



Fifteen Century's Social Background of Assam and Sankar Deva's Bargeet –“Jay Jay Yadava..”

Dr. Saroj Kakati

Assistant Professor

Assamese Dept, Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya

ABSTRACT : In 1500 century, the sacred religious stream of Vaishnavite movement flowed all over India and in Assam Sankardev was pioneer. Sankardev has genius personality in various fields like Literature, Music, Art, Drama, Dance, Social reformation etc, but he got many obstacles to convey his spiritual ideology and perception to the common people's heart and mind. Contemporary social rites and rituals, some influential person's illegal interference, the tyranny of King and his officers created intense obstacles to propagate Vaishnavite ideology. But at last he reached great success of propagation, overcoming all prohibitions. The Bargeet (The Sacred Song) took a major part to convey his ideology to the common people therefore Dr. Banikanta Kakati (great Assamese scholar) mentioned Bargeets as “Holly Song”.

Composed by great Guru Sankardev and Madhabdev, high ethical and spiritually enriched these songs are called as “Bargeet”. (Bar means great, Geet means--Song) In Indian as well as in Assamese society and culture, it is emphasized on four folds of our life skill, like “Dharma, (Humanity) Artha (Money) Kama (Worldly desire) and Mokhya (Salvation). Without spiritual knowledge, person cannot attain at Mokhya----it means ultimate freedom from ignorance of worldly life. The Bargeet can enlighten our life with great spiritual knowledge.

Keywords: Sankardev, Saivism, Saktisim, Vaishnavism, Kamakhya, Tantra Sadhana, devotees,

I. Introduction:

Sankardev (1449--1568) went two times for pilgrimage in his life, one is at the age of 39 and other is at 96 years old. He decided to propagate neo vaishnavism in Assam after the return of first time pilgrimage. He visited the major holly places of North India and got proper company of many saints, Yogis to accumulate wisdom of religion or spirituality. During the time of long 12 years pilgrimage He certainly studied about Bhakti, Karma, Jyana and Raj Yoga---- the four major spiritual paths of India, and decided to propagate Bhakti Yoga in his motherland Assam.

II. Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives in this paper are –



- to study the Fifteen Century's Social Background of Assam .
- to analyse the Sankar Deva's Bargeet –“Jay Jay Yadava.”

III. Methodology:

The research is primarily descriptive in nature. So, secondary data is the main source of data. To fulfil the objectives, study materials have been collected from different books and periodicals and try to explain it properly

IV. Result and Discussion:

4.1 In fifteen, in Assam, Saivisim and Saktisim were strongly prevalent among common people. Tantra sadhana was born in ancient Kamrup; the Kamakhya temple was the main centre of Sakti sadhana. In tantra sadhana five major offerings wine, meat, fish, grain and coition are used, therefore the common people did not able to control their mind and people gave more priority on worldly enjoyment than prosperity of their spiritual life. On the other hand Assam is a land of river and rain, Nature gives resources abundantly; people able to collect fish, meat or other food items from nature largely in very less effort and cost. As a result, the actual development of devotees was far away because of the luxurious system. Tantra sadhana is a way to attain the God realisation through worldly enjoyment, but without proper guidance devotees cannot achieve the goal. Same situation was seen in Saivism. Religious preceptors and prophets taught the secrets of austere to some selected and efficient disciples. But the common people were not able to follow the proper religious way. As a result disciples worshiped Lord Shiva as a folk God and used marijuana as major offerings. Lord Shiva was imagined as they like, “In his house other useable goods were not found but marijuana, ‘Dhatara’ (thorn apple) and marijuana crusher, smoke- pipe, bag and dried marijuana bundles are available. He is a sufferer of poverty and faces frequently family quarrel with his wife Parvati, but he is apathetic in more time----and he is intoxicating with charmed smoking marijuana.”[1].

As a result more people of this path became intoxicated with marijuana, aimless and luxurious and workless. With this circumstance some preceptors (Guru) gain excessive influencing power on society and took unexpected advantage from common people as well as from the house of King. The



uneducated, workers (pike), cultivators, have not social status and they were suppressed and neglected by such powerful persons. Religious rites and rituals became more costly and unnecessary. Common people were unable to spend sufficient money for religious purpose due to customs.

- 4.2 In this situation Sankardev discriminated to propagate an easy, simple and costless 'Baishnaviate' religion. He received sufficient response from common people but got excessive obstacles from some powerful, 'guru-like' people of the society, even he faced life risk situation at that time. Royal supports were far from him; even he was ordered to arrest and imprisoned. At last he saved his life taking shelter in powerful Koch Kingdom and learned king Naranarayana and his brother Chilarai supported him strongly.
- 4.3 The use of music was not a new media to spread religious ideology in ancient Assam. Buddhist prophets Luipada, Sarahpada, Matshendra Nath, Gorakha Nath used 'Saryapada' (spiritual Song) as a performing art to propagate the ideology of 'Sahaj- jan- Pantha' (The natural Yoga path). Some folk performing art 'Ojapali' (performing artiest of Song), Dhuliya (Drum and play artiest), Putala Nash' (play of toy) have been existing from ancient time in Assam.
- 4.4 Neo-Baishnaviate religion has an ideology to spread virtues of Lord Krishna and he is worshiped as only Lord of the Universe and he is the sole authority of creation, existence and absorption. He is also worshiped as a lord of worldly enjoyment, salvation, the ultimate Person, full of desire. According to guru Sankarasharya (The ancient Indian spiritual Guru) the Supreme power is true but the world or Nature and worldly life is not true but a hallucination. Everything of nature is materialized from the Supreme Being and other worldly lives are only perfect, multidimensional drama. The ultimate power is omnipotent, everlasting, omnipresent, omniscient and full of peace and joy. Four kinds of organism---- flying creature, aquatic animal, plants and walking creatures are only material and external expression of the supreme power.



“Tumi jagatar Isha eak

Ako bastu nahike tomat byatirek” [2].

(Meaning—Thou are the only master of the universe, there is no other matter except You)

4.5 This is Gyana (wisdom) Yoga and this way was difficult to follow for the illiterate common people. There was no sufficient educational institution or master at that time, therefore Sankardev decided to propagate the simple Bhakti Yoga. (Unconditional love to God) “Wisdom arises from Bhakti. What is the wisdom? This is ultimate wisdom---- means knowing about the supreme power. What is the way to the Brahma? The masters said with sonorous voice that Gyana-Karma- RajYoga-Bhakti through these four ways we can acquire the Supreme knowledge. The track of unconditional love for the God is the best way, because the settled process of Gyana-Karma-Yoga path are hard and intelligence base. Though it is easy to acquire the ultimate knowledge for the most intelligent persons but it is not easy way for the common people[3].

4.6 It is difficult to worship or love for the God because He is formless, unchanged, therefore Sankardev advised to worship his devotees Lord Krishna as alternative of the supreme power because Lord Krishna was full of all virtues like Bramha. Sankardev also taught the nine ways of worshipping to Lord Krishna these are hearing about the virtues of God (Shrabana) Singing about his good works (Kirtana), recollection, (Smaran) worshipping with offerings, (Archan) worshipping his feet through mentally (Padasevan) thinking as a slave of God (Daishya) thinking Him as a friend (Sakhittya) praying to God (Bandan) and offering our human body to God (Deharpana). A large number of people responded for Sankardeva’s ideology because it was very simple and costless, one can do everything mentally, moreover the neglected common people feel dignity. The path was full of self purification because Sankardev perceived that only pure hearted person can feel the God. “We should tie up completely ourselves with the God through a worldly relation, offering deep love to Himand this unconditional love can bring purity to our life. This Love will make us intimate with the universe, and it



give us the light of wisdom to see the all creatures equally, therefore it is our pure nature of heart----this is the religion of Love[4].

4.7 Sankardev did not stop his effort showing only the religion of Bhakti Path, but he always tried to teach people the actual view of human life and the world by his Literature, music, drama etc. He did not support asceticism and advised not to give up the worldly life for realizing the God, he also a married person and after the death of his first wife, he married for second time and he became father of son Ramananda and daughter Manu. He advised people to live in this world as awakened person, without any attachment to money, matter, relation, fame etc. At the time of narrating about a story in his literature, if he thought the mind of his disciples go the other side, except the God he recollected that in this transitory life only Bhakti can give us the actual path. In every moment we have lost longevity of our life, therefore giving up laziness we should go through the right path of our life. As a master of spiritual life he tried awakened people for their life and world. He preferred devotion, wisdom and work or duty of our life.

4.8 The great song of Devotion-- ‘Bargeet’:

The Absolute Being is shapeless, invisible, therefore in the path of devotion Lord Krishna is worshiped as a complete and perfect incarnation. He is the owner of creation, protection, nurture and destruction as well as donor of worldly enjoyment and spiritual salvation. Lord Siva is worshiped in Shaiviate and Goddess Durga is in Shaktisim and at last, all offerings of devotion go towards the Supreme Being. Everybody can achieve blessings from the Supreme Being, according to their own desire. Once upon a time the adorable God and Goddess revealed as human for the kind of society and now we are worshiping them. In Bhakti Yoga there is no existence of question or uncertainty but faith and love for the Supreme Being is the ultimate emotion of devotee and thus at last devotee can realize the God.

4.9 In Bhakti Yoga devotees worship the formless God as an incarnation, with a worldly relationship according to their own ideology.

4.10 It is discussed how the worshiping system demoralized and keeping away devotees from the actual path of religion at the stream of time. Therefore



Sankardev's ideology was quiet simple and modern for that time and he advised to worship Lord Krishna as the ultimate power of the universe. Sankardev glorified Lord Krishna, He is the diadem of 'Jadu' race, husband of Lakhasmi, (the goddess of wealth) and He is the holder of all creatures. Krishna is saviour of our universe. Recollection about God is the one of the major way of worshiping; it can give great result to devotees they become capable to realize the hallucination of life or world. God is very kind to the people, who is poor in wisdom. After the acquiring of wisdom devotees become very wealthy by virtue.

- 4.11 Beauty and virtue of Lord Krishna--- God is the vital force of all creatures, He has no birth, remover the cover of ignorance, controller of our internal ego. God is the remover of agony; He is the endless source of happiness because God is the joy, each and every source and root of worldly happiness. But he became cowboy and plays with his friends to show human behaviour. ' The ultimate being of Bedanta (Hindu philosophy) become an ultimate person in Bhagavata. (A great book about life works of Lord Krishna) The ultimate person is the God, He is ultimate, perfect----- and he is the Krishna [5].
- 4.12 Lord Krishna relocated with his cowboy friends in forest the Brindaban; He is efficient in all works and most handsome like full Moon. He sleeps on Sesnag (A great divine Snake), and auspicious like Shiva, devastator of demon Keshi, He wears beautiful yellow cloth, omnipresent and deathless.
- 4.13 Lord Krishna is ultimate friend of all creatures, blissful for all; very nice and sweet like the Moon, master of all divinity, ultimate calm and quiet, remover of ignorance a like a Lotus. Lotus has special quality, it remains always on water but detached from water that means apart from worldly ignorance and he is full of delight. Sankardev considers himself as a servant of such Lord Krishna without any expectation.

V.Conclusion:

Lord Krishna is a symbol of joy, divinity, divine song, of our life. Krishna is Lord of celestial melody which can delight everybody; this is the greatest creation- music of whole universe, it can attract all devotees to him, but people



unable to recognise the everlasting music due to darkness of ignorance, evanescent pleasure and bindings of one after another meaningless desires. Common people have a deep faith and attachment with worldly enjoyment but they cannot think about its consequences but we can get rid from all types of grief of life. Sankardev depicts a clear vision of his Ideology through the Bargeet (Great Song) that though the ultimate being is invisible, formless, but we can develop our 'self-being' by accumulating virtues through worship or Bhakti to Lord Krishna.

References:

- [1] Sharmadoloi, Dr. Harinath---- Asamot Shaiva Sadhana aru Shaiva Sahitya (Shaivism and Shaiva Literature in Assam) 2003
- [2] Dev, Sankar—Kirtan, Ed. Dr. Keshabananda Devagoswami,1982
- [3] Shastri, Monoranjan, Asomar Baishanav Darsanar Ruprekha—(Outline of the Vaishnavite Philosophy Of Assam) 1991
- [4] Bhattacharya, Paragkumar--- Prem Dharma Aru Baishnab Kabya,(Religion of Love and Vaishnavite Poem) Bina Library---1992
- [5] [Baruah, Girish, Sankardevar Shrister Alokrekha, (The light of Sankardeva's creation) Edited By Dr. Rashmirekha Gogoi, Prabin Sharma]

Other Books ---

- [1] Bhakat, Dwijendranath----Kirtan Ek Samikhatmak Alosona, (Kirtana—An Analytical Review) Chandra Prakash—2007
- [2] Mahanta, Keshada(Ed.) Tattanusandhani Bapchandra Mahantar Vividh Pravandha 2015 (Thinker, Philosopher Bapchandra Mahanta: Selected Articles)
- [3] Mahanta, Bapchandra-----Bargeet, Students Stors—1992
- [4] Sharma,Dr. Dimbeswar ---- Mahapurush Sankardevar Sahityat Ras 1995 (Art of Sankardeva's Literature)
- [5] Sharma, Prabin and Gogoi, Rashmirekha-----Kalpataru ----2011 (The divine tree who can give everything)
- [6] Sharmadoloi, Harinath -----Sankardevar Sahitya Prativa 1995, (Sankardeva's Literary Brilliance, 2nd part)