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Research Article

***Purana* as Hagiography: Three Lineages in the *Pratisargaparvan* of the *Bhavishyapurana*¹**

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The *Bhavishyapurana*, as published by the Shri Venkateshvara Press, consists of four *parvans* or ‘books’. Although the first book has a clear focus on devotion to Surya, the Sun god, the other *parvans* are of a more general Hindu character, promoting the worship of and rituals for various gods in the Hindu pantheon. In this article, I will show that we can trace yet another religious affiliation in the third book, called the *Pratisargaparvan*. It concerns a section of 10 chapters (*Bhavishyapurana Pratisargaparvan* 4.11-20) in which three different *guru-shishya* (teacher-student) lineages are presented. The first set of stories narrates the lives of pupils of Shankaracharya, the second narrates the lives of pupils of Ramananda, and the third narrates the lives of pupils of Krishnachaitanya. The lineages are innovative because they include people that are usually not found in lineages described by other sources. After the description of Krishnachaitanya’s lineage, the text continues with the story that Krishnachaitanya took all Vaishnavas, Shaivas and Shaktas (including Shankaracharya and Ramananda with their respective students) to the city of Puri in Odisha to meet lord Jagannatha. After the elaborate narration of three *guru-shishya* lineages, the audience finally receives the core message of this section of the *Pratisargaparvan* that Krishnachaitanya’s Gaudiya Vaishnavism and the worship of Jagannatha in Puri are the most important. Given this clear religious orientation, what can we say about the religious affiliation of the composers themselves? And what message did they want to convey with this new lineage of Krishnachaitanya?

Chaitanya, Jagannatha, Puri, Bhavishyapurana, purana

Introduction²

Sometimes the title of a *purana* immediately reveals which Hindu deity is glorified in the work. The *Vishnupurana* and the *Bhagavatapurana*, for example, promote devotion to Vishnu—the venerable one (*bhagavata*)—the *Shivapurana* revolves around the worship of Shiva, and the *Devipurana* is dedicated to Devi, the goddess. Other titles, however, are less straightforward. The *Brahmapurana*, for instance, is not devoted to Brahma, but rather conveys a general message of devotion towards the Hindu pantheon. Some titles are even more difficult to understand, as they do not include a Hindu god at all, such as the *Brahmandapurana*, or ‘the *Purana* of the Egg of Brahma’. The *Bhavishyapurana*, ‘the *Purana* of the Future’, can be placed in the latter category as well. Is it about the future, or is it dedicated to a particular god after all? Just a brief glance at the *Bhavishyapurana* already reveals that only one of its four books or *parvans*, may be classified as dealing with the future: the *Pratisargaparvan* or ‘the Book on

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² All translations in this article, unless mentioned otherwise, are my own.

Subsequent Creation'.³ It consists of several topics, such as long lineages of kings in different (divine) eras, its own version of the *Vetala* narratives, non-Hindu figures, such as Mohammed, Jesus, and Noah, and historically identifiable events and persons like the compositions of Panini and Varahamihira. The closest that we get to a description of the future is in fact a description of the proximate present of the composers of the *Pratisargaparvan*, as we read about the arrival of the English during the British colonial period and about queen Victoria in relation to Kolkata.⁴ Other parts of the *Pratisargaparvan* and the rest of the *Bhavishyapurana* do not deal with the future. They exhibit content that is more common to *puranas*. The *Bhavishyapurana* as a whole is a prolific collection of narratives about various gods in the Hindu pantheon, prescriptions of how to live a good and pious life, and instructions for general devotional practices, such as the worship of the gods, cows, trees and the importance of donation and purificatory bathing. Given its general character, it is difficult to classify the entire *Bhavishyapurana* along one particular religious affiliation, such as Shaivism, Vaishnavism or Shaktism. An important exception is the majority of the first book, the *Brahmaparvan* (chapters 47-215) (cf. Hazra 1940: 171), 'the Sacred Book', in which the worship of Surya, the Sun god, is promoted. The majority of this book deals with prescriptions of observances, rituals, donations, and other religious practices related to Surya. When we look closely at the individual *parvans*, we might find more sections that support a particular religious affiliation.

The variety of religious sentiments (Saura and more general Brahmanical Hindu) and topics (such as devotional practices and future events) of the *Bhavishyapurana* can be explained from the perspective of the composition. Many *Puranas* are in constant development. In order to keep the work relevant to new times, places and (religious) conditions, *purana* composers often omitted and changed chapters and/or added new ones.⁵ Since many *Puranas* were living texts that were continuously changing, it is impossible to speak of 'the' composition of a *Purana*, but we should rather consider them as multiple re-compositions.⁶ The *Bhavishyapurana*, consisting of four *parvans*, counting 215, 62, 100 and 208 chapters respectively, is the perfect example of this process. It is widely accepted that each individual *parvan* was composed in a different period,⁷ and within one *parvan*, there were probably also multiple compositional layers.⁸ As the *Purana* grew over centuries, its content not only grew with narratives and numerous descriptions of devotional practices, but also with religious orientation. Instead of making claims on the religious affiliation of the entire *Bhavishyapurana*, for instance as a *Saura Purana* or as a generic Brahmanical Hindu *Purana*, it is much more fruitful to investigate the religious sentiment of one particular passage in a *parvan*.

³ All references to the *Bhavishyapurana* are to the third edition by the Shri Venkateshvara Press (1959). The text consists of four *parvans*: the *Brahmaparvan*, *Madhyamaparvan*, *Pratisargaparvan*, and the *Uttaraparvan*. The oldest sections are found in the *Brahmaparvan*, or 'the Sacred Book'. R.C. Hazra (1940: 172) dates the *Brahmaparvan* to 500 CE. This text portion, however, cannot be that old because it borrows heavily from the *Shivadharmaśāstra*, the *Shivadhamottara*, and the *Vishnudharma*, composed in the 6th and 7th century CE. (De Simini 2016: 235-6, Bisschop et al. 2021: 39). Hazra (1940: 169-170) dates the *Madhyamaparvan*, or 'the Middle Book', to between 1300 and 1500 CE., and the *Uttaraparvan*, or 'the Concluding Book', to as early as between the 700 and 800 CE (Hazra 1963: 395). However, as with the *Brahmaparvan*, this dating seems too early.

⁴ *Bhavishyapurana Pratisargaparvan* 4.22.70-73 and 75-76.

⁵ See Bisschop (2019) on the idea of *Puranas* as living texts with reference to the *Bhavishyapurana*.

⁶ See Bakker (1989) for a convincing argument on *Puranas* being recomposed during transmission.

⁷ In fact, the *Bhavishyapurana* published by the Shri Venkateshvara Press never existed. This printed edition is a collection of separate *parvans*, put together by the editors. In Dokter-Mersch (forthcoming), I show that none of the manuscripts of the *Bhavishyapurana* contain all four *parvans*. Usually, they transmit only one *parvan*. The edition is thus a compilation of individual *Puranas*.

⁸ For possible layers in the *Brahmaparvan*, see Hazra (1940: 172-3).

In this article, I will explore one section of the 10 chapters of the *Pratisargaparvan*, where three lineages of teachers and their pupils are described: the lineage of Shankaracharya, Ramananda, and Chaitanya. Many of their students are identifiable as historical figures, associated with a particular religious affiliation. By focussing on these chapters, it is possible to hypothesize on the religious sentiment of its composition. In fact, this introspection may bring us closer to the religious background of its composers. Bonazzoli (1983: 277-278) argues that *puranas*:

...were modified not ‘*ad libitum*’, i.e., according to private whim but in the light and under the thrust of *sampradāya*-s [religious communities] and almost always openly, not surreptitiously [and that]... [w]e know that additions, changes, remotions etc. were most probably very often done under the inspiration of *sampradāya*-s, which were developing in the course of time. It is this guarantee that makes a change of some importance in the *purāṇa*-s acceptable and authoritative.

Although changes could have arisen accidentally, such as errors in copying or skipping a folio, and in making general religious statements that can be made by any Hindu community, Bonazzoli’s argument does apply to additions, omissions, and changes of entire sections where a particular religious affiliation is highlighted. From other *Puranas* with a clear religious sentiment, we know that they were probably the product of a particular religious order. The early *Skandapurana*, for example, was likely produced in a north Indian Pashupata Shaiva milieu and the *Bhagavatapurana* in a south Indian Shivaishnava milieu. Following Bonazzoli, I show that it is possible to trace the *sampradaya* of the composers of this section of the *Pratisargaparvan* where not just 1 but 3 major philosophical schools are represented. The next question that arises is: what is the message that the people of this *sampradaya* wanted to convey in presenting these particular lineages. Burghart (1978: 121) presents us with “four different genealogies of the *guru*-disciple succession of Ramanand which were compiled at different periods of time in the development of the sect, and I analyse these genealogies as records of strategies in which the sect reinterpreted its past in order to perpetuate itself in the present.” By studying 4 different lineages from Rama or Narayana up to Ramananda, from the 15th century, the late 16th century, the turn of the 18th century, and the early 20th century, Burghart shows us that the lineage was changed deliberately by the *sampradaya* itself. For instance, during the late 16th century revision, “devotees and disciples regardless of their caste, sex, or sectarian affiliation were initiated into a Vaisnavite sect by Ramanand. The genealogy reveals the broadening of the criteria for recruitment into a Vaisnavite sect thereby enabling the sect to compete more effectively for devotees and disciples [against other *sampradayas*]” (ibid.: 133). Comparing the lineages found in the *Bhavisyapurana* with other lineages found in Sanskrit and vernacular hagiographies, will also reveal some similarities but also many differences. With Burghart’s study in mind, how can we explain the inclusion of these newcomers?

The *Pratisargaparvan*

Before I turn to the discussion of the lineages, I will start with a short introduction to the *Pratisargaparvan*. As mentioned, the *Pratisargaparvan* speaks about multiple historically identifiable people. Based on its mention of Queen Victoria, the book must be placed in the late 19th century, just before the publication of the edition. Although this late date beautifully shows how *Puranas* continued developing over the centuries, the inclusion of this late material in the *Pratisargaparvan* is also problematic as it is based on only one manuscript. This comes to light in the second and third edition of the printed edition (1910 and 1959), where editors added a post-script at the end of the *parvan*, saying:

etanmahāpurāṇasya pūrvamudraṇasamaye 'parabhāgasya bahūny ādarśapustakāny upalabdhāni param pratisargaparvaṇa ekam eveti [...] yeṣām antika ito bhinnam pratisargaparvapustakam, sampūrṇam vā bhaviṣyamahāpurāṇapustakam cet te 'vaśyam anukampayā preṣayeyuh, yato [']nyasaṃskaraṇe punaḥ saṃśodhya mudraṇam āpyetaitad iti.

At the time of the first printing, many manuscripts of the following part of this *Mahapurana* have been acquired [i.e. of the *Uttaraparvan*],⁹ but there is only one of the *Pratisargaparvan*. [...] Therefore, if there may be people who either possess a broken manuscript of the *Pratisargaparvan* or a complete manuscript of the *Bhaviṣyamahapurana*, may they surely send [it] out of compassion, so that, at the moment of preparing another [edition], having edited [the *Purana*] again, this printing may be brought about.

Although the editors are honest about the number of manuscripts, they do not give any information on the place and time of the production of this one manuscript, nor where it is preserved today. I was thus far unable to trace it, and the manuscript remains a mystery.¹⁰ By making explicit that the text of the *Pratisargaparvan* is based on just one manuscript, the editors do seem to demonstrate that they were aware that this limited manuscript evidence could be problematic. After all, to what extent was the *Pratisargaparvan* accepted as a tradition or as an authoritative text, if the text was found in only one manuscript? And if the impact or acceptance of the *Pratisargaparvan* was limited, is it a valid topic of research?¹¹ I would argue that the inclusion of the *parvan* shows that at least one community considered the *Pratisargaparvan* authoritative enough to attribute it to the *Bhaviṣyapurana*. This shows how *Puranas* changed over time. Therefore, in this article, I take a synchronic approach to the *Bhaviṣyapurana*, studying it as a comprehensive whole, as published at the turn of the 20th century. Not only does it do justice to the very nature of Puranic literature as constantly evolving, but also because the material included in the *Pratisargaparvan* deserves our fullest attention. It is this *parvan* where historically identifiable people are found, among whom several are related to a particular religious order.

The *Pratisargaparvan* is divided into four *khandas* or 'sections'.¹² The chapters discussed in this article are found in the 4th *khandā* which starts with a description of the kings of the *Agnivamsha* ('the lineage of Agni [Fire]'), a narrative on Timiralinga or Timur, and various other legends about historical figures such as Ramananda, Nimbāditya (Nimbarka), and Valmiki (*Bhaviṣyapurana Pratisargaparvan* 4.7.36-56; 57-85; 10.35-59ab respectively). The chapters that follow provide similar legends, placing them in a narrative framework of *guru-shishya* lineages. These narratives are the topic of this present article. Each story follows more or less the same structure, starting with the narration of one of the person's previous lives. They are usually a reincarnation of a god. Once they are reborn on earth, they are described with their most famous deeds, such as writing a literary work. The life stories conclude with a short passage in which the person accepts a religious teacher. We can identify three lineages of

⁹ Alternatively, one can translate *parabhāgasya* as 'of the other part[s]', referring to the rest of the *Bhaviṣyapurana*.

¹⁰ A few attempts have been made to find more manuscripts, but none have the same text as the *Pratisargaparvan* of the printed edition (Bonazzoli 1979: 29-30).

¹¹ Although the initial reaction to the *Pratisargaparvan* may have been negative (such as Aufrecht 1903), later scholars, such as Bonazzoli (1979), see the beauty of the content of this *parvan* and accept the manuscript's situation.

¹² For a comprehensive overview of the content of the *Pratisargaparvan*, see Hohenberger (1967), and for a translation of this and of the other *parvans* (see Nagar 2021).

teachers and their students.¹³ The 1st lineage concerns 9 pupils of Shankaracharya or Shankara (*Bhaviṣṭyapurana Pratisargaparvan* 4.11-13); the 2nd lineage speaks about 8 pupils of Ramananda (chapters 15-18); and the 3rd lineage contains 13 pupils of Krishnachaitanya or Chaitanya (chapters 19-20).¹⁴ Since this section consists of multiple historical and identifiable people, who can be linked to a religious affiliation, it is suitable for this study to trace the religious order of the section and its composers. For each teacher, I will discuss whether a particular religious affiliation is highlighted, keeping in mind Bonazzoli's idea (1983) that *Puranas* were changed deliberately by a *sampradaya*, and Burghart's (1979) suggestion that there is a goal behind renewing lineages.

Shankaracharya¹⁵

The lineage of Shankaracharya and his students starts with the narration of Shankaracharya's own life story (10.59cd-81).¹⁶ After a mythological account of one of his previous lives, it is said that Virabhadra Rudra (Shiva) took a part of his own body and went to the house of the sage Bhairavadatta. He was born as his son, and called Shankara. The virtuous boy composed the *Shankarabhashya* and showed the world the Shaiva path. The *tripundra* mark (three horizontal lines on the forehead), rosary, and the five-syllable *mantra* (*namah shivaya*, 'homage to Shiva') were designed by Shankaracharya. Little is known about the historical figure of Shankaracharya from the 8th century who was an Advaita Vedanta philosopher. However, several influential commentaries on the Upanishads, the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Brahmasutra* are ascribed to him, which have been collectively described as *Shankarabhashya*, or 'Shankara's commentary'. Although he is presented as a Shaiva devotee, this description does not correspond to Shankara's interpretation of devotion. As Malkovsky (2001: 224) puts it:

Śaṅkara's personal Lord (*īśvara*) is normally treated in a non-sectarian fashion, although Śaṅkara reveals in his BrSūBh [*Brahmasutrabhashya*] and elsewhere a greater sympathy for Vaiṣṇavite religion than for any other form of devotionism. In his BhGBh [*Bhagavadgitabhashya*], however, more clearly than in any of his other works including the BrSūBh, Śaṅkara bares his allegiance to Vaiṣṇavite faith by repeatedly inserting into his commentary references to Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa as the highest reality when the text he is commenting on does not explicitly provide a divine name at all.

Shankaracharya's affiliation with Shaivism is, however, found in later hagiographies describing Shankaracharya's life. These hagiographies "are basically Śaivite in character. [...] Śaṅkara himself is regarded as an incarnation of the god Śiva" (Lorenzen 1976: 92). By presenting Shankaracharya as being born from a part of Shiva, thus being an *amshavatara* ('partial descent') of Shiva, having the Shaiva *tripundra* mark and promoting the *mantra* '*namah shivaya*' which may have served as the initiation *mantra* for the followers of Shankaracharya,

¹³ For more information on *guru-shishya* lineages, see Broo (2003), Gold (1987), Steinmann (1986), and Von Stietencron (2001).

¹⁴ Given the large number of students, I generally refer to secondary literature on the 3 teachers but not to studies on their pupils.

¹⁵ For information on Shankaracharya, his philosophy and works, see, among others, Dubois (2013), Malkovsky (2001), and Suthren (2005). For secondary literature on hagiographies on Shankaracharya's life by his later successors (such as Anantanandagiri's *Shankaravijaya*, Cidvilasa's *Shankaravijayavilasa* and Madhava's *Shankaradigvijaya*), see Bader (2000) and Lorenzen (1976).

¹⁶ For the sake of brevity, I only refer to chapter numbers and verse numbers. All passages are taken from the 4th *khanda* of the *Pratisargaparvan* in the *Bhaviṣṭyapurana*.

the *Bhavishyapurana* corresponds with the Shaiva character of Shankaracharya's hagiographies.

Considering some of his students presented in this part of the *Pratisargaparvan* (chapters 11-13),¹⁷ we can narrow down the religious community associated with Shankara to the Dashanami ('Having Ten Names') renunciate order, a Shaiva sect. During initiation, "the neophyte is given a new *dīkṣā* ('initiation') name, the 'surname' being bestowed by an initiating guru with that particular Daśanāmī surname. The ten names are: Giri ('hill'), Purī ('town'), Bhāratī ('learning'), Vana (or Ban) ('forest'), Parvata ('mountain'), Aranya ('forest/wilderness'), Sāgara ('ocean'), Tīrtha ('pilgrimage-place'), Āśrama ('hermitage'), and Sarasvatī ('knowledge')." (Clark 2006: 1-2). Although the tradition itself claims to have been founded by Shankaracharya, the Dashanami order was probably formed only in the late 16th century or early 17th century, several centuries after Shankaracharya.¹⁸ 4 or 5 of Shankaracharya's pupils in the *Pratisargaparvan* can be identified as references to the Dashanami renunciate order, viz. Girisharman, an incarnation of Rudra (11.1-13); Vanasharman, an incarnation of Rudra Nairrita (11.14-54); Purisharman, an incarnation of Rudra (11.55-71); and Bharatisha, an incarnation of Shiva (12.1-16). Giri, Vana, Puri and Bharati are initiation names in the Dashanami order. The 5th potential reference to the Dashanamis is someone called Kshetrasharman, an incarnation of Shiva (12.49-62). He is the son of Sarasvata, which might be a reference to the Sarasvati branch.

The remaining four pupils are not related to this sect. One student is called Nathasharman, an incarnation of Shiva as Pinakin (12.17-48). Although there is no personal information about him in the narrative, this could be a reference to the Natha *sampradaya* in general, similar to the references to the Dashanami order, or to their purported founder Gorakhnath from the 11th and 12th century. Given the date of Shankaracharya and Gorakhnath, the 2 could not have met. In the following hagiographies, it occurs oftener that the teacher could not have met the pupil as proclaimed in the *Pratisargaparvan*. But given the genre in which the lineages appear, this is not particularly problematic. The *puranas* contain mythological content from the past and associate it with the present.¹⁹ This is done in cases throughout the lineages in this section by connecting historical figures from various time periods with the 3 religious teachers. In some cases, we can trace a traditional relationship between the teacher and the pupil, for example when one responds to the philosophy of the other in a later work, or when later followers of the 2 men met. I am not, however, aware of such a traditional relationship between Shankara and Gorakhnath or the Natha yogis, so the inclusion of this student in Shankaracharya's lineage remains unclear. The 7th pupil is Dhundiraja, an incarnation of Ganesha (12.63-104). According to the *Pratisargaparvan*, he composed the *Jatakabharana*, a treatise on astronomy (*jyotiḥśāstra*, 12.103b). Though this information seems to agree with a number of other manuscripts of the *Jatakabharana* also attributed to Dhundhiraja (Kunjunni Raja 1973: 227) from the second half of the 15th century (Kunjunni Raja 1974: 11), I have been unable to trace a traditional relationship between Shankara and Dhundhiraja.

¹⁷ The narratives follow the same structure as Shankaracharya's, starting with a story about the person's previous life. The difference is that each story concludes by saying that the person went to Varanasi and became a pupil of Shankaracharya.

¹⁸ The earliest references to the Dashanami order are between the 16th and 18th centuries (Clark 2006: 173-6, Pinch 2006: 38). A possible earlier reference is contained in Cidvilasa's *Shankaravijayavilasa*, which refers to 'ten names' (Clark 2006: 174).

¹⁹ See Cecil and Bisschop (2025) on the interrelatedness of the past and the present in the *Puranas*. In the case of ahistorical relations between Krishnachaitanya and most of his followers, Hohenberger (1967: 80-81) argues that Krishnachaitanya is presented in the *Pratisargaparvan* as the incarnation of Krishna, who can be present in any time period.

The 8th and 9th pupils are difficult to identify because the compositions in the narratives cannot be associated with works that are known today. The 8th pupil is Bhairava (incarnation of Shiva as Kapali Bhairava, 13.1-20) who ‘composed a *tantra*, consisting of *mantras*, called Damara’ (*ḍāmaram nāma vai tantraṃ mantrabhūtaṃ cakāra ha*, 13.30cd). There are several manuscripts with (parts of) a text called *Damaratantra*, but these are supposedly composed by Kavindracharya (Kunjunni Raja 1974: 7-8). The 9th pupil is Balasharman (incarnation of Hanuman, 13.21-53) ‘who composed *tantras* and *mantras*’ (or perhaps a work called *tantramantra*) ‘consisting of stories of all social classes’ (*yaś cakāra tantramantram sarvajātikathāmayam*, 13.53cd).

Although it is not possible to identify all the pupils of Shankaracharya, the religious affiliation of Shankaracharya and his students in the *Pratisargaparvan* is clearly directed towards Shaivism in general. Shankaracharya is an incarnation of Shiva, follows the Shaiva path, and is characterized by the *tripundra* mark, and the *mantra* ‘*namah shivaya*’. Most of his students are incarnations of a form of Shiva as well, or someone associated with Shiva, and are devoted to Shiva, as becomes clear from phrases like *śambhuparāyaṇaḥ* (12.62d), or ‘fully devoted to Shambhu (Shiva)’. Based on the identity of 4 or 5 pupils who were Dashanami renunciants, their religious affiliation can be further specified as that of the Dashanami order, which is said to have been traditionally founded by Shankara. Even though the religious focus is clearly Shaiva, particularly Dashanami Shaiva, the composers of this section of the *Pratisargaparvan* were probably not Dashanamis or other followers of Shankaracharya themselves, because their focus on Shaivism disappears in the following chapters, when first the life story of Ramanuja is told (14.85-119).

According to the narrative, Ramanuja (in fact an incarnation of Bhava or Shiva) met Shankaracharya in Varanasi one day. Following that they engaged in months-long discussions on Vedanta philosophy. Ramanuja argued in favour of Krishna, and Shankaracharya of Shiva. After this long debate, the narrative concludes that Shankaracharya was convinced by Ramanuja and became his pupil, wearing white clothes and muttering the spotless name of Govinda (Vishnu or Krishna). The text does not provide personal information about Ramanuja, but there is no doubt that this is the famous 11th century, south Indian Vedanta philosopher (Vishishtadvaita), the most important teacher of the south Indian Shrivaiṣṇava tradition whose followers venerated Vishnu and his manifestations, such as Krishna. Historically, Shankara and Ramanuja could not have met. However, it is known that although Ramanuja’s “presentation of non-dualist tenets is faithful to the views of major Advaitins such as Śaṅkara” (Bartley 2002: 9), the social organization of the 2 philosophies differed. Whereas Shankara’s followers had to become renunciants (*samnyasin*), Ramanuja’s followers could continue living as householders (Lipner 2018). Ramanuja also openly objected to Shankara in his works, in which he had set himself the task “of combating the monistic interpretation of the Upaniṣadic authorities propounded by Śaṅkara (c.650–700) and his successors” (ibid: 11).²⁰ The discussion in the *Pratisargaparvan* may have reflected the philosophical battles of Ramanuja with Shankara in his works or in the discussions of their followers at a later stage. This does not become clear, because Ramanuja is not discussed further and he does not receive a *guru-shishya* lineage of his own in the *Pratisargaparvan*. Instead, the section continues with the pupils of Ramananda, the famous north Indian 15th century philosopher, the founder of the order of the Ramanandis and the first preacher of Rama *bhakti* in north India.

²⁰ See Bartley (2002) for an in-depth discussion of Ramanuja’s philosophy, and Kesarcodi-Watson (1992) for a comparison between Shankara and Ramanuja.

Ramananda²¹

Ramananda's arrival comes somewhat as a surprise, since his own life story is told several chapters earlier (7.36-56),²² in which he is said to be created out of a part of Surya's own disc in Varanasi and continued as a devotee of Rama. The text remains silent about any personal information, but in a later section (19.21-32), he is said to have composed the *Adhyatmaramayana*, a Vedanta version of the *Ramayana*. The information from these 2 narratives is partly new and partly recognized by tradition. The idea that Ramananda is born from a part of Surya is unknown and not contained in any other source. Ramananda and the Ramanandi sect are not connected to the Sun god, so this element must be explained from the view of the *Bhavisyapurana* itself. Although the *Pratisargaparvan* is not dedicated to Surya, he is the main deity in the *Brahmaparvan*. Ramananda's birth from a part of a disc of Surya may thus be understood in light of the entire *Bhavisyapurana*. Second, his place of birth as Varanasi is ahistorical too. Although Varanasi became an important place in his life at a later stage, Ramananda was probably born in Prayag. One element that is in line with what we know about Ramananda from other sources, is his attribution to the *Adhyatmaramayana*, even though the actual composition may be the product of his followers. Furthermore, his description as a devotee of Rama is found in other sources as well. This corresponds both to his affiliation with Rama in general and with his *saguna* interpretation of Rama in particular. Ramananda's disciples of the first hour already fall into 2 groups with respect to the *saguna-nirguna* discussion. As Schomer (1987: 5) puts it:

The first, more conservative, held to the doctrine of incarnation and worshipped the *saguna* Ram and his consort Sita; its greatest exponent was Tulsi Das, the author of the Hindi *Rāmāyaṇa*. The second school was that of the Sants, who completely rejected orthodox practices, and worshipped under the name 'Ram' the transcendent and formless *nirguna* aspect of divinity; greatest among this group was Kabir, the preeminent figure of the northern Sant tradition.

Since Ramananda is presented as Rama's devotee in his *saguna* form, it is remarkable that Tulsidas is, in fact, absent in this section of the *Pratisargaparvan*, with the text favouring the tradition of *Sants*, such as Kabir, with their *nirguna* interpretation of Ram instead.²³ All of Ramananda's students in the *Pratisargaparvan* are *Sants* or *bhakti* poets. In the period between the 16th and 18th century, a particular genre of hagiography arose in which verses of, and narratives about *bhaktas* or 'devotees', were collected, including texts such as the Hindi *Bhaktamal* by Nabhadas (17th century).²⁴ Then there is a collection of Hindi *Parchais* by Anantadas (17th century) (Callewaert 2000), the *Adi Granth* (the holy book of the Sikhs, written in various languages, using the Gurmukhi script, also from the 17th century) (Dass 2000), and the Marathi *Bhaktavijaya* by Mahipati (18th century) (Abbott and Godbole 1982). Ramananda

²¹ For secondary literature on Ramananda, hagiographies about him and the Ramanandis, see Bevilacqua (2015, 2019), Burghart (1978), Hare (2011), Hawley (2015), and Lamb (2002). Bevilacqua (2015: 83) is one of the few scholars who treats the Ramananda section of the *Pratisargaparvan* as a hagiography, where she discusses it among other hagiographies of the 18th and 19th centuries.

²² The disconnection between Ramanuja and Ramananda is somewhat of a missed opportunity, since Ramanuja was long considered one of the predecessors of Ramananda. As Burghart shows (1978), already in the *Ramarcana-paddhati*, an early 15th century Sanskrit text, is Ramanuja the 10th generation of teachers, and Ramananda the 23rd. This idea continues in Nabhaji's *Bhaktamal* from the late 16th century (10th and 14th generation respectively). Only at the *Kumbhmela* in Ujjain in 1921, was Ramanuja officially taken out of the list of predecessors of Ramananda (ibid.: 131-3).

²³ Tulsidas does appear in *Bhavisyapurana Pratisargaparvan* (4.22.27cd-28ab) as the reincarnation of Shridhara, where he is called Tulasisharman.

²⁴ The first 95 stanzas have been translated by Pollet (1963).

and several of his followers appeared in these works, and some of the devotees also appeared in the *Pratisargaparvan* section that is under discussion here.²⁵ These include Trilocana or Triloc(h)an (15.1-73, late 13th century to early 14th century),²⁶ Namadeva or Namdev (16.30-56, a contemporary of Trilochana), Kabira or Kabir (17.1-41), Narashri or Narsi Mehta (17.42-66), Pipan or Pipa (17.67-88, all 15th century), Nanaka or Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism (17.67-88, late 15th to early 16th century),²⁷ and Raidasa or Raidas or Ravidas (18.1-56, 16th century). These *Sants* were famous in large parts of India in their own times and honoured in later hagiographies. They were literate people who, however, did not receive a place in a Sanskrit *purana* until the *Pratisargaparvan*.²⁸ The *Pratisargaparvan* thus seems to represent a standard list of *bhaktas*.²⁹

In the *Pratisargaparvan* section of Ramananda's pupils, there is one student who is more difficult to identify: Rankana (16.57-81). One expects him to be a *Sant* as well, but he is not mentioned in any of the major hagiographies quoted above. A possible identification can be made with a person called Ranka, who is cited once in a selection of texts by *Sants*, among "Kabir, Pipa, Mirabai... Raidas, Ranka and Vanka...Rup and Sanatan" (Hare 2011: 187, also cf. 183-4). Given the fame of the other *Sants* in the 16th to the 17th century, Ranka might belong to them as well, but he has remained more obscure. Since the other people are well identifiable, they can help us to understand this section of the *Pratisargaparvan* in terms of its religious affiliation. Ramananda himself and most of his pupils are explicitly associated with Rama devotion: Rama as *saguna*. However, it is known from hagiographies that the *Sants* mentioned in the *Pratisargaparvan* are also proponents of Ram as *nirguna*. The composers of the *Pratisargaparvan* must have been aware of this incongruity. It does not, however, become clear from the text or its context why they presented Rama as *saguna*, also for the *Sants*. One possible reason might be the fact that the gods in the other 2 lineages are also *saguna*. For Shankaracharya's Shiva this may not be very clear, but Krishnachaitanya's Krishna is undoubtedly worshipped in his full form with complete devotion (*bhakti*). This becomes evident in the following section. As we read Krishnachaitanya's *guru-shishya* lineage, it also becomes clear that these 10 chapters of the *Pratisargaparvan* do not stem from the Ramanandi *sampradaya*, because Ramananda himself becomes a student of Krishnachaitanya. and the focus moves from Rama *bhakti* to Krishna *bhakti*.

²⁵ The pupils of Ramananda and Krishnachaitanya are incarnations of various gods, from which we cannot draw any conclusions on their religious affiliation.

²⁶ The first name in this list uses the spelling as it appears in the *Pratisargaparvan*, the second name has the more standard spelling.

²⁷ Nanak is considered to have been influenced by Kabir's thought. In this light, we might expect the same from Dadu Dayal in Rajasthan (16th century), since he was influenced by Kabir as well and created an influential *panth* of his own in Rajasthan (Schomer 1987: 6).

²⁸ There might be 2 non-Sanskrit *Puranas* which, as Hare (2011) points out, "could be seen as precursors of the *Bhaktamālā*: the [mid-12th century Tamil] *Periya Purāṇam* and the [13th century Telugu] *Basava Purāṇa*" (ibid.: 4).

²⁹ Ramananda and all his 7 followers cited here are mentioned in the *Guru Granth Sahib*. All except Guru Nanak are mentioned by Nabhadas in the *Bhaktamālā*. 5 followers are mentioned in the *Parchais* of Anantadas (Trilochan, Kabir, Pipan, Raidas, and Namdev), and 4 in Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya* (Kabir, Narsi Mehta, Pipan, and Namdev). Important followers of Ramananda are missing from the *Pratisargaparvan*, and they are mentioned in multiple other hagiographies that gained popularity, such as Tulsidas, Anantananda, Dhana, and Angad.

Krishnachaitanya³⁰

Immediately after the narratives about Ramananda's students end, the exposition of Krishnachaitanya's lineage starts (chapters 19-20). Krishnachaitanya's own life story is told several chapters earlier in the *Pratisargaparvan* (10.1-34). As the story goes, in the past, Indra propitiated Surya, and Surya was so pleased with Indra's devotion that he, having four arms and a red body, entered Indra. Then Indra and Shachi took on the form of Brahmins and secluded themselves. After a while, Shachi became pregnant and gave birth to Vishnu himself, who also had four arms and a red body. The gods praised this son of Indra and Shachi as Krishnachaitanya (10.32d).³¹ After the praise of the gods, the narrative moves on to someone else's life story, and so the text does not provide any information about Krishnachaitanya's deeds or devotion in the narrative. However, there can be no doubt that this Krishnachaitanya was the same as the late-15th to early-16th century founder of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, also known as Chaitanya or Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He was born in Nabadvip, present-day West Bengal, as the son of Jagannatha Mishra and his wife Shachi (note the correspondence with the *Pratisargaparvan*). He is a devotee of Krishna and Radha, while, according to himself and his followers, he is also said to be Krishna himself. He had a major influence on Krishna *bhakti*, propagating, for example, the joint recitation and singing of the names of Krishna (*sankirtan*). There is a fair amount of (legendary) information available about Krishnachaitanya in his early biographies, such as the Sanskrit *Krishnachaitanyacharitamrita* by Murari Gupta (probably written during Krishnachaitanya's lifetime),³² the Bengali *Chaitanyabhagavata* by Vrindavana Dasa (in the 16th century),³³ and the Sanskrit *Chaitanyacharitamrita* by Krishnadasa Kaviraja (1600-1612 CE) (Dimock and Stewart 1999). Although the *Pratisargaparvan* does not provide much information about Krishnachaitanya's own fame and deeds, the text does reveal its view about his lineage of students. The structure of narrative for them is different from those of the pupils of Shankaracharya and Ramananda. While a description of their previous life is told at the beginning of the 4th *khand* of the *Pratisargaparvan*, their most important exploits from a different era and their relationships with their teacher are recounted in sequence in the chapters 19 and 20.

Krishnachaitanya's first pupil is called Ropana (19.1-4). It is said that he initially taught the path of Brahma, but when he visited Krishnachaitanya, he became a devotee of Krishna. Since we lack any personal information about Ropana, it is impossible to identify him. The second pupil is a sage called Ishvara (19.5-13) who became Krishnachaitanya's student when the latter was only 5 years old, and he developed devotion to Krishna. Although the name is reminiscent of Ishvara Puri, Krishnachaitanya's teacher, whom he met in Gaya, it is not possible to identify him on the basis of this limited information. At the age of 7, Krishnachaitanya accepted Shridhara as his third pupil (19.14-20 and 8.13-30) in Shantipura, a place in West Bengal near Nabadvip, Krishnachaitanya's birthplace. According to the *Pratisargaparvan*, Shridhara composed a commentary (*tika*) on the *Bhagavatapurana* (19.20cd) and an instruction manual (*shastra*) on the same *Purana* (8.30). Referred to as Shridharasvamin, the late 14th to early 15th century commentator from Odisha, he was known as (Starza-Majewski 1983: 13-4).³⁴

³⁰ For secondary literature on Krishnachaitanya and Gaudiya Vaishnavism, see Broo (2003: 33-70), Mukherjee (2024[1979]), O'Connell (1999, 2019), and Dimock and Stewart (1999).

³¹ The praise of the gods contains various references to the characteristics of Vishnu, such as him carrying a conch, *chakra* (discus), mace, and a lotus (10.28a).

³² I was unable to find a translation of this text. A short study on the text can be found in Stewart (2010).

³³ I was unable to find a translation of this text. A short study on the text and references to the Bengali edition can be found in Stewart (1986).

³⁴ There probably was a historical relation between Krishnachaitanya and Shridhara, as well as with the Dashanami order at large (Brzezinski 2004: 76):

...the head of the Śaṅkara Govardhana māth at Purī, [who] wrote one of the most famous commentaries on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. It was Śrīdhara who was chiefly responsible for the increased prominence given to bhakti in the cult of Jagannātha and his commentary the *Bhāvārtha-dīpika* was later highly esteemed by Caitanya and his disciples.

Ramananda became Krishnachaitanya's 4th pupil when the latter was of age 12 (19.21-32 and 7.36-56). This is the 15th century Ramananda that had a *guru-shishya* lineage of his own in the *Pratisargaparvan*. He composed the *Adhyatmaramayana* at the command of Krishnachaitanya, after he became the latter's student (19.32). In other words, according to the *Pratisargaparvan*, Ramananda, who was a Rama *bhakta* and purportedly founded his own religious order (the Ramanandis), converted to the devotion of Krishna and joined Gaudiya Vaishnavism. This is a radically new idea, underscoring the importance of Krishnachaitanya. At the age of 16, Krishnachaitanya accepted his 5th and 6th pupils in Shantipura: Jivananda and Rupananda (19.33-39). According to the text, Jivananda composed the *Shatsandarbha* (19.37ab) and Rupananda composed 'a book on Krishna as part of a Purana, consisting of 10,000 [verses]' (*krṣṇakhaṇḍaṁ purāṇāṅgaṁ...daśasahasrakam*, 19.39a-d), both at the command of Krishnachaitanya. The men can be identified as Jiva Gosvamin and Rupa Gosvamin. The 2 nephews from Bengal lived in the 16th century and were 2 of the 6 Goswamis, disciples of the first hour of Krishnachaitanya, and principal theologians of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. The composition attributed to Jivananda corresponds to one of Jiva Gosvami: the *Shatshandarbhas*. The composition attributed to Rupananda by the *Pratisargaparvan* does not seem to refer to any particular historical work, but rather to his compositions dedicated to Krishna in general.³⁵ When Krishnachaitanya was 19 years old, he accepted his 7th and 8th pupil in Shantipura: Vishnusvamin (19.40-47 and 8.31-57) who composed a compilation dedicated to Vishnu at Krishnachaitanya's command, and Madhvacharya (19.48-66 and 8.1-12) about whom no information is given. The 2 men can nevertheless be identified as 2 famous 13th century south Indian theologians: Vishnusvamin, associated with the Vaishnava Rudra *sampradaya*, and Madhva, the founder of the Dvaita Vedanta school.³⁶

After listing famous theologians and Gaudiya Vaishnava teachers, the text continues with grammarians and other specialists in the sciences. When Krishnachaitanya was 20 years old, he received his 9th pupil, Bhattoji Dikshita (20.1-10 and 8.70-98). According to the *Pratisargaparvan*, the latter was an exponent of the third *Vedanga* (i.e. *vyakarana* or 'grammar') made by Panini (20.9cd), and composed the text, *Siddhantakaumudi* (20.10ab and 8.98ab). This is a reference to the 16th and 17th century grammarian who composed the *Siddhantakaumudi*. Krishnachaitanya's 10th pupil, Varahamihira (20.11-21 and 8.99-125),

The consensus in scholarly circles is that a Krishna devotional movement originating in South India made its way north through a Vaishnava-oriented group of Shankarite *sannyasis* of the Puri and Bharati orders, including Madhavendra Puri. Their principal authority seems to have been Shridhara Swami, who lived in Jagannatha Puri, which was also the home base of these particular *sannyasi* orders. Despite Chaitanya's connection with these lines (to the Puris by initiation and the Bharatis by *sannyasa*), however, his followers quickly identified him as an incarnation of Krishna.

Although the connection with Shridhara is still present in the *Pratisargaparvan*, references to other relations between Krishnachaitanya, Shankaracharya, and the Dashanamis are omitted.

³⁵ We would expect the other 4 Goswamis (Sanatana Goswamin, Gopala Bhatta Goswamin, Raghunatha Bhatta Goswamin, and Raghunathadasa Goswamin) to be part of the list too, but they are absent. Perhaps Jiva Goswamin and Rupa Goswamin stand for the 6 as a group.

³⁶ Although Madhva is a student of Krishnachaitanya in the *Pratisargaparvan*, other traditions rather point in the opposite direction where "Caitanya's movement was artificially linked with an earlier *sampradāya*, that of Madhva. [...] However, this affiliation of Caitanya with the Mādhva *sampradāya* (via Īśvara and Mādhavendra Purī) is a late and imaginary fiction" (Hardy 1974: 26).

came to him when the former was 22 years old. The story in chapter 8 narrates, that when Varahamihira was only just born, he was put into a wooden pot and placed in a river that took him to Lanka (Sri Lanka), where he studied different branches of astrology (*jataka*, *phalita*, and *mukaprashna*). After a while, he was sent back to his place of birth, where he composed the *Vedanga* that was related to astrology, and that consisted of three parts. Chapter 20 narrates how Varahamihira meets Krishnachaitanya and becomes his disciple. At the latter's command, he composes astrological treatises that consist of 4 parts, called the *Varahasamhita* and *Brihajjataka*, as well as several other *tantras* (20.20-21). Varahamihira is the famous 6th century astrologer, renowned for many astrological works, including the *Brihatsamhita* and the *Brihajjataka*. The *Varahasamhita*, as it is called in the *Pratisargaparvan*, seems to refer to the former, with *Varaha*- here, alluding to the author himself.

When Krishnachaitanya was 23 years old, he met his 11th pupil called Vanibhushana (20.22-35 and 8.58-69). The text says that Vanibhushana composed a '*Vedanga*, namely a treatise on meter bearing his own name' (*chandograntham... vedāṅgaṃ svanāmnā*, 20.35ab). There is a work on meter known as *Vanibhushana*, composed by Damodara Mishra from the 15th and 16th century. It is this work that is referred to over here, and presented and claimed. Krishnachaitanya's 12th pupil was called Dhanvantari (20.36-45 and 9.1-23). According to chapter 9, Surya announced to the gods that he would be reborn in Kashi with the name Dhanvantari in order to release all the people of the world from their diseases (9.17-18). When he was reborn as the son of Kalpadatta, Dhanvantari accepted Sushruta as his student and composed the *Kalpaveda*, thanks to which people were cured from their diseases (9.19-21). When Sushruta studied Dhanvantari's *Kalpaveda*, he composed the *Saushrutatantra*, consisting of a 100 chapters (9.23). In chapter 20, it is said that Dhanvantari, after having become Krishnachaitanya's student, composed a *Vedanga*, namely the *Kalpaveda*, and he had various students himself including Sushruta. Of the 2 medical scientists and the 2 compositions mentioned in the text, at least the *Saushrutatantra* seems to go back to a historical work on *Ayurveda*, namely the *Sushrutasamhita*. It is not clear whether this was composed by one historical person called Sushruta, because multiple Sushrutas were known (Meulenbeld 1999: 333-61). Though Dhanvantari is known of from other sources as a mythical physician, the *Kalpaveda* only appears in the *Pratisargaparvan* (ibid: 333 and 358). Krishnachaitanya's final pupil is Jayadeva, whom he meets at the age of 25 (20.46-62 and 9.24-66). Chapter 20 does not provide much information about Jayadeva himself, but in chapter 9, we learn that he composed the *Gitagovinda*. The description matches the historical figure of Jayadeva, the 12th and 13th century poet from Bengal, who wrote the *Gitagovinda*. This work played an important role in the Chaitanya school of Vaishnavism.

Although Krishnachaitanya's pupils are less cohesive as a group than that of Shankaracharya's and Ramananda's students, it is possible to trace some shared elements between them that can tell us something about the religious sentiments of this section of the *Pratisargaparvan* and its composers. The first 8 pupils are well-known Vaishnava philosophers and theologians. 5 of these, and Krishnachaitanya himself, were associated with Gaudiya Vaishnavism. While Krishnachaitanya was its founder; 2 of his pupils in the text belonged to the 6 Goswamis, historical pupils of the first hour, belonging to the Chaitanya school of Vaishnavism. The works of Shridharasvamin and Jayadeva were important to the Gaudiya Vaishnava community. If Ishvara indeed refers to Ishvara Puri, then there is another representative of early Gaudiya Vaishnavism here, close to the date of its foundation. They all come from west Bengal or from neighbouring Odisha and their stories in the *Pratisargaparvan* are set in Shantipura. This gives the list a geographical orientation of the East, the homeland of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Although the religious focus of these prominent people is obvious, it is not clear why a grammarian, astrologer, prosody specialist, and physician are included as well. Perhaps the composers of this section of the *Pratisargaparvan* wanted to present Gaudiya Vaishnavism as an inclusive

and tolerant *bhakti* movement, or present Krishnachaitanya as someone who was not only interested in religion but also in worldly matters such as grammar and astrology. What is striking is that all these famous works are made at the command of Krishnachaitanya. The composers tried to give Krishnachaitanya more importance in the production of scientific works than what is historically accurate. We can ask, what about the inclusion of philosophers with a completely different theology like Ramananda, Vishnusvamin, and Madhva? This too, I would argue, shows us a combination that hints at inclusivism and the dominance of Krishnachaitanya and Gaudiya Vaishnavism. On the one hand, he accepts people with an entirely different view on religion and on the other hand, it is clear that Krishnachaitanya is presented here as *their* master and not the other way around. This combination is, in fact, what the text tries to convey in the final part of the section under discussion, in the continuation of chapter 20, where we learn more about a particular place and the specific religious affiliation of the text.

Jagannatha in Puri

As mentioned, the text is relatively silent about Krishnachaitanya's last pupil, Jayadeva. In that section of the text (20.46-62), it is said that Jayadeva came to Krishnachaitanya and started a discussion on the identity of Narayana, Aniruddha, and Usha. Krishnachaitanya's reply to him was a lecture on the relationship between various gods and their role in the creation of the universe. He concluded his speech by stating that Jayadeva's true *guru* was Jagannatha, living in a region called Udra, in today's Odisha, and that Jayadeva, Krishnachaitanya and all of his followers should go westwards (20.62-3). All the students of Krishnachaitanya, present there, also encouraged their pupils to come along (20.64-9). Shankaracharya went to Ramanuja with his 12 *ganas* or 'groups',³⁷ the 7 *ganas* of Namadeva went to Ramananda; Ropana together with his own pupils went to Krishnachaitanya, and finally, all of them, 10000 Vaishnavas, together with Shaivas and Shaktas, went to *Jagannathapuri* with Krishnachaitanya as their leader. *Jagannathapuri* is not only 'the city of Jagannatha' (Lord of the World), but it is also the city of Puri in Odisha. When they arrived there, Jagannatha, who is identified as god Vishnu himself (20.71ab), gives a speech to Krishnachaitanya and all those present (20.72-91), in which he explains, among other things, that king Indradyumna had come from heaven to Puri and constructed a temple, in which Jagannatha, 'having a wooden and stone form' (*dārupāṣāṇarūpavān*, 20.87d), resided, and where all wishes in the world are granted and liberation is instigated (20.88-9).

Jagannatha's speech is the climax of the religious journey that starts from Shankaracharya and his Dashanamis, and travels via Ramananda and his Ramanandis, to Krishnachaitanya and his Gaudiya Vaishnavas. The journey ultimately leads to this temple of Puri where *darshana*, or 'vision', of Jagannatha can be gained in order to purify people. The verses give us a very brief origin story of the famous Jagannatha temple in Puri that still remains extremely important for countless devotees. Krishnachaitanya settled in Puri after becoming a renunciant and stayed there until his death in 1533 CE. According to various hagiographies, Chaitanya fainted out of excitement when he first saw Jagannatha at the temple in Puri (Mukherjee 2024[1979]: 26-27) and witnessed Jagannatha's annual chariot festival (*rathayatra*) for the first time in 1512 CE. (ibid: 35). The temple was built in the 12th century, after king Chodagangadeva had conquered Odisha in 1112 CE. The construction took almost a century to finish. Three wooden images were placed in it: one of Jagannatha or Krishna, one of Krishna's brother Balarama, and one of his sister Subhadra. It was a period of sectarian rivalry between Shaiva, Shakta, and Vaishnava communities in Odisha. In order to sooth disputes, and in an attempt to present inclusivism as an alternative to opposition, the three images came to stand for the Vaishnava, Shakta and

³⁷ Following Malinar (2001: 295, n.1), I take *gana* in the technical sense, referring to a subcategory of a *parivara*, which is itself a subcategory of a *sampradaya*.

Shaiva traditions of Odisha (Eschmann et al. 1978: 196).³⁸ However, it is clear that the three images particularly also represent the Vaishnava trinity (ibid.). I would argue that the section of the *Pratisargaparvan* discussed here in this article is a textual representation of what the three images tried to convey: inclusivism with a Vaishnava bias. On the one hand, the *Pratisargaparvan* section tells us of how 10000 Vaishnavas, together with Shaivas,³⁹ and Shaktas, went to Jagannatha Puri (20.66cd-67ab), thereby demonstrating how the Jagannatha cult was a pan-Indian phenomenon included in various religions.⁴⁰ And on the other hand, the text displays a favouritism towards Vaishnavism, by underscoring the importance of the Jagannatha cult and Gaudiya Vaishnavism, led by Krishnachaitanya, that particularly held the Puri or Bengali branch in esteem.⁴¹

Conclusion

The *Bhavishyapurana* is notorious for its constant alignment with new temporal, regional, and religious situations. Throughout its history, it continued to adapt the transmitted text by omitting chapters, changing passages, and adding large sections. According to Bonazzoli (1983), it is possible to see a *sampradaya* at work, when large portions are added to a *Purana*. If the added material is of a general Hindu character without any sectarian characteristics, this is more difficult or perhaps even impossible to trace. However, in the case of chapters 11-20 of the 4th *khanda* of the *Pratisargaparvan* discussed here, Bonazzoli's theory can be applied. First of all, I have shown how the composers of this section were not concerned with Shankaracharya's Dashanamis, nor with Ramananda's Ramanandis, but with Krishnachaitanya's Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Among the several places mentioned in the lineages—Varanasi, Shantipura, and Puri—Puri is described in the utmost of detail and is ascribed the greatest of importance. The descriptions of the three lineages build up to the climax in Puri where its most prominent temple is described as having an image of Jagannatha, and where Jagannatha has a wooden and stone form.

Notwithstanding the possibility that the composers had this information beforehand about the temple and Jagannatha's image from hearsay, it may well be conceivable that they are from the region of Odisha or Bengal, that is the heartland of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Following Bonazzoli's idea (1983) that the *Puranas* were deliberately adjusted by a particular *sampradaya*, we may conclude that the emphasis on devotion to both Krishnachaitanya and Krishna in the form of Jagannatha in Puri, strongly suggests that the composers of this section were Gaudiya Vaishnavas themselves, affiliated with the Puri or Bengali branch. The time and effort they devoted to describing the glory of Jagannatha and Krishnachaitanya, who are both

³⁸ “Śiva, whose color is white, is considered identical with Balabhadra or Balarāma, the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, ... followed by his considerably smaller sister Subhadrā in yellowish colors [representing Devi, the Goddess]. Next to her, as tall as his brother but black in color, is Kṛṣṇa” (Von Stietencron 2018).

³⁹ Puri is one of the four *mathas* of Shankaracharya's order. The Dashanami order is especially associated with the four *mathas*, each *matha* relating itself to 2 or 3 of the 10 monastic Dashanami orders. Shankaracharyas are still present today (Lütt 1978: 411-9).

⁴⁰ It should be noted that all of them are Hindu Indian men with a Hindu religious background (as opposed to women from another country following Buddhism for example). The level of inclusivism is thus limited.

⁴¹ After Chaitanya's death (Brzezinski 2004: 77):

[t]hree epicentres of Gaudiya Vaishnavism [...] grew: the principal one in Bengal, which would always be the main source of converts; Vrindavan, which remained the ideal spiritual center or ultimate destination for retirement and monastic dedication; and Jagannatha Puri, which, though it lost considerable influence in Bengal after Chaitanya's death, remained the main center of Chaitanya (Gaudiya) Vaishnavism in Orissa, and had considerable influence on the religious life of that region.

identified with lord Krishna, suggests that they were themselves associated with this order.⁴² This section of the *Pratisargaparvan* can then be considered another hagiography of Chaitanya's life and *guru-shisha* lineage.

In order to explain this new lineage of Krishnachaitanya, I follow Burghart's analysis of Ramananda's lineages "as records of strategies in which the sect reinterpreted its past in order to perpetuate itself in the present" (Burghart 1978: 121). Following this idea, I would like to argue that the lineage can be seen as a textual counterpart of what the 3 images in the Jagannatha temple represent according to various scholars: a combination of inclusivism and favouritism of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Besides 2 of his own main disciples, Jiva Goswamin and Rupa Goswamin, 2 authors of literary works who are important to this order (Shridharasvamin and Jayadeva), and possibly even his teacher Ishvara Puri, Krishnachaitanya's lineage includes scientists along with major, influential Indian philosophers, associated with their own religious order, viz. Ramananda, Vishnusvamin, and Madhva. All religious movements seem to have been allowed to join Krishnachaitanya on his journey to Puri to receive *darshana* of Jagannatha. The text describes a large flow of Shaivas, Shaktas, and Vaishnavas to Puri. However, there is just one true *guru* to the movement, which is Krishnachaitanya, and just one true lord, which is Jagannatha. In this way, the Puri branch of Gaudiya Vaishnavism became the leading order of this Puranic hagiography.

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⁴² We must take into account the possibility that composers were simply hired to write what was asked of them without any personal affiliation with the religious order described. In that case, the commissioning party were probably Gaudiya Vaishnava followers.

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