

## Maharaja Krsnacandra, Hinduism, and Kingship in the Contact Zone of Bengal\*

Nadiya was a little Hindu kingdom in Bengal, ruled by a line of Brahman *rajas*, who became zamindars under the Mughals and who lost much of their zamindari under the British. Nadiya was located along the eastern bank of the Hugli River, and at its peak extended from Plassey in the north to the shifting islands and mangrove swamps of the Sundarbans in the south. Its name was derived from the ancient center of Sanskritic education, Navadvipa, but like all Hindu zamindars of Mughal Bengal, the Nadiya Rajas also studied Persian, and became familiar with Persian courtly culture. Nadiya also was at

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the heart of a 'contact zone'<sup>1</sup> with Europeans, a zone which ran north and south between European factories and settlements along the Hugli River. Some of the *parganas* (the lowest territorial unit in Mughal revenue administration) belonging to Nadiya were near neighbors of the English settlement at Calcutta; the road north from Calcutta to the English factories of Cossimbazar and Maldah went through Nadiya; and the textile-weaving center of Santipur in Nadiya supplied fine cotton 'mulmuls' (muslins) for the European trade.<sup>2</sup>

Long before the English began to rule territory in Bengal, relations between them and Nadiya rulers involved calculations of mutual interest. In 1697 Ramakrsna, then Raja of Nadiya, deposited 48,000 rupees in Calcutta with the English East India Company, while Bengal was disturbed by the anti-Mughal rebellion of the zamindar Sobha Singh. Ramakrsna was 'unwilling to be knowne to the Government to have mony as is the Custome of all the Rajahs and Jimmidars [zamindars] of the Country to keep their Riches private. . .' and accepted interest of only 7.5%<sup>3</sup> The same man is said to have accepted a temporary garrison of English trained soldiers.

Mid eighteenth century, relations between Nadiya rulers and the Nawab of Bengal became more uncertain, and the presence of the English more important. I will use works of art patronized by the Nadiya Rajas in the eighteenth century to explore their self-representations. In particular, I will examine family histories and temple architecture. I will argue that during the chaotic middle decades of the eighteenth century Raja Krsnacandra (1710-1782) constructed a more unitary and inclusive meaning for 'Hinduism' to support his novel claim to a more independent sovereignty in Nadiya as new threats and opportunities opened before him.

In eighteenth century Bengal, sovereignty had to be defended and maintained. The Nadiya Rajas' symbolic 'constitutions' of sovereignty could not create an independent kingdom by themselves. By attending to how Krsnacandra identified and solved problems of religious identity and kingship, we also can begin to see strengths and weaknesses, both in his cultivation of historical knowledge, and in his practice of politics.

**The First and Second Foundings of Nadiya**

The *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam* is a Sanskrit genealogy and history of the forebears of Maharaja Krsnacandra of Nadiya.<sup>4</sup> Two undated manuscripts are held by the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (formerly the Königliche Bibliothek zu Berlin), one written in Bengali characters and one in Devanagari. Neither has a final verse identifying the author or authors, the date of composition, or the copyists; the authorship may have been collective, and chapters may have been added serially. This text treats the lineage of Raja Krsnacandra from the forebear who first moved to Bengal during the reign of the legendary ‘King Adisura’ to the death of Krsnacandra’s father and his own installation in 1728, when the text abruptly ends. Its seventh, longest, and final chapter may have been written shortly after that event, or the whole may have been composed at some later period during Raja Krsnacandra’s reign. William Pertsch, who first edited and translated them, thought the manuscripts themselves probably were products of the late eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever its date and authorship, the *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam* describes successes and failures of the Nadiya rulers in terms of an uneasy combination of Sanskritic and Persian roles and principles of legitimacy.

We may note, first, that this Brahman lineage had two founders. The first, Battanarayana, was one of five Brahmans invited from Kanyakubja to Vanga by the legendary Hindu sovereign Adisura to perform a *homa* sacrifice of the flesh of a vulture, whose inauspicious appearance upon his palace otherwise promised a future of misfortune; and in the Brahmans' success despite the utter strangeness of the task thus set them we can read the superiority of their Vedic learning. In return Adisura settled the Brahmans in his own city, where they lived for one year. Desiring that Battanarayana continue to reside, Adisura then offered him a gift of some villages, but Bhattanarayana declined to demean himself by accepting any additional gifts, and instead offered to purchase the villages. Thereafter he and his descendants 'enjoyed' these villages 'exempt from taxation' for eleven generations and 322 years.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, 'coming from the land of the *mlecchas*,' vanquished the 'lord of Delhi' at the same time that four brothers in the twelfth generation disputed the kingdom among themselves. One secured recognition from the Sultan, and thus an advantage over his brothers, by offering to pay taxes.<sup>7</sup> Thus matters continued for

another five generations and 167 years, bringing us to the time of Emperor Akbar (one must appreciate the schematic nature of this history), when Raja Kasinath lost his life, and the lineage its royal possessions, for daring to slay one of Akbar's royal elephants.<sup>8</sup>

This almost brings us to history more properly speaking, and to the second founder of the lineage, a grandson of Kasinath, who at the age of 11 joined the service of an unnamed Muslim 'minister' sent by the 'Sultan of Delhi' (the Mughal Emperor Akbar).

This grandson, Durgadas, 'in a short while became adept in the meaning of all the Persian *sastras*,' so pleasing his employer that he was appointed to serve in the office of *qanungo daftar* (land registrar) of the *sarkar* of Satgaon (an administrative level above that of the *pargana*) , and given the title *majumdar* (Persian, *majmu'adar*, a revenue clerk or accountant) and a new name, Bhavananda.<sup>9</sup> By learning Persian, and by entering directly into the Mughal land revenue bureaucracy, Bhavananda secured revenue-collecting rights to some villages (but perhaps not to his patrimonial kingdom lost by Kasinath), and changed part of the royal culture of his lineage. Descendants are described as 'saluting' Mughal rulers 'with the customary ceremonies' and as being honored in return 'with

gracious and friendly conversations’—all according to Persian courtly culture.<sup>10</sup> When Bishop Heber visited Nadiya in 1824, he found the grandson of Maharaja Krsnacandra dwelling in one room of the ruins of his ancestor’s palace. Nevertheless, after the Bishop’s rank in English society had been ascertained, he was entertained in this man’s ‘court’, and for his audience with the Nadiya Raja the Bishop was supplied an interpreter, ‘since in strict conformity with court etiquette, the conversation passed in Persian’.<sup>11</sup>

The crucial change in Bhavananda’s fortunes, however, is said to have occurred somewhat later. Raja Man Singh Kachwa (under Akbar the Mughal empire’s foremost Hindu courtier and general) had been sent by the Emperor to conquer Raja Pratapaditya of Yasohar (Jessore), the most powerful of ‘twelve kings enjoying their kingdoms exempt from taxation’ in Bengal. Bhavananda supplied Raja Man Singh with transport and food for his army when they were caught in a week-long rainstorm, guided him to Yasohar, a ‘kingdom’ neighboring Nadiya to the east, and at the crux of the battle, advised renewed attack, which met with success. In return, Man Singh took Bhavananda back to Delhi, told Emperor Jahangir about his assistance, and secured for him a sworn and signed document

(i.e., a *sanad*) granting him a ‘kingdom’ in the fourteen parganas originally held by his ancestors. The Nadiya genealogy emphasizes the honor received with Emperor Jahangir’s signature on this document.<sup>12</sup>

In short, the two founders of this royal Brahman lineage mastered two kinds of learning, Sanskritic and Persian, and defined two ways of relating to their respective sovereigns. Bhattanarayana ‘enjoyed’ his villages outright, and did not receive gifts from or pay taxes to the Hindu king Adisura. Bhavananda’s position was far inferior. In fact, if this genealogy has a single lesson, it is that from Bhavananda on, failure to collect, account for and pay the stipulated revenue demand of his ‘kingdom’ resulted in imprisonment.

It is necessary, however, to criticize this history of Bhavananda. The original *sanad*, now largely unreadable, is dated in 1606, six years before the conquest of Raja Pratapaditya, in 1612. A second *sanad* from Jahangir also has been preserved by the family. According to it, Bhavananda in fact was not given the title of ‘Raja’. Instead he became a *pargana caudhuri* and *qanungo* in the local land revenue system, with the duty

to present an ‘account of the receipts and arrears of the revenue’ (*jama-wakil-baki*) for all his *parganas*, to protect the weak from the strong, and to ‘accomplish the weal and prevent the injury of the whole region by whatever means.’<sup>13</sup> A *pargana* was the lowest level of the Mughal revenue administration in Bengal. The *qanungo* of a *pargana* kept permanent records of revenue receipts, the area under cultivation, local revenue rates, and records of revenue related customs and practices of the *pargana*. The *caudhuri* usually was the most important zamindar of a *pargana*. He certified the revenue assessments drawn up by the *qanungo*, and both organized and stood surety for their collection. Both offices usually were hereditary, but for both succession required imperial confirmation, and removal from office was possible.<sup>14</sup> Receiving the office of *caudhuri* indicates that Bhavananda had become a prominent zamindar. Since each of the two offices was designed as a check upon the other, it is striking that Bhavananda was appointed to both. Since he already had been employed as *qanungo* at the superior administrative level of the *sarkar* of Satgaon, where he collected and supervised records of

the *pargana qanungos* under authority of the *sarkar*, it seems reasonable that his position as one of the latter in some way was achieved through the former office.<sup>15</sup>

Second, Raja Pratapaditya was not conquered by Raja Man Singh Kachwa (who served as governor of the *suba* (province) of Bengal under Emperor Akbar from 1594 to the latter's final illness in 1605, and briefly was reappointed by Jahangir in 1605 and then recalled in 1606).<sup>16</sup> In April, 1601 Raja Man Singh did invest a 'strong position' of rebel Afghans 'near Bushna and Jessore'. He could not attack because 'on every side there were marshes and it was impossible to reach the place easily', but he 'appointed active people (to watch them) and addressed himself to opening out the country and increasing cultivation.' No battle is mentioned, but eventually a number of Afghans 'capitulated and came in'.<sup>17</sup> Bhavananda may have helped the Raja during this investment, or in the plan to extend cultivation to the marshes, or the author may have conflated this event with the defeat of Pratapaditya in January 1612. If Bhavananda really confirmed his position by assisting in the defeat of Pratapaditya, he must have helped, not Raja Man Singh, but Ghiyas Khan and Mirza Nathan, whom the then governor of Bengal, Islam Khan, sent with

a strong fleet and 'a number of tried and experienced officers' in December 1611 to bring Pratapaditya to submission. After two day long battles, Pratapaditya submitted in January 1612, and was taken in chains to the capital of the *suba*, Jahangirnagar (Dhaka).<sup>18</sup>

Although the Nadiya family's second *sanad* from Jahangir to Bhavananda is dated 1613, it also does not refer to Pratapaditya's defeat.<sup>19</sup> What are the consequences of so retelling the family's history? If potentially embarrassing events are elided in this history, it also may minimize Bhavananda's shrewdness, either in promoting himself by means of his bureaucratic position at Satgaon, or in materially assisting Muslim officers against a powerful, local Hindu *raja*.

### Conflicting Principles of Legitimacy

Perhaps an ideal balance between the roles of Sanskrit king and Mughal zamindar may be taken from the life of Bhavananda's grandson Raghava (reigned c. 1632-1683<sup>20</sup>).

Retaining undivided possession of the kingdom by Mughal custom, he gave his brothers funds for their maintenance 'every month'. He also regularly paid the taxes due the 'Yavana King', and so became the latter's 'faithful servant' (*visvasapatra*).<sup>21</sup> He built a

huge tank, and a temple to Siva on one bank (the Raghavesvara temple at Dignagar, dated 1669) for the dedication of which he invited a 'great assembly' of learned Brahmans from all over India, and 'kings, princes and ministers from various regions' besides. For the dedication of this tank and of the temple's Siva *linga* he is said to have spent 300,000 rupees.<sup>22</sup>

It is easy to note tensions between Sanskrit and Persian cultural forms.

Raghava's son, Rudra Ray (reigned c. 1683-1694), refused to take the drum upon his shoulder as part of the ceremony of receiving *khil'at* (a robe of honour), and when attending 'the Sultan' he insisted on wearing an unsewn *dhoti* beneath his court robe instead of sewn pants. 'Brahmans devoted to true conduct,' he said, 'wear such a garment as mine; but by sewn garments they incur a fault'.<sup>23</sup> Rudra Ray remained in the governor's good graces by his lavish distribution of bribes and presents. Comparing himself to a famous revenue official, he once acknowledged that, 'as wealth is the root of this *qanungo's* mastery of office [*karmadhyaksata*] so also it is the root of my kingdom.'<sup>24</sup>

Rudra Ray was responsible for constructing the family's palace and grounds at Krsnanagar. For this purpose he brought a Muslim builder from the provincial capital, Jahangirnagar, and secured permission from the governor to use battlements (*kangura*, P. *kungura*) in the design, and to fly banners and to beat kettledrums. The grounds included a gatehouse, a room 'suitable for the playing of musical instruments' (i.e., a *naqqara khana*), a three-storied public audience hall into which one could drive elephants, horses and conveyances on the ground floor, elephant and horse stables, and an *antahpur* (quarters for women of his family and their attendants) 'like a palace of the goddess'.<sup>25</sup>

Another detail gives us a glimpse of one possible source of his evident prosperity: he also built a high road from Krsnanagar to Santipur, which already was an important weaving center for the Dutch.<sup>26</sup>

Rudra Ray had three sons by two wives. In the next generation, Ramacandra, who contested with his younger brother for the throne for several years following his father's death in 1694, was a powerful wrestler and a prodigious eater, and won the affection of the Faujdar of Hugli for his heroic qualities. He, however, neglected daily rites and

worship, 'was adverse to good conversation with learned Brahmans', and did not follow his father's advice, for which reasons his father Rudra Ray gave the kingdom to Ramacandra's younger brother Ramajiban.<sup>27</sup> The Mughal governor, however, intervened on behalf of Ramacandra, and for a time the 'kingdom' was divided between them. Other descendants also had to balance the requirements of king and Mughal zamindar.

Ramakrsna (r. 1695?<sup>28</sup> to 1715), half brother of Ramacandra, was a friend of Auranzeb's grandson, 'Azim-ush-Shan (governor of the *suba* of Bengal 1697-1712, but absent from 1703 on), entertained the provincial banker, the Jagat Seth, was on good terms with the 'Chief of the *mlecchas* from the South' at Calcutta, from whom he received 2500 skilled 'soldiers' (*choldar*) 'to use as he pleased', but died in prison of smallpox, having failed to pay Ja'far Khan (then the provincial *diwan* or finance minister, a man who was given the title Murshid Quli Khan in 1702) the 'acknowledged taxes due'.<sup>29</sup> Ramakrsna's son Raghuram (r. 1715-1728) proved his heroism in battle for Ja'far Khan (who by this time was the provincial Nawab, uniting in his own person both military and fiscal responsibilities) and thereby redeemed his father from prison, but he himself subsequently was confined at

Murshidabad for failure to pay the taxes still owed. Even though imprisoned for debts to the Nawab, he continued to distribute land to Brahmans;<sup>30</sup> indeed, this single act reveals the fundamental contradiction in his roles. Nadiya's zamindar-kings in this account had two distinct roles, one Mughal and Persian, and one Sanskritic. The two roles both partly overlapped and partly were opposed to each other.<sup>31</sup> Neither could be eliminated.

Therefore, in this narrative the succeeding possessors of the Nadiya throne, their actions and passions, and their successes and failures are all arranged in a single field, like iron filings around a bi-polar magnet.

### The Maratha Incursions

We now may turn to the life of Raja Krsnacandra, and to two remarkable works of art composed with his patronage a few years before Col. Robert Clive's 'victory' at Plassey, June 23, 1757. These works of art are the *Annadamangal* by Bharat'candra Ray, first performed in 1751/52, and the Rajarajesvara temple at Sib'nibas, dedicated in 1754.

I will argue that these two works fundamentally change the field of kingship in Nadiya, by means of a unitary understanding of 'Hinduism' and a concomitant assertion of Hindu

'inclusivism'. I also will argue that both have as their occasion the almost annual Maratha incursions of 1742-50, and both preface Krsnacandra's assertion of independent sovereignty.

Bharat'candra's poem begins with the death of Nawab Shuja'-ud-Din Khan on March 13, 1739, and the succession of his son, Safaraz, to the position of Nawab of the three *subas*, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. 'Alivardi, deputy Nawab of Bihar under the father, staged a revolt, defeated and killed the son in battle and made himself Nawab in April, 1740. In Bharat'candra's narrative, he then led his armies into the temple city of Bhubanesvar 'in pomp and ceremony' and over this sacred place in Orissa, Siva's place in the world, 'the tyrant Mughal practiced tyranny'. To punish him Siva called upon the 'king' of the 'Bargis' (Marathas), and thus, 'for that sin the three *subas* came to be like hell'. Neither Nadiya nor Krsnacandra escaped ensuing difficulties.<sup>32</sup>

We can add that relatives and partisans of the slain Nawab Safaraz invited Raghuji Bhonsle, the Maratha chief of Nagpur, to invade Bengal, while 'Alivardi was campaigning in Orissa in 1742. Raghuji sent his general Bhaskar Ram in command of 20,000 cavalry

to collect the *cauth* from Bengal (the *cauth* was essentially a 'protection tax' demanded by the Marathas and set at one-quarter of the government's land revenues). They surprised and surrounded 'Alivardi in the neighborhood of Barddhaman Town, and while 'Alivardi and his army fought their way back to Katwa, the Marathas looted the countryside, including parts of Nadiya. For a day they even entered the capital, Murshidabad, where they extracted 300,000 rupees from the treasury of the Nawab's banker Jagat Seth Fatehcand.

Against all expectations the Marathas did not retire during the rainy season, and were not driven out until the following October. This period of the first invasion was remembered for the Marathas' atrocities upon Bengali men, women and children, and it is what Bharat'candra describes as a kind of 'hell'.<sup>33</sup>

I return to Bharat'candra's account. Sometime during or shortly after the first invasion of 1742, Maharaja Krsnacandra was imprisoned at Murshidabad for failure to pay 'Alivardi an extraordinary cess of 1,200,000 rupees. While in prison he worshipped the goddess. She took the form of Annapurna, who assures gods and humans their supply of food, and commanded him in a dream to establish her worship annually on the eighth night

of the bright fortnight of *Caitra*. She also told him to command his court poet Bharat'candra to compose her 'auspicious song', for which she would reveal the song's narrative. This song the Raja should make known publicly. Finally, Bharat'candra concludes, according to this very command Maharaja Krsnacandra worshipped Annapurna and 'crossed over that difficulty'.<sup>34</sup> Sometime after 1742 the Raja relocated his capital about twelve miles east of Krsnanagar, to a fortified place he called Sib'nibas, where he apparently escaped further Maratha raids. 'Alivardi and Raghuji finally composed a truce in 1750, by which 'Alivardi ceded all the surplus revenues of Orissa, and promised to pay 1,200,000 rupees annually as the *cauth* of Bengal.

To the ruler of Nadiya as to everyone else, the Marathas must have revealed 'Alivardi's weaknesses, even as 'Alivardi increased his financial demands. Agents of Siva, the 'Hindu' Marathas themselves, however, seem to have offered plunder and rapine as the only alternative. Could Maharaja Krsnacandra still define himself in relation to both of the roles of his position, Sanskritic king and Mughal zamindar, as hitherto imagined and

practiced by the Nadiya lineage? In this situation, Bharat'candra retold the story of its second founder, Bhavananda.

### Unitary Hinduism

Before examining this story, we must briefly describe the unitary Hinduism advocated by Bharat'candra's poem in a previous section, which describes the re-education of the great seer Vyasa. Vyasa, we are told, was a fanatic Vaisnava. Together with his disciples he wandered from place to place, carrying with him loads and loads of books and almanacs, and engaging in various discussions on the sacred texts and their commentaries.<sup>35</sup> By chance one day he met a party of naked Saiva ascetics led by Saunaka. The two leaders debated the merits of their respective deities, and came thus to Kasi, where Vyasa denounced Siva in his own city. For this impertinence he was struck dumb, until Visnu himself taught Vyasa Siva's greatness, at which point, because of his 'bad fate', Vyasa became as fanatic a Saiva as he had been a Vaisnava, and recited yet another *purana*, the *Kasi Khanda*.<sup>36</sup> The consequence is that Vyasa had to be taught by Annapurna herself that: 'Hari, Hara and Bidhi [Visnu, Siva and Brahma] are my body.

The one who worships them without distinction is the judicious (*dhira*) devotee'.<sup>37</sup> In 1766 Krsnacandra built a temple to Hari-Hara at Amghata, on the inscription to which we find this same doctrine expressed. Distinguishing Murari [Visnu] and Tripurahara [Siva] is called 'the wrong notion of the foolish', and the temple's syncretic god, Hari-Hara, is identified as the 'nondual Supreme Reality' (*advaita brahman*).<sup>38</sup> The unitary theology of Bharat'candra's poem was Krsnacandra's own theology. We will see that it seems to have been attractive because it composed differences within Hinduism so as to present a united defense against challenges from non-Hindus.

#### Jahangir's Conversion and Hindu 'Inclusivism'

Bharat'candra alters in many ways the account of the *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam*. First, the storm which halted Man Singh's army and during which Bhavananda's supplies of food were critical for the army's well-being, becomes, in his account, an act of the Goddess Annapurna, who supplies gods and humans with food, and who intends thereby to secure wider worship. 'If you give sorrow with happiness,' her attendant Padma advises, 'then you will receive worship (*puja*)'.<sup>39</sup> Second, Bhavananda worships

Annapurna, and teaches Man Singh to do so, and because of her grace the army can be fed (true, with Bhavananda's own supplies). The storm then passes, and the conquest of Pratapaditya proceeds. Third, the contrast between Bhavananda and Pratapaditya is elaborated and the latter's military resistance to the Mughal conquest is given a sacerdotal dimension. Whereas Bhavananda worships the gracious, pacific, and food-granting deity Annapurna, Pratapaditya worships Kali. (We should, however, note that Bharat'candra himself tells us that Krsnacandra also worshipped Kali.<sup>40</sup>) Third, Man Singh requests from Emperor Jahangir a kingdom for Bhavananda, not because the latter fed the general's armies from his own stores, but because he worshipped Annapurna, and thereby secured her assistance. Finally, and understandably, the Emperor expresses his opposition to so rewarding any infidel Brahman, and must be 'converted' before he will do so. The result of these interventions is that the poem brings the Mughal Emperor within the field of Annapurna's authority, so that the Mughal *sanad* to Bhavananda may be derived, ultimately, from the goddess herself.

Emperor Jahangir's 'conversion' proceeds in two stages. The first is a debate with Bhavananda about the relative merits of Islam and Hinduism, by which the superiority of a Hindu 'inclusivism' is established,<sup>41</sup> although the Emperor remains intransigent. The second is a conclusive display of Annapurna's *maya*, as a result of which the Emperor asks Bhavananda to direct him also in appropriate acts of Annapurna's worship.

We may consider a few of the claims advanced in this debate, first in the rhetoric of Jahangir. Hindus worship 'ghosts', a fraud perpetrated by Satan; really the tailless monkeys eat the food offerings to these ghosts, and the Hindu sacred texts, too, are false, the deceptions of Satan. Hindu men shave their beards, which are a sign of God's light. Hindus sacrifice goats, saying that God has eaten them, but the meat is not *halal*, and the taking of life therefore is unlawful. Hindus make a fault of accepting drinking water from others, to say nothing of cooked rice, but do not heed the *qadi* and the Prophet's deputy (*nayeb*, the Islamic ruler). Hindu widows may not remarry, and the flower that blooms in them every month is wasted for want of seed, a great sin. Hindus make idols of clay, wood, and stone, and give them a soul; can something formed by a man and given a soul

by a man really save that man? Hindus do not keep concubines, calling it the sin of adultery; God seems to have created them for suffering. (In daily prayer, *salat*) human servants (of God) should touch the ground with their heads as a sign of worship; for by an act of mercy of the Merciful One, they have accepted responsibility (as servants; lit., *diyache matha*, ‘given’ [placed a burden upon] their heads). Failing to understand this, Hindus greet everyone they serve by touching the ground with their heads. Brahmins compose lying books and teach people to be *kafirs*. Jahangir’s desire is to give this and every Brahmin he meets, not a *sanad*, but a *sunnat* (circumcision).<sup>42</sup>

Bhavananda’s strategy in response is to deny that Hindus worship a different divine being than Muslims do: ‘As there is one Lord (*isvar*) of Hindus, Muslims and all souls and living creatures, so there are not two creeds (*mat*)’. The fundamental unity of religions that he proposes, based on worshipping the one ‘Lord’, has the crucial feature that it gives priority to Hinduism: ‘For what creed is there in the Qur’an that is not in the Puranas? But consider, Hindus are prior and Muslims later’.<sup>43</sup> The proposed identity of the deity worshipped by Hindu and Muslim is the ‘Formless Lord’ (*nirakar isvar*)—who

nevertheless can be known only through his ‘enformed’ (*sakar*) manifestations. Thus to the crucial charge of idolatry, Bhavananda replies:

Look, according to both the Puranas and the Qur’an, everything—clay, wood, stone, and so forth—is the Lord. One who forms an image and worships sees the Formless Lord enformed. But one who thinks of the Formless One without thinking of him as enformed is like someone who throws away the gold and then ties up the knot in the end of her *sari*. . . . Thinking of the goddess Hindus put vermilion on trees, but what good is done by daily prayer (*namaz*) in an empty room?’<sup>44</sup>

From the rhetorically superior position of this Hindu inclusivism, Bhavananda then can respond, in language as stereotypical as Jahangir’s, to the other charges the Emperor has brought against Hinduism, not failing meanwhile to make counter accusations against some of the beliefs and practices of Islam. A widow who remarries is like a cow that

leaves one bull for another. If the Veda, Purana, and Agama are the deceptions of Satan, why should one fear to call the Qur'an also a deception of Satan? If piercing a boy's ears (to initiate a Hindu boy) is hoodwinking and knavery, circumcision is a terrible knavery. Hindus are not conscious of distinctions when thinking of what is beyond distinctions (*abhed*), so they touch their heads to the ground before everyone they serve, for the Lord is in all the forms of the cosmos. In the form of the Sun the Lord rises in the east. Facing east to worship, Hindus obtain the sunrise of knowledge—but Muslims say *namaz* facing west. A Brahman who knows Ultimate Reality (*brahmajñani brahman*) is the deputy (*nayeb*) of Brahma; such a one neither heeds prohibitions against nor incurs faults of commensal eating and drinking.<sup>45</sup>

This last defense upholds the tantric adept's immunity to commensal restrictions. He truly knows that the same Lord is worshipped by all creeds. Is not the claim implied that Bhavananda and Krsnacandra were such adepts? In comparison to Muslims, Europeans too are non-sectarian and rule-free: 'They neither pierce their ears nor practice

circumcision, have no cleansing rituals, and eat whatever they get. Saying the Lord exists is their only duty'.<sup>46</sup>

Comparing this debate to the roles of Nadiya kings in the *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam*, one must note first that at issue is, not the competing roles of king and zamindar, but the 'truth' and 'merit' of Hinduism and Islam as systems of thought and practice. Second, the essential unity of different Hindu sects and of their particular deities is assumed throughout Bhavananda's response, as it earlier was assumed in the narrative of Vyasa's re-education. Third, Hinduism in this debate is given a position of supremacy to Islam, even though the 'Lord' ultimately worshipped by Hindus and Muslims is the same. Finally, in this narrative Bhavananda's agency has been circumscribed even more narrowly than in the *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam*, so that he regains his kingdom only by means of sacerdotal knowledge, not by any other virtues.

When the Emperor cannot be persuaded by reason and debate, Annapurna herself must intervene with a direct demonstration of her transforming power. By *maya* she and all the gods recreate on a cosmic scale the Mughal Jahangir's own court, with the goddess

herself as Emperor. This cosmic Mughal court then makes Bhavananda a Raja. Then the goddess forms countless smaller replicas of Jahangir and makes these replicas beg forgiveness of Bhavananda. Here we have an explicit representation of the relation between the Mughal Emperor and Annapurna's authority: the Mughal seems to be like a tiny bit of planetary dust caught within the gravitational field of the goddess, entirely dependent upon her even while he imagines his own independence in opposition to her. But in the following acts of her drama the goddess shows us that she herself cannot be imagined as a sun; she is not stable or unitary. She multiplies her images in ways more and more novel and contrary until the Emperor 'wants to praise the enchantment, but no speech comes from his mouth'.<sup>47</sup>

### **Raja Krsnacandra's Temple at Sib'nibas**

Bharat'candra himself suggests that the unitary and encompassing understanding of Hinduism, so displayed by Annapurna, would be given architectural and liturgical expression at Raja Krsnacandra's refuge at Sib'nibas. His poem concludes its account of Bhavananda's life with a 'prophecy' of the goddess, foretelling the lives of the Nadiya

kings (up to Krsnacandra she follows the sequence of rulers in the *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam* while adding details about rulers in the lineage who did and did not worship her aniconic representation, the winnowing fan<sup>48</sup>). About the poet's patron Krsnacandra, her 'prophecy' continues:

At Kasi he will build the flight of steps to Jnana Vapi. He will reveal the temple (*mandir*) and icon (*bigraha*) of the form (*murti*) of Brahmanyadeva and reside there, making it Sib'nibas (Siva's residence, the word suggests a second Kasi). There he will reveal the worship of my image (*pratima*).<sup>49</sup>

Her 'prophecy' then recapitulates the poem's account of the Maratha incursions, and of the poet's own commission.

Jnana Vapi is the 'Well of Wisdom' to which pilgrims come 'to sip the waters and take a vow of intention (*samkalpa*)' before undertaking pilgrimages in and around Varanasi.<sup>50</sup> This well is associated with the introduction of Annapurna's worship in

Varanasi from Kamakhya in Assam, so construction at this site continued Krsnacandra's service to the goddess of food.<sup>51</sup> The Raja's construction took place in a context marked by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's desecration of the old Visvanatha (Siva) temple immediately north of the well, in 1669, and his replacement of its front façade with that of a mosque. The present temple of Visvanatha was not built until 1777, by the Maratha queen Rani Ahilyabai of Indore.<sup>52</sup> Krsnacandra's piety and self-assertion in building the flight of steps at Jnana Vapi would have been more conspicuous in his own time than it is now.

There are three large temples at Sib'nibas: a Rama-Sita-Laksmana temple built by his first wife and a Siva temple built by his second wife, both in 1762; and the large Rajarajesvara temple built by Krsnacandra himself in 1754.<sup>53</sup> The date of this last temple, completed about two years after Bharat'candra's poem, and the fact that it alone was built by Raja Krsnacandra himself, identify it and its deity as the poem's 'temple', 'icon', and 'form' of 'Brahmanyadeva' by which Sib'nibas became 'Siva's residence', a second Kasi. The inscription of this temple reads:

King Sriyuta Krsnacandra, the crest-jewel among rulers, who, indeed, is born in Bharata like a Celestial Wish-fulfilling tree and a conqueror of the Guardians of the Quarters, having erected a temple whose tower touches the moon, in this learned town, installed Sambhu in the Saka year 1676.<sup>54</sup>

For the form of this temple one finds few precedents among eighteenth-century brick temples of Mughal Bengal (see Plate 1). It is a tall, octagonal structure surmounted by an elongated, eight-*chala* roof.<sup>55</sup> The east, south, and west façades have doorways set into cusped, pointed-arched entrances, and similar cusped pointed-arched niches are set into the remaining five façades. Above them two rows of rounded arched niches complete the decoration of each façade. There is no terracotta relief sculpture, nor any other figurative decoration, a feature which sets this temple apart from any of its predecessors built by the Nadiya Raj. At each of the eight corners engaged columns rise just above the peak of the curved cornices between them. Hindu observers have not failed to notice their similarity to

*minara*, or more precisely, to engaged turrets and columns found in many mosques built at the capital cities of Dhaka and Murshidabad.<sup>56</sup> The characteristic spire-like roof of a Siva temple, however, towers above all elements derived from Persian Islamic culture which ornament the façades. From the outside, this seems to be an exact visual representation of the Hindu 'inclusivism' for which Bhavananda had argued in Bharat'candra's poem.

Within, the temple has a high, domed ceiling carried on squinches which appear almost to correspond in height to the exterior cornices. Rows of arched niches in each interior façade approximately replicate the exterior design. The high, spacious interior easily accommodates a very large *Siva-linga* carved of black stone, 9 feet high and over 21 feet in circumference at the *pitha*.<sup>57</sup> Only the *linga* indicates the 'enformed presence of the formless Lord' of Bharat'candra's poem. The *linga* carries a separate inscription, which tells us that just as Siva came to be known as Ramesvara (Rama's Lord) after being worshipped by Rama, so he became Rajarajesvara (Lord of the king of kings) because of being established by Sri Krsnacandra, the Brahman, doer of many good deeds, a king of kings on earth, which very title (*rajaraja*, 'king of kings') has been bestowed on

Krsnacandra by Siva himself.<sup>58</sup> Raja Krsnacandra's claim to being a 'king of kings' by the grant of Siva rather than by Mughal *sanad* accompanies the Hindu 'inclusivism' announced by his court poet Bharat'candra, and apparently replicated in the design of the great Rajarajesvara temple at Sib'nibas.

### Krsnacandra's *Vajapeya* Sacrifice

Was the title 'king of kings' a claim to independent sovereignty? The title, or rather, an augmented version of it, first was acknowledged not by any Mughal authority, but by an assembly of Brahmans whom the Raja invited to accomplish and witness both an *agnihotra* and his royal, Vedic *vajapeya* sacrifice, performed jointly sometime after Bharat'candra's composition was completed in 1752, and after the Rajarajesvara temple was dedicated in 1754, but before Nawab 'Alivardi's death in 1756. The Vedic sacrifices seem not to have been contemplated in 1752, for there is no mention of them in the 'prophecy' which concludes Bharat'candra's poem. Use of the *vajapeya* to secure recognition of, and in fact to augment, Krsnacandra's new title seems to have been an improvisation. What inspired its performance and what did it mean to Krsnacandra?

The absence of any information about the date of this event is perhaps our most important clue. In 1754, because of complex and violent events in Dhaka, Raja Raj'ballabh, a Vaidya by *jati* who already had achieved both wealth and prominence in the Nawabi administration of Dhaka, was promoted by his patron, Nawazish Muhammad, to be the latter's acting Deputy Governor of Dhaka, while Nawazish Muhammad attempted to 'raise money and amass troops' for a war of succession against Nawab 'Alivardi's designated successor, Siraj-ud-daula, should Nawab 'Alivardi die.<sup>59</sup> The same year Raj'ballabh dedicated a small Siva temple at Srikhanda in Barddhaman. (Srikhanda itself, the birthplace of Caitanya's Vaidya follower Narahari, was a center of Vaisnava worship and of Vaidya prestige, and is about 40 miles west of Sib'nibas.<sup>60</sup>) On the dedicatory inscription of this temple Raj'ballabh recorded the following claim: that he had performed the *agnistoma*, *vajapeya* and other Vedic sacrifices.<sup>61</sup> The 'others' refer to the full series of seven one-day *soma* sacrifices.<sup>62</sup> Raj'ballabh may have been following, on an appropriately more modest scale, the precedent of Sawai Jai Singh II, whose elaborate *asvamedha* sacrifice of 1741 had received wide and approving notice.<sup>63</sup>

Two further details bring into focus the relation between Raj'ballabh and Krsnacandra. As a Vaidya, Raj'ballabh could not have secured Brahmans to officiate at Vedic sacrifices without already having secured recognition of his right to claim Vaisya rather than Sudra status, and to wear the sacred thread.<sup>64</sup> This he did 'at great cost' on behalf of all Vaidyas, by assembling 'Brahman Pandits from different parts of India', who eventually, rendered the decision Raj'ballabh desired. Brahmans from Navadvipa participated in this decision, and no doubt were invited to the sacrifice itself.<sup>65</sup> There is a doubtful tradition that Krsnacandra himself opposed Raj'ballabh's claim to Vaisya status, and thereafter refused to admit Vaidyas to his court who wore the sacred thread.<sup>66</sup> In any case, Krsnacandra seems to have arranged for his own *agnihotra* and *vajapeya* sacrifices (but not for the whole series of one-day *soma* sacrifices) after Raj'ballabh's, in order to imitate on a still smaller scale this act of royal self-assertion by a man who was only a Vaidya, but who, because of his status as a high official in the Nawabi government, was far more powerful than Krsnacandra.<sup>67</sup>

A retrospective biography of Krsnacandra, written by Rajib'locan Mukhopadhyay and first published in 1805, gives the only account of Krsnacandra's *agnihotra* and *vajapeya* sacrifices, but it describes few details. The former sacrifice is a simple, twice-daily milk offering which emphasizes food and hospitality. It is interesting that a Ksatriya should not perform it, because he 'eats impure food, plunders and kills'.<sup>68</sup> Similar features of the *vajapeya* probably recommended it to Krsnacandra. Said first to have been performed by Brhaspati, it is therefore 'the Brahman's own sacrifice'. It produces 'overlordship' (*samraja*), and a claim is made that it is superior to the *rajasuya* sacrifice, by which the Ksatriya becomes an overlord.<sup>69</sup> Second, one who offers the *vajapeya* is repeatedly said to win 'food', a substance analogically extended to include wealth, the earth, wheat, cattle, and peasants, 'for peasants are food for the *rajan*'.<sup>70</sup> The theme of control over 'food' that creates kingship links the *vajapeya* to Annapurna, and Krsnacandra to his forebear Bhavananda.

The central act of the *vajapeya* is a ritual chariot race. By 'winning' it the royal sacrificer wins *soma*, food of the gods. It is followed by an ascent of the king and his

queen to a symbolically constituted ‘heaven’. They return immediately, the king having won the ‘power’, ‘manhood’, ‘intelligence’, and ‘energies’ of the gods, whereupon he is seated upon a throne and acclaimed as king by the Brahman priests.<sup>71</sup>

Rajib'locan retrospectively narrates only that the sacrifices were chosen, and their requirements were ascertained by learned Brahmans; that learned Brahmans were invited from all countries to witness the rites; and that immense expenditures were required (2,000,000 rupees) both for the rites and for lavish presents subsequently distributed to the Brahman priests and to invited and uninvited guests. Having accomplished these rites, Krsnacandra was given by the assembled Brahmans the title: *agnihotri-vajapeyi-sriman-maharaja-rajendra*, the ‘prosperous, Indra-like king of great kings, who performed the *agnihotra* and *vajapeya* sacrifices’.<sup>72</sup> Krsnacandra’s claim to sovereignty was not just acknowledged by the Brahmans assembled for this royal Vedic sacrifice; it was in some sense accomplished by the sacrifice. By patronizing Bharat'candra’s revisionary poem, by building the Rajarajesvara temple at Sib'nibas, and by performing the *agnihotra* and *vajapeya* sacrifices, Krsnacandra made himself an independent sovereign, whose authority

derived (equivalently?) from Annapurna or Siva or the Vedic sacrifice itself, not from a *sanad* of the Mughal Emperor. One notes in the first and last of these acts of self-definition a consistent denigration of the martial prowess of Ksatriyas, a prowess which both his father and grandfather had cultivated.

Rajib'locan uses Krsnacandra's sacrifice to preface his account of the Raja's relations with the English. In summary, he writes that Krsnacandra performed the Vedic sacrifices, and then secured the assistance of the English at Plassey, in order to take kingship away from the Mughal Nawabs, who he believed always had oppressed Hindus. The English Chief, in return for the Raja's help, awarded him the title 'Maharaja Rajendra Bahadur', thus validating the award of the title given by the Brahmans who had witnessed his Vedic sacrifice.<sup>73</sup> Every element of this narrative must be questioned.

#### Krsnacandra and Plassey

Was 'Maharaja' Krsnacandra content to re-inscribe the nature of Hinduism and the nature of kingship in relation to Mughal authority in text, temple architecture and ritual, or did he also try to act politically in accordance with what he had redefined? Published

English records are almost silent about him in the months leading up to Plassey, but there is one mention of him, in a letter from Mr. Roger Drake, Jr. (the leader who had abandoned Calcutta in 1756) to Clive, dated 3 May, 1757. Drake reported that the Raja had given ‘one of my emissaries from Muxadavad’ [Murshidabad] information about ‘discontent among the Nawab’s officers’. Drake, apparently continuing to convey news from Krsnacandra, wrote in particular that Mir Ja‘far, ‘on being ordered to hold himself in readiness’, complained that Nawab Siraj-ud-daula ‘had ruined his country, [and] was destroying all mercantile affairs’, and that he, Mir Ja‘far, would ‘lift [his] hand against him’. Drake’s letter concluded: ‘Kissenchund the Nudea Rajah has been long discontented and used ill by the Nabob’.<sup>74</sup> Drake plainly supposed a conspiracy against the Nawab in which Krsnacandra participated, and for which Mir Ja‘far would supply military force. Of course, a conspiracy could not have been news to Clive. Ten days prior, on April 24, Mir Ja‘far had sent a secret proposal to Watts that he would join the English in opposing the Nawab and in setting another person on the throne; and on April 26 Watts advised Clive to ‘lay aside all appearance of war while we concert of measures

with the principal jumidars' (*jamadar*, subaltern officers) and in the meantime to withdraw the Company's goods and servants from subordinate factories.<sup>75</sup>

Rajib'locan's retrospective account of Krsnacandra's life, written fifty years later, gives an extraordinary version of the conspiracy, in which the Raja served as the principal advisor both to the British and to the Indian conspirators. This narrative can only be described as a 'fanciful story' that betrays 'little or no knowledge of the actual events' and 'was mainly inspired by the desire to represent Krishnachandra as the main instrument in effecting the great revolution in Bengal'.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, Drake's letter proves that Rajib'locan's account was not completely without factual basis. Before Nawab 'Alivardi's death in 1756 Krsnacandra had tried to project his own sovereignty as independent of Mughal authority. It is not surprising to find him in a very small role in the conspiracy which led up to Plassey. Of course, the British themselves were interested in conspiring 'only with those persons round the Nawab who might be of some use to them by virtue of the position they held in the Durbar' (court).<sup>77</sup> They had no use for, and apparently took no further notice of the Raja.

I ask again, what did Krsnacandra do to act in accord with the world he had imagined? For it may be one thing to ‘constitute’ a ‘world’ by poetic text, novel temple architecture, and lavish revival of Vedic ritual, but yet another to succeed in remaking one’s part of the world by human labor, work and action. If Rajib’locan can be trusted (but possibly he cannot), Krsnacandra spent Plassey itself in hiding at Sib’nibas, worried about what would happen to his life and *jati* if the Nawab were not defeated.<sup>78</sup>

### English Hegemony

Within a year, the penetration of the English into the interior of Bengal began to cause Krsnacandra problems, as the English or their appointees alternately supervised or themselves managed collection of revenues in Nadiya.<sup>79</sup> In January, 1758 Nawab Mir Ja’far, unable to meet the schedule of payments for his ‘debt’ to the English, assigned them the revenues of the zamindaris of Barddhaman and Nadiya and of the Faujdar of Hugli. Luke Scrafton, then the Company’s Resident at the Durbar at Murshidabad, was put in charge of managing the collection of these revenues. Receiving little cooperation

from Krsnacandra, Scrafton in July sent a party of 20 seapoys to Nadiya, and threatened the Raja's son, Sib'candra, with arrest. Scrafton reported to the Calcutta Council:

As the chief cause of the balance [due] is the Raja's extravagance, it therefore appears to me as the necessary step to send a trusty person into his country, to collect his revenues for him, allowing him only Rs. 10,000 per annum, or whatever your honor, etc., may think proper for his expenses

. . . .<sup>80</sup>

It is a tribute to Krsnacandra's adroitness that for ten years thereafter he usually kept management of the revenue collection of his zamindari in his own hands.

At first Krsnacandra seems to have relied on alliances with Nandkumar and with Amircand and his heirs; that is, with Indians directly involved in the conspiracy before Plassey, people who could have been presumed to have influence with the British.<sup>81</sup> Later he relied as well on appropriate expressions of loyalty and good wishes.<sup>82</sup>

In the conspiracy of 1760 by which Mir Ja‘far was pressed to resign as Nawab and was replaced by Mir Qasim, Nadiya again escaped coming under direct British management of the revenues; its place was taken by the more lucrative prize of Chittagong, which Mir Qasim gave the British as one price of their support.<sup>83</sup> Late in 1760 Krsnacandra appears to have resisted paying revenues to Mir Qasim’s administration. After negotiating the transfer of revenues of Nadiya and Barddhaman to the Nawab’s control, in December the Ray-i-ryan Umid Rai (the Hindu minister heading the Nawab’s revenue department) asked the British for assistance:

It is now two months the zamindar of Nuddea has put us off by saying first that his Dasharrah holidays were coming on, and afterwards that his Dewally holidays were at hand, and now he has complained to you that his wife is sick. . . therefore I beg you will write to the zamindar to proceed speedily to this city [Murshidabad] with the money for the two months revenues which he has not paid.<sup>84</sup>

The following February Krsnacandra complained to the British that his son had been ‘carried away’ to Murshidabad, no doubt as security for payment of revenue arrears.<sup>85</sup> In the summer months of 1761, one notes a continuous record of default, both to Mir Qasim and to the English.<sup>86</sup>

Rajib'locan elides Krsnacandra's efforts to avoid paying the full revenue demand. He also does not mention two crucial, subsequent events. Sometime during this period Krsnacandra was able to keep in his control enough revenues to resume his program of temple construction at Sib'nibas. Simultaneously, as English affronts to Nawab Mir Qasim's honor increased, and their claims to private trading privileges threatened all integrity of his administration, the Nawab was pushed toward a break with them. Inveterately suspicious of disloyalty, he set spies upon his leading zamindars.<sup>87</sup> By the beginning of 1763 both Krsnacandra his son Sib'candra had been identified as supporters of the English and were being held as prisoners.

**The Maharajnisvara and Rama-Sita-Laksmna Temples and Maharaja**

### Krsnacandra's Imprisonment

In 1762 Krsnacandra's two wives dedicated two new, large temples at Sib'nibas to the east of the Rajarajesvara temple. The middle temple, dedicated by Krsnacandra's second wife, is a four-sided Siva temple with a tall four-*chala* roof. It simplifies but repeats design elements of the Rajarajesvara temple. The dedicatory inscription on the base of the *linga* installed in this temple also cleverly repeats Krsnacandra's title obtained at the *vajapeya* sacrifice: *sriman adhigatya rajati maharaj-adi-rajendratam*, 'to that prosperous one who, having attained the status of "Rajendra" preceded by "Maharaja", shines forth'.<sup>88</sup>

The Rama-Sita-Laksmāna temple was dedicated by Krsnacandra's first wife. It is more remarkable for many reasons (see Plate 2). It is architecturally more ambitious than the Rajarajesvara temple of 1754. Furthermore, it employs both design elements and techniques of construction that suggest a deliberate search for novelty. It consists of a square central tower, surmounted by a bell-shaped, four-*chala* roof, and surrounded by an enclosed verandah. Interior arches allow entry from the verandah to the central tower,

where the images are kept. When Bishop Heber visited, a Brahman guide called his attention to the use of a ‘vault’, sprung between each exterior wall of the verandah and the corresponding wall of the interior tower, to roof each side of the verandah, and Heber added: ‘. . . the Brahmin made me observe, with visible pride, the whole roof was “pucka” or brick and “belathee” or foreign’.<sup>89</sup> Comparing this temple to its neighbors, however, one most notices the absence of curved cornices.<sup>90</sup> The long straight cornices of the verandah, the linear slope of the verandah roof, and the square tower and its straight cornices all together present a rectilinear framework unmistakably ‘belathee’ (if not English) in inspiration. The temple’s rectilinear design is softened by the ornaments of its façades.

These include Islamic elements like those of the Siva temples: the arches of the verandah, and the arched niches of the tower façades. Curves in the brickwork on each tower façade above the arched niches are offset by straight lines above them, which repeat the lines of the cornices. Above all is the graceful, bell-shaped roof of the tower.<sup>91</sup>

The temple’s dedicatory inscription describes Krsnacandra as ‘born in the family of

Brahman—yet royal—sages’, and praises him as the ‘Wish-fulfilling tree on Earth’ and the ‘ultimate beattitude’ of his first wife.<sup>92</sup>

Can we attempt to compare this temple to the Rajarajesvara temple built eight years earlier? If representing a new ‘inclusivism’ were Krsnacandra’s purpose, one designed to demonstrate Hinduism’s capacity to subsume the English, the temple would appear to fail. In general, ‘foreign’ elements of its design threaten to overwhelm the Rama-Sita-Laksmana temple’s visual identity as a Hindu temple. Perhaps instead the Raja desired from Englishmen of his day an appreciative response (like that his descendants later received from Bishop Heber), and sought therefore an English architecture, as his forebear once had imported a Muslim builder from Dhaka to design the palace at Krsnanagar. In any case, I think, with this temple Krsnacandra publicly signed himself as an associate (and supporter?) of the English power; at the same time, of course, that he was avoiding paying them the full revenue demand.

Krsnacandra himself may already have been arrested by Mir Qasim for his identification with the cause of the English when these latter temples at Sib'nibas were

dedicated in 1762. He stopped writing to the Calcutta Council in February, 1761, and they to him the following June.<sup>93</sup> In April, 1763 he and his son certainly were taken from prison in Murshidabad to Mir Qasim's fort at Monghyr, and held there with the Jagat Seth, Maharaja Raj'ballabh, and with some other leading zamindars whom Mir Qasim suspected of treachery.<sup>94</sup> Both father and son escaped the execution of prisoners which followed the loss of Monghyr to Major Adams on July 19, 1763.<sup>95</sup> Did they remain captives?

Apparently; both father and son were unable to return to Murshidabad until the following February, 1764.<sup>96</sup> Mir Ja'far, restored to the position of Nawab, also kept them in confinement in Murshidabad until May, 1764, when the English ordered them released.<sup>97</sup>

### Denouement

The British victory at the Battle of Baksar on October 23, 1764, and getting the provincial revenue office, the Diwani for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, on August 12, 1765 the following year made the English East India Company masters of Bengal in all but name.

In 1767 they carefully arranged for Krsnacandra to receive a title from Shah 'Alam II, the puppet Mughal Emperor. For them the title was a formality. It preserved a certain fiction

of the continuity of Mughal authority. For Krsnacandra it seems not to have been meaningless, for the title he chose to receive, 'Maharaja Rajendra Bahadur', echoes that given him more than a decade earlier by the assembly of Brahmans who had witnessed his *vajapeya* sacrifice. Of course, contrary to the account of Rajib'locan, his new title had nothing to do with participation in the conspiracy before Plassey.<sup>98</sup>

Collection of the revenues of Nadiya seems usually to have remained in Krsnacandra's hands until 1769-70, when they were auctioned in 'farm' to a number of speculating Calcutta merchants. On this occasion Governor Harry Verelst wrote tententiously:

Nadia. The Rajah having behaved very ill in retaining a large sum from his malguzarry [revenue assessment], and (if the general voice is to be credited) having neglected the good of his country, and distressed the ryotts, we are of opinion the most eligible method to be pursued for the security of our employers and the welfare of the ryotts [cultivating tenants] of these

districts, would be to deprive the Rajah of power, and let the country out to farm for three years.<sup>99</sup>

As the rains failed in 1769, these Calcutta merchants also defaulted, and collection of revenues in Nadiya reverted to the Maharaja's control during the famine year of 1769-70.

He was no more successful than the merchants had been, and the Nadiya revenues again were 'farmed', this time for a period of five years, in 1771. Apparently, the

Maharaja himself successfully bid on at least some of his own zamindari, for in 1776 we find Krsnacandra so far in arrears that his lands were to be sold at auction.<sup>100</sup> In 1777

Philip Francis visited him at Sib'nibas, and 'saw an immense place in ruins, and the Prince of the Country, a venerable old Man, lodged in one Corner of it in a State of Beggary and

Misery, not to be believed'.<sup>101</sup> Since, as we will see, Krsnacandra already had removed his residence from Sib'nibas in 1774, and built a new home closer to Navadvip, no doubt

this is what Krsnacandra meant for Francis to see.

Despite the military and political supremacy demonstrated by the British since 1764, and closer to home, the auctioning of rights to manage some of his lands, Krsnacandra again had claimed the title *maharaja-rajendra* in his last temple, the Hari-Hara temple at Amghata. The dedicatory inscription of this temple explicitly records his accomplishment of the *vajapeya* sacrifice.<sup>102</sup> This temple was dedicated in 1766.<sup>103</sup> The temple itself is a small room surrounded by a simple, open portico carried on square pillars; it has none of the grandeur of the temples at Sib'nibas. Above it rise two, equal, pyramidal four-*chala* roofs, symbolizing, like the *murti* of Hari-Hara within, the unity of Siva and Visnu. The dedicatory inscription celebrates Krsnacandra's intent to 'destroy the wrong notion of the foolish who were sinking into a sense of difference' between the two deities. The architectural form of the temple and its dedicatory inscription both suggest that Krsnacandra was withdrawing from an understanding of Hindu inclusivism that could subsume Islam. Nor was he any longer able or willing to use elements of a European architectural style to identify himself with the English. If Kartikey Candra Ray is correct about his having retired to pursue *moksa*, Krsnacandra may have taken this occasion to

give new emphasis to the unity of competing Hindu sects in a single structure of divine truth, which unity his court poet Bharat'candra long ago had asserted. He also for the first time in a temple inscription asserted his own religious authority, not only as a king who once had performed the *vajapeya* sacrifice, but also as one who was 'given to pious deeds according to the instructions of the Sastras and the Vedas'.<sup>104</sup>

## Conclusion

Krsnacandra's forebears had a bi-polar model of rulership. On the one hand they were zamindars in the Mughal system of authority, office-holders whose rights were given by *sanad* from the Emperor, and depended on their collecting, accounting for, and paying the stipulated revenue demand. On the other hand, they also were *rajās*, little Hindu kings, whose authority was constituted by acts of redistribution: giving revenue-free land to Brahmans and other worthy recipients, patronizing scholars and artists, building splendid temples and palaces, and performing ritual celebrations with lavish generosity. Ideally, they mediated between two worlds, cultivating both Sanskrit and Persian courtly culture, for

example, or developing the martial arts expected of a noble in Mughal society without losing their taste or ability to converse with learned Brahmins.

The chaotic and destructive Maratha incursions of 1742-50, and the weakness of Nawab 'Alivardi which they revealed, suggested to Krsnacandra the possibility of a different model of kingship. In Bharat'candra's *Annadamangal*, performed in 1751/52, and in the great Rajarajesvara temple at Sib'nibas he patronized works of art which redefine both Hinduism and kingship. Both represent a superior capacity of Hindu 'inclusivism' to subsume and make relative the inferior truths of Islam. Both explicitly represent Krsnacandra's kingship as the gift of the one supreme deity, in the form of either Annapurna or Siva, to a deserving devotee, either Bhavananda or Krsnacandra himself. Bharat'candra's poem asserts that the Mughal Emperor Jahangir granted a *sanad* to Krsnacandra's forebear Bhavananda only because of the direct intervention of the goddess and only after learning to worship her. Krsnacandra's dedicatory inscription on the *linga* of the Rajarajesvara temple suggests a claim to independence from the Mughals, for it asserts that the title *rajaraja*, 'king of kings', was authorized by Siva himself because of

Krsnacandra's devotion. Performance of the *vajapeya* sacrifice further constituted that independence, winning for Krsnacandra *samraja*, 'overlordship', and the augmented title, *maharaja-rajendra*, 'the Indra-like king of great kings', from the assembly of Brahmins who witnessed the sacrifice.

What may 'independence' have meant to Krsnacandra? We must at once recognize its qualified nature. Krsnacandra, like most other zamindars of eighteenth century Bengal, did not try to develop a military capacity able to compete with the new armies of drilled foot soldiers and rapid-firing artillery.<sup>105</sup> In fact, compared to his father and grandfather, he seems to have withdrawn from military pursuits. We can recognize 'independence', nevertheless, in his limited participation in the conspiracy before Plassey to unseat Nawab Siraj-ud-daula, and in his continual efforts thereafter to avoid paying the full revenue demand, both to the English and to Mir Ja'far and Mir Qasim, the Nawabs whom they put on the throne at Murshidabad. 'Independence', that is to say, is written in the repeated complaints of the Raja's 'duplicity' and 'bad character'.

Krsnacandra's practice of politics with respect to those who could exercise coercive power over him was ambiguous, devious, and adroit. In comparison, the performances and works of art by which he constituted a claim to independent authority seem relatively simple. Based on a unitary understanding of Hinduism, they assert, in various ways, the sacred, royal authority of a Brahman who knows ultimate reality, and who has divinely given powers over 'food': wealth, taxes and peasants.

In the practice of history, both by Krsnacandra's poet and by those who later wrote about him, we note a similar erasure of complexity. Bharat'candra's history of Bhavananda, by its emphasis on the actions of Annapurna, had reduced Bhavananda's similarly adroit and ambiguous role with respect to the Mughals to one of providing correct sacerdotal knowledge. Again, in Rajib'locan's retrospective account of Krsnacandra's relations with the English, his ambiguous record of alliance, duplicity and contestation is replaced by one of constant loyalty and service.

To note coherence in most of the Raja's self-representations is not to say that he simply reproduced pre-existing understandings of Hindu kingship. Creativity and novelty

mark Bharat'candra's poem as they mark the Rajarajesvara temple. Nor do all of his self-representations repeat the same themes. His careful attention to the requirements of the Vedic *vajapeya* sacrifice, and his implicit claim, as a tantric adept, to immunity from faults of commensality; or again, his worship, perhaps at different times, of Siva, Annapurna, Kali and Hari-Hara, need further investigation, but they indicate Krsnacandra's ability to re-imagine the sacred basis of his authority. Nowhere is this creativity more evident or more problematic than in the Rama-Sita-Laksmana temple of 1762. By employing elements of a foreign, European architecture, does it reassert and extend Hindu 'inclusivism' to them; or does it rather acknowledge the Raja's alliance with and dependence on the English? Events foreclosed this ambiguity; upon his break with the English Nawab Mir Qasim identified Krsnacandra as a traitor.

Pressure from the English, who insisted upon political hegemony, pushed Krsnacandra towards a final redefinition of his authority. He seems to have tried to preserve his authority with respect to the 'religious' life of Hindus. He probably withdrew from the cares and responsibilities of ordinary life to pursue *moksa*. He withdrew also

from attempts to represent Hindu 'inclusivism' in temple architecture; one sees in the modest temple at Amghata neither Islamic nor European elements of design. At the same time he gave new emphasis to the unitary supreme being of Hinduism, and to his own pious deeds and exemplary fidelity to Sastras and Vedas.



Plate 1. Left to right: The Rajarajesvara Temple 1754; the Maharajnisvara Temple, 1762; and the Rama-Sita-Laksmmana Temple, 1762, at Sib'nibas.



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<sup>1</sup>Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>National Archives of India, *Fort William-India House Correspondence and other Contemporary Papers relating thereto*, 21 vols. (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1949-) vol. 1, p. 79, paragraph 36; and pp. 81, 317, 364, 393.

<sup>3</sup>Extract from Chutanutte Diary and Consultations, April 1, 1697; in India Records Series, *Old Fort William in Bengal*, ed. C.R. Wilson, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1906) 1:21-22.

<sup>4</sup>University of Madras, Sanskrit Department, *A New Catalogus Catalogorum: An Alphabetical Register of Sanskrit and Allied Works and Authors*, 14 vols. to date (Madras: University of Madras, 1949-) 5: 151. For printed editions and translations see *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam: A Chronicle of the Family of Raja Krishnachandra of Navadvipa, Bengal*, ed. and trans. Wilhelm Pertsch (Berlin: Ferd. Dummler, 1852); and *Ksitisavamsabalicarita*, Mohit Ray sampadita (Kalikata: Saibya Prakasan, 1986). Hereafter

Ray's edition and Bengali translation of this Sanskrit text, together with his edition of two Bengali histories of the Nadiya Raj, is cited as KVC. Ray notes that Pertsch's English translation sometimes is unreliable; see 'Prasangika Sampadakiya Tathya', in KVC, pp. 297-9.

<sup>5</sup>Mahit Ray, 'Prasangika Sampadakiya Tathya', in KVC, pp. 283-9. Before Raja Krsnacandra's time the Nadiya rulers maintained geneologies together with brief accounts of the reigns of more important *rajas*; see Sivanarayan Sastri, 'The Forgotten Poet and his Patron—Maharaja Ramajivana-Raya', *The Visvabharati Quarterly* (Santiniketan, West Bengal) 31,1 (1965-1966): 49-65.

<sup>6</sup>KVC, pp. 197-9, Bengali translation, pp. 239-41.

<sup>7</sup>KVC, pp. 200-01, Bengali translation p. 243.

<sup>8</sup>KVC, pp. 202, Bengali translation, pp. 244-5.

<sup>9</sup>KVC, pp. 203-04, Bengali translation, p 246.

<sup>10</sup>See the exemplary audience of Ramakrsna with Muhammad ‘Azim-ud-Din, KVC, p.228, Bengali translation, p. 270.

<sup>11</sup>Reginald Heber, D.D., Lord Bishop of Calcutta, *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India, from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824-25*, 3 vols. (London, MDCCCXXVIII [1828]) 1:123, 125.

<sup>12</sup>KVC, pp. 204, 207, Bengali translation, pp. 246, 250.

<sup>13</sup>The first *sanad* has become largely unreadable; the quote is from the second *sanad* of 1613. With the exception of the first, the family’s remaining *sanads* were translated into Bengali by Kartikey Candra Ray, ‘*Parisista*’ [appendix], *Ksitisabamsabalicarita* (1st pub. 1875), re-edited by Mahit Ray, in KVC, p. 143.

<sup>14</sup>Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556-1707*, 2<sup>nd</sup>, revised edn. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 331-7; Noman Ahmad Siddiqi, *Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.,

1989, first published 1970), pp. 87-91.

<sup>15</sup>Ratnalekha Ray, *Change in Bengal Agrarian Society* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1979), pp. 27-8.

<sup>16</sup>This point is made by Mahit Ray, 'Prasangika Sampadakiya Tathya', in KVC, p. 294.

For the period of Raja Man Singh's governorship see Rajiva Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber* (Calcutta: The World Press Private Ltd., 1966), pp. 90, 120-2; Nawwab Samsam-ud-daula Shah Nawaz Khan and 'Abdul Hayy, *The Maathir-ul-umara*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., trans. H. Beveridge, revised, annotated and completed by Bains Prashad, 2 vols. (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1999; first published 1952) 2:48-57.

<sup>17</sup>Abu'l Fazl 'Allami, *The Akbar Nama of Abu'l Fazl*, trans. H. Beveridge, 3vols. (New Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1973; 1st pub. 1901-1939) 3:1179-80.

<sup>18</sup>*The History of Bengal, Volume II, Muslim Period, 1200-1757*, ed. Jadunath Sarkar (Dacca: University of Dacca, 1972, first published 1948), pp. 264-9; Mirza Nathan, *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi: A History of the Mughal Wars in Assam, Cooch Behar, Bengal, Bihar*

*and Orissa during the Reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan*, trans. M.I. Borah, 2 vols.

(Gauhati, Assam: Narayani Handiqui Historical Institute, 1936) 1:131-8.

<sup>19</sup>Kartikey Candra Ray, ‘*Parisista*’, in KVC, p. 143; Alokakumar Cakrabarti, *Maharaja*

*Krsnacandra o Tatkalin Bangasamaj* (Kalikata: Pragresibh Buk Phoram, 1989), p. 4.

<sup>20</sup>For dates calculated on the basis of the *Ksitisavamsavalicaritam* see A.K.

Bhattacharyya, *A Corpus of Dedicatory Inscriptions from Temples of West Bengal (c. 1500*

*A.D. to c. 1800 A.D.)* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Calcutta: NAMANA, 1998), Appendix L, ‘A Note on the

Nadia Raj family’, pp. 204-06.

<sup>21</sup>KVC, p. 211, Bengali translation, p. 254.

<sup>22</sup>KVC, p. 212, Bengali translation, p. 255. For images of this temple see *Brick*

*Temples of Bengal, From the Archives of David McCutcheon*, ed. George Michell

(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 213, and Plates 469-72. For its

inscription see A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 38, p. 96. For other inscriptions of this

Raja see also no. 41, p. 99 (the Raghavesvara temple at Srinagar, Nadiya, 1671), and no.

45, p. 103 (the Visvanatha temple at Srinagar, Nadiya, 1674).

<sup>23</sup>KVC, p. 217, Bengali translation, p. 259.

<sup>24</sup>KVC, p. 216, Bengali translation, p. 258.

<sup>25</sup>KVC, pp. 214, 216-17, Bengali translation, pp. 256, 259.

<sup>26</sup>Om Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630-1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 61.

<sup>27</sup>KVC, pp. 218, 222; Bengali translation, pp. 260, 264.

<sup>28</sup>The rebellion of Sobha Singh is said to have occurred at the beginning of his reign; see KVC, p. 226, Bengali translation, p. 268. The chronology of the reigns of Ramajiban and Ramakrsna, however, is uncertain. See Sivanarayan Sastri, 'The Forgotten Poet,' pp. 51, 56 for evidence from the colophon of the *Rasacandrika* of Kavindra Madhusudhana that Ramajiban was reigning in 1695.

<sup>29</sup>KVC, pp. 228-30; Bengali translation, pp. 270-72. Ja'far Khan (Murshid Quli Khan

l) was *diwan* or officer in charge of provincial revenues, of Bengal from 1700, of Orissa from 1701, and of Bihar from 1704. In 1707 he briefly was appointed deputy governor of Bengal, but was removed from all offices in Bengal and Orissa and absent from Bengal in 1708-1709. In 1710 he was reappointed *diwan* of Bengal, and deputy governor in 1713, and governor of Orissa in 1714. In 1717 with the death of the nominal governor ‘Azim-us-Shan, he was appointed governor of Bengal. From 1713 on until his death in 1727, because he combined both fiscal and military responsibilities, he effectively ruled Bengal and Orissa without any official check upon his decisions, and properly can be given the title ‘Nawab’. See *History of Bengal, Vol. II, Muslim Period*, pp. 398-402.

<sup>30</sup>KVC, pp. 230-33; Bengali translation, pp. 272-74.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. Catherine Asher’s summary of Raja Man Singh as governor of Bihar, and the two, quite different inscriptions in Persian and Sanskrit on his palace at Rohtas: ‘He thus played out his dual role as the emperor’s agent and raja in his own right, a duality characteristic of the relationship between Akbar and those lesser authorities beneath him’.

Asher, 'The Architecture of Raja Man Singh: A Study of Sub-Imperial Patronage,' in *The Powers of Art: Patronage in Indian Culture*, ed. Barbara Stoler Miller (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 183-201, quotation, p. 191.

<sup>32</sup>Bharatacandra Ray, *Bharatacandra Granthabali*, dvitiya samskaran, sampadak Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay o Sajanikanta Das (Kalikata: Bangiya-Sahitya-Parisat, 1357 Bengal era [1950]), p. 11. Hereafter this work is cited as BCG.

<sup>33</sup>Kalikinkar Datta, *Alivardi and his Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Calcutta: The World Press Private Ltd, 1963), pp. 45-94; John McLane, *Land and Local Kingship in Eighteenth-Century Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 161-71.

<sup>34</sup>James Grant mentions 'extraordinary temporary exactions' levied by Nawab 'Alivardi in 1743-50 from the 'principal zamindars, such as those of Rajeshahy, Dinagepoor, and Nuddeah, whose jurisdictions, situated for the most part to the east of the Ganges [i.e., the Bhagirathi-Hugli], were not liable to be ravaged' by the Marathas. See James Grant, 'Historical and Comparative Analysis of the Finances of Bengal,' in *Affairs of the East India*

*Company* (Being the Fifth Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 28 July, 1812), ed. Walter K. Firminger, 3 vols. (Delhi: Neeraj Publishing House, 1984; 1<sup>st</sup> pub. 1917-18) 2: 216-20.

<sup>35</sup>BCG, p. 90.

<sup>36</sup>BCG, p. 100.

<sup>37</sup>BCG, p. 133.

<sup>38</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 100, pp. 164-6.

<sup>39</sup>BCG, p. 291.

<sup>40</sup>BCG, p. 12: ‘In the breast of the moon, blackness (*kali*) is only a stain, but in the heart of Krsnacandra Kali is always luminous’.

<sup>41</sup>I take this term from William Halbfass, *India and Europe* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), pp. 403-418; Halbfass cites Paul Hacker, ‘Inklusivismus’, in *Eine indische*

*Denkform*, ed. G. Oberhammer (Vienna, 1983).

<sup>42</sup>BCG, pp. 305-06.

<sup>43</sup>BCG, p. 307.

<sup>44</sup>BCG, p. 307.

<sup>45</sup>BCG, pp. 307-08.

<sup>46</sup>BCG, p. 308.

<sup>47</sup>BCG, pp. 316-19.

<sup>48</sup>BCG, p. 348. Other details also are different; for example, in this ‘prophecy’

Bharat'candra says that Ramacandra conquered Raja Sobha Singh, and he omits the period of divided and contested rule between the brothers Ramacandra and Ramajiban.

<sup>49</sup>BCG, pp. 348-49.

<sup>50</sup>Diana L. Eck, *Banaras: City of Light* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983),

pp. 125-9.

<sup>51</sup>Eck, p. 162.

<sup>52</sup>A.S. Altekar, *Benares and Sarnath: Past and Present*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Benares: Cultural Publication House, Benares Hindu University, 1947), pp. 22-4.

<sup>53</sup>The site is described in *Nadiya Jelar Purakirti*, tathya-samkalan o granthana Mohit Ray, sampadana Amiyakumar Bandyopadhyay o Sudhiranjan Das (Kalikata: Purta Bibhag, Pascim'bunga Sar'kar, 1975), pp. 98-100.

<sup>54</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 80, pp. 141-2.

<sup>55</sup>David McCutcheon, *Late Medieval Temples of Bengal* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1972), p. 60, H(2)(c), and Plate 103. Interesting comparisons can be made to the simpler Naldanga Ganesa and Siva temples, H(2)(a), and to the more complex temple built by Rani Bhavani c. 1755, which has an inverted lotus dome and a verandah surrounding the entire structure; p. 61, H(6)(a), and Plate 94. The Naldanga Siva temple,

a 19th century structure, is illustrated in *Brick Temples of Bengal*, Plate 106. A *chala* is a face of a roof, rectangular when the roof ends in a ridge, triangular when it ends in a peak.

<sup>56</sup>*Nadiya Jelar Purakirti*, p. 99. An interesting comparison can be made to the 'slender engaged columns' flanking the entrance bay of the mosque attached to the tomb of Nawab Shuja ud-Din, built in 1743-44 by Nawab 'Alivardi at Murshidabad, 'a feature seen in many mosques of Dhaka'. See Catherine Asher, 'Inventory of Key Monuments', in *The Islamic Heritage of Bengal*, ed. George Michell (Paris: UNESCO, 1984), p. 100.

<sup>57</sup>*Nadiya Jelar Purakirti*, p. 99; A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, Pl. LXXXV.

<sup>58</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, p. 10; no. 81, p. 143.

<sup>59</sup>R.C. Majumdar, *Maharaja Rajballabh* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1947), pp. 5-9.

<sup>60</sup>Binay Ghos, *Pascim'banger Samskrti* (Kalikata: Pustak Prakasak, 1957), pp. 286-8.

<sup>61</sup>R.C. Majumdar, *Maharaja Rajballabh*, p. 90.

<sup>62</sup>The seven, Agnistoma, Atyagnistoma, Sodasin, Vajapeya, Atiratra, and Aptoryama, are named and described as intended by Maharaja Raj'ballabh in *Raja-vijaya Nataka*, 'evidently authored in 1755 by Krsnamohan Kabi', Sanskrit MS no. 935C, folio 11b lines 1-2, in the Dhaka University Library. I am grateful to Professor Anisuzzaman for information about its author, and for locating this manuscript for me, and to Dr. Dulal Bhaumik for copying it for me.

<sup>63</sup>P.K. Gode, 'The Asvamedha Performed by Sevai Jayasing of Amber (1699-1744 A.D.)', *Poona Orientalist* 2 (1937): 166-180; V.S. Bhatnagar, *Life and Times of Sawai Jai Singh, 1688-1743* (Delhi: Impex India, 1974), pp. 264-6. I am indebted to Catherine Asher for these references, and for noticing this possible connection between the sacrifices of Raj'ballabh and Sawai Jai Singh.

<sup>64</sup>Rasikalal Gupta, *Maharaja Rajaballabh Sen*, dvitiya samskaran (Kalikata: Ray end Kompani, 1914), pp. 141-2.

<sup>65</sup>Fifteen Brahmans from Navadvipa are listed as signatories of the decree that Raj'ballabh and other Vaidyas could wear the sacred thread; see Rasikalal Gupta, *Maharaja Rajaballabh*, pp. 145-6.

<sup>66</sup>Dinesacandra Sen, *Brhat Banga*, 2 khanda (Kalikata: De'j Pablisim, 1993; 1st pub. 1341 [1934/35]) 2:1002-3; Alokakumar Cakrabarti, *Maharaja Krsnacandra*, p. 217.

<sup>67</sup>In formulating this argument I have been helped by the criticisms of Professors Binoy Chaudhuri and Rajat Kanta Ray. For relations between zamindars and Nawabi officials see Rajatakanta Ray, *Palasir Sarayantra o Sekaler Samaj* (Kal'kata: Ananda Pab'lisars Praibhet Limited, 1994), pp. 42-6.

<sup>68</sup>J.C. Heesterman, *The Broken World of Sacrifice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 210-12.

<sup>69</sup>*Satapatha-Brahmana* 5.1.1.11-13.

<sup>70</sup>*Satapatha Brahmana* 5.1.2.9; 5.1.3.3,10; 5.1.4.4; 5.2.1.16, 24 and *passim*. See

also Brian K. Smith, *Classifying the Universe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 98-9.

<sup>71</sup>*Satapatha-Brahmana* 5.1.5 and 5.2.1.

<sup>72</sup>Rajibalocan Mukhopadhyay, *Sri Maharaja Krsnacandrarayasya Caritram* (Landonmahanagare capa haila, 1811; in the British Library), pp. 27-9. This Bengali biography also has been included in KVC, pp. 309ff.

<sup>73</sup>Rajibalocan Mukhopadhyay, pp. 33-77.

<sup>74</sup>S.C. Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57, a selection of papers dealing with the affairs of the British in Bengal during the reign of Siraj-ud-Daula*, with notes and historical introduction by S.C. Hill, 3 vols. (Delhi: Manas Publications, 1985; 1st pub. 1905) 2:375-6.

<sup>75</sup>Subhas Chandra Mukhopadhyay, *British Residents at the Darbar of the Bengal Nawabs at Murshidabad (1757-1772)* (Delhi: Gian Publishing House, n.d. [1988]), pp. 127-9.

<sup>76</sup>R.C. Majumdar, *Maharaja Rajballabh*, p. 42.

<sup>77</sup>R.C. Majumdar, p. 39.

<sup>78</sup>Rajibalocan Mukhopadhyay, *Sri Maharaja Krsnacandrarayasya Caritram*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>79</sup>Ranjit Sen, *Metamorphosis of the Bengal Polity (1700-1793)* (Calcutta: Rabindra Bharati University, 1987), pp. 130-31.

<sup>80</sup>Public Consultations, July 24, 1758, in Rev. James Long, *Selections from the Unpublished Records of Government*, 2nd edn., ed. Mahadeveprasad Saha (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1973), p. 195.

<sup>81</sup>Scrafton was replaced by Nandkumar as supervisor of collections for Nadiya, Barddhaman and Hugli in August, 1758. A few months later, Amircand and his heirs are reported as being ‘security’ for the Nadiya collections, so that Krsnacandra could resume their management. See Letter from Clive and Becher to the Court of Directors, dated 31 December 1758, in *Fort William-India House Correspondence* 2: 79. Nandkumar was

dismissed in 1760 for ‘mismanagement’ of the collections, but Krsnacandra remained on sufficiently good terms with Nandkumar that he married his daughter to the latter’s son in 1765. See A.M. Khan, *The Transition in Bengal, 1765-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 28, 77.

<sup>82</sup>Imperial Record Department, *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, 3 vols. (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1911) 1: 21, No. 327, dated Aug. 11, 1760, letter to Vansittart offering congratulations on his appointment, with a *nazr* (gift) for the first of many examples.

<sup>83</sup>Abdul Majed Khan, *Transition in Bengal*, pp. 34-5.

<sup>84</sup>Long, *Selections from the Unpublished Records*, p. 310, No. 522; Abdul Majed Khan, *Transition in Bengal*, pp. 35.

<sup>85</sup>*Calendar of Persian Correspondence* 1: 54, 55, nos. 868, 874.

<sup>86</sup>*Calendar of Persian Correspondence* 1: 100, no. 1176, letter to Krsnacandra dated

May 24, 1761; No. 1177, letter to Mir Abu'l Qasim [Collector of Nadiya revenues under Mir Qasim], dated May 24, 1761; No. 1178, letter to the Ray-i-ryan (Umid Rai), dated May 25, 1761, and p. 156, No. 1277, letter to the Ray-i-ryan, dated July 26, 1761.

<sup>87</sup>Ghulam Husain Khan, Tabatab'ai, *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin: a history of the Mohammedan power in India during the last century*, trans. Haji Mustapha [pseudo.], 4 vols. (Lahore: Oriental Publishers and Booksellers, n.d. [1975], 1<sup>st</sup> pub. 1789-90) 2:426-32.

<sup>88</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 94, p. 157.

<sup>89</sup>Heber, *Narrative of a Journey* 1:120-1.

<sup>90</sup>I am indebted to Aditi Nath Sarkar for this observation.

<sup>91</sup>An interesting comparison can be made to the twin Siva temples at Lalbagh, Murshidabad, each of which has an inverted lotus dome above a first story marked by a straight cornice. If built by Amircand, they must antedate the Rama-Sita-Laksmana temple. See McCutchion, *Late Medieval Temples*, p. 57, and Plate 93. The overall

effect, however, is much less rectilinear and foreign. The same must be said of temples with multiple *ratna* towers above first stories with straight cornices (Plates 72, 73) and temples with a variety of traditional superstructures above first stories with flat roofs (Plates 117-120); and in any case most of these appear to be 19th century temples.

<sup>92</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 91, p. 153.

<sup>93</sup>The last letter received from Krsnacandra was written to congratulate the Company on the fall of Pondicherry, dated February 15, 1761. See *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* 1:62, no. 928. The last letter to him was written in June to complain of nonpayment of an assignment of his revenues to the English. See p. 107, No. 1222.

<sup>94</sup>Ghulam Hussain Salim, *Riyazu-s-Salatin: A History of Bengal*, trans. Abdus Salam (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1975; 1st pub. 1903), pp. 394-5; Kartikey Candra Ray, *Ksitisabamsabalicarita*, in KVC, p. 80.

<sup>95</sup>Kartikey Candra Ray, *Ksitisabamsabalicarita*, in KVC, pp. 81-2.

<sup>96</sup>*Calendar of Persian Correspondence* 1:281, no. 2045, from Raja Krsnacandra, dated Feb. 2, 1764, advising that he and his son have arrived safe in Murshidabad.

<sup>97</sup>Letter in the Persian Department to Mir Jafar, dated 11 May 1764, in Long, *Selections from the Unpublished Records*, p. 513, no. 772.

<sup>98</sup>Krsnacandra's letter thanking the Governor for his receipt of the new title is dated March 9, 1767; see *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* 2:44, No. 154. Compare Rajibalocan, *Sri Maharaja Krsnacandrarayasya Caritram*, pp. 76-7; Kartikey Candra Ray, *Ksitisabamsabalicarita*, in KVC, p. 79.

<sup>99</sup>Secret Committee Consultations, June 30, 1769, quoted in W.K. Firminger, *Historical Introduction to the Bengal Portion of the Fifth Report* (Calcutta: Indian Studies Past and Present, 1962; first published 1917), p. 187 (original pagination, clxxxi).

<sup>100</sup>Firminger, p. 313 (ccc xv).

<sup>101</sup>Journal entry 15 May 1777, quoted by Ranjit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal*

(Paris: Mouton & Co, MCMLXIII [1963]), p. 121, fn. 142.

<sup>102</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 100, pp. 164-66.

<sup>103</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya reads the chronogram recording the dedication as 1688 Saka [1766]; see no. 100, pp. 164-65, fn. 7. This must correct Kartikey Candra Ray, who explicitly states that Krsnacandra built a new residence at Gangabas a little before the end of 1774, and thereafter he also built the temple in which he installed the *deva-murti* of Hari-Hara; see *Ksitisabamsabalicarita*, in KVC, p. 91.

<sup>104</sup>A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Corpus*, no. 100, p. 164.

<sup>105</sup>McLane, *Land and Local Kingship*, pp. 43-44