



Bhakti motive: a literature of knowledge

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Abstract

This article throws light to empower the unheard voice through the literature of philosopher, who argues the Bhakti motive. Broadly speaking, Bhakti motive, devotional surrender to the Supreme Being, has immense scope as it distinguishes good from bad. Its scope is immense in the sense that Bhakti motive began since the advent of universe. People worship God in several shapes as well as in the shapeless form of meditation and yoga. People also practice Bhakti according to their own conscience. The transcendental path of Bhakti motive is both temple and scripture. Both are abodes of Bhakti. This has been an old tradition. The devotees of the Bhakti path pursue temples and scriptures in search of their eternal peace and bliss. Today's Bhakti is like Meditation and yoga. People approach Bhakti through single minded concentration rather than other methods. Generally, in the ancient time, people understood Bhakti as a form of religion. Today, people entertain Bhakti/God as per their own mode of living and thinking. Bhakti of the past is different from Bhakti at the present moment. In the past, Bhakti was viewed as "the Power of Darkness" (Kipling) while it is recognized today as "the Power of Knowledge." As per the first Sikh Guru, Nanak "truth is supreme, but above truth is truthful living" (187). Bhakti motive presents and perceives the truth as the power of knowledge since there is neither attachment to nor greed for something or somebody. Bhakti requires complete surrender. What we need is the true resurrection. In Bhakti motive (Marga), there is no value of command, order and hierarchy. Bhakti enlightens free and fair, true and peaceful thought. Bhakti transcends even rules of nature. While one accepts Bhakti, someone else ignores Bhakti and its mysterious functioning and impact.

Keywords: bhakti motive, marga, path, supreme being, viz, eternal peace, bliss, and power of knowledge

Introduction

Bhakti Movement is a movement of self-surrender and resurrection towards the literature of God. The path of Bhakti motive is also imbued with all religious values in the world. The path of Bhakti motive says that 'there are no Gods or Goddesses, but only God. The notion of Bhakti motive is to worship Religion/God. The word, God in the Bhakti Movement (path) approximately was defined early in 7th to 10th century AD in South India. Bhakti motive, irrespective of caste, hierarchy, social exclusion, and domination of classical language, implies devotion and surrender to literature of God. Both Brahmin and Rajput dynasties were the dominant figures of the society during the Bhakti Movement. Both dynasties represented the roots of history in the Bhakti Movement. Brahmins thought themselves upper caste in the Rajputana dynasties during the Bhakti Movement. The Philosophy of Bhakti minimized such racial inequality regarding the hierarchical possession in the name and fame of God. Thus, the essence of Bhakti rests on purity. Once upon a time, Brahmin undermined Rajputs regarding their respect or regard towards God. Nevertheless, the Bhakti path (s) never exposed them (Brahmin). Rajput dynasty was acclaimed and praised for the warfare, while the Brahmin dynasties were famous for the rules and politics of nation. On the other hand, Rajput dynasties prayed for physical work and Brahmins for the mental work like making rules for the regulation of kingdom. Such sign of racial inequality of Brahmin generated a rift of hierarchy between Brahmin and Rajput castes. The other castes during the Bhakti Movement were "the marginalized and subaltern groups and not well treated in the society" (Spivak, *Literature*

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119) [9]. The partial discrimination in caste was bereft of the flattery of the Brahmin elite people. Bhakti opposed the self-imposed erudition. In essence, Bhakti accepted purity and honesty and did away with the Five Vices of Greed, Anger, Attachment, Ego and Envy.

Materials and methods

Core voice of masses

The Bhakti Movement targeted to celebrate the eternal spirit, where human nature was looked into for their good and bad deeds. The crux of Bhakti Movement provided its devotees equally a kind of solemn and pious knowledge and power to discern beauty and essence of life. The sages and saints of Bhakti Movement were against racial, caste and classical fragmentation in the name of human relation. Bhakti addressed the core voice of the masses. It wanted a right of equal worship, regard and respect for God at any place. That's why. Bhakti sought personal devotion to God and Religion. The devotion of God/Religion does not approach the devotion of temple, Scripture, Vedas and classical language. Bhakti path followers exclude these mediums of worship as a vein basket of Religion /God. The teaching of Kabir, for example, says: '*pathar pujai Hari milai, Mai pujai pahad, Ushhe bhala waha chaki jisai pis khayai sansar*' (27). Bhakti Movement is mystic knowledge or power and it is gained through personal endeavour and devotion. It venerated personal God to acknowledge the true meaning of knowledge. In the similar vein, Kant writes: "The possibility is such a command as, 'Love God above all and thy neighbor as thyself' resonates well [*stimmt zusammen*] with this. For, as a command, it requires attention [*Achtung*] to a

law, which orders love and does not leave it to arbitrary choice to make love the principle.” (90). For example, Kabir and Guru Nanak are the veteran protagonists to make love the principle of the Bhakti Movement.

Bhakti, a revolt against rigid concept of God and religion, is formalized soul, mind and body to know the power of mystic knowledge and power. In this regard, Bhakti is a movement to make God accessible to all irrespective of their caste, origin, religion and language. It is a movement to give dignity to all common people who were denied equal place in society in the name of caste and religion. Kabir, Guru Nank, and Vidaypathy are among the stalwarts of this movement. In the development of Bhakti Movement, they played a significant role in popularizing the theme of God as omnipresent. God can be realized and even regularized by an uneducated person born into so – called low caste family. In this regard, as already mentioned, Swami Ramananda brought to North India bhakti which was born in Dravidadesa, and Kabir propagated it ‘in the seven islands and nine continents’ (as a Hindi verse says). The teaching of Swami Ramananda’s hymn says: ‘Do not ask anybody his caste or with whom he can eat. He who worships Hari becomes Hari’s own: “Jat panti puch-chai nahi koi, Hari ko bhaje so Hari ka hoi” (57). Single-minded devotion (ananya bhakti) to God is the sole and sufficient means to liberation. Among Ramananda’s twelve disciples were a brahmana, a rajput, a jat, a barber, a Muslim weaver and two women. He made bhakti purely ethical and universal.

Sagun and Nirgun Bhakti

According to the apocryphal commentary on the Brahma Sutra (Anandabhasya), this belonged to his (Kabir) views that God is formed and imagined as both Saguna and Nirguna. Saguna is endowed with all divine attributes, while Nirguna is devoid of all mundane attributes. The principle of attribute in the bhakti path is the principal attribute of God, which means ananda (bliss). The very name of attribute by which Ramananda often invoked God was Rama. Similarly, the principal name of attribute, which Rajyoga calls God, in Hindi abbreviation, was Devata which means the attribute. Kabir was excited by the Ramanuja- Visnusvami tradition of Southern Vaisnavam. His greatness was that he influenced his saints and bhaktas. Sant Kabir is one of his greatest Indian mystic and religious carpenters (97). People regard Kabir as the father of Hindi Literature, although he was born in a Muslim weaver’s family.

Results and discussions

God’s several names

The environment around him was Hindi and he very soon learnt to call God as ‘Hari’ and ‘Rama’. Malcolm and G.H. Westcott opined that Kabir might have been associated with Suffi order, and afterwards became a follower of Ramananda. But Kabir never suggested that he was direct disciple of Ramanandi because Kabir was twelve years old when the great teacher Ramanada passed away. Kabir was born in 1398 and Ramananda died at suspicious date in 1440 (Westcott) or 1470 (Farquhar). Kabir has been Ramanandi disciple, as this case is also written in *Bhndarkar*, a book deeply followed by

Ramanandi faith (81). He recalls God by several names like Visnu, Gobinda, Mukunda, Hari, Rama, Krisna, Narayana Sri Ranga, Vitthala and Viddhata.

God is one and same all over the world

But for him Rama and Allah are both names of the same God. Very close to the Scriptures of Rajyaga Brahma Kumari, Kabir said God was neither like the Dasaratha’s son (Rama) nor Nanda’s son (Krisna), God is formless, is neither born, nor does He die. He is neither in the image at Puri, nor in the Saligramas (holy stones found in the Churebhawar/ mine of stones). This is no wonder that the Muslim believers, Mohsin Fani and Abul Fazl thought him to be a Muwahid (a pupil and believer of one God), and the Sikhs consider he is as great a bhakta as their first Guru Nanak (*Janam Shahi*). Kabir had built his shrine between the Ganga and Yamuna, where he fixed his mind on *Sunya* there, as early he claimed that that reversing his breath and piercing the six *cakras* (82). He was also influenced by Buddhism and Yaga. Like Buddhist who believed that *chita* (pyre) is the Buddha (The Lankavatara Sutra) and Gorakhnath who believed that mind is everything and of the nature of *Sunya*,

Absolute mind or intellect

Kabir says that Mind (Un- man i.e. the Absolute Mind is like *Sunya*). He defines Mind as everything and it is independent and without base i.e. mind should be fair and free without burden (s). Kabir energizes that Mind (viz. the Absolute Mind) is Rama. But an ordinary and relative mind (viz. in- man) is like That Mind or Intellect (*gyaan*) (30). Sant Kabir suggests us to join the former mind (in- man) to the latter like salt in water by the practice of *Sadhana* (yoga). Such a way of merging is to attain the stainless (*akal niranjan*), the Absolute without any quality and defect and *Sunya* (82). Bhakti today strives to attain ‘That Mind’ (Absolute and Transcendental Mind) by his/her own means of *Sadhana*, Bhakti or yoga. Sant Kabir, further, says that “That Mind and merging mind (i.e. ordinary mind) in it reaches then *Sunya* (or destination)” (31). Such way of merging the two minds results in bliss.

Kabir, first sant

Contrary to this method, Kabir said that several Bhaktas could neither know the essence of ordinary mind nor the essence of ‘That Mind’ (man unahun na jana) (87). Kabir says that we recall God in our daily work where we feel secure therein and dream, and keep solemn respect and place for God in our heart. He is in one’s own heart. Kabir says there is no use of going to or visiting yoga ashram, idol worship, pilgrimages, and Vedic study too. The literature of Kabir is depth in literature that impacts a kind of harassment to the devotional path. These approaches and accesses to God are futile asceticism. Kabir assures God’s rules and regulations are that one should have earthly happiness as well as liberation. He further says that God (Rama) is the infinite Brahman. The similar solemn preaching of Kabir reminds me of the great poet laureate, Lamxi Prasad Devkotta’s poem entitled *Yatri* (or pilgrims). The significance of this poem comes out in this line: “Our Body is Temple and

Our Soul is an Idol of Temple and Head is the Pinnacle of the Temple.....” (12). Kabirdas was considered to be the first saint (sant) and (adisant) in his tradition of good and Holy men.

Conclusion

A number of sants after Kabir were Dadu, Dariya, Carandas, Sahajobai, Garibdas, Palatudas, Malukadas, though they were not the followers of Kabir-panthis or Kabir-way (83). However, they were not dualists because their prayers and preaching (viz. *bhaktis and bhajans*) were pure literature (visista and suddha). They were totally different from the Bhakti motive of Tulsidas, Mirabai, and Surdas, who pursued traditional Hinduism, Caste and Stages – in – life, idol worship and bhakti of God who is Sagun and accepts re-birth. Nabhaji, the author of Bhakti-Mala, says forcefully that his study is of historic significance (83). Kabir refused to accept the Brahmanical four stages of life e.g. birth, growth, decline and death as well as caste discrimination. Literature of Bhakti motive emerges from self-motive and its impacts of knowledge merge to other-motive. He (Nabhaji) did not argue about the six Hindu philosophy systems (83). Bhakti was the true religion for Kabir, but it was useless without Bhajan (singing of God’s name). He taught Hindus and Muslims similar lesson through his compositions. Both Hindus and Muslim followers praised his teaching equally.

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