāṅgmou. They stayed for five years at gāṅgmou which was a place within the Āhom Kingdom, six months at chāṅgani and then they arrived at their final destination, i.e Dhuvāhāt. His elder son Rāmānanda was born at gāṅgmou. Moreover, he initiated Satananda or Devidas at gāṅgmou into his religious fold. It is to be mentioned here is that after spending sixty years at Ālipukhuri and seven years at Bardowā, Śaṅkaradeva came to the north bank.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, it can be concluded that in 1516 A.D when he was a man of 67 years, Śaṅkaradeva left Bardovā for north bank. But cakrapāṇi Bairāgī describes this incident in a slight different way. According to him, Śaṅkaradeva first stayed for a period of six months at Rowtā and then moved to gāṅgmou. Therefore Śaṅkaradeva with his family members stayed five years at gāṅgmou, four months at chāṅgani Komorākatā and two months at Maluā ati and then marched to Belguri Dhuvāhāt.

According to the said hagiographer, Rāmānanda was born when Śaṅkaradeva had been at Moluā āti. There at Moluā āti Śaṅkaradeva composed two songs describing the affliction of birth in worldly life. The first part of the two songs was –

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110 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Lekharu, U.C. (2011). *Kathā-Guru-Carit.* pp.33-34

111 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit.* pp.39-40

‘*pave parihari ....*’ And ‘*gopāle ki gati kaile....*’ respectively.<sup>112</sup> On the basis of both the two hagiographies it may conclude that the Bhūñās after spending at the place like siṅgari, Ghilādhārī, Komorākatā, Maluā āti and Rowtā – they arrived at dhuvāhāt – Belguri. Thus it can be assumed that after spending a period of six years at various places - Śaṅkaradeva and Bhūñā used to settle at Dhuvāhāt in 1522 A.D. at his 73 years.

The hagiographies narrates two opinion relating to his departure from Gāṅgmou to Dhuvāhāt. Cakrapani Bairagi and povaram Mahanta passed the same opinion that Śaṅkaradeva left Gāṅgmou due to attack by Dafala.<sup>113</sup> But Ramananda Dwija and Ramcaran Thakur mentioned the cause of his departure in different way. According to the two hagiographers, he left Gangmou due to attack of Koch.<sup>114</sup> But it is clear that Śaṅkaradeva did not leave Gangmou for the attack of Koch, rather left the said place for Dafalā attack. On the basis of the Āhom chronicles Edward Gait opines that Koch king Bisva singha came into contact with the Āhom in 1537 A.D.<sup>115</sup>

### **0.3.21 Left Gāṅgmou and set up of Thān at Dhuvāhāt :**

After arrived at Dhuvāhāt, Śaṅkaradeva’s followers and Bhūñās made the area deforestation to build homes for themselves. There they created a religious environment by establishment of *Nāmghar*, *Maṇikuṭ*, *Hāṭī* etc. After the completion of the religious institution, they performed *Nāma-Kīrtana* to entry into that holly palce. Afterwards that place came to be known as Belguri. According to Ramcaran Thākur the very

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112 Op.cit, pp.34-35

113 (a) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Lekharu, U.C. (2011). *Kathā-Guru-Carit*. pp.34-35

(b) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. p.39

114 (a) Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. p.65

(b) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p.557

115 Gait, Edward. (2011). *A History of Assam*. p.50

place become known as such for plantation of a kind of the called *Aegle Marmelous*.<sup>116</sup>

It is to be mentioned here is that there is no existence of Dhuvāhāt Belguri at present. Due to erosion of the Brahmaputra Dhuvāhāt Belguri disappeared for long. It was Bhūñāhātā– a place where Śaṅkaradeva used to settle, thus remarked Ramcaran Thakur.<sup>117</sup> Śaṅkaradeva's two sons Kamallocan and Haricaran were born during his stay at dhuvāhāt. His daughter Rukmini also born in the same place.<sup>118</sup> Of course, Rukmini came to be known as Visnupriya.<sup>119</sup>

### **0.3.22 Meeting with Mādhavadeva :**

There happened an important incident during the period of Śaṅkaradeva's stay at Dhuvāhāt. That was the meeting with Mādhavadeva. That happened in the year 1522.<sup>120</sup>

According to the hagiography this important incident occurred at the age of seventy three and thirty two years of Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva respectively.<sup>121</sup> Although Śaṅkaradeva was born in 1449 who was at that important juncture a man of seventy three years, Mādhavadeva's age was more than thirty two who came to this world in 1489. The actual age of Mādhavadeva at that time was thirty three years five months.<sup>122</sup> Maheswar Neog also fixed the age of Madhavdeva to be thirty two at the time of his communion with Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>123</sup>

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116 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. p.

117 Ibid, p.517

118 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.39

119 Ibid, p.59

120 Neog, M. (2008). *Śaṅkaradeva and His Times*. p.110

121 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.186

122 Nath, J.K. (2016). *Mahāpuruṣa Mādhavadeva : Jīvan āru kṛti*. p.32

123 Neog, M. (2008). *Śaṅkaradeva and His Times*. p.110

It is to be mentioned that the name of Mādhavdeva's Father and Mother were Gobindagiri and Manoramā respectively. The hagiography let to know that one of the ancestors of Mādhavdeva came to kamrupa with caṇḍibar and began to dwell at Bandukā. Mādhavdeva's father Gobindagiri alias Barkaṇāgiri was born in that family.<sup>124</sup> Bandukā was within the boundary of kamrupa at that period of time. Now it is situated in the Raṅgpur district of Bāṅglādeś. The name of first wife of Gobindagiri was Anucitā. She died after giving birth a son namely Dāmodar. Thereafter Dāmodar was married and Gobindagiri handed over the post of Majindar to Damodar and then came to Bardovā for mercenary purpose. According to Cakrapani Bairagi, Kusumbar Bhūṇā could recognize Gobinda with his family who got married a girl called Manorama of his kins. Thereafter Gobindagiri was sent to Routa with his wife and used to live there.<sup>125</sup> Lakṣminath Bezbaroa describes that - that was not kusumbar, but Śaṅkaradeva who built house at Routā for Govindagiri and married to Manorama to him.<sup>126</sup> It is true as Lakṣminath Bezbaroa writes that Śaṅkaradeva arranged the marriage of Govindagiri and Manorama at Bardovā.

Madhavdeva had spent his childhood in the birth place at Harisīṅga uzir Bara's house who was an employee of Āhom kings. When Madhav grew old day to day he was accompanied by Harisīṅga uzir in his service of collecting tax and sometimes Madhav was engaged in the job of collecting taxes. Madhav also engaged himself as a cultivator for a few years. After spending two and half years at Harisīṅga's residence or four years by a different opinion, few years in separate house at uzir's complex and another few years by the side of letakupukhuri Raṅgājān, Govindagiri left that place with his family.<sup>127</sup> At that time Govindagiri was severely

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124 Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. p.66

125 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.42

126 Bezbaroa, L. (1997). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva and Śrī Śrī Mādhavdevā*. p.40

127 (a) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.43, p.48

(b) Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva-Mādhavdeva carit*. p.28-30

suffered from disease for which his family had to face a great distress. In that situation nobody of his kith and kin came out to help the family. At last Govindagiri and his family members took shelter at the residence of Ghagar Mazi of Hābung state (now in the district of Lakhimpur). At his new destination Urvaśī, the sister of Madhav was born. According to Cakrapani, Govindagiri had been in the family of Ghagar Mazi for a long period of fourteen years.<sup>128</sup> But Laksmīnath Bezbaroa opines that they stayed at Mazi's home for duration of eighteen years.<sup>129</sup> When Madhav and Urvaśī became young, the family left Ghagar Mazi's home in search of good companion for them. At the time of farewell, Govindagiri was given food grains to the family for one year by ghagar Mazi. Moreover, Māzi gave him a few pair of dresses and money in cash.

When Govindagiri could learn from other people that Śaṅkaradeva had been at that time at Dhuvāhāt, he advanced towards that destination. He came in contact with Gayāpāṇi son of Hōkorākusiya near Bharālīdubi. Govindagiri established his residence nereby Gayāpāṇi's home and therefore Uvaśī was married to Gayāpāṇi.<sup>130</sup> After a few couple of year Govindagiri came down to his birth place Banduka leaving his mother Manorama with son-in-law i.e, Gayapāṇi. Govindagiri took Mādhav with him to Bandukā. Madhav was schooling at Bandukā under the tol of Rajendra Adhyapak where Madhav learnt all the classical scriptures such as *Vedas*, *Upanisads*, *Vedanta*, *Mīmāṃsā*, *Kāvya*, *Vyākaraṇ*, Logic and philosophy, the knowledge of *kāithelī* etc in a period of one year. At Baṇḍukā Madhavdeva helped his elder brother Damodar in the paddy fields. Moreover for a some days he served as Bharali Barua of Koch administration. Govindagiri breathed his last at Baṇḍukā and his two sons Damodar and Madhav performed all his rituals. Thereafter Madhav went towards to

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(c) Neog, Tarun Ch. (2012). *Managing Committee of Sri Sri Madhavdeva's birth*

128 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp. 50-51

129 Bezbaroa, L. (1997 ). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva and Śrī Śrī Mādhavdeva*. p.45

130 Op. cit, p. 52

Bharālīdubi.<sup>131</sup> Madhavdeva now earn his livelihood through selling and purchasing battle nut and during this period he performed his ring ceremony with a girl at Negheriting. He then went down for the second time to Baṇḍukā. After spending a few days with Damodar, Madhav again made his upward movement on his way to Bharālīdubi. Madhavdeva could learn the news of his mother's illness. He then promised in the name of Devī Durgā that he would offer pair of white he goat in her name provided his mother got rid of her illness. Of course, in the mean time she was got rid of her suffering.<sup>132</sup>

Madhav asked his brother-in-law gayāpāṇi to purchase a pair white he goat to sacrifice in the name of Devī. In the mean time gayāpāṇi alias Ramdas was initiated into *Nāmadharma* of Śaṅkaradeva. So as a votary of lord Kṛṣṇa, Gayāpāṇi declined vehemently to purchase a pair of white he-goat for Mādhav and hence there arose a dispute between them. Rāmdās explained the Futility of sacrifices in the name of Devī Durgā. Then Mādhavdeva wanted to meet Śaṅkaradeva and to arrange a debate with him in matter of sacrifice. Next day Ramdas and Madhabdeva arrived at Belguri where Śaṅkaradeva had been living. At Belguri *Thān* there started a debate between Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavdeva in presence of several followers and disciples. The debate continued for nine hours. At last Śaṅkaradeva recited a sloka from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* which runs as follows :

*yathā tatormūlan śecanena  
tṛpyanti tatskandhabhujopa śākhāh.  
prāṇopāhārācca yathendriyāṇān  
tathaiva sarvārhaṇamcyutejyā. 4.31.14<sup>133</sup>  
( Bhāgavata Purāṇa )*

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131 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998 ). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit.*  
p. 46-47

132 Ibid, pp.48-55

133 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā.* p.58

[as the stem, boughs and leaves and side branches of a tree are nourished by watering its roots and just as all the same organs are nourished by sustaining life through food, so by offering worship to the Immortal Lord all are worshipped and satisfied]

Finally, Madhav took his initiation at the feet of Śaṅkaradeva. A friendly as well as spiritual relation between the two scholars is formed. Now, Śaṅkar becomes ‘*Bāp*’ (Father) for Mādhavdeva and Mādhavdeva becomes ‘*Bāndhav Mādhav*’ (Friend Mādhav) for Śaṅkaradeva. From that very day Śaṅkaradeva happened to be considered for Mādhav as an object of veneration and he himself converts as a servant of Śaṅkaradeva. Prior to that historical contact between Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavdeva, the former started his baptism in the name of *Deva* (God), *Nāma* (Personified God) and *Bhakat* (Followers) which were known as ‘*tini vastu*’ (Three Reals). On the other hand that was an incomplete theory. Now after the meeting of Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavdeva the incomplete theory fulfilled with the addition of the fourth ‘Real’ i.e. Guru (Preceptor). This very important theory was formulated by Madhavdeva. Since then the act of initiation by Śaṅkaradeva came to be known as *Guru*, *Deva*, *Nāma* and *Bhakat*. Though they are four, actually they are one in form.<sup>134</sup>

Madhabdeva remained as a bachelor for the whole life. He spent his time propagating *Eka-Śaraṇa-Harīnāma-Dharma* and looking after Śaṅkaradeva in his every moment. To serve these, he even given up the girl, with whom he already tightened up making ring ceremony.<sup>135</sup> In order to serve Śaṅkaradeva Mādhavdeva shifted his residential place Bhararidubi to Belguri.<sup>136</sup> His motto be came to server his Guru. He began to supervise in all the necessary activation of Śaṅkaradeva’s family

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134 Ibid. p.58

135 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit.* pp.85 – 87

136 Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit.* pp.93-95



such as making the houses, prepare boiled rice, in agriculture ect.<sup>137</sup> It is seen that during the period of his stay with Śaṅkaradeva at Belguri, Mādhavdeva became a part and parcel of all the household activities and thus he became an epitome of service to Guru.

### 0.3.23 Literary activities and propogating religion at Dhuvāhāt :

After the historic relationship, the hand of Śaṅkaradeva became strong. So, this encouraged him to accurate his literary and cultural activity. Mādhavdeva Stood as right hand to Śaṅkaradeva. Some of his followers and disciples used the verses of *Kaṇṣabadha* and *prahlād carit* in singing and dancing as *ozāpāli* and thus the fervour of devotion among the masses began to spread. *Mādhav*, *Rāmram* guru, Ramdas etc. took major roles in *ozāpāli*. The sound of *Nāmakīrttana*, recitation of holly scriptures make public. In this function Ratnākar kandali and Byāskalāi explained the scriptures. It is said that at Dhuvāhāt Byāskalāi took initiation in the religious fold of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>138</sup> Besides, an ascetic Brāhmin scholar namely Bhāskar Guru while loitering somewhere heard a *Bargīt* sang by someone and the melody tune of the same attracted the scholar and eventually he became a disciple of Śaṅkaradeva at Dhuvāhāt.<sup>139</sup>

### 0.3.24 Enmity of Brāhmiṇs to Śaṅkaradeva :

The Spreading of *Nāma - Dharma* at Dhuvāhāt and nearby villages through Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavdeva and their disciples and followers began to accrete day by day. Even some Brāhmins namely Ratnakar Kandali, Byāskalāi, Hari Miśra, Jagannāth etc got their initiation in the religious fold of *Nāma-Dharma* propagated by Śaṅkaradeva. But a section of Brāhmins who were against the *Nāma-Dharma* also

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137 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.63-65

138 (a) Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit*. pp.64-68

(b) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.62-63

139 Ibid (b), p.63

continued their oppression towards the disciples and Followers of Śaṅkaradeva. Their Oppression to the devotees of Śaṅkaradeva increased to such an extent that the evil minded Brāhmins forcefully took the garlands of *Tulasī* from their neck and placed in the tail of dogs.<sup>140</sup> The reason for this abusement of Brāhmins according to Maheswar Neog is – Spreading of *Nāma Dharma* among the masses liberated them from the octopus of Brāhmin and the new faith paved the way for them to approach God without any assistance of the Brāhmins. This directly affected in the livelihood of the Brāhmins. And this made them very angry to Śaṅkaradeva and his disciples. Another group stood in this line due to their jealousy to Śaṅkaradeva. Due to the influence of the later section of people, the study of scriptures and scholarship became monopoly to the Brāhmins.<sup>141</sup>

Some of the Brāhmins one day filed a petition at the Āhom Royal court against Śaṅkaradeva. Cuhungmung was the king of Āhom kingdom at that time who enthroned on 1497 A.D. after the death of his father chupimphā. He had been ruling the Āhom kingdom from 1497 to 1539 A.D. He was the greatest among *Dihingā* clan and hence he came to be known as *Dihingā* king.<sup>142</sup> The petition filed against Śaṅkaradeva mentioned that a *sūdra* viz. Śaṅkaradeva misled the subjects by spreading false religion which includes the violation of traditional Śrāddha and other rituals. The king wanted to arrange a trial on Śaṅkaradeva. So, he Summoned Śaṅkaradeva to the Royal Court and wanted to judge in front of the Brāhmins. King Chuhungmung was completely unaware of the rituals of *Śrāddha* and so the Duvarī explained the king in details about the functions of *Śrāddha*. The king was informed by the Duvarī that Brāhmins eat all the things offered to a crow, fox, dog etc in the name of the departed soul. Knowing this, the king was very much angry and ordered

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140 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit.* p.69

141 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva.* p.70

142 Bobarua, H. (2013). *Āhomar Din.* p.55

his minister to force out expel from the Royal court. In the mean time, for fear of the king the Brāhmins began to come out of the court themselves. In the other hand, Śaṅkaradeva was highly honoured by the Āhom king.<sup>143</sup> Maheswar Neog remarked on for not understanding about the futility of Śraddha by the Ahom king that they untill that period of time remained outside the boundary of Hinduism. So, they naturally did not get chance to know the various rules and customs of Hinduism.<sup>144</sup>

Although the verdict went against the Brahmins in the Royal Court, they did never retreat from their point of abusing Śaṅkaradeva and his disciples. Lakhsminath Bezbaroa wrote regarding the evil minded Brāhmins like this – ‘being a greedy and violating moral and religious rules Brāhmins degraded from their Brahminhood.’<sup>145</sup>

The atrocities of evil minded Brāhmins went growing day by day. Śaṅkaradeva seems no remedy of their ill behaviours towards him and to his disciples. So, to remedy this situation, one day Śaṅkaradeva made a plan. He asked Budākhā one of his kinsman to arrange a gathering at his courtyard and to invite the Brāhmins. He accordingly invited the Brāhmins. Śaṅkaradeva, his disciples and Brāhmins also participated in the gathering. There Śaṅkaradeva made such a plan that the Brāhmins were compelled to announce *Hari Nāma-Dharma* to be the essence of all the scriptures and no other religion is equal to *Eka Śaraṇa*. Daityāri Thākur narrates that the gathering was held on the day of Śraddha of Budākhā’s departed father.<sup>146</sup> The atrocities of the Brāhmins influenced Śaṅkaradeva to compose verses on the basis of *Padma Purāṇa*, *Pātālī khaṇḍa*. Of course, Mādhavdeva requested Śaṅkaradeva to

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143 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit*. pp.97-98

144 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.73

145 Bezbaroa, L. (1997 ). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva and Śrī Śrī Mādhavdeva*. pp.97-98

146 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998 ). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit*. p.70

remain away from creating such protested verses in stead should be tolerate to them.<sup>147</sup>

### **0.3.25 Arrest of Mādhavdeva and Hari by Āhom king :**

Suklenmuṅg (1539-1552) at that time was Āhom king.<sup>148</sup> To make easy communication and for battles, the king made a plan to catch the wild elephants. In 1539-40 A.D., he appointed one Handique to carry out this job. He was given a group of people to assist in his job. The Bhūñā of Dhuvāhāt were also given that charge. But as ill luck it would have the elephants escaped through the direction of inexperienced Bhūyāñs side. So, the King ordered to arrest the Bhūñā. The kings men failed to arrest the head of the Bhūñā i.e. – Śaṅkaradeva and so they arrested Mādhav and Hari in stead. Hari was executed by the King and since Madhav was a bachelor and were none to repent, so he was freed.<sup>149</sup> According to Ramananda Dwija, since Madhavdeva was not ordered to return back home, so he remained in a royal serviceman's family known as Handique where Mādhavdeva recited and explained the *Ayadhyā Kāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* to him.<sup>150</sup> On the other side, Śaṅkaradeva and other kinsmen were waiting with great solicitude for their return. For their safe return Śaṅkaradeva arranged '*Pālnāma*' (chanting of names by devotees one after another) at Belguri. Just the *Pālnāma* is ended, Madhav appeared with shaggy appearance.<sup>151</sup> Although Hari was executed by the king, Śaṅkaradeva became very much happy for Madhav's save return.

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147 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.523

148 Bobarua, H. (2013). *Āhomar Din*. p.76

149 Op. cit. pp.525-526

150 Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. pp.128-130

151 Dvija, D. & Hazarika, S. (2008). *Santāvalī*. pp.150-154

### 0.3.26 Left Āhom kingdom and marched down to Koch kingdom :

Now, Śaṅkaradeva decided to come down to Koch kingdom. The atrocities of the Brāhmins and the illegal verdict of the Āhom king compelled him to take the decision of backward journey.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, Śaṅkaradeva was deeply attracted to learned and scholar koch king Naranārāyaṇa and his brother Cilārāya.<sup>153</sup> All these factors made Śaṅkaradeva to take the decision of leaving Āhom kingdom for Kāmrūpa.

The names of the villages and places which Śaṅkaradeva passed through his journey by boat are mentioned by hagiographers in different manner.<sup>154</sup> The places may be arranged according to present geographical position such: Belguri, Rowrawā suti, cāulkhawā river, Tapābari, Khorā, Sādhanaṛ ghāt, kalākatā, - khāgarikatā, Kaliābar, Hātīmukh, Bardowā, (South bank), Śiṅgari (North bank), Daraṅ, kuwārbhāg gaon, Banbhāg, Barbhāg, Kapalābari etc.

The time span of Śaṅkaradeva's arrival at kapalābari from Belguri through boat is not mentioned in other hagiographies except that Cakrapani Bairagi. He however mentioned that it took twenty days to Śaṅkaradeva to arrive at Kapalābari.<sup>155</sup> On the other hand, Maheswar Neog opines that Śaṅkaradeva covered that destination in a period of seven months.<sup>156</sup> The hagiographies let to know that Śaṅkaradeva did not spend at any place of his journey for a long period. On the other hand, he left Belguri keeping the royal official in total darkness. So, it can be assumed that they did

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152 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.74

153 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit*. p.99

154 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp 530.534

(b) Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit*. p.103

(c) Bezbaroa, L. (1997). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva and Śrī Śrī Mādhavdeva*. pp.70-71

(d) Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*, p.77

155 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p

156 Neog, Maheswar. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Mādhavdeva.*, p.37

not spending for a long time at any place which may cause of any danger to their lives by the royal officials. Considering this point, Cakrapani's view is considered to be true. Maheswar Neog's opinion here finds no relevancy.

### 0.3.27 Śaṅkaradeva in Koch Kingdom :

Having decided to live permanently there, Śaṅkaradeva got his house constructed in Cūnpora. In this place, a disciple named Bhavānanda Sāud adopted Śaṅkaradeva's religion. Śaṅkaradeva bestowed the name Narayan on him. In course of time, he came to be known as Narayan Das Thakur *Ātā*.<sup>157</sup> A deep friendship was growing between Narayan Das and Mādhavadeva. After losing his bosom friend Hari Kāyastha in the Āhom Kingdom, Mādhavadeva was immensely pleased to have Nārāyaṇ here. Having settled permanently in a place called Manthai, Narayan dedicated himself in propagating Gurudharma (religion of the master). Himself taking the saraṇa (initiation to the religion) of *Gurudharma*, he made all other members of his family get endowed with *Śaraṇa* near Śaṅkaradeva. Apart from this, Thākur *Ātā* made many other people get the *Śaraṇa* near Śaṅkaradeva. Among them, Mādhav from Jayanti Village and devī worshiper Gobinda Garamali are worth mentioning.<sup>158</sup> After Cūnporā, Śaṅkaradeva stayed in Gaṅkkuci for three months. This was followed by his stay in Kumārkuci. Before leaving for Kumārkuci, he entrusted his properties to Mādhavadeva. Śaṅkaradeva lived in Kumārkuci for a year. In that place, his youngest daughter Viṣṇupriyā had breathed her last.<sup>159</sup> Bereaved at her death and due to difficulties of living, Śaṅkaradeva shifted to Pātbāusī from there.

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157 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.76–77

158 Ibid, pp.79–82

159 Op. cit. p.85

### 0.3.28 Śaṅkaradeva in Pātbāusī :

Coming to Pātbāusī from Kumārkuci, Śaṅkaradeva had built *Nāmghar and Hāṭī* for the disciples on the bank of Dhenukhandā *bil* (Water body). Like in Dhuvāhāt, in Pātbāusī also the flow of devotion had begun to spill. Countless disciples adopted the religion of Śaṅkaradeva in pātbāusī. The most remarkable disciples among all of them were Damodardeva, Sriram *Ātā*, Cakrapāni Dwij, Byas Kalai, Udar Gobinda, Ratikānta Doloi and Gobinda of Garu community. According to *Guru-Carit-Kathā*, a Brāhmin named Dāmodar used to provide maintenance to three widows by himself getting engaged in agricultural work. Hearing Śaṅkaradeva's religious elucidation everyday while passing by Pātbāusī to the agricultural field, Damodar's heart got filled with admiration for Śaṅkaradeva and consequently he accepted the *Eka-Śaraṇa-Harināma-Dharma*. Since Damodar was a Brāhmin, Śaṅkaradeva got him the *śaraṇa* by the Brāhmin Rāmrām guru.<sup>160</sup> However, as per another Carit, Dāmodar got the *śaraṇa* only near Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>161</sup> It cannot be assumed that Dāmodar had to get the *śaraṇa* near Rāmrām Guru for being a Brāhmin. Because, Śaṅkaradeva himself had already initiated Rāmrām, Mahendra Kandali, Ananta Kandali, Byās Kalāi, Brahmananda Acharya, Ratnakar Kandali, Haridev and many other Brāhmins with *śaraṇa*. One of the important incidents taking place during Śaṅkaradeva's stay in Pātbāusī was the wedding of Cilārāi with Rāmrāi's daughter Kamalpriyā or Bhuvaneswari. Fascinated by the beauty of Bhuvaneswari, Cilarai picked her up and later married. At first father Rāmrāi was against the marriage. But Śaṅkaradeva managed to convince him.<sup>162</sup>

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160 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.218–219

161 Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit*. p.191

162 Op.Cit, P. 92

### 0.3.29 Śaṅkaradeva's literary works in Pātbāusī :

It has mention in the Carit that Śaṅkaradeva lived in Pātbāusī for 14 years.<sup>163</sup> However, as per the local beliefs Śaṅkaradeva lived in Pātbāusī for 18 years and six months and accomplished the major literary works of his life here.<sup>164</sup> One of the most famous testimony of his life, the *Kīrttan-Ghoṣā* acquired its complete shape here itself. In addition to composing verses on first, second, seventh, eighth, tenth episodes of the *Śrīmadbhāgavat*. Śaṅkaradeva went on composing verses on *Balichalan*, *Kurukṣetra*, *Anādi Pātan*, *Nimi Navasiddha* when he was in Pātbāusī. Among the plays, *Rukmiṇī-Haraṇa*, *Pārijāt-Haraṇa*, *Keli-Gopāla* and *Kāliya-Damana* were created in Pātbāusī. During his stay at Pātbāusī, Śaṅkaradeva suggested Mādhavdev to compose the *Nāma-Ghoṣā*. His *Uttarākāṇḍa Rāmāyaṇa* was another creation of the same period.<sup>165</sup>

### 0.3.30 Pilgrimage of Śaṅkaradeva for the second time :

In 1550A.D. along with his bosom friend *Mādhavdeva* and hundred and twenty disciples, Śaṅkaradeva set out for pilgrimage mainly to Vṛndāvana at the age of hunderd years. As per the hagiography, Śaṅkaradeva often used to narrate stories of kṛṣṇa, during his childhood to the disciples performing mischievous activities in Gokul, Mathurā, and Vṛndāvan etc. Hearing these devotional stories about Kṛṣṇa, the disciple along with Rāmrāi Āta had discussed among themselves and requested Śaṅkaradeva to show them the holy shrines like Gokul, Vṛndāvan, Jagannāth etc. Thereafter they all arranged funds and started for the pilgrimage.<sup>166</sup> When the planning for the pilgrimage was in progress, kālindrī, the wife of Śaṅkaradeva, had an

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163 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.82

164 Ibid, p.82–87

165 Op. cit. pp.87-91

166 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.112–113



apprehension . The fear was that if Śaṅkaradeva would not come back after reaching Vṛndāvan, Kālindī along with her children would be left deserted. Therefore, she earnestly requested Madhavdeva to persuade Śaṅkaradeva to cancel the trip. Mādhavdeva explained to Kālindri that it was impossible to cancel the tour since the planning had already been done. Understanding her grief Mādhavdeva promised to kālindī that he would prevent Śaṅkaradeva in any way from visiting Vṛndavan. Thereafter, they started their journey after consoling Kālindī.<sup>167</sup>

### **0.3.31 Madhavdeva's relentless service to the preceptor during the pilgrimage :**

Throughout the sacred tour, Mādhavdeva took care of Śaṅkaradeva in each of his day to day activities. Mādhavdeva assisted Śaṅkaradeva to have the meal, go to sleep and always massaged him with oil and sour fruit juice for his relief from the labor of travel. He would have his meal only when Śaṅkaradeva would fall asleep. Thereafter he would take a bed near Śaṅkaradeva. He would supply *phyllanthus emblica* (āmlakhi – a kind of sour fruit), *terminalia citrine* ( śilikhā - having an astringent taste) etc fruits to Śaṅkaradeva when he was thirsty, while walking under the scorching sun. Whenever Mādhavdeva came to know that Śaṅkaradeva was having burning sensations in feet while walking under the sun, he would fetch water in a jar and pour on his feet. In this way, since the day of beginning the tour from home till their return after six months, Mādhavdeva never had let Śaṅkaradeva suffer the slightest trouble.<sup>168</sup>

### **0.3.32 Śaṅkaradeva's kindness for birds and animals :**

During the pilgrimage, Śaṅkaradeva showed his keen concern for the birds and animals.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid, p.113

<sup>168</sup> Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp. 126–144

<sup>169</sup> Infra, Chapter -V, pp. 131-132

### 0.3.33 Vṛndāvan visit cancelled :

In course of their pilgrimage, the group reached in a place called Bināiganj. From there they went ahead to reach the crossroads terminus of Nelāihāt. From that point the four places – Vṛndavān, Jagannāth, Setukhaṇḍa and Gaṅgā could be arrived at by taking the four different routes. Looking at the faces Śaṅkaradeva asked to all, “Which way should we move at first?” Rāmrāi stated that when they were destined for Vṛndāvan, they should go there. Other disciples also supported Rāmrāi’s suggestion. Mādhavdeva did not say anything. Śaṅkaradeva as well as other disciples asked him where he wanted to go. Utilising the opportunity, Mādhavdeva said that he would not go to Vṛndavan. When the disciples asked him why, Mādhavdeva answered that the holy books had described about a beautiful attractive image of the ancient Vṛndavan and if the same image was not witnessed there in reality, it may bring in a feeling of disrespect in their minds for the place of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s playful activities. Therefore, it would be better not to go there, he said.<sup>170</sup> Vṛndavan was the principal destination for all the disciples and so, Śaṅkaradeva was also hoping for that. Therefore, in order to put Mādhavdeva down, Śaṅkaradeva raised a point with reference to religion. He said to Mādhavdeva that Rūp Goswamī in Vṛndavan has accepted *Eka-Śaraṇa-Harināma-Dharma*; let’s go and see whether it is same with that of us or not. Discarding Śaṅkaradeva’s proposal, Mādhavdeva, who had given word to Kālindrī, expressed his feelings firmly that he would never move a single step forward in this regard. Mādhavdeva, who had firm belief in Śaṅkaradeva’s religion, was not at all in favour of judging it by means of comparing it with others’ religion. Therefore, Mādhavdeva announced with a self-esteem in his tone that those who have doubt over own religious philosophy, who would accept it as reliable only after

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170 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (ed.) (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. P. 130

comparing with others and finding it to be matching with others, only they should go to Vṛndavan. Impressed by Mādhavdeva's determination and the clarity in his replay, Śaṅkaradeva withdrew the Vṛndāvan trip. Leaving the idea of Vṛndavan visit there, the disciples proceeded towards Jagannāth on the south.<sup>171</sup>

#### **0.3.34 Jagannāth visit :**

Next, the pilgrims proceeded towards the south from Nelāihāt and at Dolāmārī point they crossed the river Padmā. They took their bath at Jyāganj and then spent the night in a place called Mukhcuābāj. From there they crossed the Kātuā Gāngā and travelled along the Bay of Beṅgal coastline to Jagannāth. Spending the night at a place called Tulasīcorā, the next day they arrived at Ātharenalā from where they entered in Purī. In Purī the pilgrims went ahead to visit the Jagannāth temple. All of them assembled at the main entrance of the temple. As per tradition, every devotee was to be hit by a cane before entering the temple. When Śaṅkaradeva - Mādhavdeva along with the disciples stood at the entry of the temple, a *pāṇḍā* (Brāhmaṇ who performs *pūjā* in a temple for the devotee) revealed them about the tradition of caning. Mādhavdeva, in order to get rid of the inauspicious traditional practice of caning and to retain the honour of Śaṅkaradeva as well as himself, recited a devotional verse. Hearing Mādhavdeva's devotional verse, the *pāṇḍā* went home letting them enter the temple without going through the traditional beating.<sup>172</sup> Thus, using his presence of mind, Mādhavdeva skillfully saved Śaṅkaradeva as well as himself from being caned.

#### **0.3.35 About interaction between Śaṅkaradeva and Caitanyadeva :**

In the hagiographies of (a) Rāmcaran Thākura, (b) Daityāri Thākura, (c) Bhūṣan Dwija, (d) Cakrapāṇi Bairāgī and (e) Dīnanāth Bezbaruā, there are descriptions about

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid, p.130

<sup>172</sup> Bazbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. p.115

Śaṅkaradeva and Caitanyadeva's interaction during Śaṅkaradeva's second pilgrimage.<sup>173</sup> However, the descriptions in the hagiographies about Śaṅkaradeva's interaction with Caitanyadeva are just imaginary stories. Caitanyadeva was born in 1486 A.D. and died in 1533 A.D. So, there cannot be any question of Śaṅkaradeva meeting Caitanyadeva during his second pilgrimage that he had made in 1550 A.D. Therefore, the references in the hagiographies about the interaction between the two saints were nothing but fantasies of the authors.

### 0.3.36 Return from the pilgrimage :

In the return journey, they first arrived at the Kaṭak town. From there they passed through Bāleśwar port and route to Bardhamān on the bank of river Dāmodar. After that the pilgrims camped at several places viz. Kamārpukhurīā, Gopīnāth in Navadvīp, Śāntipur, Kātuā, Tripinī mukh - the river mouth of Gaṅgā and from there at Mocuābāj respectively. While taking shelter in these places their food was managed by the disciples namely, Balorām Ātā, Rāmrām Ātā, Rāmrāi, Kālirām, Paramānanda Ātāi, Daibagya Nārāyaṇ, Balobhadra, Jātirām, Gobinda, Gopāl, Mukunda, Ārhai Ātai, Kaṇiṣṭha Balorām etc. by expending their own funds . One morning, during their camping at Mucovābāj a devotee named Suśarmā, who was heading for Vṛndāvan sang a hymn in praise of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Hearing the hymn sung in praise of the couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Śaṅkaradeva asked Mādhavdeva to sing a song that would signify the

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173 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit* .p.697

(b) Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahapuris Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – .Mādhavdeva carit.* pp.124–125

(c) Dvija, B. & Borkakti, D. (1986). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva.* p.134

(d) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā.* p.127

(e) Bazbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit* .p.109

*Eka Śaraṇa Nām Dharma*. Accordingly, Mādhavdeva sang a *bhaṭimā* in the morning.<sup>174</sup>

From Mucovābāj, they moved to camp at Jaṅginpur on the bank of river Gāṅgā. From there they travelled through Bhāgangolā, Pukhuriāganj, Silimpur, Bank of Mohanā Gaṅgā, Binājpur and from there they stationed at Gobindaganj. During their camping at Gobindaganj, they treated and cured a gluttonous *sanyāsī* named Śūlapāṇi with the help of Mādhavdeva. Śūlapāṇi got *śaraṇa* near Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>175</sup> From Gobindaganj, they went further to reach Ghorāghāt, leaving behind Kistāgaṅgā on the way. From there they crossed the river Gaurāṅga and stopped at Singiāganj, a place close to the border of Koch Kingdom. From Singiāganj, the disciples went out in the morning to a place called Khāncipurganj by the side of river Naliya. Seeing the *sanyāsīs* of Paramhaṇsa there, Rāmrāi expressed his desire to spend the night in their company and asked for Śaṅkaradeva's permission. Allowing Rāmrāi to stay there, Śaṅkaradeva, accompanied by the other disciples stationed at the house of a person named Beli Maṇḍal, a little away from there. Since Beli Maṇḍal was not a member of the *Eka Śaraṇa* sect, Mādhavdeva played a trick. He made Śaṅkaradeva sit in front of him and performed *Nām-prasaṅga* (ritual prayer) by singing the verses of *Śaraṇa*. He also made Beli Maṇḍal sit there during the performance. Thus, Beli Maṇḍal got into the *śaraṇa*. Śaṅkaradeva highly applauded intelligent Mādhavdeva for applying this tactic.<sup>176</sup> On the other hand, Rāmrāi who went to sleep in the company of the *sanyāsīs* of Paramhaṇsa, lost everything to the *sanyāsīs* as they looted his belongings by threatening him. He was screaming in fear for life. Recognising Rāmrāi's sound, Śaṅkaradeva informed Madhavdeva through gesticulation. Making a noise by shouting loudly, Mādhavdeva chased the place bravely. The noise was so deafening

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174 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā* . p.139

175 Infra.Chapter -V, p.151

176 Op. cit, p.140

that the *sanyāsīs* thought it to be the sound of some two hundred people coming along. Frightened, they fled away from the place. Later, an empty-handed Rāmrāi appeared in front of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>177</sup> Next, the disciples camped at Madārganj on the bank of river Sonkoṣ.

Later, from Madārganj the devotees arrived in Pātbāusī. Along with Śaṅkaradeva-Mādhavdeva the disciples after the six-month long tour had just reached Pātbāusī when Mādhavdeva immediately went inside and bowed down to Kālindrī. With a feeling of self-satisfaction Mādhavdeva said, “By the grace of your blessings, the Guru has been escorted homeward, by preventing from going to Vṛndāvan.” Kālindrī also responded with gratefulness to Mādhavdeva, “Due to your mercy, my lord’s face has been visible again.”<sup>178</sup> From there, taking leave from Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhavdeva went to Gaṇakkuci with Śrīram Ātā. Getting the information about Mādhavdeva’s return from pilgrimage, Nārāyan Dās Thakur Ātā came to Gaṇakkuci with a lot of items for him. After paying reverence to Mādhavdeva, Thākur Ātā asked him about the tour. He spent the night with Mādhavdeva. Mādhavdeva from his experience of the tour described to his friend in detail about the social systems of the people of different places, comprising behaviours, food habits, traditional practices etc. While speaking about the norms followed in different places, Mādhavdeva also stated with a bit of surprise in his face that people on one hand sell out items like coral while on the other hand buy things like cow-dung. He said to Thakur Ata that talks on such diverse practices if started would never end.<sup>179</sup>

### **0.3.37 Obtained *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* :**

A Brāhman called Kaṇṭhabhūṣaṇ from Māguri near Hājo was suffering from inferiority complex due to Śaṅkaradeva’s immense intelligence in explaining

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177 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.142

178 Ibid, p.142

179 Op.cit. p.143

Bhāgawat Purāṇa. He could not tolerate to see Śaṅkaradeva presenting enlightenment on Bhāgawat to the Brāhmaṇas and with an intention to acquire more knowledge to defeat Śaṅkaradeva in interpreting the sacred books, he had left for Vārāṇasī. There he was learning Vedānta under the guidance of Brahmananda, who was a disciple of Viṣṇupurī *sanyāsī*. One day, during the process of learning, Brahmananda muted for while, unable to explain the meaning of a verse. Taking over the turn, Kaṇṭhabhūṣaṇ expressed the meaning in front of Brahmananda by using Śaṅkaradeva's straight forward translation of the Bhāgawat. Knowing about Śaṅkaradeva's identity from Kaṇṭhabhūṣaṇ, Brahmananda remembered that his Guru Viṣṇupurī *sanyāsī* had left the book Ratnāwalī for Śaṅkaradeva. Referring to Viṣṇupurī *sanyāsī*, Brahmananda handed over the book *Bhakti-Ratnāwalī* to Kaṇṭhabhūṣaṇ telling him to get it to Śaṅkaradeva. Three months later, Kaṇṭhabhūṣaṇ arrived at Pāṭbāusī and after showing honour to Śaṅkaradeva he described the whole incident and delivered the book Ratnāwalī in the hands of Śaṅkaradeva. Śaṅkaradeva got a *thagā* (raised holder for book), placed the book on that and directed Mādhavdeva to have a check on it. Assuming that in the sacred book, composed by a *sanyāsī* there might be variations to their principles, Mādhavdeva passed it back to Śaṅkaradeva without checking by himself. After a careful check Śaṅkaradeva came to know that it was a summary of Bhāgawat and then he handed over the book to Mādhavdeva again. Śaṅkaradeva said to Mādhavdeva, "This brilliant book bears the same religious ideology like ours. Had it been found earlier, I would not have composed *Bhakti-Ratnākara*. Therefore, you yourself do the Assamese transformation of its Saṅskṛt verses." In response to this, Mādhavdev expressed his inability in front of Śaṅkaradeva to compose verses for such a sacred book with his level of knowledge. However, Śaṅkaradeva stated that this book would later be done by Mādhavdeva himself and entrusted responsibility of its safe custody with Kālindī.<sup>180</sup> The story of Brāhmaṇanda sending the sacred book

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180 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.145-148

Ratnāwali to Śaṅkaradeva is found in several other hagiographies with slight changes.<sup>181</sup>

### 0.3.38 Complaint to Naranārāyaṇa by Brāhmiṇs against Śaṅkaradeva :

As in Dhuvāhāt,<sup>182</sup> within Koch kingdom too, a section of the practicing Brāhmins felt threatened at the spread and growth of the Nām Dhārma principles. Because, the Brāhmins were nearly losing livelihood as many people had become *Ēka Śaranīā Bhakat* (disciple)s. Therefore, by finding out flaws of Śaṅkaradeva and Ekśaranīā Bhakats, they complained to the king. Their main grievance was that Śaṅkaradeva did not have any reverence for *śrāddha* (death ritual), *tulasī* (basil leaves, considered as sacred), Gaṅgā, *sālagrām* (a stone, considered as sacred), Brāhman etc. He neither performed devī pūjā (worship of the goddess) nor used to greet a Brāhman with a *namaskār* (joined palms). Within the religious sect proliferated by Śaṅkaradeva, people of all castes Brāhman, Kaivarta, Koch, etc. were allowed to sit together for prayer and have food. They tried to persuade the king by saying that if the religious norms of the holy books like Veda and Bhāgawata were not followed, there would be fear of downfall and also loss of life to the king. Allowing Śaṅkaradeva to continue his practices would therefore invite famine in the state, cattle and crop loss. Such things have been described in several hagiographies in different amounts.<sup>183</sup>

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181 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit.* pp.783-787

(b) Thakur, D. & Nath, R.(1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Madhavdeva carit* pp.149-151

182 Supra, pp. 66-68

183 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit.* pp.745-746

(b) Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Sriguru Carit.* pp. 201-202

(c) Thakur, D. & Nath, R. (1998). *Mahapurush Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva – Mādhavdeva carit.* pp.152-153

(d) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā.* p.148

(e) Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva.* pp.85-86



### 0.3.39 Śaṅkaradeva in the royal assembly of Naranārāyaṇa :

The king's officials again came to search Śaṅkaradeva. But, by the time Cilārāi's messenger had already abducted Śaṅkaradeva and sheltered him in Cilārāi's place. Naranārāyaṇ directed Cilārāi to send Śaṅkaradeva to the place of the king. But, Cilārāi had let Śaṅkaradeva to attend the royal assembly only after obtaining the assurance from the king that there would be no harm to Śaṅkaradeva. By appointing messenger on horse, Cilārāi was having frequent watches over Śaṅkaradeva's condition there. While climbing the staircase, Śaṅkaradeva kept reciting the song "*madhu-dānava-dārana-deva-barāṇ*" Completing this, he blessed the king through four *slokas* (verses). When offered a *kamali* (mat), Śaṅkaradeva politely sat down and sang the *Bargīt* (devotional song) in *Dhaṅsrī rāg* - "*Nārāyaṇ Kāhe Bhakati Karo Terā.*" Later again he recited the *Rājibhatima* - "*jayajaya malla nrpati rasavān. yākeri guṇagana Nahike sama nāhi.*" King Naranārāyaṇ himself was a learned person with an admiration for poetry. Naranārāyaṇ showed to Śaṅkaradeva the prose notes of eight *slokas* composed by him. The king was impressed when Śaṅkaradeva presented explanation on the *slokas* with a divine connotation. Later, bidding goodbye with due honour, the king said to Śaṅkaradeva, "Everyday, come to my place in the first half and be at my brother's residence in the second half."<sup>184</sup>

In this way, during his stay in Kochbehār for three months, Śaṅkaradeva continued frequenting the royal assembly. According to Carit, the songs recited by Śaṅkaradeva in the royal assembly on his second, third and fourth day of the visits were "*Bando Govindā Gopī janānandā*", "*hāsi sābhasita karo bahu thira, malla*

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(f) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit* .pp. 104-105

(g) Bezbaroa, D. (1987). *Barcarit*. pp.120-130

184 Ibid. pp.154-155

*nṛpati sama nāhikaya bīra*”, “*pekhiye cānura sabhā mājhe jāi, sunata rāj ajñā rām gosāi*” respectively. On the third day, the practicing Brāhmaṇs while placing the complaint in front of the king had put forward the point that Śaṅkaradeva did not have any respect for the places of pilgrimage. In rejoinder, Śaṅkaradeva informed the king about his pilgrimages that he had already made twice. In response to the objection placed by the practicing Brāhmaṇs about dishonesty, Śaṅkaradeva informed the king that the Ekśaran Nāmdharma belief had been disseminated by him only after collecting *Eka Śaraṇa* from *Gīta*, *navabidhā Bhakti* from *Śrīmadbhagawat* and the summary of *Ved-Vedanta*.<sup>185</sup>

#### **0.3.40 Refuge of Cāndsāi :**

Once during Śaṅkaradeva’s stay in Bhelā Madhupur, Naranārāyaṇ had advised a Muslim tailor, named Cāndsāi to stitch a *dagalā* (shirt) for Śaṅkaradeva. Cāndsāi saw Śaṅkaradeva as a figure having four hands. So he stitched a *dagalā* with four sleeves on it which he delivered to Śaṅkaradeva. When Śaṅkaradeva asked as to why he had sewed that shirt having four sleeves, Cāndsāi replied that it was prepared just to fit the figure he had seen in him. Śaṅkaradeva told him to remove two sleeves from the shirt and advised not to share the matter with anyone. As per Śaṅkaradeva’s advice, Cāndsāi removed the additional sleeves. Later, he ardently requested Śaṅkaradeva and got himself the *refuge* near him.<sup>186</sup> According to Rāmānanda Dwij, previously Cāndsāi used to spread insulting stories about Śaṅkaradeva. Later, he left his family and relatives and became one of the beloved disciples of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>187</sup>

#### **0.3.41 Creation of *Guṇamālā* and listening by Naranārāyaṇ :**

Once, king Naranārāyaṇ urged the Brāhmaṇ scholars and Śaṅkaradeva to make arrangements for him to listen to the whole *Bhāgawat*, while sitting in the court.

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<sup>185</sup> Op. cit. p.156

<sup>186</sup> Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā* p.168

<sup>187</sup> Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Sriguru Carit*. pp. 220-225

The Brāhmins informed the king that such an activity would be impossible to perform. Śaṅkaradeva compiled the summary of *Bāra Skandha* (twelve episode) *Bhāgawat*. With that he composed *Guṇamālā* overnight and the next day he recited it for the king within thours. Hagiographers have described this incident as trapping a big elephant in a small pot.<sup>188</sup>

This story has been described in many other Carits too.<sup>176</sup> It is important that according to Puwaram Mahanta, Sankaradeva had composed five chapters of the book *Guṇamālā* in beforehand. After the order of the king, he composed one more chapter which was enclosed as the first chapter.<sup>177</sup>

Śaṅkaradeva returned to Pātbāusī after spending three months in Kochbehār. Prior to his return to Pātbāusi, Cilārāi got a Saṅskṛit copy of *Janmapurāṇ* and requested Śaṅkaradeva to translate that into Assamese. Śaṅkaradeva brought it along, assuming that the task would have to be done in Pātbāusī only. Later, he got it translated into Assamese by Mādhavdeva. And this was the “*Janma Rahasya*” (Birth Secret) volume of Mādhavdeva.<sup>178</sup>

### **0.3.42 Rukmiṇī Haraṇa play, Kurukṣetra poetry by Śaṅkaradeva and composing Rājasuya poetry by Mādhavdeva :**

Ananta Kandali, handed over to Śaṅkaradeva the two episodes - middle and the end of the *Daśam Skandha* at Pātbāusī, coming all the way from *Ujani* (the upper land). This responsibility was given to Kandali by Śaṅkaradeva way back when he

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188 Op. cit. p.168

176 (a) Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp.779-780

(b) Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*, pp. 219-220

(c) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. 2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. pp.109-114

177 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. 2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. p.133

178 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.169

was in Barduvā and he himself did the Assamese translation of the first episode.<sup>179</sup> Having a check on the work, Śaṅkaradeva did not find Kandali's translation satisfactory. It carried more description about war and less about devotion. Therefore, picking up legends from the *Daśam Skandha* of *Bhāgawat* and sources from *Harivaṁsā*, Śaṅkaradeva created “*Kuruṣetra*” poetry and “*Rukmiṇī Haran*” play himself. He again entrusted Mādhavdeva with the task of composing poetry from *Madhya Daśam*. Thus, Mādhavdeva composed “*Rājasuya*” poetry on the basis of *Madhya Daśam*.<sup>180</sup>

### **0.3.43 Manufacturing the *Vṛndāvanī Vastra* (cloth) and presenting it to Naranārāyaṇa :**

On his next visit to Naranārāyaṇ's place for settlement issues, Śaṅkaradeva was requested by the king to show him Lord Kṛṣṇa's playful activities performed in Vṛndāvan, by illustrating them on clothes. Considering the king's request, Śaṅkaradeva mobilised 12 expert weavers. Among the 12 weavers, the chief was Budhā Gopal (Mathurā Dās Buḍhā Āta). Śaṅkaradeva also acquired the necessary yarn. He got the yarn dyed with different colours for weaving. Śaṅkaradeva supervised the weaving of *Vṛndāvanī Vastra* by visiting Tātikuci everyday from Pātbāusī. After six months Śaṅkaradeva got the *Vṛndāvanī Vastra* completed. Designs of all the pictures of Kṛṣṇa's mischievous activities performed in Vṛndāvan and Māthurā were depicted beautifully in the *Vṛndāvanī Vastra*. All incidents from Kṛṣṇa's birth till the assassination of Kaṇsa were described in the *Vṛndāvanī Vastra*. For the *Vastra*, the measurement for the yarn in length was set as 120 arms. But then it came out to be only 60 arms in length.<sup>181</sup> According to Rāmcarāṇ Thākura, the

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179 Supra, pp. 56-57

180 Op.cit, p.174

181 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.174-176

Vastra was 120 arms in length and 60 arms in width.<sup>182</sup> According to Rāmānanda Dwij the weaving of Vṛndavanī Vastra took only three months.<sup>183</sup> According to Puwārām Mahanta, it was Cilārāi who requested Śaṅkaradeva to weave out the Vṛndāvānī Vastra.<sup>184</sup> Thus, in the descriptions of Carit Puthi (book)s, some differences are seen as regards the Vṛndāvānī Vastra. Finally, Śaṅkaradeva went to Kochbehār and delivered the Vastra to Naranārāyaṇa.

#### **0.3.44 Urge to compile *Bargīt* (devotional songs) :**

During his later years of life in Pātbāusī, Śaṅkaradeva compiled the *Bargīts*, composed by himself, in a book form. As per hagiography, he had composed 120 *Bargīts* in total. Once a music enthusiast disciple called Kamalā Gāyan of Barpetā took away the compilation of songs from Śaṅkaradeva in order to memorise for himself. Unfortunately, a fire spread by pre-spring wind gutted the house of Kamalā Gāyan and the compiled book of songs owned by Śaṅkaradeva was totally damaged. After the loss of the precious book of songs in fire, Śaṅkaradeva became reluctant to compose any more songs. Therefore, Śaṅkaradeva said to Mādhavdeva in grief, “*Barāpo, anek sramkai gīt khāni kailu puile, gīt kicu karā, āmi nakaru āru* (I had composed the songs with much effort, but fire has taken them away. Now you create a few, I am not going to make any more).” Understanding the sorrow in Śaṅkaradeva’s mind, Mādhavdeva compiled and edited 191 number of songs.<sup>185</sup> However, in today’s *Bargīt* collections differences are visible as regards the number of songs.

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182 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H.(1985). *Guru Cari* . p.782

183 Dwija, R. & Borkakati S.K. (2014). *Śrīguru Carit*. p.196

184 Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. (2009). *Bardova Guru Carit*. pp.108-109

185 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.177-178

### **0.3.45 Nominating Mādhavdeva as the successor of *Gurudharma* (The religion preachd by Śaṅkaradeva) :**

During his last visit to Kochbehar, Śaṅkaradeva spent a night at Ganakkuci. There in front of all the disciples, Śaṅkaradeva announced that Mādhavdeva was inseparable from him. On that day, giving advice to Madhavdeva to manage all the disciples, he said that you take care of all. You take them (the disciples) as myself and follow them with love and respect.<sup>186</sup> These were the last words of Śaṅkaradeva to Mādhavdeva while transferring the responsibility of supervising religious matters.

### **0.3.46 Suggestion to Mādhavdeva to compose the *Nāma-Ghoṣā* (devotional verses):**

Apart from nominating as the supervisor of the Dharmarajya (religious kingdom), Śaṅkaradeva offered an important suggestion to Mādhavdeva. Śaṅkaradeva advised Mādhavdeva to bring out a holy book with an objective to produce epoch making religious matters by way of devotional literature creation. Mādhavdeva was advised to produce a book with the name – Ghoṣā, by using ten thousand names of the Almighty, making it applicable to the disciples of all levels like the water in a spacious pond where all kinds of fish from Rou-Barāli (a kind of local big fish) to Darikaṇā (small fish) can live together.<sup>187</sup> Offering his suggestions in this way, Śaṅkaradeva went downwards to Kochbehār. Along with Śaṅkaradeva, his elder son Rāmānanda as well as a few disciples also went to Kochbehār.

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186 Ibid, p.182

187 Op. cit. p.182

188 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit.* pp.812-815

189 (a) Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā.* p.184

(b) Mahanta, P. & Borkakati, S. K. 2009). *Bardova Guru Carit.* p.113

190 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva.* p.114

### 0.3.47 Naranārāyaṇ's prayer for *śaraṇa* (refuge) :

King Naranārāyaṇ once invited Śaṅkaradeva and urged him to endow him with śaraṇ. But Śaṅkaradeva responded by saying that those who were engaged in earthly and routine activities, could not be given śaraṇ. In addition, the king also used to perform devī pūjā in accordance with sacrifice and other norms. Since the king was not satisfied with the explanation of Śaṅkaradeva and expressed more interest, Śaṅkaradeva told him that śaraṇ would be provided to him, once he got an order from Kṛṣṇa.<sup>188</sup> The above description is also available in the *Carits* of Cakrapāṇi Bairāgī and Puvārām Mahanta.<sup>189</sup> Maheswar Neog on reasons for not providing *śaraṇa* to a king, said, “Seeing the great king Naranārāyaṇ's strong admiration for the śākta religion, Śaṅkaradeva might have no faith in the king's ability to go about with this unpolluted devotional religion. Only two years ago, in 1487 Śaka, as per the king's order the construction of the new structure of the Kāmākhyā temple was completed.”<sup>190</sup>

### 0.3.48 Śaṅkaradeva's journey for eternal rest :

After deciding not to endow king Naranārāyaṇ with the śaraṇ, Śaṅkaradeva's time for the final exit came closer. Maheswar Neog has written, “It is said that due to eruption of a boil at a joint in the right arm, according to another saying – on the thumb finger, or at the ‘jāṅgadāndī’ or ‘āthān’ the Guru had a very high fever which brought his death after three days.”<sup>191</sup> According to Carit, Śaṅkaradeva concluded his life theater in the place called Bhelā Kākatkuṭā after the 21<sup>st</sup> day of Bhādra (July-August) month in 1490 Śaka, Thursday, Śukla Dwitīa tithi (lunar position), after one or half past one noon, around Aādra Nakṣatra.<sup>192</sup> King Naranarayan, on receipt of the news, lamented that in the fear of having to bestow śaraṇ to this unlucky great sinner,

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191 Ibid, p.114

192 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.186

Śaṅkaradeva ended his life drama. Getting the news, Cilārāi Dewān became emotional and cried inconsolably referring to the Guru's qualities. After a discussion, Śaṅkaradeva was cremated in Bhelā Kākatkuṭā where he breathed his last.

#### **0.3.49 Purpose of Śaṅkaradeva's Literature :**

Śaṅkaradeva was a dedicated worker of literature and culture. In the basic of literature and culture he spreaded the *Bhakti* religion. Though he accepted literature as the medium for publication and spreading the religion of Veneration, yet his writing were lurches with all the characteristics of poetry. Of course it is remarkable that Śaṅkaradeva did not create the good literature only for the entertaining the amiable quality of literature.

#### **0.3.50 About his original scripture :**

Though Śaṅkaradeva created the everlasting literature by his versatile genius, yet no trace of book written by his own inscription can be found anywhere. But in the subsequent period Sāñcipāt (a kind of bark of Sāñci tree on which Śaṅkaradeva wrote in the primitive age before the printing press) or hand written copy of the in-scripiter which was preserved in various medium bear the stamp of the books of Śaṅkaradeva. That is why for the touch of various in-scripiter as the time passes out the spelling using of word and structure of language varied. So, sometimes the similarity among the literary creations on Śaṅkaradeva by various persons and institutions can be hardly found.

#### **0.3.51 Division of literary life :**

The literary life of Śaṅkaradeva is classified into three divisions by Satyendra nāth Śarmā. (a) In the first period he spent at Bardowā. (b) The second period is that

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193     Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samīkhwātmak Itiṛtta*. p.120.

194     Supra, pp.38-39



he spent more than twenty years in upper (Assam) at Dhuwāhāt, Belguri etc. (c) In the third period he spent in Lower (Assam) at Pāṭbāusī and Kochbehār. According to him, the exact date, year and regular series of creation of his poetry cannot be orderly prepared yet, his poetry can be categorised as the creation of early middle and last period of his life respectively. On the basis of ‘Caritputh’ (hagiography) it is decided that the Hariścandra upākhyān the first creation of Śaṅkaradeva and on the otherhand “Rām Bijay” drama is the last creation of his life.<sup>193</sup> Of course, from the reading of “Caritputhi” it becomes clear that during his staying at the premise of Mahendra Kandali’s Tool as a student, he created an amiable poem.<sup>194</sup>

### 0.3.52 Classification of Śaṅkaradeva literary works :

The literary creation of Sankaradeva was classified into six divisions –(a) poetry (b) Devotional book (c) Transcreational (d) Aṅkīā drama (e) songs and (f) Relating to community prayer. (a) Verse – (i) *Hariścandra upākhyān* (ii) *Rukmiṇī Haraṇ* (verse) (iii) *Balicalan* (iv) *Amṛit Manthan* (v) *Ajāmil Upākhyān* (vi) *Kurukṣetra*. (b) Devotional Book – (i) *Bhakti Pradip* (ii) *Bhakti Ratnakar* (Sanskrit) (iii) *Nimi-Navasiddha Sambād* (iv) *Anādipātan*. (c) Transcreational – (i) *Bhāgavat*: First, Second, Sixth (only legend of Ajāmil), Eighth (*Balicalan and Amṛit Manthan*), Tenth (first part), Eleventh and Twelve part (ii) *Uttarā Kāṇḍa Rāmāyaṇa* (d) Aṅkīā Nāt (drama) – (i) *Patnī Prasāda* (ii) *Kālīa damana* (iii) *Keligopāla* (iv) *Rukmiṇī Haraṇa* (v) *Pārijāt Haraṇa* (vi) *Rāmbijay*. (e) Songs (Hymns) – (i) *Bargīt* (ii) *Bhaṭimā*. (f) Community Prayer – (i) *Kīrttan Ghōṣā* and *Guṇamālā*.<sup>195</sup> It is remarkable that though Satyendranāth Śarmā divided one sector as a devotional yet in all his creations devotion is the principal theme.

<sup>195</sup> Op.cit. P. 119.

<sup>196</sup> Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samīkhwātmak Itiṛtta*. p. 120.

### 0.3.53 Verse of Sankaradeva :

**Verse : (i) *Hariścandra Upākhyan*** – The poet extracted the material from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of “Mārkaṇḍeya, purāṇa” for the story of Hariścandra.<sup>196</sup> The story runs as follows : King Hariścandra had to face many hardship and suffering for offering the prayer to Viṣṇu instead of Gaṇeśa. Of course, King Hariścandra obtained the heallen of *Viṣṇu* the final felicity. The excellence of Viṣṇu is presented in this verse. It is not required to worship other deity if offer have to pray to Viṣṇu. The verse becomes fit to be tabled for the mixture of melancholy and mirth. The pathetic condition is the main sentiment of the verse. The king Hariscandra is presented as the wise, truthful and liberal man. On the otherhand Śaibya is portrayed as tolerant and worm hearted towards her son and husband. The poet sketches the character of Biśvamitra as a villain. Śaṅkaradeva uses pada, cabi, dulari and jhumuri (these are Assamese metre) in the verse.

**(ii) *Rukmiṇī Haraṇa* (verse) :** Śaṅkaradeva took the main story of this poetry from “Haribaṇśa” and “Bhāgawata Purāṇaa”. According to the poet the reader get taste for the blending of these two verses like the blending of honey and milk.<sup>197</sup> As per the description of the poetry, Śrīkṛṣṇa married Rukmiṇī, the daughter of king of Bidarva, Bhiṣmak who was a worshiper of Viṣṇu by defeating Śiśupālā, Jarāsandha and Rukmabīra the senior most son of Bhiṣmaka. Though this poetry is important for the heroic sentiment, yet the poet doesnot totally set aside the pathetic sentiment and mirth. The poet use five Assamese remarkable metres like Pada, Dulari, Cabi, Jhunā and Jhumuri. With the help of simile, proverb, phrases and idioms, the poet illuminates the normal ideal status of the character. The poetry reflects the Assamese social and homely atmosphere which normally attracts the reader. The reader gets the

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197 Chutia, Sonaram & et.al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmr̥t*. p. 846

picture of mental tension of Śasīprabhā for offering her daughter Rukmiṇī at the hand of a eligible bridegroom. The importance on the pre-destined marriage system, murdering of man, woman and cow as a sin work, the indication for the vibration of the major limbs of our body, paying importance on the married woman on auspicious occasion, the showing of respect through veil, the prevalence of re-marriage system are elaborately discussed in the poetical work. According to Maheswar Neog, “*Rukmiṇī Haraṇ*” is a popular verse among his other poetical works.<sup>198</sup>

(iii) **Balichlana:** The “*Balichlana*” is based upon the last part of the eight chapter of the “*Bhāgavata*”. The poet admits that some description from the “*Bāman Purāṇa*” is added here.<sup>199</sup> The chief purpose of this verse is to send *Bali* to the Earth with the help of intrigues. For this reason Viṣṇu take the shape of Bāmana. The discussion between Bali and Bāmana, the upanayan ceremony of Bāmana, the settlement of the three steps of Bāmana, the self-concealment of deities in disguise are the subject matter of the poem. Heroism, emotion of anger and mirth are the principal sentiment of the poem. The poem is enriched with the determination of humble solicitation, importance of inner feelings and emotion.

(iv) **Amṛit Manthana :** Śaṅkaradeva created “*Amṛit Manthana*” on the basic of 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of the 5<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> parts of *Śrīmadbhāgavata Puraṇa*.<sup>200</sup> The entrance of the crowd of deities into the palace of Bali, the rise of Lakṣmī from the bottom of sea, acceptance of Viṣṇu as husband, holding of the enchanting shape by Viṣṇu, the expression of lustful behaviour of Mahadeva by observing enchanting shape of Viṣṇu, the churning activity of the deity and devil and taking ambrosia by the deity are the principal subject matter of the poetry. The heroic activity and greatness of Bali are

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198 Neog, M. (2015). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Rūprekhā*. p. 90

199 Op.cit.P. 382

200 Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samīkhwātmak Itiṛtta* .p.122

characterised more vividly than the delineation of Indra. Furthermore the Excellency of Viṣṇu is exhibited clearly through the story of “*Amṛit Manthan*”. The poetry become attractive and interesting for the skillful blending of laughing, pathetic and heroic sentiment.

(v) *Ajāmil upākhyāna* (The legend of Ajāmil) : The legend of Ajāmil is created on the basis of the three parts of sixth chapter of *Bhāgavata purāṇa*.<sup>201</sup> Śaṅkaradeva also briefly describes this legend in “*Kīrttan-Ghosā*”. In the first part of the poem Śaṅkaradeva describes about the hell. The description of the hell is found in origin the fifth chapter.<sup>202</sup> The chief purpose of writing the legend of Ajāmil is to express the dignity of Rāmnām. The co-habitation of Ajāmil with prostitute, the arrival of the Indian Pluto (a messenger of the regent of death) to capture Ajāmil towards hell, the negotiation between the regent of death and regent of Viṣṇu, the revelation of the dignity and significance of Rāmnām through the mouth of regent of Viṣṇu, adoring of the God concentratly by Ajāmil, the rushing of Ajāmil towards Heaven Vaikuṇṭha, the conversation of the Indian pluto with the messenger of the regent of death are described in the poetry by Sankaradeva in a vivid manner.

(vi) *The poem of Kurukṣetra* : During his staying at Pāṭbāusī Śaṅkaradeva created this poetical work. He was not satisfied with the translation of *Bhāgavata* by Ananta Kandali and consequently he created this poem.<sup>203</sup> On the basis of 82-85 sub-division of the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of *Bhāgavata* this poem is created. The marching of Kṛṣṇa and Jādays towards Kurukṣetra, the re-union of Nanda, yaśodā and other cowherd, the description of the marriage of the wife of Kṛṣṇa, the performing of sacrificial rite by Basudeva and prayer to Kṛṣṇa, the prayer to kṛṣṇa by Daivakī to bring back the dead

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201 Ibid, P. 121.

202 Sarma, N. C. (2014). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva*.p.37

203 Supra, p. 86

son of Daivakī, bringing the son of Daivakī, the pathetic departure of Nanda-yaśodā are vividly descried in the poem.

### 0.3.54 : Devotional Book :

(i) *Bhakti Pradīpa* : Śaṅkaradeva on the basis of “Garuḍa Purāṇa” created this religious scripture.<sup>204</sup> According to Cakrapāṇi Bairāgī Śaṅkaradeva, during his staying at Bardovā created this scripture.<sup>205</sup> According to Dīnanāth Bezbaruā, Śaṅkaradeva created this scripture during his staying at Pāṭbāusī.<sup>206</sup> On the otherhand according to Dimbeswar Neog. Śaṅkaradeva created this scripture before his journey to lower Assam.<sup>207</sup> According to Maheswar Neog, “*Bhakti Pradīp*” is the earlier creation, and he created this scripture when he was staying in the kingdom of Barabhūyañ.<sup>208</sup> Thus various critics opined differently on the creation of this religious scripture. The scripture is divided into nine parts. The events of the scripture are like this: the discussion of the monks in the sacrificial rites of yudhiṣṭhira, the conversation of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, presentation of the conversation of Suśīl brāhmaṇ and Caṇḍālīnī (a kind of aboriginal tribe of assam), by kṛṣṇa in fornt of Arjuna, conversation of Nārada and caṇḍālīnī, the advice of Śrīkṛṣṇa to Arjuna, the characteristics of devotee, the significance of Nām, and the religion of the Bhāgavata, Śrīkṛṣṇa’s description of heaven to the question of Arjuna. In every event of the scriptures, through the discussion between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna the importance and significant of *Eka-Śaraṇa-Harīnāma-Dharma* is revealed.

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204 Chutia, Sonaram & et. al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmṛt*. p.772

205 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. P. 30

206 Bezbaruā, D. (1987). *Barcarit* p. 88

207 Saikia, N. (2015). *Dimbeswar Neog Rachanāvali*. p. 388

208 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p. 44

(ii) ***Bhakti Ratnākar*** : “*Bhakti Ratnākar*” is a collected and only Sanskrit scripture of Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva. From various religious scripture Śaṅkaradeva extracted the slokaes (verse of poetry) for “*Bhakti Ratnākar*”. The reference scriptures are *Bhāgavata*, *Brhannāradīya Purāṇa*, *Gītā*, *Bhāgavat Bhāvartha Dīpikā*, *Subodhinī Tīkā*, *Vaiṣṇavānanda Laharī*, *Nara siṅgha Purāṇa*, *Biṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Pāṇḍavi Gītā*, *Matsya Purāṇa*, *Kurma purāṇa*, *Biṣṇu Dharmottar*, *Brahmāṇḍa purāṇa*, *Bāmaṇ purāṇa*, *Bhujaṅgaprayatastotra*, *Prabodh candroday drama*, *Śāntiśatak*, *yogasār*, *Padma Purāṇa* etc.<sup>209</sup> The scripture which starts with three self-created verse of poetry consists of 564 verses. Abundant number of verses are collected from the Bhāgavata purāṇa. According to the regular series of the subject matter the scripture is divided into thirty eight chapters. “*Bhakti Ratnakar*” is the first edited and compiled book of Assamese writer. Through this book Śaṅkaradeva created a trend of editing and compiling a book.

(iii) ***Nimi-Navasiddhva Sambāda*** : As per mention of *Kathā guru carit* Śaṅkaradeva created *Nimi-Navasiddhva Sambāda* in the time of settlement in Koch Kingdom.<sup>210</sup> On the basis of 2<sup>nd</sup> part to 5<sup>th</sup> part of the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of *Śrī madvagavad purāṇa* Śaṅkaradeva created this scripture. Through the discussion among Nimi King and nine number of omniscient Śaṅkaradeva revealed the doctrine of devotion of the king. Nimi questioned to nine omniscient regarding the universe, life and God and he becomes satisfied to the answers of these omniscient. The scripture is divided into eight divisions.

(iv) ***Anādi pātan*** : Śaṅkaradeva created this scripture on the basis of the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the *Bhāgavat* and *Bāmaṇ Purāṇa*.<sup>211</sup> He describes the doctrine of creation in this book. According to Maheswar Neog Śaṅkaradeva analyse the principal of

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209 Sarma, N. C. (2014). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva*. p. 270

210 QV. Ibid, P. 39

creation on the basis of his own thinking and knowledge.<sup>212</sup> Śaṅkaradeva expressed the very complex and tasteless doctrine regarding the creation of the world in a very simple way.

### 0.3.55 Transcreational literature :

(1) **Bhāgavat** : Though lots of creative work of Śaṅkaradeva is transcreational, yet he does not keep himself apart from the main work. Some chapters of *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and *Uttarākāṇḍa Rāmāyaṇa* are remarkable among such type of translation. The chapters of the *Bhāgavat purāṇa* are like this - First chapter, Second chapter, Third chapter (*Anādi Pātan*), Sixth chapter (legend of Ajāmil), Eight chapter (*Amṛit Manthan* and *Balichlana*), Tenth chapter (*Ādi bhāg*), Eleventh chapter and Twelve chapter.

**First part** : There are nineteen nos. of chapters and eight hundred sixteen nos. of verses in the first part of Sanskrit *Bhāgavat*. Śaṅkaradeva finished the first chapter with only 422 numbers of metres. But Śaṅkaradeva does not translate the second and third chapters. The message of Sut-Śaunak, the message of Byās-Nārada, the history of the former birth of Nārada, the mystery of the birth of parikṣit, the prayer of Kuntī to kṛṣṇa, the act of talking about salvation of Bhīṣma, severe hindrance of Kali and preservation of religion. Falling of parīkṣit in curse of the Supreme Being - are elaborated discussed in the first chapter. The chapter is finished with the Excellency of devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

**Second part** : The second part is a heap of ten chapters. Śaṅkaradeva briefly describes the narration of the Supreme Being and creation of the universe. In this chapter Śaṅkaradeva strictly advices his disciple to abide by the rules of *Eka-Śaraṇa* principle of religion.<sup>213</sup>

**Third part** : In the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter Śaṅkaradeva analyse the doctrine of creation in a simple manner.<sup>214</sup>

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211 Chutia, Sonaram & et. al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyaṃṛt*. p. 267

212 Neog, M. (1987 7). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p. 121

**Sixth part** : The biography of a Brāhmin, named Ajāmil and significance of Rāmnām is discussed in this chapter.<sup>215</sup>

**Eight part** : In this chapter Śaṅkaradeva discussed on the two books like ‘Balicalan’ and ‘Amṛit Manthan’.<sup>216</sup>

**Tenth part** : Śaṅkaradeva transcreated only the first part of the tenth chapter of the Bhāgavata, Ananta Kandali translated the last and middle part.<sup>217</sup> There are ninety parts in the tenth chapter of the Sanskrit Bhāgavat. Śaṅkaradeva transcreated only first to forty nine parts. This part is called *Daśam* (Tenth). According to Satyendra nāth Śarmā though all the translation of tenth chapter is meant by ‘*Daśam*’ yet Assamese people regards the part as ‘*Daśam*’ by Śaṅkaradeva’.<sup>218</sup> The childhood of Śrīkṛṣṇa is described in the ‘*Ādya Daśam*’. Śaṅkaradeva portrayed the natural beauty of the autumn and summer season in a fascinating and the readers are spell bounded by this description. The description of the “Rāsakrīdā” and “Gopī udhava Sambād” in the best example of all the acceptable as a work of art. The playful activities of Śrīkṛṣṇa, majesty and deepness of devotion are expressed in a very clear way.

**Eleventh part** : There are one thousand four hundred fifty nine verses of poetry in Thirty one episodes of eleventh chapter of Sanskrit *Bhāgavat*; Śaṅkaradeva finished the translation of eleventh chapter through the using of 848 Assamese metre of two lines rlyming at the end. Śaṅkaradeva set aside the yoga, dhyāna (concentration), activities of ascetic in the eleventh chapter and prepare this chapter for the readers of Vaiṣṇava. In this chapter a fine blending of devotion of *Bhāgavat* and philosophical views is observed.

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213 Op. cit. P. 225

214 Supra, p. 73

215 Suprs, p. 73

216 Supra, p. 73

217 Supra, p. 73

218 Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samīkhwātmak Itirtta*. p. 123



**Twelve part :** There are three hundred sixty three verses of poetry in thirteenth episodes of twelve nos. of chapter. Śaṅkaradeva transcreated these verses of poetry in five hundred thirty nine metre. The description of the Candra dynasty, division of Veda, *Varṇāśram Dharma* ,i.e religion of a particular mode of living a family life ordained for each caste and virtues are expressed in a comprehensive way in this chapter.

**(2) *Uttarākāṇḍa Rāmāyaṇa*:** As per description of *carit puthi* (hagiography) Ananta Kandali wanted to establish the *Rāmāyaṇa* of *Mādhav Kandali* by his name through adding some new elements. Mādhav Kandali seemed to request to Śaṅkaradeva in his dream to rescue his *Rāmāyaṇa*. For this reason Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavdeva transcreated the ‘*Uttarākāṇḍa*’ and ‘*Ādikāṇḍa*’ *Rāmāyaṇa* respectively.<sup>219</sup> Śaṅkaradeva appreciated also the talent of Mādhav Kandali as a poet in *Uttarākāṇḍa Rāmāyaṇa*.<sup>220</sup> Śaṅkaradeva transcreated only the episodes relating to Rām-Sītā by keeping aside the unnecessary things. That is why Śaṅkaradeva regards it as the main point of issue.<sup>221</sup> The exile of Sītā, Sītā’s arrival at the Vālmikī’s hermitage, birth of Lava-Kuśa, the Aśvamedh Sacrificial rites of Rām, the Rāmāyaṇi song of Lava-Kuśa in the palace of Śrī Rāmcandra, the birth description of Hanuman, arrival of Sītā with Vālmikī, the entrance of Sītā into the hell, the anger of Rām towards the Earth, offering of consolation by Brahma, the coronation of Lava-Kuśa, the searching of Lakṣmaṇa, the journey of Rāmcadra to heaven are described with utmost creation by Śaṅkaradeva. Śaṅkaradeva portrayed the separation between Rām and Sītā in a heart touching and pathetic way.

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219 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p.101

220 Chutia, Sonaram & et. al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmr̥t*. p.974

221 Ibid, p. 950

### 0.3.56 *Aṅkīya Nāṭ* :

Śaṅkaradeva is regarded as the father of Assamese dramatic literature. Before Śaṅkaradeva there is no proof of creating drama by only dramatist. According to Satyendra nath Śarma for having one ‘act’ (*aṅka*) the dramas of Śaṅkaradeva is regarded as *Aṅkīyā* drama.<sup>222</sup> Of course, Śaṅkaradeva did not use the above mentioned word. Śaṅkaradeva uses only “Nāt” (drama), “*Nātak*” and “*yātrā*” (royal drama) in his drama.<sup>223</sup> Before the creation of six dramas he performs ‘*Cihnayātra*’, one of his drama. Śaṅkaradeva uses the “*Brajāvalī*” language in his drama, not Śanskrit or colloquial language. Of course, the verses of poetry are adorned by Sanskrit language. The remarkable six dramas are – (a) *Patnī Prasāda* (b) *Kāliya damana* (c) *Keli gopāla* (d) *Rukminī haraṇa* (e) *Pārijāt haraṇa* and (f) *Rām bijaya*.

(a) ***Patnī Prasāda*** : According to Satyendra nāth Śarmā “*Patnī-Prasāda*” is the first drama of Śaṅkaradeva and he created this drama during his staying in Belguri.<sup>224</sup> Maheswar Neog also opined it as the first drama.<sup>225</sup> Śaṅkaradeva took the material of “*Patnī-Prasād*” from the 13<sup>th</sup> episode of the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of Śrī madbhagavat. The story of the drama is designed on the believer of sacrificial rites, the Brahmin wives who are devoted to Kṛṣṇa and other Brāhmins who are against Kṛṣṇa. The story of this drama in comparison to the other drama is very precise. Satyendranāth Śarmā says that the playful activities are not in abundance. The characters are fractional and quite impersonal. Of course, Śaṅkaradeva did not concentrate on the conflict and characterization, because it was not his chief purpose

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222 Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samīkhwātmak Itiṛtta*. p.126

223 Chutia, Sonaram & et. al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmṛt*. pp.1020, 1011, 1046

224 Sarma, S. N. (2000). *Asamīyā Nāṭya Sāhitya*. p. 44

225 Neog, M. (2015). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Rūprekhā*. p. 91

it's create these things.<sup>226</sup> A quiet sentiment encircles the dramatic performance of the *Patnī Prasād*.

(b) ***Kāliya damana*** : From the tenth chapter of the *Śrīmadbhāgavat*, the story of the '*Kāliya daman*' is extracted. Cowherd's outgoing with Kṛṣṇa for the grazing of cows, becoming insensible for taking poisonous water of Kāliya lake, the terrific fight between Kṛṣṇa and Kāliya Nāg (snake), the praying of the wives of Nāg, sending for exile of Kāliya Nāg to Ramanak island instead of killing, at last Kṛṣṇa's devouring of wild fire are the subject matter of *Kāliya damana*. The explanation of the interlocution in each prelude is much than the dialogue of the character. The cruelty, boast of the Kāliya Nāg decline the devotion of Hari.

(c) ***Keligopāla*** : Śaṅkaradeva wrote the "*Keligopāla*" drama on the basis of 29-33 episodes of the tenth chapter of *Śrīmadbhāgavat*. There five episodes are called altogether as "*Rās Pancādhāya*". The sweet, heart touching flute sound of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by observing the splendour of flower of autumn, the rushing of female cowherd to *Bṛndāvan* as being amorous at the flute sound, the order of Kṛṣṇa to the female cowherd to return home by reminding duty of Kulabadhu (a daughter-in-law of lineage), the disappearing of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with one of the female cowherd, named Rādhā, the seacing of Kṛṣṇa by female cowherd and mourning of then at the absence of Kṛṣṇa, arrival of Kṛṣṇa at last, re-union with the female cowherd and description of the *Rāsa Krīdā* (the playful activities) are described in such a lively manner that it becomes living picture of *Brajadhām*. Afterwards the incident of killing of Śaṅkhacur is added in the drama. The *Rāsa Krīdā* is interpreted spiritually also. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the symbol of Supreme Being and female cowherd is the symbol of sentient soul. That is why the activities of the *Rāsa Krīdā* are significant as the assimilation of soul and

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226 Op.cit. P.45

Supreme being. Though the female cowherd at first approach to Kṛṣṇa with amorous feelings but later on this type of feeling is transformed into love. This drama is based on dance and singing.

(d) **Rukmiṇī Harāṇa** : Śaṅkaradeva created this drama on the basis of 52-54 episodes of the tenth chapter of *Śrīmadbhāgavat*. The outline of the story is like this : Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī's growing attraction for each other by hearing the appreciation in the month of migrants, Rukmabīra, the brother of Rukmiṇī invitation to Śiśupāl as a bridegroom, the journey of Vedanidhi (one name of Brāhmaṇ) to Dvarakā by taking the news of Rukmiṇī, the arrival of Kṛṣṇa with Vedanidhi at Bidarbha, Rukmiṇī's elopement with Kṛṣṇa by the returning way from Bhavānī temple, Kṛṣṇa's fight with the kings and finally defeat the kings, defeat of Rukmabīra at the hand of Kṛṣṇa and beheading of Rukmabīra and finally the marriage of Rukmiṇī. The dimension of the "Rukmiṇīharāṇa" is the biggest among the dramas of Śaṅkaradeva. Śatyendranāth Sarmā says in respect of Kṛṣṇa's marriage with Rukmiṇī through thrift that the marriage of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī is the example of prevalent demon marriage system from the ancient time.<sup>227</sup> The characterization of Rukmiṇī becomes attractive and lively than the other characterization. Rukmiṇī is the serious beloved inhering the all quality of humanity, devotee of Kṛṣṇa and tolerant. Vidanidhi, Hari Dās and Surabhi bhāt are the original creation of the dramatist.

(e) **Pārijāt Harāṇ** : Śaṅkaradeva extracted the story of *Pārijāt Harāṇ* from the "Bhāgavata Purāṇa" and "Haribaṇsā". According to Śatyendranāth Śarmā 'Pārijāt Harāṇ' is the best drama among the dramas of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>228</sup> Rāmcarāṇ Thākura opines that Śaṅkaradeva created this drama after his second coming for pilgrimage.<sup>229</sup>

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227 Sarma. S. N. (2000). *Asamīyā Nāṭya Sāhitya*. p. 56

228 Ibid, p.51

229 Thakur, R. & Duttabarua, H. (1985). *Guru Carit*. pp.739-740

In comparison to the other dramas of Śaṅkaradeva the dramatic quality of this drama in respect of characterization and dialogue is superior. The portraiture of Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, and Nārada is lively and is attractive. Among all the characters, Nārada is the most attractive. The humorous quality and habit of backbiting are the principal characteristic feature of the characterization of Nārada. Rukmiṇī is taciturn loyal to husband and lover of Kṛṣṇa. On the otherhand Satyabhāmā is arrogant, garrulous and jealousful.

**(f) *Rāmbijay* :** Śaṅkaradeva took the materials of *Rāmbijay* from the *Ādikāṇḍa* of *Rāmāyaṇa*. The journey of Rām-Lakṣmaṇ with Bīśvāmītra to hermitage, the arrival at the sayambar (the selection of a husband by a princess from a numerous princes assembled for the purpose) of Sītā, the daughter of King Janaka. The breaking of Haradhanu (bow of Māhadeva), the acceptance of Sītā as a wife and finally returning of Rām-Lakṣmaṇ with Sītā towards Ayodhyā are the Principal subject matter of the drama. The skill of the dramatist is observed in enlightening the characters with relevant salient features within a very limited circumstances. The affection of king Dāsaratha for sons, the amiable quality of Rām, devotion and love of Sītā to Rām, the boast of Paraśurām are expressed more skillfully by the dramatist. *Rām Bijay* is the last drama of Śaṅkaradeva. It is not only last drama but also the last creation of Śaṅkaradeva. Śaṅkaradeva folded the writing activity after writing this drama. Śaṅkaradeva admits that he creates this drama in 1490 Śaka for the inspiration of Cilārāi.<sup>230</sup>

### **0.3.57 Hymnology :**

**(a) *Bargīt* :** According to hagiography Śaṅkaradeva at first created hymn(*Bargīt*) during his first pilgrimage. With his devotee Śaṅkaradeva rested in one

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230 Chutia, Sonaram & et. al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyaṃṛt*. p.119

of the family of *Raumārī* (now *Baṅgāigaon* district) of Assam. Śaṅkaradeva spent one night there and the family accepted the religion of Śaṅkaradeva and he gifted a hymn, written with spirituality to the family. Later on *Mathurā Dās* rescued this song and bestow it to Mādhavdeva.<sup>231</sup> This is the first *Bargīt* of Śaṅkaradeva. The first part of the hymn is as follows :-

*rām meri hṛdaya paṅkaje raise/*

*bhāi citta cintasa kaise||*

Of course, Maheśwar Neog opines that Śaṅkaradeva created *Bargīt* at first during his staying as pilgrim at Badarikāśram. According to him the hymn, “*mana meri Rām caranahi lāgu*” is the first *bargīt* of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>232</sup> At present, all hymns of Śaṅkaradeva are not available. All *bargeets* are burned in the house of Kamalā gāyan during the wildfire.<sup>233</sup>

It is remarkable that Śaṅkaradeva regards his hymn as ‘*gīt*’. Nowhere he uses the word ‘*Bargīt*’. In the subsequent time some devoted followers used the word ‘*Bargīt*’. Bāṇikanta Kākati comments on *Bargīt* as follows: *Bargīt* are placed on the pillars of high morality and spiritual feelings. The English poet Herrick also created some spiritual poems and regarded these poems as ‘Noble Numbers.’ In our literature also *Bargīts* are Noble Numbers.”<sup>234</sup> Like the *Ankīyā* drama (play based one Act, scene etc) the language of the *Bargīt* is Brajāvalī. *Bargīts* has the primay mode of music. Furthermore, *bargīts* are based on the parental affection, Servitude and tranquility of mind.

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231 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M (1987). *Guru-Carit-Katha*. p.412

232 Neog, M. (1987). *Śrī Śrī Śaṅkaradeva*. p.41

233 Supra, pp. 87-88

234 Kakati, B. K. (2007) . *Asamīyā Puraṇi Sāhitya* . p.57

(b) **Bhaṭimā:** *Bhaṭimā* is one kind of praying hymn. In the Middle Age of India the Bhāt were singing *Bhaṭimā* for livelihood. They were appreciating God, King, emperor and famous man in *Bhaṭimā*. As for example a sentence like ‘*Capaya paḍhaya Bhat*’ is found in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of *Mādhav Kandali*.<sup>235</sup> During the second journey for pilgrimage Śaṅkaradeva described the singing of *Bhaṭimā* by Bhāt in the hagiography.<sup>236</sup>

Śaṅkaradeva created three kinds of *Bhaṭimā*: *Deva Bhaṭimā*, *Nāt Bhaṭimā* and *Rāj Bhaṭimā*. Singing the appreciation of Kṛṣṇa, the God and sacrifice to his feet is the subject matter of the *Deva-Bhaṭimā*. The *Deva-Bhaṭimā* by Śaṅkaradeva is classified into three categories. One of these three one *Deva-Bhaṭimā* is based on Sanskrit language. The metre ‘*Toṭak*’ of Sanskrit language is called ‘*Totaya*’ in Assamese. That is why it is regarded as ‘*Toṭaya*’ in Assamese language by the name of metre. When for the first time Śaṅkaradeva came to the palace of Narānārāyaṇa he was singing the *Deva-bhaṭimā* ‘*Madhu dānava dārana deva baran*’ written on the metre of ‘*Tuṭak*’ metre. In the second day he recited the ‘*Bando gobindā gopī Janamānandā*’ and some other day he recited another *Bhaṭimā*, “*Jaya Jagadīśa īśa bhayahārī*.”<sup>237</sup>

The *bhaṭimā* which consists in the drama is called ‘*Nāt bhaṭimā*’ (Nāt=drama). The *Nāt bhaṭimā* is classified into three categories:- primary *bhaṭimā*, middle *bhaṭimā* and last *bhaṭimā*. The last *bhaṭimā* is called *muktimāṅgal bhaṭimā*. Śaṅkaradeva created *bhaṭimā* in his all six plays.

There are two *rāj bhaṭimā* (royal *bhaṭimā*) by Śaṅkaradeva. When for the first time Śaṅkaradeva went to the palace of king Naranārāyaṇa he created a *bhaṭimā* and

235 Kandali, Madhav & Sarma, K.C. (2008). *Rāmāyaṇa*. p.399

236 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. p. 139

237 Ibid. pp.154-157

in the second day he recited the second *bhaṭimā* before king. The first royal *bhaṭimā* is – “*jaya jaya malla nṛpati rasajān*” and the second *bhaṭimā* is “*hāsi sabhāsada karu bahu thira*”.<sup>238</sup> The heroism, mastery, liberality and capability of Naranārāyaṇa are appreciated in the above two *Bhaṭimās*. Apart from the *bhaṭimā* the *payar* (a kind of rhyme) are also integral part of the drama. The language of the *Bhaṭimā* is Brajāvalī like the *Aṅkīyā* drama and *Bargīt*.

### 0.3.58 Relating to *Nāma*: Community prayer :

(1) *Kīrttan-Ghoṣā* : When Śaṅkaradeva was alive, the *Kīrttan -ghoṣā* was not found as a copy of book. The various part of the *Kīrttan Ghoṣā* were scattered in many places where Śaṅkaradeva was staying. Later on as per direction of Mādhavdeva the nephew of Rāmcaraṇ Thākura collected the remnants and edited into book.<sup>239</sup> The *Kīrttan Ghoṣā* is the cluster of twenty seven parts. Every part is independent. Apart from these 27 parts of Śaṅkaradeva, ‘*Sahasra Nām Bṛtānta*’ by Ratnākar Kandali, “*Ghunucā Kīrttan*” by Śrīdhara Kandali and “*Dhyān Barṇan*” by Madhavdeva are included in published *Kīrttan Ghoṣā*.<sup>240</sup> Except the three chapters of *Kīrttan Ghoṣā*, Śrīmadbhāgavat is the principal basis of another twenty four episodes.<sup>241</sup> Among the nine devotion Śaṅkaradeva emphasized on hearing and singing. “*Kīrttan* is the best example of practice talent of Śaṅkaradeva and pillar of Vaiṣṇava literature. Like the appreciation and adoration of ‘*Rām carit Mānas*’ by Tulsī Dās in North Indian area where Hindi language is prevalent, the *Kīrttan Ghoṣā* is also popular and is adored by Assamese people.”<sup>242</sup>

238 Op. cit. pp.155-156

239 Bairagi, C. (Orator) & Neog, M. (1987). *Guru-Carit-Kathā*. pp.414-415

240 Chutia, Dharmeswar & et.al. (2005). *Kīrttan- Ghosa āru Nāmā- Ghoṣā*. pp.516-591

241 Neog, M. (2015). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Rūprekhā*. pp. 85-86

242 Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samikhwatmak Itibittra*, p.124



(2) *Guṇamālā* : During his staying in Kochbihār, Śaṅkaradeva created “*Guṇamālā*” by following the request of Naranārāyaṇa.<sup>243</sup> *Guṇamālā* is created in *Kusummālā* rhyme of six syllables. Four hundred forty one verses are consisting of in the six parts of *Guṇamālā*.<sup>244</sup> According to Satyendranath Śarmā there are 337 verses in *Guṇamālā*.<sup>245</sup> The first chapter is based on the appreciation of splendour and quality of God and other parts are the essence of tenth and eleventh chapter of *Bhāgavat*.

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243 Supra, p. 86

244 Chutia, Sonaram & et. al. (1998). *Mahāpuruṣa Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Vākyāmṛt.*, p.1-15

245 Sarma, S. N. (2011). *Asamīyā Sāhityar Samikhwatmak Itibittira*, p. 125