CHAPTER I

BHAKTI TRADITION

PART A

BHAKTI IN VEDAS (SAMHITAS)

Some western scholars have enthusiastically advocated that Bhakti in India is originated under the influence of Christianity. But this claim has well been refuted by most of the Indian thinkers and on the other hand they have tried to find its origin in the Indian soil. Even otherwise it seems ridiculous to say that Bhakti can be sub-planted or transported or originated, because it is a disposition of the soul and is naturally within every body. It is an other thing that this natural gift may find means of expression which are distinctively in accordance with the prevailing conditions of a particular country. But, it is not wise to conclude that a particular country has borrowed Bhakti from a particular country or a civilisation.

Vedas are the first spoken words of Aryans, and are the oldest records of the Indian civilisation. Even in these Bhakti is not unavailable. Though word 'Bhakti' is not used in the Samhitas portion of Vedas, yet its root 'bhaJ♦' is available and it seems unreasonable to believe that if the word and particularly root is available the corresponding sense is debarred, especially when the Vedic creed is the creed of activity. Secondly, the different means and essentials of Bhakti like worship, Kirtan, repetition of the Naam

1. Rig-veda:1.156.3 C/f Ude-Dhāna Singh, Tulsi Darshan-Mimansa p. 259.
etc. are scattered all over the Vedic literature and are melted in every sacred cry of the Vedic man. Complete faith, an other essential of Bhakti, is enjoyed and offered by the Vedic mind. These are definitely the means to concentrate upon the deity and this whole process is nothing except Bhakti. Dr. Munshi Ram in his book, ’Bhakti Trangani’ has collected and compiled the Vedic hymns, in which loving soul seems to be flowing in an intensified way to attract the godly spirits and to be saved from the demonic forces. The prayers for deity’s grace are also frequent.

Apart from modern scholars, there are prominent mystics to quote and to prove that Bhakti in Sambitap is not unavailable. ’Bhakti is clearly available in Sruti’ says Shandilya. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism believes that ’Vedas speak as the source of Bhakti’. (Ved Pukare Bhakti srot).

In Vedic literature, three methods of salvation are described and these are called Karam - Kanda, Jnan-Kanda and Upasana-Kanda, and all the three are available in the Sambita portion also. By Upasana it means to sit beside the

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2. Shandilya, Bhakti-Sutras, 1.2.9.
3. Bilawal M.I.
4. In this way the original meaning of upasana ‘to sit beside’ were also, in the passage of time,
deity and to devote to the constant repetition, and this repetition is synonymous to the word 'Bhai'; and hence to Bhakti. Moreover, all the characteristics of the nine types of Bhakti, which later Āchāryas preached as Navdha Bhakti, are available in the Samhitas. Here different Devas are frequently addressed as father, friend, brother etc. and the devotee always remains intuned with his deity. Thus it is evident that Bhakti, with all its elements and essentials, is well extended and accepted in these. Erotical feelings are vibrating in whole of the poetry of Samhitas.

But it does not mean that Bhakti here is the same, as preached by the later Āchāryas. It has a few distinctive characteristics as:

1. Bhakti here has not yet been formulated into some doctrine or creed, but it is the simple expression of the loving heart directed towards the deity.

2. Bhakti here is not an isolated achievement or cultivation, but is cultivated and duly supported by Karma and Jñān. Here as in the later period, these three have not been separated and made the basis of different philosophical schools, but all present a synoptic view.

3. Bhakti in Samhitas is not an ultimate aim in itself, as it was considered in the later period. It is accorded with some motive, it may be worldly or spiritual.

changed or limited in 'sitting beside the Deva and meditating.' Dr. Udebanu Singh, Tulsi Darshan Mimansa, p. 259, translated by author.

7. Bhakti-yoga is a real, genuine search after the
4. Bhakti in Samhitas is not only self-achievement or gift from deity, but external means for its attainment are made necessary. The Vedic mind is convinced so much about its use that even the wrong chanting of a hymn or a word from it would spoil the whole fruit, including Bhakti and for that the help of a priest (Brahmin) is indispensable.

5. Bhakti here is more of a collective disposition than individual.

6. Bhakti here is not offered to Absolute, Formless and Impersonal God but to the personal deity i.e. to the individual god. Indra, Vishnu and Varuna are the prominent adored gods. But it was not exactly the polytheism because every devotee devotes himself to one god at one time and would exalt him to the supreme position. It was necessary, therefore, for the purpose of accurate reasoning to have a name, different from polytheism, to signify this worship of single gods, each occupying for a time a supreme position and I purposed for it the name of Kathenotheism, that is worship of one god after another, or of Henotheism, the worship of single gods.  

BHAKTI IN UPANISHADS

Vedas have been divided into four portions Samhitas.

lord, a search beginning, continuing and ending in love; the complete works of Swami Viveka Nanda; Vol. III, p. 31.

8. Fredrick Max Muller, The Vedas, p. 85.
Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upanishads and we have seen that the seeds of Bhakti are not unavailable in the first portion. Deep sense of emotional attachment is well defined in their sacred hymns. Brāhmaṇas are related to Karm-Kānda in which the rules and benefits of conducting religious ceremonies are prescribed and Karma, in these, apart from being a method has become ultimate and also. Āranyakas portion deals with the vows of ascetic life and it is generally taken as the part of the Upanishadic literature. Jñāna as a method and end, dominates the Upanishads, though the feelings of Bhakti are not totally abscinded. This division of the Vedic literature is based upon the traditionally prescribed four stages (Ashramas) of Indian life and according to this view the Sāmīta deals with the needs and demands of celibacy (first Asrama) in which instructions to serve Gurus and devas are imparted. The sense of complete faith, dedication and devotion is well inculcated in the heart being moulded. Brāhmaṇas cater to the life of a house-holder where the life of activity is most needed. The third stage of an ideal life is that of Vanaprasta, a sort of self exiled life in which the adoption of the asceticism and the longing for supreme Jñāna is favoured and Āranyakas portion reflects it. At fourth stage Sanavāsa, the sense of complete renunciation and non-attachment is gained and supreme Jñāna is acquired.

9. Prof. Paul Deussen has rightly declared that this division into Sāmītas, Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas, and lastly Upanishads is based on the principle of dividing life into Ashramas or stages; S. Prabhavananda, The Spiritual heritage of India; p. 37.
The literal meaning of the word 'Upanishad' is 'to sit beside'\(^\text{10}\) i.e. to sit beside the Guru and to gain \(\text{Jn}\). The Upanishads are the last portion of Ved\(\text{ic}\) literature and that is why these are called Ved\(\text{anta}\), but by Ved\(\text{anta}\) here does not mean the prevalent Ved\(\text{anta}\)-system. Upanishadic literature is mainly philosophical literature and it deals with the problems of the life. Brahman in these is Absolute being and \(\text{Jn}\) is the dominating method to apprehend him, but, along with it, other prevalent aspects of that reality are not unavailable. He is many times described as personal being, silent, spirit, light etc. and emphasis, on the whole, is to show that supreme reality is indestructable. It so seems in Upanishads that a Sad\(\text{haka}\) starts from a personal god with faith, sense of devotion and in the end loses himself in the Impersonal being and thus in spite of the stress upon \(\text{Jn}\), Bhakti and its elements could find a place in these.

Moreover, the word, 'Bhakti' in Indian literature is, first of all, used in the Upanishadic literature. A g\(\text{shaloha}\) from Upanishad says that the light being revealed can be apprehended only by the person who is absorbed in Supra-Bhakti for Deva and similarly for Guru.\(^\text{11}\) This first use of word is the best evidence to believe that Upanishads

\(^{\text{10.}}\) The word 'Upanishad' is derived from Upa (near) ni (down), and sad (to sit), i.e. sitting down near;— S. R\(\text{dha}\)s Krishanan; The Principal Upanisads, p. 19.

\(^{\text{11.}}\) Shaveta, Up.; 6.23 C/F. Baldev Up\(\text{dheye}\); Bh\(\text{agw}t\) Samp\(\text{arda}\)e; p. 73.
are not without a sense of Bhakti, though here, in the deep philosophical discussion, the simple feelings of love just remain unexpressed many times and are made secondary. The simple heart of Samhitas here seems to be loaded with wisdom and emotional cry has become the basis of intellectual discussion. But when all wisdoms fail, there is an aspiration, in the same Upanishad, to take refuge in the Deity and then to dedicate oneself to Him.12

BHAKTI IN PURĀNAS

Purānas are considered to be fifth Veda13 and it is because the whole of the Vedic thought-culture is revealed through these. Most of the Vedic subject matter is expressed through hints and being subtle in nature, is not easily understandable for a common man. But in Purānas even the abstract Jñān and finer feelings of Bhakti are related through living characters, stories and episodes and are represented through concrete symbols. Thus for the comprehensive study of the Vedas, the study of the Purānas becomes indispensable and it is perhaps because of this fact that the Purānic sages have claimed that the apprehension of the Vedic Literature is impossible without being a scholar in the Purānic Literature.14 In fact, Purānas are an elucidation

12. 6.18 C/F ibid. p. 73.
13. Vāsu Deva Sharan Agarwāl, Mārkandya Purāna, p. 3.
of the Vedic contents. 15

Otherwise too, the ancient history of Indian culture is divided into three parts i.e. periods i.e. Vedic period, (Samañitas) where the emphasis is upon Karma, Upanishadic period, in which Jñan dominates and Puranian period, where Bhakti supersedes every other method. This division is generally made to understand the dominance of a particular method in a particular age, otherwise the sense of any method is not unavailable in any period. For instance, the sense of Bhakti is well-defined and apprehended in the Vedic (Samañitas portion) and Upanishadic literature, as is proved above, though the other methods are also not ignored; so, it is simply to emphasize the dominance and not the unavailability of any method.

Puranian literature, being the exponent of Bhakti, deals elaborately on the subject. The Bhakti, nature of Bhakti, types of Bhakti, essentials of Bhakti and the object of Bhakti, all the relevant aspects of Bhakti are dealt with and are presented concretely. Bhakti, being the constant, undisturbed and motiveless attachment with the deity, also evolves itself about the nature of deity and modes of manifestation. God in the Indian tradition has always been perceived as a unity and formless absolute, Supreme reality, but at times He descends 16 in the world and these incarnations

15. Nārāyaṇa; 1.9.100.
have captivated the minds of sages with a sense of Bhakti. Thus deity has been perceived in its Impersonal and Personal forms and accordingly the Bhakti—scriptures have defined Bhakti, but it must be clear that by doing so, no place to dualism has been given. God is an impartable unity and these two forms are the different modes of manifestation of the same Reality. Purānas too speak of this fact and the treatment here is based upon the Psychological truth that for a common man or a beginner, it is not easy to concentrate upon the Impersonal being. The Purānic literature offers the solution to this problem and it says that in the beginning a Bhakta should concentrate upon the personal form of the deity and then proceed toward the Impersonal form. When the ultimate end is to apprehend the Impersonal form of the God, it becomes obviously clear that the evolution of the personal form is nothing more than a creation of the devotee's mind, which varies in emotional nature and perceives the reality in consonance with it. Thus Purānas, with various types of discriptions, have emphasised the loving nature of Brahman, who, apart from being Absolute reality, comes to the world with divine forms and embraces the Bhaktas.

No doubt, the Purānas reveal the predominance of Bhakti and have emphatically preached to establish it, but by it, it cannot be concluded that the other methods like Karma and Jnān have found no place in these. Contrary to it,

17. Padma Purāna, Shiva Gītā, 14.5.
Karma and Jnāna are also recommended by the Purānic sages, but with a different attitude. Here Karma is neither an independent path nor, as in Vedas, is indispensable for the successful adoption of Bhakti. Jnāna too is not an absolute necessity here, though it is never discarded in any field of spiritual elevation. Bhakti of the Purānas does not require a Bhakta with the performance of a definite type of Karma and nor it demands more of learning. It is an urge of the soul and inclination of the mind. 'Sinner or holy, learned or unlearned, undoubtedly, all get liberation by His Grace. Even if a Bhakta does not deserve it, Bhagavan, out of generosity, destroys all his sins and embraces him surely.' But, still, Jnāna is not ignored at all. Bhakti enlightened by Jnāna is par excellence and so the Purānas believe. In spite of this, Bhakti enjoys superiority and it is partly because it is known as easier, convenient and a natural method.

Bhakti in Purānas becomes the ultimate aim. It is quite motiveless and even the most valuable rewards are discarded. It knows no bargain and is pure love directed towards deity. It is neither Savitri's 'Yajēt Svargkēma' nor Sankar's 'Sve Surup annusandhānam'. If any motive or desire, a Purānic Bhakta has in his mind, then it can only be of His service. He wants to serve his deity constantly and motivelessly and prays to be given countless births to

19. Shiva Purāna; Uttar-Mhāg; 8.25.26 C/F Kalyān
   Bhakti Ank p. 62.
20. Kūra Purana Uttarardha; 4.25, C/F ibid, p.62.
serve Him again and again. It is an effective way for the manifestation of his noblest feelings of love and service is the only reward he prays for. Moreover, it is such a spontaneous and continuous attachment of the heart, that it does not need any assistance from any priest for its completion. The springing of this fountain of love is not conditioned by the considerations of caste, creed, category and sex. The idea of forbidding the women, shudras and the people from lower classes in participating in hearing the Vedas, could find no advocacy in Puranas.

Bhakti here is more of a gift from God than a personal achievement. Man and his efforts are incomplete. It is only the Grace of Lord that Bhakti can be attained, sustained and successfully followed. What is required is that Bhakta should throw himself at His feet prostrating in full obedience and utter humility.

**PART B**

**BHAKTI ELEMENT IN JAINISM**

Brahman, the ultimate and only reality of Upanishadic literature does not find any place in Jainism nor the loving and kind idols of worship of the Devas could have any grip over this sect. The Jaina adherents do not feel any temptation to bring God or Brahman as the cause or effect of this being and postulate Him on the fortune of the man.

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He is neither the creator, nor preserver nor destroyer of anything, but contrary to it, everything potentially has all these qualities in itself and these develop in correspondence to the full co-operating condition of time (Kāla), nature (Śvabhāva), necessity (Niyati), activity (Karma) and effort (Uddyāna). The nature of every action and the prevailing diversity with which it is being conditioned are responsible for its reaction and everyone is to undergo all these. Nothing from the gods interferes in the appearance or disappearance of anything but it is only the Karmas which is the governing force and thus nature of the Karmas, good or bad is to determine its present and future life and even the Karmas of previous life count in the perfection or imperfection of the human personality in the making. The emphasis is on rising with self-efforts and not on depending upon some pre-supposed gods.

The word, which specifies the name of the sect derives it self from the root 'Jīna', which grammatically means victorious. This shows the desire for victory over worldly objects and the total annihilation from the self. This victory which prepares for Nirvāṇa is attainable, according to the Jainism, only through three jewels (Tri-ratna) of faith in Jīna, Jñān of his doctrine and perfect conduct. 'Belief in real existence or Tattvas is right

23 The Jainas are the followers of 'Jīna', the victor, .. S. Rādhā Krishnan; Indian Philosophy; Vol. 1. p. 286.
faith, knowledge of real nature without doubt or error is right knowledge. An attitude of neutrality without desire or aversion towards the objects of the external world is right conduct, "The three together form one path, and are to be simultaneously pursued." The introduction of three jewels to a seeker shows the three fold efforts to attain the ultimate aim, defined as Nirvana. The faith in Jina, a perfect personality shows the desirability of the adoption of truth with intensity.

The emphasis upon a highly sublimated conduct is the loftiest ideal of Jainism and perhaps of every religion, because it never proves a failure for the attainment of goal. Jina and Karma may prove a negative equipment while conduct is definitely a positive one and commands an affirmation from the intuitional powers of a man. For the purification of conduct again five principles are recommended by Jainism to proceed on and then to obtain Punya, which also stands on the nine ways. 25

Of course, the purity of Karma, attainment of supra-Jinan and loftiness of conduct cannot be excluded from Bhakti and all are positively a useful for it, but the negation about the existence of any supreme power is exclusively against the basic doctrine of Bhakti. Bhakti, of a religious man, can have no stand without the affirmation and belief in God and Bhakta has to understand that no

perfection is attainable through self efforts, as in Jainism, but through the grace of God. So, frankly speaking, there is no clear exposition of Bhakti in Jainism or in any of its sub-sects like Digambra and Svetambra. But still there are certain things which determine that elements of Bhakti are not absolutely unavailable in them. The absence of Bhakti is in philosophical speculations which are meant only for a few persons. The common man can find no satisfaction in it and has to find some emotional basis, according to its nature, for faith. Moreover, it is in tradition with the Indian people that in practical life, they have to establish some ideal in visible human being or in invisible Supreme being and then to worship it for perfection. The Jaina adherents could not remain detached from this fact, and though they did not believe in the existence of any being as God, yet the perfect Jina were equally worshipped. They did not believe in God as Supreme being, but they held a belief in perfect Jina as God. Their emotions would find expression in some or the other way and would establish the elements of Bhakti undoubtedly.

BHAKTI ELEMENT IN BUDHISM

Purity of mind, expression and Karma is laid down by Gautama Buddha, as the sole basis of perfect personality and with this he made a stress on the independence of individual. He tried to free the Indian mind from the worshipping of the heavenly abodes and preached that there is no use on depending upon these. The purity, brotherhood, spirit of
tolerance and non-violence and freedom from any fear, dependence and decadence were the principles propounded by him for the welfare of the individual and the society.

But with the split of the Buddhism into many sections and especially in Hinayana and Mahayana schools, these principles could not remain strictly in practice. No doubt, the former school of Buddhism could remain stuck to the original principles, but the attitude of the later was more liberal and, in fact, the names Hinayana for others, and Mahayana for themselves, were introduced by them. They thought that adherents of Hinayana school are conservative and narrow minded people who bother only about their own salvation. On the other hand they considered themselves to be in effort for the welfare of all and with this idea, contrary to that of Hinayana, they include any man from any caste or creed in themselves and adopt any method for perfection regarded useful to all. With this liberal attitude of the Mahayana adherents, the spirit of self-reliance was vanishing and many of the Vedic gods began to enter Buddhism. The conception of all these gods, as being the representation of one Supreme being also began to survive in the shape of Buddha. Buddha took the place of Brahman of the Upanishads and the faith in him gradually began to take place. His words were meditated upon. To these adherents of Mahayana school, Buddha is the supreme wisdom. "Other religions have made their founders into gods and sons of God, Buddhism makes its founder into the ultimate and only reality, which
For the attainment of Nirvana, a term used in Buddhism for complete perfection, an all-round developed personality, through ten stages or Phumis of progress, is especially mentioned. Along with it for the development of moral life, ten principles are put forth, but with all this the element of faith and dependence upon Lord Buddha is not excluded. The importance of Jnan renunciation and morality is not reduced but it is substituted with faith in the founder of the sect. The condition of being monk is also relaxed and even a married can attain Nirvana with faith in Buddha. "Faith became the sole requisite to salvation; all else of the great moral philosophy of Gotama the Buddha was swept away."

In this upheaval of the Buddhism, faith became the dominating factor in the Buddhist mystical life, faith in the Buddha and bodhisatva. As this faith is the initial step in Bhakti, as preached by many exponents of Bhakti, no doubt is left that the establishment of the Mahayana school of Buddhism was a step towards it. In fact, the essentials of Bhakti are so thickly connected with the human nature that it becomes almost indispensable for every Sadhaka. Moreover, the definition and circle of Bhakti is so vast that it has almost a capacity to include most of the religious sects in it. Same is the case with Buddhism. Though in the beginning it was really a religion which depended upon

26. J.B. Pratt; The Pilgrimage of Buddhism; p. 249.
logic and to some extent it was rational also, but later on when the Buddha, as person gained more dominanece then his words, his worship became eminent. This tendency captivated the Buddhist sects not only in India, but in other countries like China, Tibet, Japan, and where-ever it is prevalent. There are traces pertaining to the worship of Buddhas. "So, also one reads in the Mahāvastu about devotees developing Bodhi-citta and aspiring to Buddha-hood by the simple act of worshiping a stūpa or making some presents to it." This unshaken faith, in deity, which inspires towards worship is nothing except Bhakti. "The ideal of Bhakti" says Dr.Hardayāl, "arose and flourished amongst Buddhists". In fact, it seems as if Bhakti in the sense of love was well emphasised by Buddhists. Supreme wisdom and supreme love are equally powerful forces, which cannot be kept unexpressed. This expression or in other words, prayer is definitely the cry of the human heart for himself and for others. "The essential nature of all Bodhi-Sattvas is a great loving Heart (Maha-Karuna-Citta), and all sentient beings constitute to the object of his love.  

In later schools of Buddhism, Hīnayāna is an exception

28. Nalnakha Dutt; Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its relation to Hīnayāna; p. 36.
29. The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature; p. 31.
30. Quoted by D.T. Susuki in 'Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism; p. 292' from 'A treatise on the transcendentality of the Boddhicitta'.

to some extent, and particularly in Mahayana, this attitude of Bhakti is clearly available. Buddha is always depicted as deity in the scriptures and the Mahayana as devotee. The tradition of three-fold prayer in usage after the death of Buddha, which goes as:

Buddham Sharnam Gashami
Dhamam Sharnam Gashami
Sangham Sharnam Gashami

for protection clearly indicates that Buddha was taken as saviour. Prayers for refuge were frequently offered to him and in this respect the religion of Mahayana could remain no longer different than that of Gita. So far as the position of Buddha is concerned, it is in no way different than that of Bhagwan Krishna in Bhagavata. The metaphysical aspect of Dharman-Kaya (the last amongst the three kayas, or the ultimate basis of existence) is practically in accordance with Brahman of Upanishads and Gita. As the author of Gita has established Krishna, the most prominent deity in the field of Bhakti, Supreme being, similarly, the author of Saddhasamudarika has tried to depict Buddha as supreme God. He is not only a god, but the God of the gods. He declares like Krishna, 'to all who believe me I do good, while friends are they to me, who seek refuge in me.'

31. Dr. Hardayal claims, "In fact, the very word Bhakti, as a technical religious term occurs for the first time in Indian literature in Buddhist treatise and not in Hindu scriptures"; The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Sanskrit literature, p. 32.

32. Lalitavistara, VIII, C/F S. Radha Krishnan; Indian Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 600.
This Bhakti element in Buddhism, which springs from the Jnan and morality, is of its own kind and nature. Though all the essentials of Bhakti, like faith, worship, love emotional attachment with Buddha, are available in it, yet it is not like the Bhakti of Vaishnavas. The foundations of this Bhakti do not rest upon extreme pietism and total dependence, but the spark of Jnan, morality and logic always remains burning in the hearts of the adherents of Buddhism and the spirit of self reliance remains constantly awakened. Bhakti was only a way for that and not the ultimate end. Persistent faith and undisturbed love in Lord Buddha were to beg for the strengthening of the spirit of renunciation and then to awaken the potential Buddhahood already in them. His grace was prayed for the development of love for the welfare of society. Bhakti element in these Buddhist adherents was only an entrance to the realm of perfection, as Nāgārjūna, in his commentary on Prajñāparāmita says, "faith is the entrance to the ocean of laws of the Buddha and knowledge is the ship on which one can sail in it". No doubt, love is a cohesive element in all laws, morals, and logic but in Bhakti it is a binding force. But in Buddhist Bhakti even this love takes another colour. Here faith reverence, and adoration is offered to Buddha to pray for the betterment of all. Love in the Mahāyāna school takes the form of charisma when it is begged from Buddha and it becomes generosity when it is shared with others. Love here is not only a

33. C/F Dr. S. Rādhā Krishnan; Indian Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 603.
binding force between Buddha and his devotee, but between the devotee and the people. The Bhakti in Buddhism whose foundation is love, is also a path enjoined not for personal salvation only, but for the salvation of all. That is why, we can say that importance of Bhakti in Buddhism is mainly is paving the way for other Bhakti sects. "There is no doubt that in giving a large place to Bhakti or devotion the Mahayana scheme of salvation opened the breaches to Tantricism and other mystic forms."  

This Bhakti element in Buddhism did not keep itself confined to Mahayana school only, but it remained with its descendant schools also. The eight-fold religious practices were definitely not similar to those of Yoga, propounded by Patanjali, but later on and especially in the Mantrayana school of Buddhism, it nearly assumed the same form. An effort was in custom to reduce the size of the words of Buddha and to make these shorter and easy to remember. These words were meditated upon and with the help of this the tendency to bring the supernatural powers under command were prevalent. The very name of the school Mantra-yana clearly shows that by nature it is a school of the persons, who meditated upon words. This repetition of the words (Mantra-jap) or meditation upon these is the religious practice included by the exponents of Bhakti also. This itself is an evidence that Bhakti in the Buddhist schools kept intuned with their upheavals and remained in practice in one or the other form.

34. Ibid. p. 598.
ATTITUDE OF GITA TOWARDS BHAKTI

Gita, being pregnant with the seeds of all the prevailing philosophical systems in India, is most important treatise in the history of Indian thought-culture. Being a philosophical as well as practical book, it deepens and broadens the mental horizon of a Sadhaka and tells him the right and convenient method of salvation. It touches the pulse of the human mind and contains and advocates such currents of thoughts, as to satisfy every type of nature and mood of a person. It has sufficient material, with logical grounds, to touch and lead the man of every type, age and class.

Ultimate aim of the every being, practically speaking, is the liberation and Gita too, emphasises the same truth. It contains discussions upon every method like Samskara - Yoga, Karma - Yoga, Dhyana-Yoga, Jnan-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga etc., but Karma, Jnan and Bhakti are the dominant methods, which it advocates for the purpose. But all these three methods, accompanied by the word Yoga, are not only different methods, but at a particular stage they seem to join together and strive forth jointly. In Gita especially these three are combined and are made inter-dependent, when ultimately every one of these is required to dedicate itself before the deity. It may be Karma/Jnan or Bhakti or the fruits of everyone of these, everything is to be dedicated before God realising that the He is the only reality. And,
moreover these three methods in Gita are not contrary to each other, but are complementary and each contributes to its whole. It gives a complete synoptic picture of the three when it emphasises that Shakti without Karma becomes un-energetic and without Jnan ego.

No doubt, Gita gives importance to every method and believes that each of these is competent for the purpose. "Thus every method of directing oneself to the Deity, whether it be through devotion, control, work or knowledge or all of these together, is advocated by the Gita." But the tone of Shakti is aloud and it seems as if it dominates the whole contents of the book. It becomes very clear, from the close study of Bhagavata Gita that different methods like Karma, Jnan and Shakti do not form a separate identity, but are combined in one and that is Shakti. It can be argued in another way also. In it, the three Yogas i.e. Karma-Yoga, Jnan-Yoga and Shakti-Yoga are particularly represented and the adherents of each Yoga are called the Yogis. But amongst all, the best and perfect Yogi is he, who reflects upon Him in complete faith. Faith being the indispensable limb of Shakti shows, that every other method in Gita is superseded by Shakti or at least its supremacy is undoubtedly established. Otherwise also, if we take into consideration the opinions of many scholars that the whole

36. Gita; 6.47.
of Gītā can be divided into three portions and each one contains discussion upon a different Yoga i.e. Karma, Jnān and Bhakti. The supremacy of the last can be seen through the fact that each portion is not devoid of the shalokas which deal with the sense of Bhakti. In fact, Gītā does not advocate the adoption of one method, absolutely disconnected from others, but it believes that man is a complex being and it needs an alround effort for the desired goal. That is why, "Not knowledge and works alone are demanded of him (Sadhaka) now, but Bhakti also." It means in the life of a Sadhaka, there comes a moment, when methods other than Bhakti do not prove sufficient and Bhakti becomes an indis-pensibility.

Attitude of Gītā towards Bhakti is very clear when it classifies the number of Bhaktas into four. It believes that four types, (Artharthi, who devotes for some worldly motive,irtya, who devotes with a motive to be saved in times of difficulty, Jigyāsu, who devotes to apprehend the real nature of his deity and Jnān who devotes for devotion sake i.e. motivelessly) of Bhaktas are available and they devote in different manners and with different motives. There is no doubt, as assured by Bhagvan, that everyone is rewarded with the fruits, he has devoted for,

37. Sri Arbindo Ghosh; Essays on Gītā; p. 30.
38. Gītā; 7.16.
39. ibid. 4.11-12.
but they do not enjoy the eternal bliss which springs through the real union. The best and dearest type of Bhakta is therefore Jnāni, who has no motive, empirical or spiritual, behind his devotion to be fulfilled. He is always absorbed in the motiveless worship of his deity, "and this worship is a hundred times greater than liberation." Thus Jnāni-Bhakta is well esteemed in Gītā and that shows that Bhakti here is not only an act of feelings, but is of intellect also. "For note", says Sri Arbindo Ghosh, "that it is Bhakti with knowledge which the Gītā demands from the disciple and it regards all other forms of devotion as good in themselves, but still inferior; they may do well by the way; but they are not the thing at which it aims in the soul's culmination." Writing about the Jnāni Bhakta the best according to Gītā, Dr. Rādhā Krishnan observes, "such a devotee has in him the content of the highest knowledge as well as the energy of the perfect man."

In the Indian tradition of man's struggle for spiritual elevation, Gītā is the first treatise which clearly emphasizes the need of Bhakti. Throughout the book, Bhakti, its nature, essentials, aids, kinds and fruits are discussed elaborately, but along with it, it must be clear that Bhakti

40. S. Rādhā Krishnan; The Bhagavada Gītā; p. 61.
41. Essays on Gītā; p. 33.
42. The Bhagavada Gītā; p. 66.
43. Gītā; T. 19.
in Gītā cannot be an absolutely isolated thing. It is equally supported and accompanied by every other method so as to produce a really harmonised personality. It is to draw out the best of man, in any way, and make him dynamic, so as to satisfy the inner and outer conditions at the same time. It is to develop the inner forces and then to create a congenial atmosphere with the spirit of tolerance, contentedness and detachment, so that with the development of strong ethical personality, a conformity between the oneself and other selves may be brought and everything in the universe may be taken as His own self. Thus Bhakti in Gītā arises out of self-surrender and results in producing a really dynamic personality, as we find, in the case of Arjuna.

PART D

BHAKTI SUTRAS

In Indian Bhakti Tradition the first clear cut exposition of Bhakti is available in Bh. Gītā. This is a treatise in which particularly every method of salvation, recorded by the Indian sages, is included and is given due importance with explanation and emphasis. Bhakti also finds place in it and, of course, sometimes dominates the other methods, but here Bhakti does not hold a different identity but is described in a very synthetic way to collaborate with it.

Bhakti in its complete wholeness and theoretical
description is dealt, first of all in Shandilya Bhakti-Sutras and Narada Bhakti-Sutras. In his Bhakti-Sutras Narada, when discusses the views of his predecessor on Bhakti, he includes a reference to Shandilya, which shows that Shandilya was the pioneer. But as far as the elaboration of the subject is concerned, Narada gives more details than Shandilya. However, Shandilya Bhakti-Sutras and a commentary on these by Narayana Tirath (Bhakti Chandrika) give a complete and adequate study of Bhakti. For Shandilya, Bhakti is, "Supreme devotion to God". He does not feel contented with passionate attachment only but he stresses the need of supreme and unchangeable attachment. Human mind, by nature, is bound by attachment and "Where as this attachment with worldly objects is a hindrance", the attachment with God assists to attain supreme devotion. With equally strong and sweet attachment, as one feels for sensual objects, Bhakta sees, finds, hears and speaks about deity. His one attachment exists, when all others vanish. Bhakti itself is indifferent towards external religious symbols. It is an attribute of the self, and so it is not easily perceivable.

44. Bh. Sutra; 83.
45. Sh. Bh. Sutras; 1.1.2.
46. Yoga Sutra; 2.3.
47. Sh. Bh. Sutra; 1.2.14.
48. Ibid. 2.2.28.
by the outward inferences. But to make it possible for the perception of the common man, it can be manifested through the visible symbols of the physical world.\textsuperscript{49}

Śhandilya also, like most of the \textit{Bhakti-ashāryas}, divides \textit{Bhakti} according to its nature, into two types primary (Mukhya) and secondary (Itra), of which former is aim and later is way to it. To attain the primary \textit{Bhakti} the secondary is adopted. But contrary to it, the secondary demands some efforts to be put in for the attainment. Religious ceremonies, worship, pilgrimage, study of the scriptures, charity etc. are the essentials to be carried on with sincerity, until the perfect conduct and supreme devotion is not attained,\textsuperscript{50} because without it, "The possibility of decline remains there".\textsuperscript{51} When this is attained no necessity of any \textit{Karma} is left because every \textit{Karma} is the fruit of efforts, which are absolutely needless in the state of supreme devotion.\textsuperscript{52} But secondary type is also not neglectable because even in this, \textit{Bhakta} remains always in his deity.

\textit{Bhakti} in fact, is a constant mental struggle for negation and affirmation. On one side \textit{Bhakta} develops an attitude of indifference towards worldly objects and on the other hand he embraces everything belonging to God.

\begin{itemize}
\item[49.] Ibid, 2.1.17-18.
\item[50.] Bh. Sutra, 2.2.16.
\item[51.] Bh. Sutra, 13.
\item[52.] Bh. Sutra, 2.7.
\end{itemize}
Nārada Bhakti Sutras discuss the subject with much elaboration. Here Bhakti has become particularly a philosophy, having all its essentials, aids, impediments and fruits. Nārada has discussed all these allied subjects in detail and has established Bhakti as a philosophy. His philosophy of Bhakti is very clear and touching the subject on the whole. Bhakti according to him is "Supreme love with God".\(^{53}\) It shows that Nārada holds the opinion that love and Bhakti are equivalent in meaning. He, in the coming Sutra says, "Bhakti is a nectar and whosoever takes it becomes perfect, eternal and contented."\(^{54}\) It becomes obvious with the Bhaktas that except the emotion of attachment with deity, he has no other emotion of 'begetting sorrow, jealous, attraction etc.'\(^{55}\) Here in Nārada, the attributes of Bhakti become almost authentic and are acceptable even to-day in the field of Bhakti.

Another problem, with which human nature has always suffered, is the suppression of instincts. It is always argued by the philosophers and preachers that unless these ordinary instincts are suppressed the question of perfection remains unperceived. Supreme Bhakti is not full of desires, because by its nature, it is a suppression of desires. The human instincts are undoubtedly powerful and can disturb the mind at any time. But the suppression, on the whole,

\[^{53}\] Bh. Sutra 2.
\[^{54}\] ibid. 3-4.
\[^{55}\] ibid. 5, compare with Bh. Gītā 12.17.
has another accepted difficulty that these can burst up at any moment and can shake the whole structure. For this the Indian philosophers have another idea of educating or channelising rather than suppressing and this channelisation should result in sublimated love. "This suppression is the detachment from the Vedic and worldly Karmas. It is too in the undisturbed love of dearest deity and undesirability in all the objects against it." 56

**Bhakti** is the nature of emotions and this emotion for its development needs some aids. "With hearing and remembering the attributes of God, Bhakti can be matured even while living in the society." 57 It is clear that to hear and remember is Bhakti in itself. That is why Bhakti, by nature becomes method and aim in itself. In another Sutra, Narada recommends the company of holy persons. This company is to fasten the progress towards the goal. But on the other hand the Indian Bhakti tradition reveals, that even this cannot be attained with self-efforts. It is only through the "grace of God that company of holy people is enjoyed." 58 God on the other hand is so merciful and kind that He always embraces everybody, even the sinners.

As all these attempts are not the constitutive element in the attainment of Bhakti, only the grace can be

56. ibid. 8-9.
57. ibid. 37.
58. ibid. 40.
useful. 59 Bhakta is simply to remain at His disposal, to receive, obey and carry on His commands and to abide always in Him. This is a sort of perfection while living in this world and is not attainable within one day. It is continuous process of embracing and disembracing and can be undertaken with the initiative of the good people. But along with it, Bhakta is to remain aloof from the bad company which is the root cause of all desires, anger, lust and ego, 60 the accepted impediments in the way. He is to develop the spirit of detachment from each and every Karma and its respective fruits. This stage of self-surrender is a stage of perfection in Bhakti and according to Narada it is twofold in nature. Though God's grace is competent to bestow His Bhakta at any moment, with any attainment, but still the importance of self exertion is not ignored.

Bhakta, has only one aim to strive for, 61 and that is to see, love and live in God. All sorts of pure Karma, supreme Jnan and bodily disciplines are subordinate to Bhakti. Bhakti is supreme, because it is not for any other motive except for itself. Bhakta bothers not even for liberation. He always, and even if he comes to the world many times, wants to serve remember and meditate upon his deity with pure and loving heart and that is the only desire from

59. ibid. 38.
60. ibid. 44.
61. ibid. 67.
which he enjoys pleasure. Bhakti in Gita, also holds the supreme position, but there it is co-ordinated with Jnan whereas in Narada, Bhakti alone is supreme, even from supra-

PART E

BHAKTI IN SOUTH

It is a popular belief among the thinkers on Bhakti that medieval Bhakti movement actually made its start in South India and the saints called Alwars and Adiyars were responsible for it. The former accepted Lord Vishnu as their altar of faith and worship and were called Vaishnavas, while later entered their faith round Shiva and were called Shaivas. Here the Bhakti was given a new colour and it remained no longer a subject of scriptures for theoretical discussion or with the Rishis to impart with their students, but it became a practical experience and an indispensable part of the life of the people. By it, we do not mean that before this, Bhakti was a subject of pure discussion and never entered the practical life of the people, but we mean that it is here that Bhakti could canalise itself in a movement and could come nearer to life of the masses. Now it had become a mass-movement, and a very powerful movement, which could attract the common people to participate, enjoy and live in it. Though these saints did not organise any movement on any systematic

62. ibid. 81.
pattern with an idea to form a platform, but it was automatically formed and a movement came into existence which could provide relief to the Indian people for many centuries. The followers of these two groups which grew almost at the same time and were contemporary, were purely devotional in character. They grew in complete obedience to their deities and would not adopt any other method. As regards the nature of Bhakti, its completion and other characteristics, no major difference is traceable except that both would accept Vishnu and Shiva as the respective deities and would address all prayers to these. Both had a belief in an Absolute power.

It is clearly depicted in the hymns of these saint-poets that the method adopted was no other than to love the deity. Their devotion rests in the emotional attachment. For this no theory is formulated and adopted, no nature is defined, but only an absorption in love is recommended. The duty of Bhakta is to be in constant devotion to the Lord and the records of their mystical experiences, as revealed in their poetry, show how deeply they were lost in it. There is a longing of the heart, a cry, coming out, breaking all the curtains to achieve the love of their beloved. They practically became the paragon of love.

Love is an emotion, which strives for an adequate expression, though in it the capability of any expression is doubted, yet it cannot be kept buried also. The Alwars and
Adiyars of the South India tried to express these feelings of deep love in many ways. To make it easily perceivable, they described their beloved in the form of human relations. They would love Him as father, son, brother etc. and express towards him the feelings of love, adoration and gratitude.

Another popular relation between the Bhakta and the Bhagwan is that of the Master and the servant. Bhakta serves him like a humble servant, with whole-hearted faith and un-ending zeal. They frankly confess their weaknesses and would pray to Him to remove these. But the more favourite relation developed and strengthened by these poets is that of the husband and wife or lover and beloved. Bhagwan is always served as a beloved with pure, motiveless, and un-ending love. The intensified love, would not permit them to be at rest.

"For father is Arur
sprinkle ye the blooms of love;
In your heart will dawn the light,
Every bondage will remove.

Him the hilly in Arur,
Never forget to land and praise;
Left behind all worldly ways.

In Arur, our loved one's gem,
Scatter golden blossoms fair,
Sorrow he shall wipe away,
Your's be bliss beyond compare." 63

"Thou to me are parents, Lords;
Thou all kins men that I need;
Thou art treasure which indeed.

Family, friends, home art thou,
Life and joy I draw from thee,
False world's good by thee I leave,
Gold, pearl, wealth art thou to me." 64

63. Tirumävukkarasu, C/F ibid. p. 89.
64. Tirynäna Sambandhar, C/F Dr. Tära Chand, Influence of Islam on Indian Culture; p. 89.
With the development of this consciousness, the God became nearer to man and more natural basis was found for emotional attachment and inter-communication.

Love in its sublime form i.e. Bhakti is exclusively an attachment of the mind. It needs help of outward things for its expression, though it cannot be enriched with external symbols of show. But the Bhaktas of South would never like to adopt such means for purification which would depend upon external show and could prove deceptive. They never advocated pilgrimages, charity, study of the scriptures, chanting of the hymns of Vedas, bathing in the sacred waters, fasts etc. Moreover, with the perfection, these things are automatically left behind. So they tried to rise above all these and begged only for the grace of Lord with a confidence that all these salvations are unto Him.

"Release is theirs and their is alone, who call in every place the Lord of all." 65

These Vaishnavas and Shaivas of the South were not Bhaktas who were absorbed only in supreme Bhakti for personal salvation, but they were preachers also, with a burning desire to bring some upheaval in the society. They wanted to give a new pattern to the society and that was the pattern of mutual love and faith. They realised that supreme Jain supported by rationalism, of Jainism and Buddhism, and complicated bodily disciplines of Yogis cannot be easily followed by the common man and it is not possible for them

65. Ibid C/F. Ibid. p. 90.
to strive through these ways. These were the methods for a few gifted people. That is why they want door to door, preached the simple and convenient creed of faith, sincerity and love. They presented an ideal of love for the beloved with all-round purity of mind, body and \textit{Karma}. They preached the religion which is accommodative and tortureless in nature. Because these Southern saints came from different classes of the society and preached the equality and unity of mankind, therefore, all the undesirable ego was gradually coming to an end, and a single unity was being tried to be established. In this way, as it is mentioned above, the \textit{Shakti} movement which later on flourished in Northern India also, came into contact with the masses and could strive to remould the human mind. Here it was recoloured. Their hold on the people's mind was sufficiently strong and they could enrich it with the penetration of new spirit for a new direction.

Their hold on the human mind can be verified by the respect accorded to their composition even to-day in their native lands. These compositions, which constitute, the most revered part of the literature in Tamil, are full of devotional spirit addressed to the respective deities. The composition of the Shaiva adherents are arranged into eleven groups and are called 'Tirumurai' compiled by Nambrander-Nambi of Tinjore, and the composition of \textit{Vaishnavas} were compiled by Nath-Muni, perhaps under the editorship of Nammalwar, and are called 'Nalayya-Prabandham'. These two
books are regarded most sacred and are revered like Vedas, in the respective schools of Alvars and Adiyars. These songs contain the mystical experiences of the Bhaktas and are devotional in nature. These are respected so much so that on religious ceremonies, the hymns from these precede the chantings than from Vedas.

PART F

BHAHTI - ACARHYAS

Sankara

With the advent of Alvars and Adiyars in the South, Bhakti could enter the practical life of the people. It is an undisputed fact that the India-wide Bhakti movement was originated here, though its seeds were available in the past also. But it is here that it enshrined itself into a strong, constant and continuous stream with an intensified flow. This natural flow of the human mind and countless other flows of Indian systems which were developing through separate channels and lying scattered were all synthesised into one philosophy of Absolute Monism (Advaita) by the great philosopher Sankara. Before him were lying many systems of philosophy, religion and faith in Indian tradition to whom he gave a synthesis in form and unity in contents. He bluntly encouraged the condemnation of the theories about the non-existence of God, various phases of His existence and tried to establish his Absolute Monism. His Brahman is one and cannot be perceived in many forms and phases. He
is the only and ultimate reality. This universe is only 
Māyā and not a reality in any way.

It is generally believed that for Sankara, the 
method for attaining perfection was supreme Jñāna and Bhakti 
could find no favour at his hands. But this belief does 
not seem significantly genuine, because the incidents related 
to his life, and a close study of his writings made a clear 
revelation of his inclination towards Bhakti. Frankly 
speaking, as theistic sect in India could remain aloof from 
Bhakti and same is the case with Sankara. Though Bhakti 
could not be an ultimate end in his conceptions, yet its 
authenticity is not challenged and it is accepted as a method 
for the achievement of goal. "Of the things which help the 
attainment of liberation, Bhakti is greatest in the sense 
that it is stepping stone to the liberation in consonance 
with Sankara's system of absolute nonism.  

Sankara's system, definitely rests upon the Supreme 
Jñāna, which is a stage of enlightenment, where no illusion 
contrasts the human faculty, but along with it he is aware 
of the cohesive nature of the Bhakti also. In most of his 

60. A misunderstanding prevails in the minds of many 
interpreters of Sankara that in him Jñāna and Bhakti 
are fundamentally opposed to each other. But the 
real opposition which is relevant to Sankara's 
Philosophy of Jñāna is not the opposition between 
Jñāna and Bhakti but one between different grades 
of Bhakti... Bhakri or the highest devotion, is 
spoken of by Sankara as consisting in the actual 
experience of the highest truth; Dr. K.K. Pratap 

67. Dr. M.V. Krishna Rao; Mystic tradition in Religion 
and Art in Karnataka; p. 14.
works and especially in 'Prāboḍh Sudhākar' he has given an elaborate study of Bhakti, its nature and essentials. He does not only emphasize the need of Bhakti, on the whole, but he treats it as psychologically indispensable for the human mind. He is fully aware of the nature of the human mind and accordingly divides the Bhakti into two types that is abstract (Suksham) and concrete (Satthul). He knows that abstract things are not easily adoptable, so in a shaloka from Prāboḍh Sudhākar, he advocates to start with concrete Bhakti. "Abstract and concrete are two types of Bhakti, initially concrete is followed which culminates in abstract Bhakti." 68 As its very name suggests, concrete Bhakti depends upon external performances of the religious ceremonies, while the other one is purely the quality of the inner-self. In concrete Bhakti he includes "Belief in the class (Yarān-Āshrama), worship of Krishna's idol, congregation, to hear devotively the legends about Bhagwan, to speak the truth and avoid the company of other's women and wealth and not to defame others, to avoid the unhealthy conversations, and take pilgrimages to the sacred places. To think always that the life is ruining without hearing His good-name. 69 All these external means are for the purification of the self, which is of major importance in mystical life, and then to strive for the attainment of

68. C/F Kalyān-Ank p. 212.
69. C/F ibid. p. 213.
internal qualities to enter the realm of perfection. But neither these external means, help in achieving abstract Bhakti, nor the striving force of the mind is sufficient without attracting His grace. Though these do not go in vain. "In this way with the practice of concrete Bhakti and grace of Krishna's name, abstract Bhakti is awakened and as a result God takes place in him." 70

But in Sankara's system, Bhakti was not regarded the ultimate aim or method. As far as the realisation of the self is concerned, Sankara, in his Viveka-Chudamani, affirms the competency of Bhakti when he says, "Bhakti is the research of the self", but for the next step i.e. for the salvation he advocates supreme Jnan. Bhakti for him is only a method.

Sankara's attitude towards Bhakti is of a definite kind. Though in his works, he holds discussion on Bhakti in detail, and sometimes he says "Bhakti is the best amongst the means of salvation" 72 but even then his Absolute mood could not encourage Bhakti to enter his philosophical system. The religion of love and faith is adopted by Sankara, only so far as it aspires the Adhakha to attain the supreme Jnan. It aspires only with his conception of lower God, that

70. C/F ibid. p. 213.
is Ishwara, who himself is a phenomenal being. The attainment of this Ishwara, who is, several times taken as personal God, can be through Bhakti, but Sankara does not feel contented here. The true freedom, according to him, is only in rising above this and in embracing the supreme truth, which can only be possible through supreme Jnān. Bhakti in him, though equally important could find secondary place in nature and aim.

Ramanuja

This attitude of Sankara, as explained above was mainly responsible for the whole-hearted opposition of his ideas by the later Vaishnava-Āchāryas. But one thing is clear that Bhakti of the Āchāryas was not the same as that of the simple hearted saints of the South. It was no more a creed of intensified love only, but now it entered the field of theology, as it was a revolt against Sankara's protagonism exposed in the exalted adherence to the path of Jnān. His Monism and the path of Jnān, no doubt, could influence the large number of people, "But the religion of love and devotion, which the Alwārs and the Adiyārs were making popular, soon found its own philosophic exponents who entered the field of controversy and disputed the theories of Sankara."73

Rāmanuja is the most popular amongst those Bhakti Āchāryas.

73. Dr. Tara Chand; Influence of Islam on Indian Culture; p. 99.
who refuted the philosophies of Sankara and established the religion of Bhakti through his works, Vedanta Sangraha and commentaries on Bh. Gita and Badrayana, Vedanta Sutra, which reveal his theory of qualified or modified Monism. Ramanuja could not reconcile with Sankara's theory of Maya and, contrary to it, he believes that this world is not an illusion but it is real and is of three-fold nature i.e. Ishwara Conscious (Citta) and unconscious (Acitta). The later two identities abide in the first, who is Antarayami, as a spark abides in the fire and thus forms a composite whole. The finite self is an Anu (Atom) of Infinite and it is essentially an attribute (Prakar) of God. Complete union of the man and Brahman is not possible even if the former attains the highest perfection. Moreover this complete union i.e. the loss of the individuality is not favoured by Ramanuja, because in this state a Bhakta loses all his charms. He preserves his distinction from Brahman to enjoy the bliss of the divine service and love. The creation of the real cannot be unreal and Brahman is not qualitiless on the whole. He has uncountable attributes. He descends in this visible world out of the love for the mankind.

Complete perfection or liberation from the bondages can only be, according to Ramanuja, through Bhakti. By this we cannot conclude that Ramanuja ignores Jnan, but his attitude towards it is not the same as that of Sankara.
Sankara's Jnāna is absolute and is self-luminous in nature, where no distinction of the subject and object is observed, whereas the Jnāna of Ramanuja is relative in nature and it holds the distinction between the two. Jnāna here is not an ultimate end in itself, but it is accepted only so far as it helps in developing Bhakti. When he mentions the means for the attainment of Bhakti, he concludes by saying, "The attainment comes with discrimination, control of the passions, habitual practices of religious discipline, sacrificial work, purity, strength and suppression of excessive joy." It shows that he recommends Karma for the purification of mind, Jnāna for the discrimination between right and wrong and concentration of mind to perform austerities, which culminate in awakening Bhakti, and ultimate aim.

Another method preached by this exponent of the qualified monism is Prapatti that is self-surrender. It is a method which is regarded to be easier than Bhakti even, and "In qualified monism, Bhakti and Prapatti are accepted as two different methods of salvation." In Bhakti the grace of the Lord is to be won, while in Prapatti only the self is to be surrendered. It is advocated for

74. C/F Swami Prabhavanand, Spiritual Heritage of India, p. 314.
75. Dr. Udebhāno Singh, Tula Darshan Himansā p. 315, translated by author.
76. While Bhakti requires faith and love, in Prapatti we simply surrender ourselves to God, place ourselves in His hands leaving it to Him to deal with us, as He elects; - S. Rādha Krishanan; The Bhāgavada Gītā p.62.
ignorant people as an easier way.

This difference in Prapatti and Bhakti by Ramanuja shows his attitude towards Bhakti, as to keep it a dynamic force duly supported by Karma and Jnan. Bhakti as an ultimate end is a culmination of the two, whereas Prapatti does not require these. His Bhakt rests upon the purity of mind with awakened faculties of reasoning, instead of sheer emotionalism.

Nimbārka

In revolt to Sankara's monism, Ramanuja established qualified monism, but Nimbārka could not feel satisfied even with this and hence, with his mystical experiences and logical observation, tried to penetrate into the subject more vigorously and as a result propounded the theory of Bheda-Bheda (Dualism in non-dualism), according to which Brahman is definitely Absolute but is relative also. He is personal and impersonal simultaneously and has innumerable attributes and the whole universe has emerged from His Self. But with this emerging of the nominal world, his potentialities do not exhaust. He is absolute and transcendental being and in this way He is above all this cosmic world.

As regards Nimbārka's speculations about the universe and its relations with God, these are not much different than those of Ramanuja. He believes that the creation is not different from its creator, as a particle is not different from its source in nature, though it can
differ in quality. The distinction is as between the Atom and whole-composite self.

Method for salvation, Nimbadaka experienced and preached, was that of Bhakti, though he too like Ramanauja, does not ignore the importance of Jnan. But the theory of Prapatti dominates his doctrine and it gains further popularity at his hands. In both the cases, devotion or self surrender, the self of Sadhaka is not completely lost, but it remains distinctive. He emphasises the adoration of Lord Krishna and his consort Radha.

Madhava

Another exponent of the Vedanta philosophy was Madhava, who too propounded his philosophy on the basis of 'Vedanta Sutra', on which he wrote commentary in addition to Gita and many of the Upanishads, and was quite indifferent towards the philosophies of the above-mentioned Acharayas. He refuted the theory of Absolute monism, qualified monism and established the extreme dualistic nature of Brahman. His theory regarding the nature of Supreme being is synonymous to the theory of Bh. Puranam, which restores the individuality of Bhagwan as distinct from the world. His excellency is maintained and Supremeness is restored in order to erect his philosophy of frank dualism.

Unlike Sankara, he does not constitute his philosophy on Maya and the self-luminous Jnan but he believes that the world is real as it is perceived by us and the nature of
Jnan is relative, i.e. distinctive. This distinction, according to Madhava, is of five-fold in nature, and is between (1) God and individual soul, (2) God and non-living matters, (3) One soul and every other soul, (4) individual soul and matter and (5) the parts of the matter.

As his dualism believes that God is distinct than man, it also advocates that the method of salvation is Bhakti. He emphatically preaches the necessity of Bhakti which should, according to him, be unmixed with any motive behind it. It should be pure and humble in nature, leaving oneself at the will of God. The spiritual emancipation is the inevitable result of Bhakti.

Dualism divides the human beings into further divisions which are three in number. There is a category which remains absorbed in the worldly things and does not devote itself to God and it remains emancipated. The second category is of human beings, who do not get salvation, but are subject to rebirth and miseries of the world and the third one is of the beings who are entirely devoted to God and enjoy unending peace and calmness.

Valabha

Valabhā-chārya, another Vedāntist of the sixteenth century is the exponent of pure monism. For him, Brahman is not of absolute nature, but is relative and is source of all this visible world, which springs out of Him as a ray from the sun or as a spark from the fire. It does not
mean that He is changeable, but contrary to it, He remains unchanged and imparted (Avikrit). He is pure in essence and supreme in nature. Vallabha’s assumption is that He is thoroughly competent to assume the nature of personal and impersonal being and He ascribes this supremehood to Lord Krishna, who bless the devotee amusing the three forms of Ātma-Śāma, (Prevalent in soul), Puroshotam (Best amongst the persons) and Ānandmai (Blissful), in consonance with his mental attitude.

In Vallabha’s pure monism, this universe is divided into two different names, Jagat and Sansāra, which can be translated respectively as universe and world. He believes that the former is eternal whereas the latter is conditioned and transitory and is subject to change.

Synonymous to this is his view about soul. In his philosophy, soul should be unchanging and unending and it resides in the heart of the man and is manifested through body. But it is not subject to any change like body. The nature of the soul, according to him is also three-fold as pure, liberated and worldly. The first type is pure in essence and always abides in the eternal peace. The second one is the liberated and abides in the region of bliss. The third type of the soul is always after sensual objects and is conditioned by the bondages. He creates all this because he wills so. It is His play (Līlā) which is not conditioned by anything, except his own will, which when desires for expansion, it creates the world and souls.
This philosophical system of Vallabha, accepts Bhakti as practical method. He presumes and preaches two kinds of Bhakti which he terms as conditioned by tradition (Maryāda) and Pushti-Mārga (depending upon His kind will). In traditional Bhakti Sadhaka has to perform several religious ceremonies in correspondence to the prescription of the authentic scriptures, whereas in Pushti Mārga he is not to undergo any ritualistic tendency except to dedicate himself for His grace. If grace is gained, through his generosity, the perfection is not far. Though he does not disclaim the use of Ṣāman but he believes that with this, the attainment will be of lower Brahman which he terms as Akshara Brahman and not the Supreme one.

As regards the philosophical speculations in the Vedāntic school of thinkers slight changes are notable at every stage and are of great importance so far their minute observations and propounded experiences are concerned and Vallabha in this respect definitely puts a step further, but as regards his concept of Pushti Mārga, it is just a name ascribed to the Prapatti Mārga of Ramanuja. Both the systems declare their inability to attain perfection with their own efforts in respective schemes and surrender themselves to His grace. Moreover its applicability to the lower class of the society is also affirmed by the both and it is because that class is unable to equip itself for the other methods.
It has been seen that the first use of the word 'Bhakti' is available in Upanishadic Literature and then in Panini and also in the heterodox systems like Buddhism, but Bhakti as a mass-movement could be adopted and practised through the Alvars and Adiyars of the South India. Here it went deep in the common man's life and Vishnu and Shiva, became the personal gods and recipients of people's faith. But this simple, lofty and forceful doctrine of love, preached by above-mentioned saints, could no longer remain so simple and mere emotional expression and it soon became philosophical in the hands of Bhakti-Acharyas. Despite this fact, the flow of the stream of love, which once touched the common man's soul and gave it new dimensions, became almost irresistible and perhaps that is why, Ramanuja could not reconcile with Sankara's teachings and continued to catch the people's pulse through preaching the religion of love and personal form of the absolute reality.

This torch of Bhakti travelled from South to North through Ramana, a disciple of the Ramanuja's Sri sect. A couplet to this effect is available in 'Sant

77. Thus in his Sutra IV.3.95, Panini states that an affix comes after a word in the first case in the construction in the sense of, 'This is his object of Bhakti'; - Dr. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, The evolution of Theistic sects in Ancient India; p. 25.
Kabirji ki Sakhi', which stands as testimony that Bhakti-movement was actually intensified by the southern saints and, to north, it was carried by Ramananda. It goes like:

"Bhakti was originated in South and was brought (to north) by Ramananda. Kabira made it popular in the seven continents and nine regions i.e. in the whole world."

With the passage of time, the followers of Bhakti were divided into various schools and two among these, Nirguna and Saguna, were important. The former would accept the Impersonal God as their deity, whereas the later would adore His personal forms or manifestation. Jnāneshvra and Tukā Rāma were the Bhaktas, who advocated the Nirguna Bhakti and Tulsi Dāss, Meera Bāi, and Surdāss were the saints who worshipped the incarnations. In Bengal i.e. Eastern India, Chaitanya originated a Vaishnava school, which was called Sahijya, which preached the Saguna Bhakti. Rāmānanda, who made a strange departure from the original doctrine of his sect in many ways, too established his different school and advocated the worship of Rāma and his consort Sīta instead of Krishan and Rādha.

78. C/F Dr. Rāmji Lal Sahayak, Kabir-Darshan, p.349.
Kabir, a famous disciple of Ramanand, took over the torch of Bhakti from his Guru and spread the light around, as is indicated in the above-mentioned couplet. He, like his Guru, initiated the persons from every caste and each sex to his religion and made it easily accessible for the learned and unlearned, high and low. Kabir was a staunch advocate of Bhakti and he could never practise or preach to practise any other method except it. "Why such a sinner, who has not practised Bhakti, has not died even while living," is his conviction. Bhakti for him is the supreme and the only method and according to him there can be no liberation without it. "Without the Bhakti or Hari there can be no liberation at all." But along with it, he seems to be putting an emphasis upon Yoga and that is why a considerable part of his poetry contains his ideas about it. This attitude of proclivity towards Yoga and Bhakti both, makes difficult for a reader to understand whether he was a Bhakta or a Yogi. Dr. H.P. Dwivedi offers a solution to it and believes that this firm adherence to Bhakti was inculcated in his mind only after meeting Ramananda. He writes, "This does not seem impossible that before coming under the influence of

80. "I was revealed in Kasi, and was awakened by Ramananda". Kabir; Bijak, Ramaini, p. 77, C/F Dr. Tara Chand; Influence of Islam on Indian Culture; p. 147.
82. Ibid. p. 245.
Ramananda, he might have written many such verses, in which the Impartability, revealed by the tradition of Yoga sects, might have been clearly seen and Bhakti—Rasa might have not found a reference in these. Thus it becomes apparent that the torch of Bhakti, as a mass-movement, was brought by Ramananda from South to North and Kabir was the main instrument for its spread. With him, or at this time, the Indian Bhakti tradition finds new dimensions and new colours and Sikh Guru played the major role in making it a living force and mass-movement, the treatment of which follows in the subsequent chapters.