

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SANT KABIR AND ITS RELEVANCE IN MODERN INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

*PAVANJOT KAUR

ABSTRACT

Sant Kabir was an educationalist with high aims and ideals. He emphasised on the need for india to develop a national spirit to take its place among the nations of the world and to develop educational methods founded on Indian ideals. He became the founder of Modern Education under the name of the society for promotion of Modern Education. He brought a new spirit in the country and worked tirelessly for the promotion of education.

KEYWORDS: *Sant Kabir, Educational Thoughts, Modern Indian Education*

Human life is a very complicated process. In the very beginning its only concern was safety and satisfaction of hunger. As the time passed the life of man became complicated and a lot of problems were faced. Time to time such questions were tried to be solved with the help of education and philosophy. Education is that process which leads and guides us truly on the path of life in various spheres of human being. It is a lighthouse for the passengers who might deviate on the path of life. It is a lifelong and continuous process of cognition. One goes on learning whole life and, in fact, learning from such real life experience is called education. Education tries to spread knowledge in the normal walk of life to make it more and more sophisticated, easy, logical and true in every sense. It is the education which teaches us proper meaning of life, proper behavior and way of life. Society as a whole goes on changing, researching and modifying its structure, behavior, way and walk of life as well as its life philosophy continuously through the education.

Kabir suggested that True God is with the person who is on the path of righteousness, considered all creatures on earth as his own self, and who is passively detached from the affairs of the world. To know God, suggested Kabir, meditate with the mantra Rāma, Rāma.

Early life

The years of Kabir's birth and death are unclear. Some historians favor 1398–1448 as the period Kabir lived, while others favor 1440–1518. Kabir's family is believed to have lived in the locality of Kabir Chaura in Varanasi. Kabir maṅha , a maṅha located in the back alleys of Kabir Chaura, celebrates his life and times. Accompanying the property is a house named Nīrūṅlā which houses Niru and Nima's graves.

Poetry

Kabir's poems were in vernacular Hindi, borrowing from various dialects including Avadhi, Braj, and Bhojpuri. They cover various aspects of life and call for a loving devotion for God. Kabir composed his verses with simple Hindi words. Most of his work were concerned with devotion, mysticism and discipline. Where spring, the lord of seasons reigneth, there the unstruck music sounds of itself, There the streams of light flow in all directions, few are the men who can cross to that shore! There, where millions of Krishnas stand with hands folded, Where millions of Vishnus bow their

*Assistant Professor, *Sadbhavna College of Education for Women*

heads, where millions of Brahmas are reading the Vedas, Where millions of Shivas are lost in contemplation, where millions of Indras dwell in the sky, Where the demi-gods and the munis are unnumbered, where millions of Saraswatis, goddess of music play the vina, There is my Lord self-revealed, and the scent of sandal and flowers dwells in those deeps.

Kabir and his followers named his verbally composed poems of wisdom as "bāṅīs" (utterances). These include songs and couplets, called variously dohe, śalokā (Sanskrit: ślokā), or sākhī (Sanskrit: sākṣī). The latter term means "witness", implying the poems to be evidence of the Truth.

Authenticity

Numerous poems are attributed to Kabir, but scholars now doubt the authenticity of many songs credited to him. Rabindranath Tagore's English translation and compilation One Hundred Poems of Kabir was first published in 1915, and has been a classic reprinted and widely circulated particularly in the West. Scholars believe only six of its hundred poems are authentic, and they have questioned whether Tagore introduced then prevalent theological perspectives onto Kabir, as he translated poems in early 20th century that he presumed to be of Kabir's. The unauthentic poems, nevertheless belong to the Bhakti movement in medieval India, and may be by admirers of Kabir who lived later.

Philosophy

Some commentators suggest Kabir's philosophy to be a syncretic synthesis of Hinduism and Islam, but scholars widely state that this is false and a misunderstanding of Kabir. He adopted their terminology and concepts, but vigorously criticized them both. He questioned the need for any holy book, as stated in Kabir Granthavali as follows: Many scholars interpret Kabir's philosophy to be questioning the need for religion, rather than attempting to propose either Hindu-Muslim unity or an independent synthesis of a new religious tradition. Kabir rejected the hypocrisy and misguided rituals evident in various religious practices of his day, including those in Islam and Hinduism.

Influence of Islam

Lorenzen in his review of Kabir philosophy and poetry writes, "The extent to which Kabir borrowed elements from Islam is controversial. Most recent scholars have argued that he simply rejected Islam and took almost all his ideas and beliefs from the Hindu tradition. Contemporary Kabir Panth sadhus make roughly the same argument. Most of the vocabulary used in his songs and verses is borrowed directly from the Hindu tradition. Nonetheless it is hard not to see the influence of Islam in his insistence on devotion to a single God, a god Kabir most often calls Ram".

Persecution and social impact

The legends about Kabir describe him as the underdog who nevertheless is victorious in trials by a Sultan, a Brahmin, a merchant, a god or a goddess. The ideological messages in the legends appealed to the poor and oppressed. According to David Lorenzen, legends about Kabir reflect a "protest against social discrimination and economic exploitation", they present the perspective of the poor and powerless, not the rich and powerful. However, many scholars doubt that these legends of persecution are authentic, point to the lack of any corroborating evidence, consider it unlikely that a Muslim Sultan would take orders from Hindu Brahmins or Kabir's own

mother demanded that the Sultan punish Kabir, and question the historicity of the legends on Kabir

Legacy

Kabir's literature legacy was championed by two of his disciples, Bhāgodās and Dharmadās. Songs of Kabir were collected by Kshitimohan Sen from mendicants across India; these were then translated to English by Rabindranath Tagore. New English translations of Songs of Kabir is done by Arvind Krishna Mehrotra. "It is Mehrotra who has succeeded in capturing the ferocity and improvisational energy of Kabir's poetry".

Kabir and the Guru Granth Sahib

Kabir's verses were incorporated into Adi Granth, the scripture of Sikhism, with verses attributed to Kabir constituting the largest non-Sikh contribution.

Some scholars state Kabir's ideas were one of the many influence son Guru Nanak, who went on to found Sikhism in the fifteenth century. Other Sikh scholars disagree, stating there are differences between the views and practices of Kabir .

Kabir's poetry today

There are several allusions to Kabir's poetry in mainstream Indian film music. The title song of the Sufi fusion band Indian Ocean's album Hindi is an energetic rendering of Kabir's famous poem "The intricately woven blanket", with influences from Indian folk, Sufi traditions and progressive rock. Noted classical singer, late Kumar Gandharva, is widely recognized for his wonderful rendering of Kabir's poetry.

Life History of Kabir Das

Siddhapeeth Kabirchaura Math Mulgadi and his Tradition:

Kabirchaura Math Mulgadi is the home, historical work place and meditation place of the Saint-Shiromani Kabir Das. He was the only saint of his type, known as the "Sab Santan Sartaj". It is considered as; the history of humanity is worthless without Kabirchaura Math Mulgadi just like all the saints are valueless without Saint Kabir. Kabirchaura Math Mulgadi has its own affluent traditions and effective history. It is the home of Kabir as well as the courageous vidyapith for all the saints. The Indian saints of the Madhyakalin India got their spiritual education form this place. It has been proved in the history of human tradition that it is not necessary to go to the Himalaya for the deep meditation, but it can be done by living in the society. Kabir Das himself was the ideal indication of this. He is the real indication of the Bhakti, living together with the normal human being life. He showed the way of free Bhakti to the people instead of worshipping stone. History witnessed that the tradition of here give the reputation and recognition to all the saints.

The used things of the Kabir as well as other saints of his tradition are still kept safe and secure in the Kabir Math. The weaving machine, khadau, rudraksh garland (got from his Guru Swami Ramanand), rust free trident and the other entire thing used by the Kabir someday are available at the Kabir Math.

Historical well:

A historical well is here at the Kabir Math, the water of which is considered as mixed with the Amrit Ras of his Sadhana. It was first guessed by the great Pandit Sarvanand from the south India. He came here for arguing with the Kabir and felt thirsty. He drunk water and ask for address of Kabir from the kamali. Kamali told him the address but in but in the form of dohe of Kabir Das.

Kabir Das Contribution to the Country

Saint Kabir Das, a Bhakti and Sufi movement saint of the medieval India, is extensively for his Bhakti movement in the North India. His life cycle is centered in the region of Kashi (also known as the Banaras or Varanasi). He was heriditorically related to the weaving occupation and cast of Julaha. His immense contribution towards the Bhakti Movement in India is considered as a pioneered one along with the Farid, Ravidas and Namdev. He was a saint of combined mystical nature (Nath tradition, Sufism, bhakti) which made him of a distinctive religion of his own. He said that the path of sufferings is the real love and life.

Religion of Kabir Das

According to the Kabir Das, real religion is a way of life the people live it and not made by the people own. According to him the work is worship and responsibility is like religion. He said that live your life, do responsibilities and do hard work to make your life eternal. Never go away from the responsibilities of the life like having Sanyasa. He appreciated and valued the family life which is the real meaning of life. It is also mentioned in the Vedas that living life by leaving home and responsibilities is not the real dharma. Living as a householder is also a great and real Sanyasa. Just like, Nirguna sadhus who live a family life work hard for their daily routine bread as well as chant the name of God. He has given the people an authentic fact about what is the religion of human beings the one should have. Such preaches of him has helped the common people to understand the mystery of life very easily.

Kabir Das: A Hindu or a Muslim

It is considered that after the death of Kabir Das, Hindus and Muslims had claimed for getting the dead body of Kabir Das. Both of them wanted to do the funeral of dead body of the Kabir Das according to their own customs and traditions. Hindus stated that they want to burn the body as he was a Hindu and Muslims said that they want to bury under the Mohammedan rites as he was a Muslim.

But, when they removed the sheet from the dead body they found only some flowers at that place. They distributed the flower between each other and completed the funeral according to their own traditions and customs. It is also considered that when they were fighting, the spirit of Kabir das came to them and said that, "I was neither a Hindu nor a Mohammedan. I was both. I was nothing. I was all. I discern God in both. There is no Hindu and no Mussalman. To him who is free from delusion, Hindu and Mussalman are the same. Remove the shroud and behold the miracle!"

God of Kabir Das

His Guru Ramanand has given him the name of Lord Rama as a guru-mantra which he had interpreted in his own way. He was devoted to the Nirguna Bhakti and not to the Saguna Bhakti like his Guru. His Rama was an absolute pure Satchitananda, not the son of Dasharatha or king of Ayodhya as he said "Dasaratha ke ghar na janmey, yee chal Maya keenha." He was greatly influenced by the Buddhas and the Siddhas over Islamic tradition. According to him, "Nirguna Nama japahu rey Bhaiya, Avigati Ki gati Lakhi Na Jaiya."

Death of Kabir Das

Kabir Das, a Sufi poet of 15th century, it is believed that he had chosen his own place of death, Magahar, which is located about 240 km away from Lucknow. He has chosen this place to die in order to remove the fairy tale (myth) from the people mind. Those days, it was considered that the one who takes his last breathes and die in the region

of Magahar, would never get place in heaven as well as take birth of donkey in the next life.

Kabir Das: A Mystic Poet

A great mystic poet, Kabir Das, is one of the leading spiritual poets in Indian who has given his philosophical ideas to promote the lives of people. His philosophy of oneness in God and Karma as a real Dharma has changed the mind of people towards goodness. His love and devotion towards the God fulfill the concept of both Hindu Bhakti and Muslim Sufi. It is considered that he was from the Hindu Brahmin family but espoused by the Muslim weavers without child, Niru and Nimma. He was founded by them into the pond of Lahartara (in Kashi) lying at a huge lotus leaf. At that time there was a lot of disagreement between orthodox Hindu and Muslim people which was the main focus of Kabir Das to resolve that issue by his dohas or couplets.

Professionally he never attended classes but he was very knowledgeable and mystic person. He wrote his couplets and dohas in the formal language which was greatly spoken at that time which includes the Braj, Avadhi and Bhojpuri as well. He wrote a lot of dohas, couplets and books of stories based on the social barriers.

Works of Kabir Das

The books written by the Kabir Das are generally the collections of dohas and songs. The total works are seventy two including some of the important and well known works are Rekhtas, Kabir Bijak, the Suknidhan, Mangal, Vasant, Sabdas, Sakhis and Holy Agams.

The writing style and language of the Kabir Das is very simple and beautiful. He had written his dohas very boldly and naturally which are full of meanings and significance. He wrote from the depth of his heart. He has compressed the sense of whole world in his simple dohas and couplet. His sayings are beyond compare and inspiring.

Birth Place of Kabir Das

It is the great pond where Saint Kabir was found by the Neeru and Neema. It is located at the Saint Kabir Math Lahartara in the Kashi. It is the Saint Kabir Math located in the Lahartara Varanasi. What a great building of the peace and real education. Saints from all over the world come here to get the real education.

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