

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2017.031.041](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2017.031.041)

**BINIKA SADHNANI**

Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University, India

## **ANALYSIS OF THE BHAKTI POETRY MOVEMENT IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MIRABAI AND HER POEMS**

### **Abstract:**

The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism. It originated in the seventh-century Tamil south India, and spread northwards. The Bhakti movement regionally developed around different gods and goddesses, such as Vishnu, Shiva. The movement has traditionally been considered as an influential social reformation in Hinduism, and provided an individual-focused alternative path to spirituality regardless of one's caste or birth or gender.

This paper aims to provide a brief understanding of the Bhakti movement which spread in early India and the Indian literature which sprang out of it. The focus of the paper is to identify the features of Bhakti poetry and the relevance of the ideas in the contemporary world. The paper proposes to focus in particular on Saint Mirabai- one of the well known women poets of the Bhakti movement. Born in Rajasthan and married to Rana Bhojraj but as a young girl Mirabai took the idol of Lord Krishna (Hindu God) as her husband incarnate. Mirabai's entire life was devoted to Krishna. Despite the discontentment from her in-laws, Mirabai continued to sing, dance and immerse herself in the devotion of Lord Krishna.

The idea of bhakti is often looked at as a mere devotion to God. Its value is often limited to that being religious. This paper aims to expand the horizon and look deeper into the movement and what it stood for with religion not at the center of it. This paper analyses Mirabai's role as a strong woman in the early India dominated by patriarchy and caste-ism and looks at Mirabai's poetic themes as philosophies which can be adapted by the contemporary world. The paper does not intend to change or propagate any religious ideas as the focus is the attitude, the mentality and the courage which one can infer. The paper proposes to explore religion and God as a concept which is personal and may be interpreted individually. These two terms can be replaced with anything that is deeply personal and carry immense value for any individual. Lord Krishna was a concept or a belief and the purpose of Mira's life. For a modern day individual Krishna can stand for something else- one's belief, a commercial idea, a philosophy, anything that is intuitive and different from that which is taught- this is the undercurrent of this paper.

### **Keywords:**

Bhakti Poetry, Mirabai, Secular India

**JEL Classification:** Z11