



Religious Movements

The medieval period is considered as an age of great cultural synthesis in India. The synthesis between different cultures gave birth to new philosophical and religious traditions like Sufism and Bhakti, new religion like Sikhism, growth of Urdu and Persian languages and literature.

Bhakti Movement

- Bhakti is a devotional worship of God with the ultimate objective of attaining moksha or salvation. The concept of 'Bhakti' was put forth right in the AD 6th century, but became most popular during the medieval times all over India. The 'Alvars (Vaishnavaites) and Nayanars (Shaivites) popularised the cult in South India.
- The Bhakti saints offered a liberal approach of Hinduism, which was largely targeted to the lower castes. Rama and Krishna emerged as the leading Hindu deities. With Saguna and Nirguna Bhakti emerged as powerful medium, each having its own votaries. There were Siddhas of Tamil region who were monotheistic and condemned idolatry.
- Lingayatas of Kannada region questioned the theory of rebirth and rejected the caste hierarchy.
- Saints of Bhakti Movement gave three means (margas) for attaining salvation,
1. Gyan Marga 2. Karma Marga 3. Bhakti Marga

Causes for the Emergence of Bhakti Movement

- Bhakti Movement used local language for preaching. They ignored caste system and initially, this movement was based on equality of all human beings. The saints of Bhakti Movement led a very simple lifestyle and Bhakti Movement became very popular in Southern India and displaced Jainism and Buddhism as popular religions from that region.

- Improvement in the economic condition of the lower class, especially artisans and impact of Islam's doctrine of monotheism and equality were also important causes for emergence of Bhakti Movement in North.

Bhakti Saints

Sankracharya (AD 788 - 822)

- He is known as Pseudo-Buddha or saviour of modern Hinduism; born at Kalindi, Kerala.
- Teaching concepts of maya (illusion), advaita and importance of Vedanta.
- He established 4 mathas at Badrinath, Puri, Sringeri and Dwarka.
- He wrote commentaries on Upanishads, Bhagawad Gita and Brahmasutras of Badrayana.

Ramanuja Acharya (AD 1017-1137)

- He was a Tamil Vaishnavite saint. He advocated, Philosophy of Visistadvaita. wrote Vedanta Samgraha, commentaries on Brahmasutras and Bhagawad Gita.

Vallabhacharya (1479-1531 CE)

- He was a devotional philosopher, who founded the Pushti sect in India following the philosophy of Shuddha advaita.

Madhavacharya (13th Century)

- He was a Kannada Vaishnavite saint. He gave Philosophy of Dvaita and divided universe into two parts: Swatantra and a Swatantra.

Nimbaraka (13th-14th centuries)

- He was a Telugu Vaishnavite saint; Concept of Dvaita was propounded by him.

Raghunandan

- He belonged to Navadvipa (Nadia) in Bengal, and was Considered to be the most influential writer on the Dharamashastras.

Vidyapati (14th-15th Centuries)

- He was also known as **Maithil Kavi Kokil** and was a **Maithili** poet and a Sanskrit writer. He was born in the village Bisje in Madhubani district of Mithila, region of India. His works includes Bhu-Parikarma, Varsakrtya, Danavakyavali etc.

Two Schools of Bhakti Thoughts

Saguna Bhakti

Believed in the personification of God.

Worshipped Lord Vishnu in form of Ram and Krishna.

Not very liberal in social matters.

Saints— Ramananda, Surdas, Tulsidas, Chaitanya.

Nirguna Bhakti

Believed in formless God.

Against caste system and brahmanic rituals.

Liberal in social matters

Saints Kabir, Nanak, Raidas, Dhanna, Sena, Pipa, Dadu.

Nirguna Saints

Kabir (AD 1440-1510)

- He opposed to caste, creed, image worship and propagated Hindu-Muslim unity. He wrote- Sabad, Bijak, Doha, Holi, Rekhtal. The verses of Kabir, Namdev, Raidas, Dhanna, Pipa etc; were included in Adi Granth. He propagated Ram Bhakti.

Bijak

- The best known as of the compilation of the compositions of **Kabir** is known as **Bijak**.
- It is the holy scripture for followers of the Kabirpanthi religion.
- The Bijak is one of the earliest of the major texts in modern Hindi. The term 'Bijak' is derived from 'Bija', meaning a document containing sacred texts.

Guru Nanak (AD 1469-1539)

- He was born at Talwandi in Lahore. He propagated monism, Hindu-Muslim unity and denounced idol worship.
- His disciple Mardana played Rabab. His poems were later collected in the Adi Grantha. His followers founded a new religious sect Sikhism and it had ten Gurus.
 - (i) Guru Nanak
 - (ii) Guru Angad
 - (iii) Guru Amardas
 - (iv) Guru Ramdas, Akbar granted him the land at Amritsar, where the Golden temple now exists.
 - (v) Guru Arjanmal, compiled Adi Granth and was killed by Jahangir.
 - (vi) Guru Haragobind, he militarised the Sikh sect and defeated the Mughal army at Sangama near Amritsar.

- (vii) Guru Har Rai
- (viii) Guru Har Kishan
- (ix) Guru Tegh Bahadur, he was executed by Aurangzeb.
- (x) Guru Gobind Singh, he instituted the custom of Baptism thus, formed the **Khalsa**. He compiled **Dasven Padshah Ka Granth** was stabbed to death by an Afghan fanatic.

Dadu Dayal (AD 1554-1603)

- He was born in Ahmedabad to Muslim parents, brought up by a Hindu. His teachings are collected in a book called 'BANI'. Disciples-Sundaradasa, Rajjab, Bakham and Warid. He founded Brahma sect or Param Brahma Sampradaya.

Saguna Saints (Ram Bhakti)

Tulsi Das (AD 1532-1623)

- He was contemporary to Akbar. He wrote Ramcharitamanas, Kavitawali, Gitawali, Parvati Mangal, Janaki Mangal.

Nabhaji

- He wrote Bhaktmal in which 200 Bhaktas have been mentioned.

Ramananda (AD 14th-15th Centuries)

- He propogated Bhakti in North India. Organised a group of cadres called Bairagis. His disciples include Kabir (weaver), Raidas (cobler), Sen (Barber), Dhanna (Jat). He was a worshipper of Krishna.

Famous Disciples of Ramananda

Disciples	Communities	Disciples	Communities
Kabir	Muslim	Weaver Ravidasa	Cobbler
Sena	Barber	Sadhana	Butcher
Dhanna	Jat Peasant	Narahar	Goldsmith
Pipa	Rajput Prince		

Twelve Disciples of Ramananda

Twelve Disciples (Avadhuts of Ramananda)

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| (i) Kabir | (ii) Pipa |
| (iii) Dhanna | (iv) Ravidas |
| (v) Bharanand | (vi) Sen |
| (vii) Sukhanand | (viii) Sri Ananda |
| (ix) Paramanand | (x) Sursurananda |
| (xi) Mahanand | (xii) Anantananda |

Saguna Saints (Krishna Bhakti)

Vallabhacharya (AD 1479-1531)

- He was Telangana Brahmin born at Banaras. Title Jagat Guru Mahaprabhu. Established Pushti Marg. He established Pushtimarg and gave philosophy of Shudha Advaita.

Surdas (AD 1483-1563)

- He was disciple of Vallabhacharya and a blind poet of Agra. Sang the glory of Krishna in his Sursagar.

Mirabai (AD 1498-1546)

- She was rathore princess of Merata and daughter in law of Rana Sanga of Mewar (husband- Bhuja Raja). She wrote the vers Padavali.

Chaitanya (ad 1486-1533)

- He was known as Gaudiya Mahaprabhu. Founder of Gaurang or Bengal Vaishnavism. His teacher was **Ishwapuri**. He propounded philosophy of Achintya Bhedabheda

Shankara Deva (ad 1449-1568)

- Established **Ek Sharan Sampradaya** or **Mahapurushiya Sampradaya** in Assam.

Maharashtra Dharma Saints

Jnanesvara / Jnanadeva (AD 1271 1296)

- He was worshipper of Vithoba. He was associated with **Krishnamargi sect**. He was founder of Marathi language and literature. He wrote commentaries on Bhagawad Gita called **Dyaneshwari/ Bhavarthadipka**.

Namdeva (ad 1270-1350)

- He was tailor by caste, opposed caste distinction. He founded **Vakari sect** or the cult of **Vithoba**.

Eknath (AD 1533-1599)

- He was associated with Varkari Sect. He wrote commentary on the Ramayana called the **Bhavartha Ramayana and another commentary on the 11th book of the** Bhagawata Purana.

Tukaram (1598-1650)

- He was associated with Dharkari and Varkari sect. He wrote devotional poems called **Abhangas**. He was the teacher of Shivaji.

- **Ramdas (1608-1681)**
He compiled his writings and sermons in Dasabodha.
- **Purandar Das (1480-1564)**
A saint from Karnataka, he is known as the Father of Carnatic music.
- **Tyagaraja (1767-1847)**
Greatest saint composer of Carnatic music from Tamil Nadu.

The Sufi Movement

- The term Sufi has its origin from the Arabic word Safa. It has two meanings
 - (i) One who wear woollen clothes.
 - (ii) Symbolises purity and sacredness.
- Sufi mysticism is associated with the liberal interpretation of Quran called Tarikat. (Shariat is the conservative interpretation of Quran). It believes that that (God) and Khalaq (Soul) are the same. The Sufi orders were divided into two parts:
 - (i) Ba-shara
 - (ii) Be-shara

Sufi Orders

Orders	Founders	Area of Propagations	Famous Saints	Principles
Chishtis	Khwaja Moin-ud-din Chisti (came with Ghori)	North India (Delhi-Ajmer)	• Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki	• Kept aloof from royal court popularised music recitations called Sama (Mahboob -i-Ilahi).
	Burhan-ud-din Garib	South India	• Farid-ul-din Ganj-i-Shakar (his verses were included in Adi Granth of Sikhs) • Nizam-ud-din Auliya • Nasir-ud-ddin Chirag-i-Delhi	• Amir Khusrau was disciple of Auliya.
Suharwardiy	Shikh	Punjab Multan	• Hamid-ud-din Nagori	• Accepted Royal Service.

Orders	Founders	Area of Propagations	Famous Saints	Principles
Qadiri	Shihab-ud-din Suharwardi Sheika Nizamat Ullah	Sind Lahore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rukn-ud-din Abdul Fath • Baha-ud-din Zakaria • Nasiruddin Mohammed Jilani • Para Shikoh (Shah Jahan's son) 	
Naqshbandi		North India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi (Mujaddid) • Ubaidullah Ahrar • Babur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orthodox sect • Mujaddid opposed Shiah, philosophy of Wahadat-ul-Shahdud, wrote 'Red-i-Khafid', arrested by Jahangir.
Firdausi	Bihar		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baduddin Samaragji • Ahmed Iban Yahiya Maneri 	
Roshaniya Order (Akbar's time)	Miyan Bayazid Ansari (Pir Roshan)	Tribal Areas of North West		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ansari wrote the book Khair-ul-Bayan.
Mahadevi	Mullah Mohammad Mahdi	Jaunpur		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposed orthodox Muslims.
Rishi	Nur-ud-din Noorani (wali)	Kashmir		
Qalandariya	Abu Wali Qalandar		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidi Maulah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wandering monks were called Darveshes. • Organised attack on Baba Farid.
Shattari	Abdullah Shattari	Gujarat, Meerut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaji-al-din • Shah Pir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claimed direct contact with God.