CHAPTER-IV

EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT
OF BHAKTI IN SUBAH

1. Origin:

The Hindus treat their religion from the point of view of emancipation (Moksa), from the bondage of birth and death, which is the ultimate end of human life. To attain Salvation, they recognized three paths i.e. Gyan (knowledge), Karma (Action) and Bhakti (devotion).¹ The ‘Bhakti Marga’ has been defined as worship of a personal deity in a spirit of love, as personal faith in personal God, love for him as far as human being, the dedication of everything to his service.² The Bhakti is both a means as well as an end in spiritual life. Bhakti as a means is called ‘Sadhna Bhakti’ or Gauni bhakti or Apara Bhakti.

The root ‘Bhaj’ in the sense of serving (Sevana) gives the clue to the meaning of this term. It is serving or worshiping the Divine, generally with the help of names or forms, ritualistic or emotion.³ It implies a certain code of conduct (Acarā) and Upasna (worship, Puja). This term (Bhakti) possibly occurs for the first time in ‘Svetasavatara Upanisad’ but it is noted that the idea of God of Grace and doctrine of

² Ibid.
Bhakti. From the time of “Svetasvatara Upanisad” onward Bhakti became an indispensable term for the using the sense of faith and devotion. There is emphasis in Bhagvad Gita on love and devotion to God. The attitude of love to the supreme continued to be recommended in the Bhagvata Purana’ and even in late medieval commentaries on Brahma Sutra, in Bhagavad there is a prayer:

‘Lord may our speech be engaged in recounting your qualities, our ears in learning your stories, our hands in doing your service for you, our mind in the remembrance of your feet, our head is being to this world which is your dwelling peace and our eyes in gazing at the saints who are you living images on earth’.

The ‘Astadhyay’ of Panini and the Buddhist work speak of this term in the sense of love directed to God. ‘Navada’ defines it as the nature of intense love for God. It is of the nature of love (Preman) which reaches its acme of the perfection (Porama). It is of the nature of ‘Amrata’ (Nectar of immortality). Sandilya explains as absolute devotion to God.

7 Prem Lata, Mystic saints of India; Ramanuja, pub. Sumit Publications, Delhi-1980, p.106.
In later devotional literature a distinction is drawn between Bhakti and Preman. Bhakti is the spontaneous attachment for the desired object, God being entirely possessed by and absorbed in Him. Preman is the most concentrated love for God which is full of the most intense attachment, and which purifies the heart completely. Divine love (Preman) is the completion and perfection of devotion – Bhakti.

This movement was initiated as a cult of love and devotion based on the Bhagvad Gita and other sacred ancient Hindu text by Alwar and Adiyar Brahmins of South India. The 7th century was its starting period – From 8th to 15th Centuries were its home religious reforming place. In which many Hindu philosophical saints like – Shankaracharya, Nimbarka, Madhvacharya, Basava, Nimaditya, Vallabhacharya Ramanuja, etc. not only enriched with their new provoking thought but also expanded their philosophical concepts. This movement reached among common people.

These philosopher saints are as follows:

2. The Philosopher of Bhakti:

The two main ideologies of Hindu philosophy are ‘Advaita’ view of a formless God of which the main exponent was Shankaracharya and the second view of ‘Dvaita’, in which God is endowed with attributes and the main exponent of this doctrine was ‘Madhvacharya’, Vallabhacharya, 

---

9 Tarachand op.cit., p.84.
and others. Another philosopher saint Ramanuja propounded a theory of *vishiht dvaita*, Vishnsht mean (qualified). His theory stands between Advaita and ‘Dvaita’ philosophy. In this concept of Ramanuja’s “although Brahman is qualified, it is not dual (advaita).°

Shankaracharya:

He was born in a Nambudri Brahman family of Kerala. There is no any certain date about his birth but the scholar reached the conclusion that he was in eight century. The Shankara’s philosophy of dualism dealt fatal blow to Buddhism and attempted to rally the Hindu sects together.° The ‘*Advaitist*’ believed the world to be illusory; a mistaking, a peace of rope lying on the ground for a snake. When knowledge dispels this illusion, as a lamp lighting up the dark the unreality of the world becomes the reality of Brahman. The seer realises that the thing which likes before him is a rope only. And the misconception of the snake vanishes. According to Shankara the world is unreal (*Mithya*) and Brahma is real. Thus the Brahman is the one without a second. There is nothing except Brahman. The Advaita philosopher believes that God (*Brahman*) and the soul (*Atman*) are one, and when the soul is emancipated it goes to God of whose essence it is.°

---


° Prem lata *op.cit.*, p.106.
Madhvacharya:

Madhvacharya also known as ‘Anand Thirtha’ (b.1197 AD-D.1276 AD) was son of Madhyagaha Bhatt, lived in the city of Rajasthan near Udiipi, close to Shrinageri Math of Shankara. He spent his early child hand with the holy men and later on came under the influence of ‘Achyutapareksha’ at Udiipi. Madhva’s main opposition was naturally against Shankarites but he had also some different views in some respect from Ramanuja’s doctrine too.

The fundamental difference between Shankara and Madhva is about the soul. He did not believe in the qualified Monism of Ramanuja and emphasized the doctrine of duality, based mainly upon Bhagvat Purana. He is of the opinion that the great obstacle in the path of Salvation was the belief in the identity of Brahma & Jiva. Madhava’s views about reincarnation is also differed from other Hindu philosophers. According to him ‘The supreme lord is never touched or affected by physical substance. He cannot therefore take a human shape and descend on the earth, although he may bestow His grace on human beings’.

Nimbarka:

Another great philosopher was Nimbarka who tried to reconcile the two views. His philosophy is ‘dvaitadvaita - i.e. Monism-cum-dualism.

---

He conceived of God as both formless and with form. He was born in Nimbarpur (Karnataka) but spent most of his time in Vrindavan (Mathura, U.P.). R.G. Bhandarkar has given a supposed date of his death as 1172 AD. Nimbarka was a Telgu Brahman. He attached great importance to attainment of knowledge and devotion.  

**Ramanuja:**

Beside above these philosopher of Bhakti, Ramanuja has a great place among them. He was born in 1016 AD at Tirupati or Perampur near Madras. His father name was Kesava and mother was Kanti-Mati. He received his education at Conjeevaram and Shrirangam. Due to his scholarship acquired a position of authority among philosopher. He wrote a commentary on ‘Brahmasutra’ and refuted Shankara, offered his own interpretation on theistic idea. His commentaries on ‘Brahmasutra’ popularly known as ‘Sri Bhasya’.  

Ramanuja believed Brahma as supreme and individual souls as modes or attribute of Brahma. He is of the opinion that Brahma has two attributes – Purusha and Prakriti. Brahma is container while Purusha and ‘Prakriti’ are contained. In other words, he emphasise on Bhakti as principle means of attaining the supreme reality (God) or final bliss and

---

16 Tarachand, *op.cit.*, p.100.
even outcast person also get salvation in complete surrendering to God.\textsuperscript{17}

It is a well known fact that ‘Shankara’ was the founder of Bhakti and Ramanuja had systematized and propagated all over India. The medieval Bhakti movement in real sense begins with Ramanuja and later on bifurcated into two to aspect of Brahma which was known as the \textit{sagun} (qualified) and \textit{Nirgun} (Non-qualified).

In \textit{Sagun}, Brahma had various qualities viz. \textit{Sat}, \textit{Chit}, \textit{Anand}. Brahman manifested himself into the world in many ways. As He was in river, mountains, plant, etc. This belief gave reality to the necessity not only on being God but also of being beautiful. This aspect of \textit{Bhakti} called \textit{Sagun Bhakti} (God with attributes). And the Second aspect is \textit{Nirguna} (Non-qualified) or (God without attributes). Here emphasized is on that nothing could be said about Him, words are in adequate to express His nature. No special quality could be attached with Him. He is simply absolute. This Brahma was known as \textit{Nirguna Brahma} and the followers of this doctrine called \textit{Nirguna saints}.\textsuperscript{18} The main exponent of this school of thought was Ramnanda.

\textbf{7. Bhakti Movement in the Subah:}

The Bhakti movement, who brought into north India particularly Suba Allahabad, was Ramananda, who believed in the doctrine of devotion preached by Ramanuja.

\textsuperscript{18} Tarachand, \textit{op.cit.}, p.144.
Ramananda: Ramananda was born in a Kanya-Kubja Brahman family of Prayag (Allahabad). He got his schooling at Prayag and Benaras and visited many religious places of North India. His first teacher was vedantist and later he became the disciple of Raghvananda, who belonged to ‘Shri sect’ of Ramanuja. But he found himself too radical to accommodate with the ideas of his Guru and established his own School. It is said that he came into contact with some learned Muslims of Banaras due to which his thought took a new way.

A very important feature of his philosophy was vivid faith in the reality of one personal God, spiritual and invisible, whom he called Ram and detachment from rigidity of Hindu rituals and vehemently opposed the cast system of Hindu society. He spent most of his life at Banaras as religious teacher and observed that due to the rigidity of the cast system a number of Hindus of lower cast embracing Islam on very flimsy ground, such as taking food and water touched by Muslims. So he emphasized on that cast should not be a barrier in religious and social intercourse. By this move, the rigours of caste distinctions were greatly softened and a large number of Hindus from lower caste attracted towards him. The

---


20 Pitamber Datt Badthawal, Ramanand Ki Hindi Rachnaen (Hindi), Lucknow-Sam 2007.

greatest contribution of Ramananda to this movement was that he used ‘Hindi’ in place of ‘Sanskrit’ due to which he reached among common people.

The followers of Ramananda were called ‘Ramanandi Vairagis’ or ‘Avdhutis’ i.e. (liberated ones). These Sadhus lived under lesser rigid discipline than Shankaras ‘Sanyasis. The main centre of activities of Ramanandis were Allahabad, Benaras and the vicinity of Chunar. His important followers or disciples were Kabir, Anantanand, Sukhanand, Sursuranand, Padmavati, Pipa, Dhanna, Narhariyanand, Raidas, Sena and Brahmanand. The teachings of Ramananda gave rise to two school of religious thought one conservative and the other radical. The legends attached to his disciples show the popular character of Bhakti movement.

Nirguna School:

In the whole sweep of north Indian religion there is no voice more stringent, more passionate, and more confident than that of Kabir. If Hinduism has prophet, an Amos or a Jermia, here he is not in the sense that he forecast anything but that he was ever adds with the world around him, always ready to fling the dart of criticism in the direction of established religion.

\[22\] Ibid., p.78.

\[23\] Tarachand, op.cit., p.145.
Kabir lived in Benaras (Kashi) belongs to Nirgun school of thought. His life story is mixed up with legends and traditional accounts. It is said that he was a son of a Brahman widow, who in order to hide her shame, left the baby by the side of a tank in Benaras, where Niru and Nima, the Muslim weaver couple picked up and adopted. Kabir had a saintly nature from his child days. He came in touch with various saints of different sects. There are many traditions relating to his discipleship. One is that, he was disciple of Shaikh Taqi but due to some differences left his company and another is about Ramananda. Though he did not mentioned his Guru but it was assumed that Ramananda was his spiritual preceptor.

According to Mohsin Fani “At the Time, when he was in search of spiritual guide, visited the best of the Musalmans and Hindus but he did not find what he sought, at last somebody gave him direction to an old man of bright genius, the Brahman Ramananda”.

He became disciple of Ramananda and stayed most of his time at Benaras. Later on migrated to Maghar (Gorakhpur), where taken his last breath.

---

The teaching and mission of Kabir was to preach a religion of love which would unite all caste and creeds. He tried to synthesize of the conflicting ideology of Hinduism and Islam. He did not believe in differences of religion and condemn idol worship. The God he worshiped was formless and believes that the ultimate goal of the human soul is unity with God.

He had a large number of followers but he did not favor to establish a sect of his own, but later on after his death, we find a Panth (Sect) known as (Kabir Panth). The two of his prominent disciple Dharamdas and Suratgopal carried out the activities of the Panth in the Suba.27

Later, the Panth divided into two sections one of which its headquarter at Kabir Chaura (Beneras) and the other in Chattisgarh. of Central Province. The former is sometime called as ‘Bap’ (Father) and the later the Mai (Mother) Section. Beside it there were other divisions also.28

Surat Gopal was the founder of the Kashi (Banaras) branch of Kabir Panth which is called Kabir Chaura. This centre also controlled the activities of Maghar Centre. Second disciple Dharamdas has founded of Kabir Panth branch in Baghelkhand. Gradually these centers became an important and holy place of Kabir Panthis.29

28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
There were some basic differences in the doctrine of the two

A. The Kabir Chaura Section do not think it proper for the Gurus to marry while Bandogarh branch has no such restrictions

B. The Kabir Chaura panth do not visit the holy places of Bandogarh Section, but the followers of Dharamdas do visit the Kabir Chaura and Maghar.

C. In the Bandogarh Section, there were some female Vairaginis of the sect, who were usually the wives of men who had become vairagis. The Gurus of the Kabir Chaura were rigid in these matters and did not admit a single women within their fold.

D. There are also slight differences in the 'Tilak' of the two different branch of this Panth.

E. In Kabir Chaura branch there was only one 'Mantra' but in the Bandogarh section two 'Mantras' are given at the time of initiation in the sect, the Guru Mantra and 'Tinka Mantra' subsequently three more are given, called 'Panchnam' 'Satnam and Harnam'.

F. The Bandogarh branch of the Panth office of the Guru is hereditary while Kabir Chaura branch is against it.

G. The followers of Kabir Chaura did not recognizes the Gurus of the other branches.

The immediate disciple of Kabir was Suratgopal, sometimes regarded as the real organizer of the 'Panth'; succeeded him at Kashi and

---

30 F.E. Keay op.cit., p.152.
31 Ibid., p.94.
also recognized by the Kabir Panthis of Maghar.\(^{32}\) There are two shrine at Maghar, one in the hands of Hindu Pujari, who was a sadhu of the Panth derived his authority from Kabir Chaura branch and the second shrine under Mohammadan weavers who claimed to have had charge of the tomb from the time of Kabir's death. He has the title of Ghani Karan Kabir. The Mohammadan incharge of this shrine do not regard Kabir as God but simply a Pir or Mohammadan saint.\(^{33}\)

It is said that Suratgopal was in the Gaddi of Kabir Chaura in 1599 AD and taken Samadhi in 1651 AD. The Guru Parampara of the Kashi branch has been continuing since the death of Suratgopal to this day. The twenty one Guru of Kabir Chaura covers a period of about five hundred years and have fairly old traditions. In regarding the other branch of Kabir Panthis i.e. Bandogarh or Mai Section, its founder was Dharamdas. He belonged to the 'Kasavdhant Baniya' caste and lived at Bandogarh. It was the formerly capital of the Baghel Kings, but it was taken by the Emperor Akbar in 1597 AD.\(^{34}\)

His real name was 'Judawan' and Kabir is said to have changed it to Dharamdas.\(^{35}\) There is very little information about the history of this

\(^{32}\) Tarachand, \textit{op.cit.}, p.181.
\(^{33}\) \textit{Uttar Bharat Ki Sant ..... op.cit.}, p.266-268.
\(^{35}\) F.E.Keay, \textit{op.cit.}, p.98.
branch is known except the names of the *Gurus*.\(^{36}\) A great contribution goes to Dharamdas in growth and development of this panth in the Bandogarh region. His two sons namely, Narayandas and Churamani succeeded to *Gaddi* after his death.\(^{37}\) This branch had also exercised much influence over the masses and had a large number of followers.

Kabir was strictly monotheist. The recurring theme of his poetry is that there is one supreme God and none is equal to Him

\[
साहब मेरा एक है दुजा कहा न जाय।

dujā sahāb jō kadh, sahāb mēra rīsāy।

“My Lord is one supreme God,

There is no other God, if I say there is another God also, My loved will be displeased with me”.\(^{38}\)

He therefore called upon others also to worship the one supreme God.

“O Shameless man, art thou not ashamed why does thou forsake God, and go to some one else”.\(^{39}\)

He used many names for God and explained that various name point to the one reality. He says;

अल्लाह-राम फरीम कैसी, हजरत नाम धराया।

गहना एक कनकले गढना, इनि मह भाव न दुजा।।


\(^{37}\) *Ibid*.


\(^{39}\) Macauliff VI, p.159.
“Allah, Ram, Kareem Keshawa, Hari. Hazrat are but names, that are given, Jewels and Jewels are made of one gold: but it is in one nature only”.

He believed in Panthism (Hama-ost) i.e. He is everywhere. According to this, he identified the human soul with the universal soul (Tat-vam-Asi, thou art that), which means there is no difference between God and man. The human soul is article of the ultimate reality of Brahman the two are the same.

As the rivers ultimately merge in the ocean so the human soul will merge in the Divine soul:

दरियाब की तहर दरियाब है जो।
दरियाब और कहर में भिन्न कोयम।।
उठे तो नीर है बैठे तो नीरि है।
कहरे जो दूसरा किस तरह होवन।।
उसी का फट के नाम कहा धरो।
कहर के कहे क्या नीर कोयम।।
जल ही फेर जब जल परब्रह्म में।
ज्ञान कर देख माल कोयम।।

“The river and its waves are one Surf where is the difference between the river and its waves?

---

41 Dabistan-e-Mazahib. P.202., According to Mohsin Fani “he spoke on pantheism like a great scholar and his verses (on this subject) became very popular”.
When the wave's rises, it is the water, and when it falls, is the same water again.

Tell me, Sir, where is the distinction?

Because it has been named as wave,

Shall it no longer be considered as water?

Within the supreme Brahma, the worlds are being told like bend,

Look upon that rosary with the eyes of wisdom.\(^{42}\)

The Hindus worshiped God in the form of an idol, Kabir severally criticized this practice and decline that idols are lifeless object, it is folly to worship them, He sang.

\begin{verse}
पाहन पूजे हरि मिले, तो मैं पूजू पहार।
ताले यह चाकी भली, पीस खाय संसार।।

“If by worship stones one can find God,
I shall worship a mountains, better
Than these stones (idols) are the stones
Of the flour-mill with which men
Grind their corn”.\(^{43}\)

हम ती एक-एक करि जाना।
दोहे कही ठिकैं की दोजग, जिन नाहिंन पहिचाना
एक पवन एक ही पानी, एक जोति संसार।
एक ही खाक घड़े सब भांड़े, एक ही सिरजन हारा।।

“Only the one of recognized
Those who call Him two will go to hell,
For they know not the reality,
\end{verse}

\(^{42}\) Kabir Bani \textit{op.cit.}, p.83.

\(^{43}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p.129; Macauliffe, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.163-203.
All human beings are sustained by the
Same air and water, and are
Illumined by the same light,
All have been formed out of the same
Dust, and there creator is the same".44

He rejects incarnation theory which is one of the principles of Hinduism. He says;

"They believe in Ten Avatars, but no Avatar can be the infinite spirit, for he suffers the results of his deeds: The supreme one must be other than this".45

He was totally against the practices of the ascetics (yogis) and declared that their exercises are useless without spiritual devotion. In the following verses he satire on ascetics:

“The yogis dyes his garments, instead of dyeing his mind in the colours of love: He sits within the temple of the Lord, leaving Brahma to worship a stone. He pierces holes in his ears, he has a great beard and matted locks, he looks like a goat: He goes fourth into the wilderness, killing all his desires, and turns himself into an eunuch. He shaves his heads and dyes his garments; he reads the Geeta and became a mighty talker, Kabir says you are going to the doors of death, bound hand and feet.”.46

45 Kabir Bani op.cit., p.81.
46 Ibi., p.135, Macauliff op.cit., p.231.
He has suggested to achieve the God *i.e.* Union with God, the guidance of a Competent preceptor or *Guru*. The Guru shows the Lord.

‘O, Brother, my heart yearns to that true Guru, who fills the cup of true love, and drinks of its himself, and offers it to then to me. He remove the veil from the eyes, and gives the true vision of Brahma’.

He was against the caste system and inequality of man based on religion, tribe or trace or family. He ridiculed the notion of untouchability and laid emphasis on the essential unity of mankind. He sarcastically remarks:

```
जो तु शाभन शाभनी जाय।
हो आन बात है काहे न आए।।

If you are a Brahman being born of a Brahman, why have you not been born in a different way”
```

```
हमारे कैसे लोहू तुम्हारे कैसे दुध।
तुम कैसे शाहमण पाए हम कैसे सूद।।

‘Do you have milk in your vains while we have blood? If not how are you a Brahman and we Sudra”
```

\(^{47}\) Kabir Bani, *op.cit.*, p.103.
“If you are different (i.e. superior) from others, as you claim why were you not born circumcised”.

Another place he sang!

कहे कबीर चेततु रे भीतीू
बोलन हरा तुरन्त न हिंदु

wake up you fool, the supreme spirit is neither Turk nor Hindu

He says:

एक बूढ़ एक मसा मूसर एक चाम एक चाम एक गुदा।
एक जोति थे सब उतपना कौन ब्रह्मन कौन सुदा।।

“All human beings are produced by a drop of semen and have the same skin and bones. The discharge arch their bodily functions in the same manner. All have been born from the same supreme Being (Jyoti or light), Hence How can one be called a Brahman and another Sudra.”

He song:

एक जनलिह सब उपजा
कौन बहन कौन खुदा

All the creative originally belong to the light, None is Brahman and Sudra.

He emphasized on the fundamental unity of the Hindu and Turks.

Kabir uses the word Turk for all Muslims especially for ruling elite of

---

49 Ibid., pada-56, p.106.
50 Ibid., pada-57, p.106.
51 Kabir Sahib op.cit., p.68.
Muslim who had came from Turkistan, Iran or Central Asia, who looked down upon the Indians: says:

एक निरंजन अलाव मेरा ।
हिंदु तुरक बहु नहीं मेरा ॥

The God (Allah) is one

"The Hindus and Turks are not two" 52

Kabir severely criticized the externalia, rituals and practices of the two faiths, pilgrimage and Haj, ritual bathing, image worship, formal prayer (Namaz and counting rosary), fasting, applying sandalwood paste or ashes on the forehead, weaving sacred threads etc., were meaningless to him. He pointed out that these irrational practices are the cause of Hindu - Muslim conflict.

Like all other religious thinker Kabir also sought union with God and release from the bound of transmigration. The prevalent systems of both Hindus & Muslims could not satisfy Kabir He claims to have examined both religions.

हमारा शागरा रहा न कोऊ। पंडित मुल्ला छाड़ि देओऊ।
पंडित मुल्ला जो लिखी दोया। छाड़ि चले हम कहू न तीया।

I have no quarrel with anyone I have given up both the Pandits and mullahs.

What the Pundits and Mullahs prescribed for me.

I have received no advantage from and have abandoned.53

---

He rejects the differences based on faith. He asserts again and again that Hindus and Muslims were the servants of God and equally dear to Him. The conflict was chalked out and propagated by the religious leaders of both the communities to full fill their worldly desires. He is of the view that the ideal society was one which was not dominated by priests and Mullahs, and when the individual could distinguish between the true and false and realize God of Goodliness in his own heart on the basis of self realization, and following the path set out by a true saint.

Raidas:

Raidas was born in Benaras or its vicinity. His father name was Raghu and mother Ghurbiniya belong to caste ‘Chamar’, a very low in social status. Raidas himself accepted many places in their verses about his profession or caste Chamar (leather worker, cobbler).

There is forty ‘pad’ in Guru Granth Sahib in which Raidas mentioned as resident of Kashi (Benaras) and from Chamar (leather

---

53 Kabir Bani op.cit., p.199.
worker) caste. He had not received traditional education or learning but what he achieved only from in company of Saints and traveling. He accepted that he received the *Gyan* (knowledge) in the *Pathashala* of Hari. He was so much devoted to religious men and saints and used to spent money on them. Due to such type of nature, his father became displeased and turned him out of the house. He constructed a hut behind his home and lived with his wife joyously followed his ancestral work of leather by mending shoes. His simple way of life and spiritual knowledge attracted a number of people. It is said that a Rajput queen Rani Jhali of Chittod became his disciple.

There is a traditional story about Rani Jhali and Raidas: that when Rani Jhali traveled to Banaras with some of his court Brahmans, entered in the discipleship of Raidas, so the Brahman raised hue and cry and the matter came in the court of Banaras king for justice. The King called Raidas and Brahmans to court and announced that he would value the claim of whoever could show that the lord inclined his direction. The Brahmans chanted the correct *Vadic* verses, but was no effect, when Raidas sang a verse in which he asked God to reveal himself as the one

---

57 Saint Raidas *op.cit.*, p.27.
whose nature is to rescue the fallen (*Patit Pavan*), the image responded by jumped directly into the poet's lap.\(^60\)

Basically he was a saint of *Nirgun* School of *Bhakti* like Kabir. His cardinal doctrines are very similar to that of Kabir. His hymns breathe a spirit of humility and self-surrender. He did indulge in high philosophical speculation about the nature and essence of God and His relation with the world and man.\(^61\) Raidas did not opposed the caste system directly but subscribes to the idea that differences of caste or status do not matter where saints, and their devotees are concerned. He is of the view that God does not reside only in families where there a.e *Vaishnava Sadhus*. He resides everywhere and does not distinguish between high castes and outcastes, between the rich and the poor. For Him, Brahman, Kshatrya, Vaishya, *Shudras*, *Dom*, *Chandal* and *Mlechha* (the untouchable) are the same.

He believed in God as the absolute Lord of all and identical with self. He says:

\[
\text{एक अनेक एक हरि, कही कौन विष दुःख।}
\]
\[
\text{Hari is in all and all is in Hari}
\]
\[
\text{Who else second to worship.}\(^62\)
\]

\[
\text{तोही मोहि मोहि तोहि अन्तर ऐसा।}
\]

\(^{60}\) Songs of the saints...*op.cit.*, p.12; *Uttar Bharat Ki Sant...* *op.cit.*, p.238

\(^{61}\) Tarachand *op.cit.*, p.179.

\(^{62}\) *Raidas Ki Bani-* *op.cit.*, Pada-55, p.25.
Thou art I, and the difference between me and thee is like water in a vessel of Gold and in the wave.\textsuperscript{63}

In his view God is not identical with any of the incarnations; he says.

"जो राम ही सबै जगजाने । भरम भूले रे भाइ।"

"The Ram is whom the people recognize Him, they are in error about it, o’brother".\textsuperscript{64}

According to him, the world is the play of God and is inclined to the view that it is illusory, at any rate not worth paying attention to

बाजीगर सो राधि रहा, बाजी का मरम न जाना।
बाजी छूट साच बाजीगर, जाना मन पतियाना।।

“He arranges it like a player (Bazigar), no one knows the secret of his play. The play is false, only the player is true, by knowing this the mind is satisfied”.\textsuperscript{65}

He believed in the immanence of God.

“Between Thee me between me thee what difference can there be?

The same as between gold and the bracelet, between water and its rights”\textsuperscript{66}

ढोथी भाया ढोथी माया।
ढोथा धरि बिन जनम गवांया।।
ढोथा पड़ित ढोथी बानी।
ढोथी हरि बिन सबै बानी।

\textsuperscript{63}Ibid., pada -29, p.15.
\textsuperscript{64}Ibid., pada 9/2 p.6.
\textsuperscript{65}Ibid., Pada-10/2 – p.6,
\textsuperscript{66}Macauliffe op.cit., pp.321-328.
“The body is empty, the Maya (Nature) is empty, emptily hast thou wasted life without Hari, The temple and luxurious living are empty and empty is the dependence on other Gods”.  

Another place he says that:

“O Rama, Thou alone art wise, thou art eternity without guise, thou art King (Sultan) of Kings. I am thy ignorant broken (Shikasta) servant (band). I have no manners, no fortune. I am a sinner, an alien (gharib), head less, cowardly and black-hearted. Thou art powerful (qadir) and capable of taking me across the ocean. I am greedy and cunning. This body of mine is shattered and broken, and my mind is full of many apprehensions. Raidas the slave, begs his lord (Sahib) vouch safe to me a sight (didar) of there”.  

And therefore he calls upon Him out of the depth of his heart:

“Save me, save me, O holy Lord of three worlds”

---

67 Raidas Ki Bani op.cit., pada 30, p.15.
68 Ibid., pada 30, p.15.
69 Tarachand op.cit., p.181.
He was against the traditional idol worship. He is of the view that God is omnipresent, Omnipotent, and cannot be a sand statue (idole). He has also denied pilgrimage, fastes, shaving of heads and dancing in temples.

He was also critical on the lamp waving ceremony (Arti) conducted in front of deity images, suggested that the ritual is part of a hypocritical system. He says:

आरती कहा लो जोदै, सेवण दास अच्छे होवै।।
बावन कंचन दीप घरायै, जह बैरागी दृुष्टि न आवै।।
कोटी भान जाकि सोभा रूमी, कहा आरती अगि धूसै।।
पाँच तत्व अरु श्रीगुली माया, जो देख सो सकल समाया।।
कहै रैदास देखा माहिं, सकल जीनि रोम सम नाही।।
What have you brought for ‘aarti’ what do you see?
It astonishes your servant and slave!
You have made fifty-two golden lamps
Fool, you have not even glimpsed renunciation!
The brilliance of this hair is ten million suns
How can you perform His aarti with smoke a fine?
The five elements and the three guns of Maya
Whatever is visible is all His creation
Raidas says, I have seen within,
All your flames cannot equal a single hair”.

70 Raidas Ki Bani op.cit., pada-82, p.39.
He rejected only outer stricter of devotion or show-ism and emphasized on heartily devotion and spiritual life.

He tried to make some reconciliation between Hindu – Muslims. He says:

कृष्ण करीम राम हरि राधव जब लगि न एक पेषा।
बेद कलेव कुरान पुरान न सहज एक कांटि मेवा। 171

He did not satire any one but propagated the ulterior motives of religion, is to adopt the humanitarian values in life and keep distance from the evils of world.

His teachings resulted removal of all social evils like; distinction between higher and lower castes, Hindu-Muslims social rift, out castes in religious field. His teachings developed Hindu-Muslims unity in the contemporary society.

It is evident that people of all sections of society holding positions of power and prestige as well as common men followed his teaching irrespective of their cast background. Commenting on his raised status says:

जाति भी ओछी करम भी ओछा,

ओछा कसब हमारा।

नीचे से प्रभु उच कियो है

कह प्रभु रायदास चमारा।।

171 Sant Raidas op.cit., pp.190-191.
"My cast is low my actions are low,
And even my profession is low.
Says Raidas, yet the Lord has raised me high". 72

**Another place says:**

"He was a Chamar untouchable by caste, and tanned the skin of
dead animals near Benaras, yet now Brahmans and chiefs (*Pradhans*)
salute him". 73

In his view that A family who has a true follower of the lord. Is
neither high caste nor low caste, lordly or poor.

**Malukdas:**

Malukdas was born at Kara (near Allahabad) in 1574 AD and died
in 1682 AD. 74 He was the son of Lala Sunderdas, who was a Khattri by
caste with the surname ‘Kakkar’. He married and had a daughter, lived a
family life and died issueless. Therefore, his nephew Ram Sahay
succeeded him at his seat (*Gaddi*) at Kara. 75 There is no exact information
about his Guru. Some scholar says that he was disciple of Murar Swami,
some traced as Krishndas and Vitthaldas. While some of the view that he
was disciple of Kilh. The author of Uttar Bharat Ki Sant Parampara has
mentioned in his work that he was disciple of Murarswami. 76

---

72 *Raidas Ki Bani op.cit.*, pada 87/4 p.42.
73 *Sant Raidas* – pada-60, p.172.
74 Uttar Bharat Ki Sant... *op.cit.*, p.505; Tarachand *op.cit.*, p.189.
Malukdas, from his younger age inclined towards asceticism and spent his time in the company of Sadhus and Sanyasis. His sisters’s son Sathradas wrote a versified biography of the Saint, named ‘Parichyay’. He was one of the saint who lived in quest of the truth and whose teachings spread far wide. A number of stories and miracles are attached with his life.

It is said that an official staff of Aurangzeb, Fateh Khan was sent to summon him in the imperial court, but he was so much influenced by Malukdas and entered into his discipleship and never returned back to imperial camp. Who later on called Mir Madhav. There is a reference that the 9th Guru of the Sikhs, Tegh Bahadur came to Kara and met Malukdas in his religious assembly.\(^\text{77}\)

He had twelve disciples but six name are known i.e. Mir Madhar, Laldas, Ramdas, Udayrai, Prabhudas and Sudama. Who established their centers Kabul, Patna, Kara Jaipur, Gujarat, Multan, in spite of so many difficulties in transport at that time.\(^\text{78}\)

The main characteristic of the teachings of the saint was laid equal stress on Guru and God, but believed in supremacy of God and was greatly devoted to Him. His religious doctrine was the same as Kabir. According to Tarachand, ‘He teaches that the true religion as an inward

\(^{77}\) Ibid., p.512.
\(^{78}\) Ibid., p.513.
faith, that *Maya*. Is the enemy of man and God’s name is the only protection against it, that the world is transitory and the worldly relations are no avails, that man is born of dust, that those who are the dogs of the world, that salvation is obtained by knowing the self, killing pride and egotism, controlling passions, trusting the Guru and loving God’. 79

He had very soft and humanistic approaches in his heart and always be ready to bear the sorrows of people of the world.

He believes in one supreme authority and feels always His presence in every place or learns about His presence. He disfavors the idol worship. His God is without attribute and formless. He says:

जेती देखी आत्मा तेवे सातिगराम।
बोलनदा राँच्ये, पत्थर से क्या काम। 80

Like other Nirguna saints he condemned the pilgrimage and says one place:

हम जानत तीरथ बढ़े, तीरथ हरि की आस।
जिनमे हिरदे हरि बसे, मोटे तिरथ हिम पास।।

“I know the pilgrimage is holy in search of Hari (God) but those who have Hari (God) in their pure hearts all the pilgrimage they have done”. 81

मक्का मदीना छारका, बद्रि और केदार।
बिना दया सब छूट है कहे मलुक विचार।।

Makka Madina Dwarka & Badri Everyplace is useless without mercy (on humanity), it is a thought of Maluk.82

He says that remembering God must be through heart and not on lip. God does not like showism.83 He too taught ones of religious and the unity of the Hindu and the Muslims: He says;

माला कहाँ और कहाँ तसबीह।
अब चेत इनहि कर टेक न टेको।।

“Where is string of beads (Mala) and the rosary (Tasbih), how awak and rally none on them”.

काफिर कौन मलेच्छ कहावत।
संध्या निवाज सकय करि देखे।।

“who is official (Kafir) and who is barbarian (Malecha) look upon Sandhya (Hindu worship) and prayer (Namaz) as one”.

कहाँ जमराज कहाँ जवराईल है।
काजी कहा जबती हिसाद के लेखे।।

Where does ‘Yama’ line and where is Gabriel? He himself is the judges(Qazi) who else keeps account?

Another place he says:

दाल मलूक कहा भरमी तुम।
राम रघीम कहावत एके।।

---

82 Ibid., pada-49, p.33.
83 Ibid., pada-40, p.32. सुमिमरन ऐसा किजिए, दूजा लही न कोय।
ओठ न फरक्त देखिए, प्रेम राखिए गोय।।
“Malukdas, why art thou in error, Ram an. Rahim are the names of one”.

The next saint of Nirguna School was Sena, a barber of caste, and was serving of the Raja of Bandogarh (Modern Rewa). It is said that he was a disciple of Ramananda. There is one hymn in *Adi-Granth*, in which he has used the name of Ramananda. In this hymn, it shows that he also believed that salvation could be attained by means of devotion. Like other Nirguna saints, he also rejected the outward forms of religion & rituals. He laid emphasis on the repetition of His name and meditation. There is a story told by the Nabhadas in his *Bhaktmal* which illustrates the saint dependence on God and His readiness to help him.

**Sagun school:** Tulsidas, a great poet and devotee of Rama, was born in a Saryu Brahman family in 1532 AD. in Rajpur, Disstt. Banda. His real name was ‘Rambhola’. The father of Tulsidas was Atma Ram Dube and mother Hulsi. At an early age Tulsidas became orphan but was brought up and educated by his father’s Guru Narsinghdas. He learnt *Sastras* and other religious works. The early life of Tulsi was spend in Rajpur (near Banda) and later shifted to Chitrkut. Tulsidas refers his

---

85 Uttar Bharat Ki Sant... *op.cit.*, p.233.
87 Tarachand – *op.cit.*, p.179.
childhood in his *Ratnawali*. He also refers to his first teacher Narhari Anand to whom he owed much.

It was at ‘Sukar Kheda’ that I was told again and again by my teacher the story of Rama but being a child I could only follow it partially on account of the limitations of my intelligence.\(^90\)

He lived in Benaras till the end of his life. It is said that on account of a taunt of his wife Ratnawali taken to life of a religious hermit. He wrote several books like *Ramacaritmanas. Gitavli, Kavitavli, Vinay Patrika, Prem Vatika, Hanoman Panchak, Ras Bhushan, Bajrang Sathika, Bharat-milap, Vijay Dohavli* etc.\(^91\) His magnum opus composition *Ramcaritmanas* widely known as the *Tulsi Ramayna* which enshrines highest ideals and enjoins the simplest practices of religious life. Being an ardent follower of the Rama cult depicted Rama as an incarnation of God, the Almighty. Rama was a personal and supreme God, which has feeling of compassion for the humanity which suffered. He has given vividly and eloquently description about Rama’s life, right from his birth to his coronation and therefore to the foundation of an ideal kingdom (Ram Rajya).\(^92\) He was worshiper of Ram and has drawn an

---

\(^90\) J.N. Farquhar *op.cit.*, p.328.


ideal picture of his favorite deity. His Rama (God) is the light of the universe. He is Permanent. His Rama is *Saguna* instead of *Nirguna*. Rama is Vishnu also and incarnation of Brahman. The power of Brahma is ‘Maya’ hence Rama is ‘Mayapat.’

The *Ramcharitmanas* is essentially a work of *Bhakti* of loving devotion, and this we could call the spiritual personal, experimental or mystic aspect of the work and guide to practical life. In this, he makes an exposition of religious devotion of highest order and laid stress upon knowledge, devotion, worship and meditation.

In his view on the best mean of Bhakti is name-Japa, repetition of name of lord. In *Balkand* and *Uttar Kand* of *Ramcharitmanas* has given stress several times on Rama name. R.G. Bhandarkar informs us that his path of devotion centered around Rama, is based upon a dualistic

---


94 Al-Srivastava, *op.cit.*, 92-95.

95 Manasa. Balkand vol.I.
philosophy with a leaving towards spiritual monism of Advaita system.\(^{96}\)

In this context, the supreme place in Ramcharitmanas was given to Rama. He is omnipresent and omniscient, a supreme power, who can make Brahma and Siva dance. He is creator of heaven and earth, and incarnate on earth in human form in order to destroy the evil and protect the good. All are born out of Rama and ultimately absorbed in Him and this merger will be salvation. He had duel approaches to society. The first-category based on the basis of essential qualities of individuals and the second, he appears to conform to the traditional concept of Varnashram.\(^{97}\)

He laid emphasis on that there should be no caste distinction among the devotees, was widely accepted. Tulsi says that as he is a devotee of Rama, he has no caste-now is he bothered about any body else caste. Another place he says that an untouchables who is a devotee of Ram is superior to anyone else for he recounts the name of Rama night and days.\(^{98}\)

In his view that a saint, although a Rajpoot or a weaver by caste can beg from anyone and can sleep anywhere. He condemns those

\(^{96}\) R.G. Bhandarkar *op.cit.*, pp.74-75.

\(^{97}\) Manasa, Aranyakand, p.94. जाति पाति कुल धर्म बढ़ाई। घन बल परिजन गुण चतुराई। भक्तिहीन न नौहारि। विनुजल नारिद विदिय जैसे।।

\(^{98}\) Mansa, Uttar Kand, vol.3. p.158.

कर्णदम नाहि आश्रम चारी। श्रुति विरोध रत सब नारि। कृपा श्रुति बचक भूप प्रजापान। कौत नाहि मान निगम अनुभासान।
Brahmans of the ‘Kali’ age that instead of devoting themselves to the study of the Vedas a teachings the other three caste, how to lead an ethical life, these Brahmans have given up true calling (Dhrama) became greedy, indulged in worldly pleasures. Further he says that the low born people consider themselves to be as learned as the Brahmans and take part in Japa-Tapa and Vrata (ascetic, practices and recitation of mantra) sit on high seat and discourses on the scriptures. They make the Brahman to worship them. He concludes that such Sudra spoil both this world and the other. 99

His views towards Sadhus position in cast ridden society was different. He believes that caste restriction do not apply to saints even Chandala i.e. a man of lowest caste, is better than a man of high caste, if the former is devotee of Ram or if a low caste Sadhu recite the name of Rama (God) every day is better than high born Sadhu.100 He tried to relate the Varnas in terms of intrinsic qualities rather than birth. He is of the view that before Bhaktas, all women are regarded as mothers, others property as poison, regards the lord as master, friend, father mother and preceptor. They give up the pride of caste, social position, wealth family

99 Ibid., नारी विवेक नर सफल गुसाई। नाचिनि नट नरकर की नाई।
शुद खलनिह उपदेश शाना। मेलि जनेज तली फुलाना।।
ते विन्देन सन पौंँ गुजार्थी। उभयसमुक निर्जाप नानाजाहि
बिन करहर लोहुप कामी। निराचार शाह्वदु की स्वामी।

100 Ibid., कृत युग श्रेष्ठ अग्राप पुणा मरण अक्ष योग।
जो गलि होई सो कलिहि हरि नाम ते परवहि लोग।
etc. and cherished the lord in his heart. They have compete humanity and free from all pride. Their mind have assimilated the principle of Dharma. Through these philosophical efforts, he tried to make an environment of harmony and brotherhood among his fellow religionists. His perception about Ramrajya is that, the people will performed their duties as per Verna and devoted on the path of Vedas and will be always happy and free from all ailments and have will be no cause or sorrow.

Vallabhacharya:

The next great saint Vallabhacharya belongs to Sagun School of Krishna cult of vaishnavism. He was a Tilang Brahman of south India, born in 1479AD/1535 VS. in Beneras. His father name was Lakshman Bhatta and grand father Ganapati Bhatta were very devoted to God and it is said that they had performed one hundred Soma sacrifice. This family was known for its learning scholarship and deep devotion. Vallabhas early name was Vidarbha. He was very intelligent and promising child and it is said that his birth was followed by some miraculous happenings.

Vallabhachary was destined to a life of scholarship and religious meditation and reform. In his early days he learnt four Vedas in four

---


months. The six *Shastras* and eighteen *Purana* were finished. He had learnt all scripture completed the whole education in Kashi.\(^{103}\)

Having heard about the religious disputation was being held at the court of the King of Vijanagara in south, went to participate in that discussion and this was about the nature of Brahma. He argued that Brahma was determinate nature.\(^{104}\) Here, he met ‘Vyasa-Tirtha’ the great disciple of Madhavacharya.

He traveled widely and during the long journey, the saint was deeply absorbed in the thinking of Vishnu the lord of the creation to attained enlightenment. He got the patronage of Krishnadevaraya and established the supremacy of *Vaishaism* with some learned scholars of *Shaivait* sect in South.\(^{105}\) He visited mostly religious places of Rajasthan, Maharastra, Uttar Pradesh (Vrindavan, Haridwar, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Kashi, Prayag etc.). This gave him a spiritual strength.\(^{106}\)

He does not believe married life as hindrance to spiritual progress like other *Bhakti* saint of *Nirguna* School. He got married with Maha lakshmi daughter of Devanna Bhatt at Benaras.\(^{107}\) He had two sons, eldest was Gopinath born on Saturday 31\(^{st}\) August 1510 AD/ on *Ashwin Krishna*

---


\(^{104}\) Alwar Bhakton Ka.......... op.cit., p.78.

\(^{105}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{106}\) *Medieval Indian Culture*, op.cit.

\(^{107}\) Tamil Aur Hindi Ka ..........op.cit., p.565
Devadshi in 1567 VS at Arail\textsuperscript{108} and the second son Vitthalnath was born in 1515-16 AD /1572 VS at Chunar and received his education at Arail. In 1523-24 A/158VS his sacred thread ceremony was held.\textsuperscript{109}

Vallabha was attracted a place called Arail near Prayag and here he established his Ashram.\textsuperscript{110} Due to his efforts this region came under the influence of Krishna Bhakti. Chaitanya was his contemporary and is said that he met him in Arail.

He took four basic works as authoritative, viz. the Vedas, the Bhagvata Gita, the Brahma Sutra and Bhagvata. These were known as Prasthanas. He was the author of a number of important works in Sanskrit and Brajbhasha some are as follows:

2. Tattvarthadipa Nibandh: This work of Vallabha popularly known as Nibandha is in prose and verse.
3. Subodhni- This is a commentary on Bhagvat Purana.
4. The Sadasa Granthas; independent treatise for the enunciation of the Shudhadvaita doctrines and the education of the scriptural text.\textsuperscript{111}

He became renowned Acharya in the Shishya Parampara of Vishnu Swami and called his philosophic system a Shudhadvaita or pure

\textsuperscript{108} Ashtchehap Aur Vallabah...op.cit, p.72.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., (This Ashram is still exist and called Sthan of Mahaprabhau)
\textsuperscript{111} Alwar Bhaktou ka Tamil..., op.cit., p.79.
monism. He tells us that he was commanded by Lord Krishna to appear in the world in the form of Agni and the correctly explain the Upanishads and the Brahmasutra as these scripture had been misinterpreted by Shankara.

Vallabha gives special importance to Bhakti (devotion) which according to him can only be conferred by God. According to him, there are two ways of devotion one is Maryada Bhakti in which devotion is obtained by one's own efforts. The other path of devotion is Pushti-Bhakti by which devotion is obtained effortlessly merely by the grace of God. This grace in his system is called 'pushti'. This term in the sense of nourishment is found in the Vedas.

He discusses the significance of the paths of nation, knowledge and Bhakti, their relative worth in his Tuttvarthedipa-Nibandha and finally declares that the path of devotion characterized by the grace of God is the best and the easiest of all. Vallabha says that the seed of the Bhakti is planted in a Jiva through the God. This seed first develops into an inclination towards or affection for the lord and then strengthened after having chanted of his name, listening to his tales, renunciation etc. enhances the love (Prema) with Him.

---

112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid., p. 81. J.N. Farquhar op.cit., p.313.
His human friendly Bhakti was better served by the child Krishna, whose playful activities were fully described in the Bhagvat. The play of child Krishna is the subject matter of the Bhagvat. He has chosen this work as representing the highest truth and added it to the normally accepted Prasthana-Trayi. Such a natural appeal gained an extraordinary popularity. Perhaps this was foreseen by Vallabha, who accommodated most of the Bhagvata tenets in his system which won over a large number of followers.116

He considered Srikrishna at the highest Brahma ‘Purushotama’ the most excellent of all being or the perfect man and Parmananda the highest joy. The special significance of his Bhakti meant absorbing oneself completely in the service of the lord-(Krishna and the highest goal is not Mukti (liberation) but rather eternal service of the lord. He is of the view that every sin whether of body or soul is put away by union with the creator.

116 Ibid., p.88.