

CHAPTER - 7

THE SAINTS OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

Shankaracharya

1. Devotee of Shiva.
2. Gave birth to the philosophy of Advaitavad or Ektatvavad of Vedanta.
3. Established many Mathas (Viharas) in different parts of country-Jagannathpuri in east , Sringeri in south, Dwarka in west and Badarinath in north.
4. Emphasised knowledge or true education as a way to attain Moksha (salvation).
5. Known as Crypto - Buddhist
6. Defeated Buddhist scholastic teachers.

Ramanuja

1. Urged that for salvation the grace of god is more important than knowledge.
2. Expounded the philosophy of visistaadwaita and qualified monism.
3. His commentary of Vedanta is compiled in Sribhashya and Gitabhashya.
4. According to him soul is one with God yet separate.

Ramanand

1. Admitted to his sect disciples from all castes, from both sexes and even from among the Muslims.
2. His twelve disciples, who became famous later on included a Jat named Dhanna, a barbar Sena, a cobbler Ramdas and a Muslim, Kabir.
3. Worshipper of Rama.
4. Representative of Sagun Bhakti sect.

Kabir

1. Most radical disciple of Ramananda.
2. Brought up by a weaver of Varanasi.
3. By means of sakhas and sakhis he imparted religious instruction to Hindus and Muslims alike.
4. His sayings.

- “O Kabir, Sanskrit is the water in a well, the language of people is the following stream.”
- “I am neither in kaba nor in kailash But present in all creatures.”
- “God is the breath of all breaths.”

5. Stood for Hindu-Muslim unity.
6. Declared that Allah and Rama were the names of the same god and called him Ram and Rahim.
7. Representative poet-saint of Nirguna Bhakti sect.

Dadu Dayal

1. Resident of Ahmedabad.
2. Accepted by both the Hindus and the Muslims.
3. Devotee of Nirankar Brahma and staunch supporter of Nirguna School of Bhakti cult.

Guru Nanak

1. Believed in the doctrine of karma and the theory of transmigration of souls.
2. Started Langar (free community kitchen).
3. Worked for Hindu-Muslim unity.
4. Conceived God as Nirankara.
5. His work was compiled in the Adi Granth which also included the teachings of Kabir.
6. His Saying “God knows man’s virtues and enquires not his caste, in the next world there is no caste.”

Chaitanya

1. A devotee of Lord Krishna.
2. Founder of modern vaishnavism in Bengal.
3. Original name was Vishwambhar.
4. Great exponent of Krishnaite form of Vaishnavism.
5. He is considered by his followers as an incarnation of Krishna or Vishnu.
6. His philosophical doctrine - “Acbuttabgeda Bhedavada.”

7. His philosophy is known as Rag Marg (Path of spontaneous love).

8. Gave birth to Sankirtan system.

9. His birth place was Navadwip.

Nimbarkacharya

1. A Telgu Brahmin of Andhra Pradesh.
2. Spent most of the time at Vrindavan.
3. Published the theory of Dwaith advaitvad (Dualism-non dualism).
4. Identified Brahmana with Krishna.

Vallabacharya

1. Devotee of Krishna.
2. Believed in the philosophy of Sudhaadvaita.
3. Emphasised on Vaishnavism and Monoism.
4. His philosophy known as pushtimarg (the path of grace).

Mirabai

1. Follower of the Krishna cult of Vaishnavism.
2. Her songs were full of devotion and love, written in Rajasthani & Braja Bhasha.

Tulsidas

1. Renowned author of Ramcharit Manas.
2. Depicted Rama as the incarnation of Vishnu.
3. His other books are – Dohavali, Kavitaawali, Vinay Patrika etc.
4. Became a saint and went to Ayodhya.

Madhawacharya

1. Expounded Dwaitvad (Dualism).
2. Devotee of Vishnu.

Jnamesvar or Jnanadeva

1. Saint of Maharashtra Dharma.
2. Composed his Marathi commentary of the Bhagwad Gita known as Jnaneswari.
3. Related to Varkari sect.
4. Wrote Abhangas.

Namdev

1. Saint of Maharashtra Dharma.
2. Associated with Varkari sect.
3. Some of his lyrical verses are included in the Granth Sahib.
4. His Sayings.
 - “Hindu is blind, then Muslim squint, who

knows it, is wiser than both; he is the servant of that name”.

Ramdas

1. Saint of Maharashtra Dharma.
2. Spiritual guide of Shivaji.
3. Wrote Dasabodha which contains his vast knowledge of various sciences and arts with the synthesizing principles of spiritual life.
4. Expounder of Dharakari group.

Surdas

1. Foremost of poet of Krishna sect.
2. The first great theme of his poetry constitutes Krishna's Bal Lila (child Krishna).
3. Disciple of Vallabhacharya.

Eknatha

1. Saint of Maharashtra Dharma.

Tukaram

1. Tried to reconcile Hinduism and Islam. Known as “Kabir of the Deccan”.
2. Wrote several abhangas which embody his teachings and were widely recited in Maharashtra.

Sankardev

1. Resident of Assam.
2. Famous as “Chaitanya of Assam”.
3. His Saying.
4. “There is only one God, only one faith and devotion and besides this there is no other God”.

Narsi Mehta

1. Resident of Gujarat.
2. Author of vaishnav jan to teno kahiye A favourite Bhajan of Mahatma Gandhi.

Basava

1. Prime Minister of the Kalachuri King Bijjala.
2. Wrote Vachanas.’
3. Expounder of Virsaivism or Lingayat sect.

Sufism

Sufism and Suri Saints

1. Mystic movement in Islam is called Sufism.
2. Emphasized on realization of divine unity by arousing intuitive and spiritual facilities.
3. Pir appointed his successor who was called Wali and their disciples were known as Murids.

4. Monastic organisation of the sufi was called Khanqah.
5. Sufi orders or silsilahs are broadly classified into two.
 - a. Ba-Shara – Those who followed Sharia or Islamic Law strictly.
 - b. Be-Shara – Those who did not strictly follow sharia.

Sufi Orders

Chisti Order

1. Earliest and most liberal sufi order in India.
2. Sufis of this order lived life of poverty.
3. Did not visit the court of Sultan.
4. Practices Sama or recitation of music to create ecstasy.
5. Performed a number of yogic exercises.

Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti

1. Chisti order in India was founded by Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti who settled in Ajmer.
2. His tomb in Ajmer developed into a leading pilgrimage centre.

Sheikh Hamiduddin Nagori

Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki

1. Iltutmish was deeply devoted to him.
2. Iltutmish dedicated the Qutab Minar to him.
3. Died in the course of music.

Sheikh Faridduddin's / Baba Farid

1. Confined his activities to Punjab and Haryana region.
2. His verses are quoted in 'Adi-Granth', Scripture of the Sikha.

Nizamuddin Auliya

1. Was hostile to Sultan-Qutbuddin Mubarak and Giyasuddin Tughlaq.
2. For his mastery over yogic practices he is called a 'sidh' or perfect.
3. Practiced Sama.
4. Amir Khusrau was his disciple.

Gesu Daraz

1. Chisti silsila was made popular in the deccan by Sayid Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Hussaini or Banda Nawaz, or Mir Gesu Daraz.
2. Most important chisti sufi in the Deccan.
- b. Suhrawardi Order
 1. Came to India with the foundation of the Delhi

Sultanate.

2. Belonged to the Ba-Shara.
3. Did not believe in poor like style of the Sufi saint.
4. Accepted state patronage.
5. Real founder in India was Sheikh Bahauddin Zakaria.
- c. Firdausi Order
 1. Emerged in 14th Century.
 2. Establishment in Delhi by Badruddin Samarqandi.
 3. Outstanding sufi of the order-Sheikh Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri (of Maner near Patna).
- d. Kubrawiyya Order
 1. Main centre Kashmir.
- e. Qalandariya Order
 1. Literally means "wandering dervishes"
 2. Refused to obey Khanqah life.
 3. Did not follow Sharia, (Be-Shara)
 4. Practices Hathayoga.
- f. Shattariya Order
 1. Founded in India by Sheikh Abdullah, called Sahtar (Fast Runner)
 2. Lived kingly life style, his disciples marched wearing soldier's uniform beating drums, etc.
- g. Qadiriya Order
 1. Original founder – Muhyuddin Abdul Qadir Jilani (died 1166)
 2. Sheikh Abdul Qadir – Popularized this silsila in Sind and Punjab in 16th Century.
 3. Orthodox order (Ba-Shara)
- h. Nashabandiya Order
 1. Babur, while in central Asia, was disciple of Khwaja Obaidullah Ahrar.
 2. Sheikh Ahmed Sirhind, disciple of Baqi Billah, was contemporary of Akbar and Jahangir, Jahangir imprisoned him for declaring himself to be Mujaddid (Redeemer of Islam) at the fort of Gwalior.
- i. Rishi Movement
 1. Begun by Sheikh Nuruddin in Kashmir.
 2. He incorporated the teachings of Yogi Lalla, also called Lal Ded, a Shaivite woman saint of Kashmir.