

JNANESHWAR'S JNANESHWARI LEADING MAHARASHTRA EVEN TODAY ON THE MAP OF GLOBALIZATION OF LITERATURE ON THOUGHTS OF FREEDOM

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Abstract

Freedom is basic instinct of every being. Freedom on macro and micro level is the individual effort of conscious being. As soon as the nestling (baby bird) has its wings it takes his first flight of freedom. When a baby takes his first step he wants to run. Freedom is part of evolution for all sentients. The very trait which distinguishes Human from other beings is struggle for freedom on all levels like Personal, Social, Cultural and Spiritual. World leaders mention freedom as not for one's self but for the society as a whole. "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." Nelson Mandela . In India, Saints and Masters have longer history to have contributed to the freedom of the oppressed in society.

Maharashtra's History and literature is empty without the mention of Mystical, Philosophical, Scientifical laureate Saint Jnaneshwar. Spiritual and Social reformists Saint Jnaneshwar was the pioneer in upliftment of humanity in real terms of 'FREEDOM'. Though many centuries back, Jnanadeva made prolific changes in the literary, historic and the social map of India, bringing Maharashtra on the topography of World through his epitome work Jnaneshwari 'Bhavaratha Deepika' as he calls it, means 'Lamp of Knowledge'. He brought Gita for common man at their doorsteps in colloquial language Marathi. Even today we see the impact of Jnaneshwari on all fronts from Education to Character building of youth in households of Maharashtra today. It is deeply grass rooted in society. My honest attempt is to bring out Mauli's concept of Freedom on micro and macro level applicable even today.

Keywords: *Freedom, Jnaneshwari, Reformist, Micro and Macro.*

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Motivation:

In my childhood days my Father used to take me to our village temple to listen to Kirtans most evenings. Little did I understand then. But today when I look back these were the base building days of my today. Simple virtues in abhangas like help needy, live in harmony, don't be selfish or greedy. Today it is need of time on all the above virtues imbibed in early years through abhangas. Real freedom was not on social front it was on individual front to overcome all vices, Jnaneshwar

Mauli has taken these virtues to each and every home even in the remote areas through his writings.

Introduction:

Saint Jnaneshwar from Maharashtra played the crucial role of Social reformist, keeping intact the Vedic knowledge of Vedas. Jnaneshwar through his magnum opus Jnaneshwari -Bhavaratha Deepika as it is called– the transcription of Bhagvad Gita. For the first time in colloquial language 'Marathi' brought forth, the essence of scriptures to common man, which was then

only restricted to handle full of learned Brahmins. Jnaneshwari is the first and the greatest work in Marathi language, elevating the philosophy of life till date.

Jnaneshwari which is epitome of his writings is not simple philosophy. In the ordinary sense of the world; what he wrote was not mere speculation or theory but was an attempt to explain what he had personally experienced first-hand in his mystical experience of Unity with Higher Self. Jnaneshwar's philosophical work here is considered to be of Universal significance. According to Jnaneshwar to Love 'Him' (Ultimate Truth) is to love self, this love is the inspiration of noble deeds and the highest social service. So, the philosophy of Jnanadeva is based on universal love to self and others equally.

Jnanadeva lived in the latter half of the 13th century A.D. At the age of fifteen (1290) Jnanadeva is said to have delivered his poetic commentary on the Bhagavad Gita - Jnaneshwari. Indian approach to freedom has been on spiritual aspect of liberation or Moksha. But it is very intriguing to note here, while Jnaneshwar vastly spoke from the Vedic attributions. His major contribution was liberating the society on grounds of Individual to Social freedom as whole. Prior to Jnaneshwari. Vedas were only restricted to set of people biased by caste and religion boundaries. Jnaneshwar breaking all social barriers reached the hearts of common man through Jnaneshwari. Today we see various sects have come up on the ethos of Jnaneshwari like the Bhakti sampradaya of Varkari, the elite collaboration of literature on the India panorama, Various schools of thought like the Kirtan Kars from Maharashtra narrate Jnaneshwari to bring the masses together on one platform away from any biasedness.

'Jnaneshwari' as guiding Philosophy for common man:

Maharashtra is a land of Saints; Jnaneshwar lived an ascetic life and brought the mysticism of Vedanta to ordinary man's level including eternal values for a

changing societal bonding's. Jnaneshwar's Gita has crossed beyond boundaries of Maharashtra. When one studies the Historical, social and cultural factors, Jnanadeva was a revolutionary of non-violence, a pioneer on this frontier. At a tender age of 15 years he lectured on Jnaneshwari, the whole community came together on one platform. The life of Jnanadeva was dedicate to his people. Literature was represented as a godlike being, when Jnaneshwar had to prove his asceticism by making a bullock recite the Vedas. His miracles are beyond the readings of today's science. Jnaneshwar mentioned in his writings about the Earth and planets revolving around sun, even before Galileo. Jnaneshwar propagated values based on humanity, non-injury in action, thought and words that is non-violence, forbearance in the face of adversity, dispassion towards sensory pleasures corresponding to moral values of character building in society. One can find **Gandhian thoughts** are in relation with Jnaneshwari's tradition. These traditions are not build overnight. Meticulous formation of rigorous work by his followers is the result we see today. Today as one visits the remote places in Maharashtra one finds the spread of Jnaneshwar's teachings in daily acts; right from educational syllabus, moralisation of good conduct, equanimity among fellow beings beyond realm of economical strata, equal participation of women thus over coming gender biasedness, also giving equal platform for women. Women in Maharashtra have a long standing history equally as saints and as commoners to participate shoulder to shoulder with men on all peripherals much before the women's right issue were raised.

Macro and Micro concept of Freedom in Jnaneshwar's writings:

Jnaneshwar has tremendously influenced the culture, literature and the aesthetics of Maharashtra. Saint Jnaneshwar is the Legacy of Saint Parampara of Maharashtra . For more than 700 years, even today

Varkari movement is strong witness to the change Jnaneshwar brought centuries back. On macro level, Varkari movement though based on principals of Bhakti, its impact is on socio-political level. It is platform for equanimity among all beyond gender where men and women participate equally in the march to affinity to Vithala their Lord. This was purely out of the freedom that Jnanadeva provided his fellow mates, overcoming layers of hurdles in co-existence based on then the shackles of caste, creed and religion.

Today the public reading of Jnaneshwari at various places is an effort to underline the cultural importance of a text that has shaped modern progressive thoughts in Maharashtra. On micro level Jnanadeva's literature enhances the individual growth leading to societal growth. Jnaneshwari as multiple themes and multi-disciplinary approach is what draws people from different callings to internalise the document on levels of education, youth and societal norms for moral values of conduct. In the contemporary political sense, the truest form of human bonding and universal brotherhood takes place on the domains where the Kirtans, Bhajans and Pravachans are held freely. Jnaneshwari has brought together people of diverse profiles on one platform.

The drought-hit farmers of Marathwada are the most dedicated readers in the Dnyaneshwari event. "It has been observed that Dnyaneshwari has become a life-giving force for those affected by natural disasters. Most families that follow Dnyaneshwari reading daily as a habit have been able to keep away from suicidal thoughts. Mumbai-based sitting judge Chakor Baviskar has researched and published a lexicon of 106,928 terms, with elaborate explanations, from Jnaneshwari. He says "The text is like a buffet at a philanthropist's

house, which caters to every taste and sensibility. Anyone who opts for this humungous buffet will not go hungry. I am particularly touched by the 286th ovi (tenth adhyaya), which talks about the judiciary. The saint sees the system of justice delivery as the highest vocation," said the additional metropolitan magistrate of Mumbai¹. Jnaneshwar is the only saint in history to have propounded Science, Mysticism, Religion, Values, Morality and Justices on same dias.

Jnaneshwar propounded Āmtoddhār to Lokoddhar. For Jnaneshwar Bhakti was a form of service to mankind by supporting individual growth to growth of all together in society. The understanding of "God as Universal spirit" - **Vishwatmaka Ishwar** means that understanding of God as abiding in one and every being - "Seeing oneself and in all self" says Jnanadeva². This Upanisadic literature is mentioned by Swami Vivekananda in his lecture "Serving human is the highest form of bhakti, laid down to worship man. To bring Nations together, to break the barriers of countries, to build strong foundation of a moral Nation like India"³.

स्वधर्मुं जो बापा । तोचि नित्ययजु जाण पां ।

म्हणोनि वर्ततां तेथ पापा । संचारु नाहीं ॥81॥⁴

Jnaneshwari chapter 3 verse 81.

Transliteration - The person who keeps doing his duties, is his yagna, he doesn't abide by any malefice. He is bound on higher level to benefit all surrounding him.

Conclusion:

The philosophical message of the Jnaneshwari conveyed by the term 'Vishwa-Swadharma' ('World Religion') and his words 'He Vishvachi Majhe Ghara' ('This Entire World is my Abode'), echoing India's ancient concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' ('The

¹ <https://punemirror.com/others/dnyaneshwari-for-everyman-in-every-era/cid5136854.html>

² Goil Anshu - The Iridescence of Jnaneshwar's Works, Pg. no.219

³ Swami Vivekananda: The complete works of swami Vivekananda vol.3, pg. no. 39

⁴ B.P. Bahirat. The Philosophy of Jnanadeva, pg. no. 146 Motilal Banarsidass

Whole World is one Family') which today the theme of G-20 summit held in India. Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi promoted Jnaneshwara concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam for celebrating the 75th year of Independence.

Sant Jnaneshwar was a prophet of Bhakti who brought about a spiritual renaissance in Maharashtra. He has also been called the father of Marathi literature and of Marathi Nationalism. Jnana, Bhakti, Swadharma and Vishwadharma in our culture⁵. Philosophy of Jnaneshwar is not only of historic compliance but also of Universal significance, especially putting Maharashtra on the forefront in India. In order to strengthen the balanced concept of overall development on fronts like -

- 1) Materialistic
- 2) Economic
- 3) Intellectual
- 4) Moral
- 5) Spiritual

Present in all works of Jnaneshwar - M.R Yardi, Bhagvad Gita of Synthesis. Jnaneshwar's philosophy is making way for salvation for all⁶. This is most dynamic and synthesised work done 700 years back. Jnaneshwari is cultural, social, spiritual and intellectual heritage on not only in India but for the World. His universal prayers resounded beyond the borders of class, creed, caste, religion and also the boundaries of land which is relevant even today

किंबहुना सर्व सुखी | पूर्ण होऊनि तिहीं लोकीं |

भजिजो आदिपुरुखी | अखंडित || ७ ||

आणि ग्रंथोपजीविये | विशेषीं लोकीं इये |

दृष्टादृष्ट विजयें | होआवें जी || ८ ||

येथ म्हणे श्रीविश्वेशराओं | हा होईल दान पसावो |

येणें वरें ज्ञानदेवो | सुखिया झाला⁷ || ९ ||

Pasayadan, Saint Jnaneshwar's Universal Prayers. May this Saints be friends of all people. May all beings in all the worlds be filled with joy and may to whom so ever this book is their way of life be blessed with success in this world, this brought great joy to Jnaneshwar.

Jnaneshwar only joy was upliftment of all fellow beings, bringing freedom in true sense from individual to society and society to individual thus creating Mahatma Gandhi's the concept 'Ram Rajya'. Happy individual Happy society leading to Happy harmonious Universe.

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⁵ Goil Anshu - The Iridescence of Jnaneshwar's Works, pg.no. 231

⁶ M.R. Yardi Bhagvad Gita as a Synthesis, 1991

⁷ Goil Anshu - The Iridescence of Jnaneshwar's Works, pg.no.61

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