

Spiritual Unity of India- Bhakti Movement From South to North India**Asst.Prof. Narendra Narsing Suryawanshi**Vitthalrao Patil Mahavidyalaya, kale,
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The spiritualunity in India was manifested in the form of revolution of religious ideology from North to South in form of Vedic, Brahminical, Jain and Buddhist traditions. From the 5th Century the spiritual movement in the form of Bhakti was propagated from South to North India. The term Bhakti is a derivation from the Sanskrit word Bhakti meant divide share or distribute. The notion of Bhakti can be traced to post Vedic Upanishadic literature, as the idea of Bhakti is related to Purusharatha namely Moksha. Svetasastra Upnishad mentions Bhakti in reference to devotion to a personal God.

In Panini's Astadhyayi (5thCentury B.C.) , the word Bhakti used to mean a thing to be liked or loved. The Pancuratra Sanhitas also refers to devotion to Lord as the highest form of attain liberation. The Bhagvata purana describes the nine mode of Bhakti namely Sravana, Samarana, Padasevana, Archana,Dasya, Sakhya, Kirtana, Bandana, Atmnivedana. Sandilya sutra considers Bhakti the superme LOVE for one personal God, while Narada sutras consider it as intensric LOVE for the supreme. Sandilya refers to Bhakti in the following manner honouring him, or honouring every thing that made to remember him, aversion to all that are not associated with singing the glory of him and that he is imminent in all things. Narda describes as LOVE for attributes and greatness of God, for his beauty, worship, recollection, LOVE for him as a servant, a friend, a parent and a beloved wife LOVE of self consecration to him, to absorb in him and the pang of separation from him.

The blossoming of Bhakti began in South India with the rise of a group called Alwars 6th – 9th century. There were twelve Alwar poets Nammalwar, Madhur kavi, Periya, Aantal(Andal), Paigaiyer, Pudatta, Tirumalsiar, Tirupkam, Tundaradipuri, Tirumanglai, Kulsekhar and among them one was Brahmin, Periyalwar and one women Andal. The early alwars

Pudattalwar, Peyalwar and Poygailwar were probably present around 7th century A.D. They started composing the Nalayara Divyaprabandhams in Tamil. This work was inspiration behind the conduct and shape of the southern vaishnism.

The Alwar poets however never reacted against the Vedas and Puranas rather their movement was a reaction against Buddhism and Jainism. They emphasized on chanting the name of God and their concept of Bhakti gained momentum among the common people who was tired of excessive rites and rituals. The song of the Alwar poets reflects that the soul does not find rest until it finds God. The Alwars represented the spiritually and divinity in their Faith. Along with the Alwars, there also emerged a group of Saiva Bhaktas Naynaras. The Naynaras reacted against Buddhism, Jainism and even Vaishnism. They preached Bhakti to Lord Shiva as all omnipotent and omnipresent. The Naynaras to preach their devotion composed a number of literatures like Tevaram, Periyapuram and Saiva Siddhanta sastras.

The main emphasis of their devotion was greatness of God and feeling if submission, self-abnegation and self surrender to God.

Acharayas followed the Alwars. They preached the teaching and concept of Alwars. They translated the work of Alwars into Sanskrit and preached it among the common people. They were Nathamuni (824-924 A.D.). Yamunacharya (11th cen.) Ramanuja (1027-1137 A.D.) and Srivaishnavism. The Acharyas introduced a new concept of taking the path of Bhakti with the help of a preacher. The Acharyas developed the Alwars doctrine of Prapatti. They based their teaching in both Sanskrit and Tamil scriptures. They attempted to include the Vedic and Upnishadic teachings in the Prabandhams of Alwar. They include Janna and Karma along with devotion in preaching in Bhakti.

Shankaracharya's Advita developed probably in 7th century. He preached the supremacy of

Vedanta. He emphasized on attaining salvation through Gyan i.e. knowledge. His Bhakti was a reaction against Buddhism. He established the supremacy of the Hindus by establishing monasteries on the four directions. In the east, Govardhan in Puri, Sarada in West, Jyotish near Badrikashram in North and Sringeri on the Tungrabhadra in the South. He organized his disciples in ten orders to propagate his Faith. They are Aranya, Vana, Saraswati, Bharti, Puritirtha, A drama, Girl, Parvata and Sagara.

Nathumani (Ranganathmuni) of the first quarter of ninth century is considered as the founder of the Ramanuja school. Yamunacharya was influenced by the work of the Alwars. He tried to establish the authority of the Pancuratra literature the canon of the Srivaishnava sect. Yamunacharya started the philosophy of Visistadvaita which Ramanuja preached his Mahapurusanirnya upholds the supremacy of Vishnu.

The medieval Bhakti Movement starts with Ramanuja. Ramanuja preached the Visishtadvaita doctrine initiated by Yamunacharya. Ramanuja born in 1017 A.D. composed the philosophical words of Yamunacharya and gave it a solid base. Ramanuja's philosophy was against Shankaracharya's philosophy of advaitavada (monoism) and Maya (illusionism). Ramanuja's philosophy believed in the supreme being is one and therefore, preserver and destroyer of the universe. His doctrine believed that one could attain Salvation through the path of Bhakti. He was liberal in his outlook towards the caste system that the Shudras and the out caste could also attain Salvation with the help of a guru (teacher). Ramanuja was a devotee of Narayana and his consort Lakshmi. The vedantic philosophy was included, in the Sri-Bhasya of Ramanuja. The elements of Bhakti become the loftiest and the most important factor in the means of deliverance in the philosophy of Ramanuja.

Madhvacharya (1199-1278 A.D.) flourished in 13th century. The Bhagvata Purana influenced his philosophy, which was distinct dualism. He rejected the philosophy of Sankaracharya's qualified monoism and Ramanuja's Vishistadvaita. His Bhakti Movement made room for general vaishnavism. He composed thirty seven treatises on his doctrine, which includes Bhasya of the Vedanta sutras, Bhagvata-tatparya nirnya and commentaries on ten

Upnishadas. In the philosophy of Mashvacharya, there is adoration of Krishna by Bhakti.

In Karnataka, the Haridasa saints propagated the Bhakti Movement. They could reject the social and caste distinctions and included all sections of people in their movement. The earliest Dasa Bhakti poets were Sripadarja, Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa. Kanakadasa was of low BIRTH and considered Bhakti as the supreme. The greatest gift of the Karnatak Bhakti movement was the development of the Karnataka Classical music. Purandaradasa is considered as the father of it.

The dasa saints expressed their LOVE towards God Krishna through music and dance. The dasa saints did not worship Radha. Sripadarja composed Bhramargeet, Benugeet and Gopigeet. Jagnath dasa composed Harikathamritsar. Tipamma dasa and Madhavadasa made the vaishnav music popular in their vernacular language.

The Bhakti movement in Maharashtra was taken up by Varkari saint. The mysticism of Marathi Bhakti began with Dnyaneshwar. Namdev, a tailor who rejected the caste system and worship of idol. He insisted on chanting the name of Govinda. Eknath a Brahmin by BIRTH also rejected the caste system. His Haripatha, a collection of twenty six abhangas reflected monism and mystic experience. Tukaram, the shudra shopkeeper wrote abhangas. The hymns of Tukaram had great significance in the Maratha country. They played a great role in spreading the Bhakti movement. Namdev, Tukaram were great Bhakti philosophers, who did not formulate any philosophy. Their LOVE towards God was sincere devotion to him. The Bhakti poets of Maharashtra rejected the caste system and believed in devotion to God as the main medium to attain spiritual bliss of almighty. The Bhakti movement of Maharashtra brought in a revolution. There were sprout of Bhakti literature in vernacular language. It developed the nationalism in Maharashtra.

Another two Bhakti poets who based their teachings on Bhagvata purana was Vishnu seaming (14th century) and Sridhar seaming (15th century). Vishnuswami brought in the element of Radha to his teachings. He wrote commentaries on the Vedanta sutra, the Bhagvata Gita and Bhagvata purana. He believed in dualist philosophy. Sridharaswami was the preacher of Gobindanatha or Govardhara in Puri. His

work Bhagvata, is influenced by the Sankaracharyas philosophy of Advaitavad . Sankaradeva was also greatly influenced by the writings of Sridharswami. The Charitaputis mention that Sankaradeva after hearing the Bhagvata purana having the tikka of Sridharswami by Jagdish Mishra attained the complete knowledge of Bhagvata Bhakti and he started preaching his Bhakti doctrine.

In 14th century, the Bhakti movement received a new energy with the coming of Ramananda. He was fifth in apostolic succession to Ramanuja. He in his early years believed in the Vishistadaivtata philosophy of Ramanuja. But later, he developed his own teachings. He could not reject the caste system but made a strong move by including the shudra and women as his disciples. Ramananda moved to North India and started his new school. However, he did not rule the supremacy of the Brahmanas but he included the lower caste and shudra in his movement and gave them an equal footage. Ramananda used vernacular medium Hindi propagate his Faith.

He had twelve disciples including a Jat name Dhanna, a barber named Sena, a cobbler Raidasa or Ravidasa and Kabir and two women Padmavati and Sursari and Anantamanda, Pipa, Bhavananda, Sikhs, Sursara, Narahari, Ramananda. His main philosophy was devotion to God and brotherhood among all people. The preaching of his philosophy gave a boost to the Bhakti movement. Ramananda's reform was a radical reform. He allowed the people of lower caste to dine together with the Brahmanas maintained that the farmer have to be the devotee of Vishnu. Ramananda is regarded as the main propagate of the Bhakti philosophy popularly known as the Bhakti movement of India.

The tradition of Bhakti movement originated in South India and moved to North India as stated in Padmapurana, were in Bhakti was manifested as individual and says, " I was born in Tamildesa, grow up in Karnataka, middle aged in Maharashtra region and became old in North India."

Ramananda described in following manner ' Bhakti Dravida Upaji , Laya Ramananda, Pragat Kiya Kabira Ne Saptadvip Naukhanda (Bhakti was born in Dravida, Ramananda brought Bhakti from the Dravida land and Karvir made it popular in rest of India).

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