



## **Baul Song: Lyrical expression for Socio-Religious Reformation and Self-Exploration**

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### **ARTICLE DETAILS**

#### **Research Paper**

**Accepted:** 29-05-2025

**Published:** 10-06-2025

#### **Keywords:**

*Baul Philosophy, Lalon, Rabindranath, Man made Society, Man of Heart.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

Society refers to a complex in the interior relationship. On the one hand, human conflicts with world nature, on the other hand human conflict with human beings- this mutual conflict is never operated or not possible in a particular straight line. The variety of international relationships- the variety of retaliation created multi-faceted thinking in the society. Although originating in the same social system, not all thoughts are influenced by one outlook and at a certain time, different ideas are developed in society. Social thinking does not mean the single thought of a particular class, because the identity of the society is in its cohesion. Analyzing the structure of the Hindu society of undivided Bangladesh, it shows that it is a social system based on the Veda-Brahmin-ruled caste system. Needless to say, the inequalities and social distances of people have increased on the basis of caste and class. At this time, in the Hindu society of Bangladesh, various secondary religions have emerged in parallel beyond the mainstream of religion and life, which was associated with the life of the so-called lower and lower classes. At a particular time, a particular philosophy is in the role of a controller in the life of the society, but other views exist outside the boundary and affect the life of the people. There is always a Baul community that exists in this society which community hates inequality in the society, the racism, the caste system and emphasize a pure love or 'Sahoj'. The aim of this paper to find out the philosophical influence

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on the society for socio-religious reformation and self-exploration. The main focusing theory of my paper is Intertextuality, which is basically when an author got influenced from another text which is written previously and merged it in his text to give a new meaning, and that merged body is also used as a textual reference.

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15658905>

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## Introduction

The estimated origin of the Baulism that in the sixteenth century, but its proper development began in the seventeenth century to gain the most popularity in the eighteenth century compared to other contemporary philosophy. The influence of multiple religions was effective instead of a single philosophy at the source of the Baul religion. In fact, Baul religion is a coordinated religion in the combined influence of Tantric Buddhism, Shiva Shaktism, Radhakrishna, Vaishnava Sahajia theory, Sufi philosophy and Gaudi Vaishnava religion. Although the conventional Baul philosophy is a centrality from the seventeenth century to the present period, the interval of time has changed the life of the past and present bauls, the speeches and the lyrics of the world. The posts that are taken to establish the speech of Baul philosophy in general, are not the eighteenth-nineteenth century, but despite of the seventeenth century. Earlier, from the tenth to twelfth century, the glimpse of the Baul philosophy and their compositions was found in Charyapad. Baul philosophy neither belongs to a philosopher nor a missionaries creation. Therefore, in presenting its keynote, the statement of a guru or a '*padkarta*' is not enough, it is necessary to accept the statement of multiple people at different times.

## Background of the study

### *Social background of the study*

A special social background was active at the root of the origin, development and popularity of Baul philosophy. The concept of Baul has a deep relation with Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Sahajiana. Baul doctrine evolved in medieval period in Bengal. Upendranath Bhattacharya said "The Baul philosophy in Bengal evolved between (1625-1675) B.C (11). Baul doctrine has its influence from Islamic Sufism and Vaishnava Sahajiana". At this time, due to stratification in the society of Bangladesh, the social distance of the lower castes with the upper castes was increasing steadily. As a result of this negligence



and deprivation, people from both Hindu-Muslim communities were gradually isolated from the mainstream of society. The Baul community has denied the concept of values and contemporary society-based justice based on Vedas and they have developed a completely unique life-style. The concept of the fundamental structure of the personality of the social people of the existing society was broken by the pursuit of the sole secret life of the so-called antisocial bauls. The Baul Sadhak has explored his prayers in his body. In the process of searching bauls adopted various artistic techniques of body pursuit. It can be said that Baul philosophy has been expressed in the physiological consciousness of philosophy, the human values of the liberated people from social discipline, which are involved in the contemporary situation. It goes without saying that Baul philosophy has not received the approval of the contemporary society. In the Muslim community, the bauls have been identified as '*Narar Fakir*' and to Hindus as '*Bratyas*' and '*kadachari*'. The life and pursuit of the Baul community has created mixed reactions at different levels of the society of Bangladesh. In addition to strong opposition, the outlook of the nineteenth -century intellectual people is also particularly significant in this regard, because they had a special contribution to making Baul philosophy and song known in civil society. Anirban Mondal a researcher mentions:-“Those who blindly believe on god and religion do not allow men’s supreme position rather their religious dominance, abstract philosophy and scriptures force men to go through the religious, cultural and socio-economical differences. By the concept of rebirth and heaven they try to control human beings which make men a helpless doll of the fate. Through the folk-materialistic outlook the Bauls preach that if this world is created by the same Creator, if this world is His cosmic enblame then why this caste system, why so many religions, why this gender discriminations, why this class dominations and the Bauls try to create a man based society and culture”- (Ahmed 47).

### ***Religious background of the study***

The relationship of Baul with the Supreme is actually the direct love and union with the entity of God. The intense integrity of association with the 'man of heart' through self-sufficient pursuance bears the special influence of the Sufi religion. Therefore, in the Baul concept of 'man of heart', the concept of the Upanishadic 'Supreme Being' and the concept of simplicity of the Sahajiya with the concept of the 'supreme love' of Sufi religion has come together. The application of the word 'man' in the Baul song is the only religious consciousness. Baul's mindset is a kind of socialization process through which a special life philosophy can be associated. In the face of strong resistance to the society by eliminating the values of the people, adaptation to the alternative life -giving pursuit throughout life, whose guru gained the status of the chief controller. Guru-The difference between the different traditions of the



disciple, the relative distinctiveness of the thought of the Baul saints, the practices and the practice of life. Baul music has a duality between the mind and matter. But this dual thinking is not the last thing, the absolute and extreme purpose of the sadhak is to reach the united person in the mind and man of heart by ending the duality for him. The path of this pursuit is not easy and smooth, so all the bauls are heard in the songs or in their self-esteem. The importance of the mind is immense in all pursuits. It is only if the mind is connected or disseminated by the mind can be accepted or excluded. And that is why the main purpose of the Baul music is to initiate the mind and to master its related conduct. The pursuit of the Baul begins in the search of beings in the human body and the consequences of the pursuit turned the thick body into a subtle body to the absolute attainment of 'man of heart'. Upendranath Bhattacharya analyzed that the significance of telling the soul is that the spirit can be gained through the human body and through the pursuit of the human body. That is why Baul has called him a human form of human beings. The idea of baul is that a body is in the form of the everlasting paramatma in the core of the body, whom has called the 'man of heart'.

## Methods

In this paper I used theory of Intertextuality and textual influence. The term 'Intertextuality' was coined by Julia Kristeva in 1966. for Kristeva, is an intertext which interacts with the other texts, rewrites, transforms or parodies them. Intertextuality suggests a range of links between a text and other texts emerging in diverse forms as direct quotation, citation, allusion, echo, reference, imitation, collage, parody, pastiche, literary conventions, structural parallelism and all kinds of sources either consciously exploited or unconsciously reflected. By so doing an intertext transforms or reproduces the texts preceding it -(300). In its simplest sense, intertextuality is a textual reference within a body of a text, also reflects that the text used as a reference. The concept and ideology from one text to another text has merged in the theory of Intertextuality.

Textual Influence is completely opposite of Intertextuality; in this case, an author got inspired from a text from another author and intentionally referred to the text in the body of his text. That author also accepts the fact that his writings are inspired from other writers, that influence can be of many types such as writings, newspaper articles, concepts etc-(Ahmed 8).



## Discussion

The goal of the pursuit of Baul philosophy or Baul pursuit is in the limits of the righteous, desire and happiness of the society, in the limits of the sadhak's own body in the limits of the person's self-search theory. Bauls theory not only revolts with the cast and class, but its original rebellion is in the field of determining the spiritual position of the people in the society. Abu Ishhaq Hossain said -“No one can demean humans for the sake of religion. But this religion is the main reason why human is always underestimated. Caste system actually created the division between people, it has also created the “Untouchable” tradition in the society. For this inequality, the people from lower class have suffered most.”-(112)

Lalon said about this inequality:

“Jaat na gele pai na hori

Ki chaar jaater gourob kori

Chushne boliye,

Lalon koy jaat hat a pele

Poratam agun diye”. (Hossain, 113)”

Lalon wanted to destroy that caste system. Once Lalon was being asked that what his caste is? He said:

“Everybody inquires of Lalon”s religion

Whether he is Hindu or Muslim in faith

Lalon says I do not bother for religion”.(Hossain, 658)

The religion and humanism both are opposite to others, but Lalon combined this two things and he saw these into human. There is no God without human. Lalon said:

“Odhor chander koto I khela

Sorbo uttom manush lila

Na bujhe mon-holi vola



Manush birodhi". ( Hossain,112)

Abu Ishhaq Hossain said -“ Lalon used to see human not into a religious perspective, Lalon was astonished after seeing caste system in his society. Lalon was also hurt by the “Untouchable” fact that exists in the society”-(113).

That is why Lalon wanted to established a humanism philosophy in the society, he said:

“Everyone is scared of losing his caste

What a strange fallacy it is!

None is on the right terrace

Everybody is in wrong track”.( Hossain,398)

Abdul Wahab a researcher and author talks about Lalon’s belief. He said:“In the philosophy of Lalon the existence of God is questionable, Lalon shai who is the ultimate leader of Baul, that Baul religion never supported the inequality of race and caste.Rich-poor, man-women all are equal in the eye of Baul religion. Lalon always mentions equality in his songs, Bauls never believe in the invisible, that which is invisible and unsolved for them”-(114).

Rabindranath's affection for Baul philosophy is well -known and his role in the contemporary masses is undeniable. He is characterized by Baul philosophy as 'mystic transcendentalism'. In the pursuit of inner being, he found the ocean of nectar named ‘Arupratan’. He wrote:

“My innermost one resides within me,

And He seems omnipresent hence.

He rests within my eyes,

I need not search Him at all” – (Ganguly,1)

After knowing the Baul philosophy and revealing “Jibon Debota” inside him he finally got what he was searching throughout his life. This “Jibon Debota” had changed all of his philosophy and thoughts about life, his pride as a zaminder and rich family came to an end. He also started to believe in humanitarian religion and neglected his own religion. He said:



“Ami bratto ami montrihin

Sokol mondir er bahir a

Amar puja somapto holo aaj

Devlok theke Manob loka. (Hossain, 222)

Jarif Faiyaz Ahmed a researcher mentioned in his research work by concluding remark that “in spite of Tagore’s Brhama-samaj adherence and his Hinduism Lalon’s secularism and concern with social injustice carries through in some of Tagore’s humanitarian subjects. He actually introduced Baul music in Bengali society. He always tried to bring social problems in his songs and protested against the injustice that occurred in his surroundings, as, that period was so conservative, he and the people of his sect suffered a lot of disturbance from the followers of institutional religion. But, after all of these, Lalon still had the courage to speak out about the injustice of the society. Lalon’s bravery teaches us how to raise the voice against the social injustice”-(56).

## Conclusion

The pain of the inadequacy for man of heart in the Baul tradition became the main theme for the exploration. It did not intensify in the exploration, but the urge to receive it was intensified. Baulism is not confined to Tantra, it is combined with the genre of Sufi and Vaishnava. If you can subdue the body for devotion and love, then the ‘man of heart’ can be found. In the whole view of bauls, people do not have mere biological entities, they become an endless exploration of the whole life. Finally, it can be said that Baul is the stream of philosophy that flows against the main stream of society. Again, in the judgment of philosophy, Baul is a category of thinking, where he rejects the Vedas, sees the universe in the treasury, explore the man of heart in the body.

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