



DISCERNING DYNAMICS OF RELIGIOSITY : A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Religiosity is not a homogeneous phenomenon. It functions multiple ways depending upon believer's emotional relationship with the object of faith (Divinity, Holy Spirit, Personal God etc.) The present research intends first, to investigate the nature of religiosity considering the role of emotion in the making of believers' subjectivity. The study categories different types of believers according to their aspirations for mundane and supra-mundane concerns. Second, it discerns the subjective and objective dimensions of believers' consciousness by phenomenologically exploring the interface of emotion and perception in life- world of believers. And third, the study further attempts to apprehend the perception of believers by examining axiological and aesthetical dimensions of believer's subjectivity.

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The phenomenon of religiosity is dynamic one since intentionality of believer's consciousness differs on account of emotions, their intensity and the nature of the object of faith. Believer's emotion is always directed towards an object of faith who is considered by him as the embodiment of the highest virtues. Emotions are manifested in various religious activities such as rituals, rites, prayers, customs, and religious ethics. These activities also differ according to cultural context. Due to the dynamic nature of religiosity, there are various types of believers. In Bhagwat Gita,¹ Sri Krishna has said about the four types of persons: 'Ārta', 'Jijnasu', 'Arthartha' and 'Jañani', who take refuge in him.

Types of Believers

On account of the value of emotion, they can be put into two border categories: first, includes those believers for whom faith is intrinsically valuable, second consists of those believers for whom faith is extrinsically valuable; it is a sort of means to achieve some other ends. Usually, believers have faith in God for they think that He will help them to attain certain desired goals.

Religiosity as Means

This category of believers contains within itself various kinds of believers, differing from each other concerning the nature of goals they aspire for. Further, this category (faith is extrinsically valuable) includes three groups of believers: the first group comprises of those believers who have lost all hope of getting out of his state of utter despair and are looking for divine help. Second is of believers who think that with His Grace god could fulfil their desires for mundane possessions like wealth, success in professional life etc. The third group includes believers aspiring for the meaning of life by attaining knowledge, doing service and welfare for society. Though the believers of non-theistic religions have no personal god from whom they

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