

THE LOKAMĀNYA BĀL GAṄGĀDHAR ṬĪLAK'S  
ŚRIMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀRAHASYA  
IN THE LIGHT OF THE SAINTLY TRADITION  
OF MAHĀRĀṢṬRA

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OF MAHĀRĀṢṬRA

By

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## ABSTRACT

The Lokamānya B. G. Ṭīlak wrote a commentary on the Bhagavadgītā, which is called Śrīmadbhagavadgītārahasya athavā Karmayogaśāstra but is popularly known as the Gītārahasya. In the Gītārahasya, Ṭīlak often quotes three of the prominent saints of Mahārāṣṭra, namely, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās. A few scholars have indicated that there might be some influence of the theology of the prominent Marāṭhā saints on the Gītārahasya. But no one has studied this matter in detail and demonstrated the depth of their influence on the Gītārahasya. This thesis hopes to fill that gap in Ṭīlak scholarship. In attempting to do that this thesis traces out how the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical ideas of Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās influenced Ṭīlak's religious, social, philosophical, and ethical thought in the Gītārahasya.

Ṭīlak was a controversial leader in Mahārāṣṭra. He opposed the 'Age of Consent Bill' introduced by Hindu social reformers and argued that social reform should be carried out within the frame of Hinduism. He opposed the Moderate party being allowed to hold its Social Conference in the Congress pandal and thus separated social reform from political reform. His opposition to the social reforms proposed by the social reformers was understood by many to mean that he was anti-reformist and pro-orthodox. How can a student of Ṭīlak



understand him? This thesis provides an answer to this problem, saying that Tīlak took a middle position on questions of social reform and orthodoxy between the strict orthodox , who were completely opposed to social change, and the Hindu social reformers, who wanted to reform Hindu society on the basis of western values and culture. This thesis demonstrates that Tilak's middle position on those issues is best understood as an attempt to continue the position taken by the Marāṭhā saints on problems of social change and orthodoxy.

Tīlak, being a nationalist, defended Hindu values and institutions. He defended the final authority of the Vedas. He defended the traditional Hindu social order, that is, the varṇa vyavasthā, in terms of the guṇa-karma theory (i.e. position of an individual in Hindu society is determined by his qualities and functions). He did not , however, justify social hierarchy in terms of birth. He was fully aware of the defects of the caste system and he wished to remove them. He expounded the message of the Bhagavadgītā along these lines.

Tīlak argued that the Gītā teaches advaita Vedānta. Because of this he preferred the commentary (bhāṣya) of Śaṅkarācārya on the Gītā over the commentaries written by other ācāryas. This might lead one to believe that Tīlak's advaitic philosophy and Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta were identical. This thesis, however, argues that Tīlak's advaitic philosophy differs from Śaṅkara's system in that Tīlak follows the

advaitic theology of the Marathā saints rather than that of Śaṅkara's system. Ṭīlak's system is purṇa advaita (perfect or complete non-dualism) like that of the saints, rather than Śaṅkara's kevala advaita (pure or abstract non-dualism).

Ṭīlak rejected all the bhāṣyas on the Gītā because they proposed either jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the way of liberation and exhorted a liberated person to renounce society and take samnyāsa (renunciation of society). Ṭīlak argued that the Karmayoga of the Gītā is a synthesis of knowledge (jñāna), devotion (bhakti), and action (karma) and its liberated person (jñāni or sthitaprajña) continues to act even after liberation. This is Ṭīlak's unique position. This thesis argues that Ṭīlak's distinctive position follows the activistic (pravrttipara) theology of the Marathā saints whose bhaktimārga was a synthesis of knowledge, action, and devotion and who asked a liberated person to continue doing his socio-religious duties for the welfare of others in the spirit of dedication and selflessness. Ṭīlak followed the saints of Mahārāṣṭra very closely in this regard.

In short, this thesis is an attempt to explain Ṭīlak's religious, social, philosophical, and ethical ideas in the light of the saintly tradition of Mahārāṣṭra. It does not specifically deny that he was aware of western thought that he felt some loyalty to his Brahmanical heritage, or that he was responding creatively to the political and cultural

pressures of his day. While each of these factors affected his thought, this thesis argues that he was determined to keep to the tradition of the Marāṭhā saints and that in the Gītārahasya he largely succeeded in that endeavour.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>I INTRODUCTION</b>	
The Hypothesis.....	1
The Historical Setting.....	2
The Prominent Marāṭhā Saints.....	12
The Lokamānya Ṭīlak and His Milieu.....	25
The Lokamānya Ṭīlak and the Marāṭhā Tradition.....	48
The <u>Bhagavadgītārahasya</u> .....	54
The Hypothesis.....	59
Scope and Limitations of the Thesis.....	67
 Part One: THE LOKAMĀNYA B. G. ṬĪLAK'S THOUGHTS ABOUT ORTHODOXY AND SOCIAL ORDER	
<b>II THE PROBLEM OF ORTHODOXY</b>	
Hindu Orthodoxy.....	70
The Marāṭhā Saints and Hindu Orthodoxy.....	80
The Lokamānya Tilak as an Orthodox Hindu.....	106
Ṭīlak's Middle Stand on Social Reform.....	111
The <u>Gītārahasya</u> and the Marāṭhā Saints.....	117
Conclusion.....	138
 <b>III THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL ORDER</b>	
Traditional Hindu Social Order.....	140
Actual Social Order of Hindu Society.....	161
The Marāṭhā Saints and Social Order.....	165
The Lokamānya Ṭīlak and the Social Order.....	208
The <u>Gītārahasya</u> and the Marāṭhā Saints.....	222
Conclusion.....	229
 Part Two: THE LOKAMĀNYA B. G. ṬĪLAK'S THOUGHTS ABOUT NON-DUALISM AND SAINTLY ACTION	
<b>IV THE PROBLEM OF NON-DUALISM</b>	
The <u>Gītārahasya</u> 's Advaitic Philosophy.....	231
Śaṅkarācārya's Advaita Vedānta.....	236
Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and the Advaita Philosophy of the <u>Gītārahasya</u> .....	240
Ṭīlak's General Observation on the Marāṭhā Bhāgavat Dharma.....	252

	Page
Similarities among Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Jñāneśvar's Theology, and the <u>Gītārahasya</u> .....	257
Differences among Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Jñāneśvar's Theology, and the <u>Gītārahasya</u> .....	265
Similarities among Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Rāmdās' Theology, and the <u>Gītārahasya</u> .....	279
Conclusion.....	287
V THE PROBLEM OF SAINTLY ACTION	
Sources of the Problem of Saintly Action.....	290
Differences of the <u>Gītārahasya</u> from other <u>Bhāṣyas</u> .....	304
Sources of the Solution to the Problem of Saintly Action.....	312
Indebtedness of the <u>Gītārahasya</u> to the Marāṭhā Saints.....	339
Conclusion.....	356
VI CONCLUSION.....	358
APPENDIX	
Sayings of the Marāṭhā Saints.....	363
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Primary Sources.....	420
Secondary Sources.....	424
Periodicals and Other Sources.....	434

SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION OF SANSKRIT

अ	a	.क	k	.ठ	ṭh	.ब	b	.क्ष	kṣ
आ	ā	.ख	kh	.ड	ḍ	.भ	bh	.ज्ञ	jñ
इ	i	.ग	g	.ढ	ḍh	.म	m		
ई	ī	.घ	gh	.ण	ṇ	.य	y		
उ	u	.ङ	ṅ	.त	t	.र	r		
ऊ	ū	.च	c	.थ	th	.ल	l		
ऋ	r̄	.छ	ch	.द	d	.व	v		
ॠ	e	.ज	j	.ध	dh	.श	ś		
ऌ	ai	.झ	jh	.न	n	.ष	ṣ		
ॡ	o	.ञ	ñ	.प	p	.स	s		
ॢ	au	.ट	ṭ	.फ	ph	.ह	h		

- (anusvara) ṁ; (visarga) ḥ, ' (avagraha)

SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION OF MARATHI

अ	a	क	k	ठ	ṭh	ब	b	ळ	ḷ
आ	ā	ख	kh	ड	ḍ	भ	bh	क्ष	kṣ
इ	i	ग	g	ढ	ḍh	म	m	ज्ञ	jñ
ई	ī	घ	gh	ण	ṇ	य	y		
उ	u	ङ	ṅ	त	t	र	r		
ऊ	ū	च	c	थ	ṭh	ल	l		
ऋ	r	छ	ch	द	d	व	v		
ॠ	e	ज	j	ध	dh	श	ś		
ऌ	ai	झ	jh	न	n	ष	ṣ		
ॡ	o	ञ	ñ	प	p	स	s		
औ	au	ट	ṭ	फ	ph	ह	h		

- m (anusvar)                      aḥ (visarg)

NOTE : medial 'a' (अ) and ending 'a' (अ) will be dropped.

eg. Karamarakara\_ (करमरकर ) ... Karmarkar.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BG.	<u>The Bhagavadgītā</u>
Das.	<u>The Dāsboḍh</u>
GR. (E)	<u>The Gītārahasya</u> , tr. B. S. Sukthankar
GR. (M)	<u>The Gītārahasya</u> in Marathi
Jn.	<u>The Jñāneśvari</u>
RV.	<u>The Ṛgveda</u>
SBG.	<u>Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the Bhagavadgītā</u>
SBS.	<u>Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the Śarirasūtra or Brahmasūtra</u>

Note: Translation is mine unless otherwise stated.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Hypothesis:

This dissertation is an investigation of the hypothesis that the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical dimensions of the thought of some prominent saints of Mahārāṣṭra namely, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās, influenced the Lokamānya Bāl Gaṅgādhara Ṭīlak's (A.D. 1856-1920) Śrīmadbhagavadgītārahasya Athavā Karmayogaśāstra<sup>1</sup> also called the Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā-Rahasya Or Karma-Yoga-Śāstra<sup>2</sup>, commonly referred to as the Gītārahasya. The evidence for this hypothesis is the fact that Ṭīlak often cites these prominent Marāṭhā saints in the Gītārahasya, and that his religious, social, philosophical, and ethical thoughts tend to follow the theology of the saints on crucial issues. While this fact has been noted by a few scholars, the nature and the full extent of the influence of the saints tradition or the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra on the Gītārahasya has not been studied in detail. This study

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<sup>1</sup>B. G. Ṭīlak, Śrīmadbhagavadgītārahasya Athavā Karmayogaśāstra, (10th ed., Pune: J. S. Ṭīlak, 1973, first published, 1915)

<sup>2</sup>Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā-Rahasya Or Karma-Yoga Śāstra, tr. B. S. Sukthankar, (2nd ed., Poona: J. S. Ṭīlak & S. S. Ṭīlak, 1965, first published, 1936).

will attempt to fill this gap.

A) The Historical Setting:

Before investigating the hypothesis, let us introduce the historical setting of Mahārāṣṭra, its saint tradition, and the Lokamānya B. G. Tilak.

The present state of Mahārāṣṭra covers a total area of 3,06,059 square kilometres which is more than 10% of the area of the Indian Republic. Mahārāṣṭra is situated on the coast of the Arabian Sea and surrounded by Gujarāt, Madhya Pradeś, Aṅdhra Pradeś, Karnāṭak, and Goa. Its geographical setting places Mahārāṣṭra in contact with both North India and South India and gives it a culture which is a mixture of the cultural patterns of the North and South in India.

(1) The Early History of Mahārāṣṭra-

King Aśoka, the greatest emperor of the Maurya Empire (321-185 B. C. ), referred to the rulers of Mahārāṣṭra as the Rathikas (i.e. 'going by carriages or chariots, or driver or owner of a car or chariot'). Mahārāṣṭra was a part of the Mauryan Empire. After the decline of the Mauryan Empire, the

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<sup>3</sup>  
G. B. Sardar, The Saints-poets of Mahārāshtra: Their Impact on Society, tr. K. Mehata, (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1969), p.33.

<sup>4</sup>  
C. V. Vaidya, Madhyayugin Bhārat Athavā Hīndu Rājyāncā Udbhav, Utkarṣa, āṇi Ucched, (A.D. 600-1200), (Pune: Bhāratetiḥās Saṁsodhak Maṇḍal, 1920), II, 463.

<sup>5</sup>  
M. Monier-Williams, A Saṅskrit-English Dictionary, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

Sātavāhanas came into power in the Deccan. Their capital was Pratiṣṭhān (the modern Paithan). They encouraged the development of the Mahārāṣṭri-Prākṛt language. Śatakarni was a great king of the Sātavāhanas who supported the Brāhmaṇa orthodoxy and performed a horse-sacrifice to celebrate his victory.<sup>6</sup>

After the Sātavāhanas, the Cālukyas came into power in Mahārāṣṭra; they ruled over Mahārāṣṭra from A. D. 500 to A. D. 753. During the rule of the Cālukyas, Vedic religion, devotional sects, Jainism, and Buddhism co-existed. The Cālukya power was overthrown by Daṅtidurga, one of the Cālukya feudatories.

Daṅtidurga established a new dynasty, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Daṅtidurga performed brāhmanical sacrifices (e. g. Hiranyagarbha sacrifice at Ujjayini). During the rule of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Purāṇic Hinduism, especially the worship of Viṣṇu and Śiva, grew popular in the Deccan. Kṛṣṇa I built a rock-cut shrine for Śiva at Elora.<sup>7</sup> Temples were built to house images of Śiva and Viṣṇu who were worshipped with an elaborate ritual. Amoghavarṣa I and Īndra IV patronized Jainism. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas ruled over Mahārāṣṭra from A. D. 753 to A. D. 973. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas were defeated by the Cālukyas and Mahārāṣṭra came

6

R. Thapar, A History of India, (Harmondworth: Penguin Books, 1966), I, 101.

7

J. Burgess, Report on the Elura Cave Temples and the Brahmanical and Jaina Caves in Western India, (Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1970), pp. 25f.

under the power of the Cālukyas again from A. D. 973 to A. D. 1189. After the Cālukyas, the Yādavas became rulers of Mahārāṣṭra.

(2) The Yādava Dynasty-

Dr̥ḍhaprahāra, the founder of the Yādava dynasty, established a kingdom at Candrapuri (district Nasik) in A. D. 843. Bhillama IV moved the capital to Devgiri (the modern Daulatabad) in A. D. 1187. Singhaṇa (A. D. 1210-1247) was a supporter of Brāhmanic-Vedic religion; he gave grants to Hindu temples and the Brāhmanas. Both Kṛṣṇa (A. D. 1247-1260) and Mahādeva (A. D. 1260-1271) performed many Vedic sacrifices. While the Yādava kings patronized Brāhmanic-Vedic religion, the common people were embracing sectarian movements. The Yādava period is important from the point of the religious history of Mahārāṣṭra primarily because the major sectarian movements came into prominence during this period, namely, the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, the Liṅgāyata Saṁpradāya, the Nātha Saṁpradāya, and the Mahānubhāva Saṁpradāya. 8

The Vārkarī devotional sectarian movement originated under Puṇḍalik in the eleventh century. On the basis of inscriptions (A. D. 1186, 1236, 1237, and 1273) we know that the cult of Viṭṭhal and the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya were in

existence a few centuries before Jñāneśvar (A. D. 1275-1296).

Another sectarian movement, called the Lingāyata or Virāśaiva Saṁpradāya, was introduced into Mahārāṣṭra in A. D. 1190. This movement was grounded in the philosophy of Śaivism. It challenged the orthodox or Brahmanic Hinduism which was centered on the authority of the Vedas, the exclusive privileges and rights of the Brāhmaṇas, the exclusion of women and the Śūdras from Vedic knowledge, and Saṁskṛt as the only medium of religious instruction.

The third religious movement, called the Nātha Saṁpradāya, was introduced into Mahārāṣṭra by Gahininātha (A.D. 12th and 13th century), the chief disciple of Gorakṣanātha (A. D. 1050-1150). The Nātha Saṁpradāya was also oriented towards the philosophy of Śaivism. This movement used the regional languages, e. g. Marāṭhī, Hindi, and Bengali, for religious instruction and de-emphasized the importance of Saṁskṛt. Nāthism also accepted women and Śūdras within

9

S. V. Dāṇḍekar, Vārkarī Paṁthācā Itihās, (3rd ed., Ālandi: the author, 1966), p. 9.

10

C. Parvathama, Sociological Essays on Veerasaivism, (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1972), p. 6; J. Hastings, ed. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), VIII, 69f.

11

P. P. R. Mokasi, Mahārāṣṭrātil Pañc Saṁpradāya (2nd ed., Pune: Prasād Prakāśan, 1975, pp. 65f.

its fold.<sup>12</sup> It emphasized self-purification (ātmaśuddhi) as the way of self-realization (ātmasākṣātkāra) and criticized<sup>13</sup> excesses of ritualism.

The fourth religious movement which spread through Mahārāṣṭra during the Yādava dynasty was the Mahānubhāva Saṁpradāya. This devotional sect was founded by Cakradhara (A. D. 1194-1274) in A. D. 1263, at Paithan. The Mahānubhāvas<sup>14</sup> emphasized the non-observance of the caste system, initiated<sup>15</sup> Śūdras and women into their sect, criticized the excesses<sup>16</sup> of karmakāṇḍa or ritualism, and used Marāṭhī as a medium of religious instruction.<sup>17</sup> They were the first to produce a large body of literature in Marāṭhī.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup>M. Singh, Gorakhanatha and Mediaeval Hindu Mysticism including texts and translation of Machhendra-Gorakh Goshti, Padas and Shlokas of Gorakh, Shlokas of Charpatnath, (Lahore: the author, 1937), p. 23.

<sup>13</sup>R. C. Dhere, Marāṭhī Bhaktiparamparā v Śrirāmakṛṣṇa-Vivekānanda, (Pune: Śrirāmakṛṣṇa Āśram, 1963), p. 26.

<sup>14</sup>P. R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 65f.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>17</sup>A. N. Despande, Prācin Marāṭhī Vānmayācā Ītihās, (Pune: Vinus Prakāśan, 1966), I, 401f.

<sup>18</sup>G. B. Sardar, op. cit., p. 133; B. R. Sunthankar, Mahārāṣṭriy Saṁtamaṇḍalāce Āitihāsik Kārya, (Belgañv: A. P. Caugule, 1948), p. 11 (introduction).

While the common people were following these "popular" religious movements some orthodox Hindus were trying to revive Vedic or Brāhmanic Hinduism under the royal patronage of Mahādeva (A. D. 1260-1271). Vijñāneśvara, Bopadeva, and Hemādri attempted to revive Vedic religion. Hemādri was a minister of Mahādeva and also a learned scholar. With the help of a number of orthodox scholars he produced a large compendium of religious rites and observances called "Caturvargacintāmaṇi" which consists of four large books or parts: (a) the Vratakhanda or vows, (b) the Dānakhaṇḍa or charities, (c) the Tirthakhaṇḍa or pilgrimages, and (d) the Mokṣakhaṇḍa or liberation, with several supplements (Parīśeṣakhaṇḍa) emphasizing the worship of various deities, of the manes, and the daily and seasonal duties and penances (prāyaścitta). The emphasis of the Caturvargacintāmaṇi was that the people should perform all the rites mentioned in the Gṛhyasutras, the Kalpasutras, the Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, the Epics, and usages (sarvaśākhāgṛhyakalpasutrasmr̥tipurāṇetihāsācāravaḡatadharmamatrayuktamena sarvaih śrādham̄ kartavyamiti sthitam̄)<sup>20</sup>. The purpose of the Caturvargacintāmaṇi was to

19

M. G. Panse, Yādavakālin Mahārāṣṭra (A. D. 1000-1350), (Bombay: Mumbai Marāṭhī Grāṅth Saṅgrahālay, 1963), p. 132.

20

Caturvargacintāmaṇi II.i.16; III. i.25; quoted by P. V. Kane, History of Dharmasāstra (Ancient and Medieval Religious and Civil Law). (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1975), I.ii.752.



arrest the decline of the Brāhmaṇic or karmakāṇḍic Hinduism. Hemādri directly opposed Cakradhara and his Mahānubhāva Saṁpradāya. Because of Hemādri's influence at the royal court, the Mahānubhāvas and the Liṅgāyatas did not get the sympathy of the Yādava kings.<sup>22</sup>

The last king of the Yādava dynasty was Rāmdeva (A. D. 1271-1306). During his period the revived Brāhmaṇism emphasized the performance of many rites and ceremonies, and observance of strict dietary rules and the caste distinctions (viz. touchables and untouchables)<sup>23</sup>. It was, in short, an attempt at a revival of laws and regulations based on the Dharmasāstras. However, the three non-Vedic religious movements namely, Nāthism, the Liṅgāyatas, and the Mahānubhāvas continued to flourish. St Jñāneśvar (A. D. 1275-1296) and St. Nāmdev (A. D. 1270-1350) and many other Vārkarī saints, e.g. Baṅkā Mahār (died in A. D. 1378), Cokhāmelā' Mahār (died in A. D. 1339), Sāvātā Mālī, Narahari Sonār, etc., were born under this situation of social and religious tension between orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

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21

A. N. Despande, op. cit., I, 174, 176.

22

N. N. Relekar, H. V. Inamdar, and N. D. Mirajkar, eds. op. cit., p. 11.

23

Ibid., pp. 24f.

(3) The Muslim Rule-

The Yādava dynasty was brought to an end by Alā-ud-din Khalji, the nephew of Jalāl-ud-din, who attacked Devgiri in A. D. 1296, defeated Rāmdeva and extracted booty from him. By the end of A. D. 1312 the Yādavas and other kingdoms in the south of India acknowledged Alā-ud-din as their suzerain. There also soon emerged the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar (A.D. 1336-1565) and the Muslim Bahāmani kingdom (A. D. 1347-1526). Both of these kingdoms were situated in the south of India.

(4) The Rise and Fall of the Marāṭha Power-

The Bahāmani kingdom was later divided into five independent Sultanates which controlled the territory of Mahārāṣṭra. Marāṭhā chieftains soon began to accept service under the Deccan Sultanate rulers. Marāṭhā statemen and warriors began to occupy important positions in the civil and military departments. <sup>24</sup> The hill forts near the Ghāts and the surrounding territory came under the control of Marāṭhā Jāgirdārs (fief holders) who were nominally dependent upon these Muslim rulers. This situation eventually led to the process of independence from Muslim rule. <sup>25</sup> Śivāji established

24

M. G. Ranade, Rise of the Marāṭhā Power and Other Essays... (Bombay: University of Bombay, 1961), p. 20

25

R. Dange, Śivaśahitil Don Sañt: Tukārām āni Rāmdās, (Amarāvati: Nāg-Vidharbha Prakāśan, 1966), p. 9.

a Marāṭhā kingdom and was crowned in A. D. 1674 as a king of the Marāṭhās. He had to fight the Muslim powers in the Deccan and the Moghul power in the north in order to defend his newly established kingdom.

While the independent Marāṭhā power was in its nascent stage, two prominent Marāṭhā saints, namely, Tukārām (A. D. 1598-1650) and the Samārtha Rāmdās (A. D. 1608-1681) were enlightening people in socio-religious matters. They were the contemporaries of Śivāji. Śivāji took keen interest in these religious leaders. According to a letter from Śivāji to Tukārām and Tukārām's reply<sup>26</sup> it seems that they met in A. D. 1645.<sup>27</sup> Tukārām directed Śivāji to contact Rāmdās;<sup>28</sup> Śivāji did so in A. D. 1645. It is clear from Rāmdās' writings that he acted as one of the spiritual advisors to Śivāji.<sup>29</sup>

After Śivāji his sons Sambhāji (A. D. 1680-1689), Rājārām (A. D. 1689-1700), and his grandson Śāhu (A. D. 1707-1715) became kings. At the time of Śāhu, the Marāṭhās were

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26

The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K. B. Marathe, (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1909-15), 1884-1904.

27

S. G. Tulpule, Pañc Saṅtakavi, (2nd ed., Pune: Vinus Prakāśan, 1962), p. 314.

28

The Poems of Tukarama 1473, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe.

29

S. G. Tulpule, op. cit., pp. 397f. , e.g. Dās.18.vi, Rāmavaradāyini, Ānaṅdavanabhavan.

engaged in fighting a civil war and soon the actual power came into the hands of Bālāji Viśvanāth, the first of the powerful Peśwas. After the death of Bālāji Viśvanāth in A. D. 1720, his son, Bājirāv I was appointed as the Peśwa. Bājirāv I continued his father's policy of conquest in the north and south of India. After the death of Bājirāv I in A. D. 1740, his son Bālāji or Nānā Sāheb became the Peśwa and remained in the office till his death in A. D. 1761. Under the Peśwaship of Nānā Sāheb, the Marāṭhā power became dominant in India. After the battle of Panipat in A. D. 1761 the Marāṭhā Confedeacy was weakened. Nānā Sāheb's son MādHAVRĀV I became the Peśwa in A.D. 1761. He died in A. D. 1772 and his younger brother NārāyaṅRĀV became the Peśwa. NārāyaṅRĀV was killed in a plot. His son MādHAVRĀV II was made the Peśwa. As he was minor, Nānā Phaḍnis was the caretaker of the Peśwa. MādHAVRĀV II died in A. D. 1795. After this, Bājirāv II, a son of Raghunātharāv was made the Peśwa in A. D. 1796 by Nānā Phaḍnis (died in A. D. 1800). Bājirāv II applied to the Bombay Government for protection in A. D. 1802. The Peśwa rule was continued under the over-all authority of the British. Peśwa rule was ended by the British in A. D. 1818. Maratha leaders, however, organized and led the revolt in A. D. 1857 against the British rule in India. This spirit of Marāṭhā defiance against outsiders is seen in Tīlak's work, as scholars

31  
 have noted. The heritage of the Marāṭhās seem to have been uppermost in his mind.

B) The Prominent Marāṭhā Saints:

(1) Saint Jñāneśvar-

Jñāneśvar, whose works became the theological foundation of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, was born in A. D. 1275. His father Viṭṭhalpaṅt was very religious. He once went on a pilgrimage during which his religious aspiration became so intense that he gave up his householdership and became a saṁnyāsi (i.e. a hermit). But at the word of his preceptor he later gave up saṁnyāsa and resumed householdership.

Viṭṭhalpaṅt had four children: Nivṛttināth (A. D. 1273-1297), Jñāneśvar (A. D. 1275-1296), Sopāṅdev (A. D. 1277-1296), and Muktābāi (A. D. 1279-1297). Viṭṭhalpaṅt, his wife, and the children were excommunicated by the Brāhmaṇas of Ālāṅdi because they thought of Viṭṭhalpaṅt's withdrawal from saṁnyāsa as a serious offence. The Brāhmaṇas

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31

T. L. Shay, "Tilak, Gāndhi and Arthaśāstra" Ph. D. Thesis (Evanston, Ill. 1955), pp. 232f.; R. I. Cashman, The Myth of the Lokamānya: Tilak and Mass Politics in Mahārāshtra, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 114.

32

B. P. Bahirat, The Philosophy of Jñānadeva, (Pandharpur: Pandharpur Research Society, 1965), pp. 9-12.

33

R. D. Ranade, Mysticism in Mahārāshtra, (Poona: Aryabhushan Press, 1933), p. 31.

forced the family to live on the outskirts of the village. Viṭhṭhalpant asked the Brāhmaṇas for an atonement (prāyaścīta), but the Brāhmaṇas suggested he commit suicide as an atonement. His children were denied the right to the initiation rite (upanayana), the right of every twice-born (dvija) male of Hindu society.

As Viṭhṭhalpant's sons were denied the right to the initiation rite and to be in the fold of orthodox Hindus, the children were initiated into the non-Brāhmaṇic or non-Vedic Nātha Saṁpradāya. Gahininātha (A. D. 12-13 cent.), a chief disciple of Gorakṣanātha (A. D. 1050-1150) had spread Nāthism in Mahārāṣṭra. Gahininātha was willing to receive Nivṛttināth, the eldest son of Viṭhṭhalpant, into the Nātha order despite the excommunication ban of the Brāhmaṇas, and Nivṛttināth was initiated into the Nātha order when Jñāneśvar was only eight. <sup>35</sup>

Viṭhṭhalpant then went again on pilgrimage and committed suicide as his atonement when he drowned himself in the Ganges. His wife followed him and ended her life a year later. <sup>36</sup> Their orphaned children went to Āpegānv, their ancestral village to get their share of property, but

34

Jñāneśvari: Bhāvārthadīpikā, tr. V. G. Pradhan, ed. H. M. Lambert, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967), I, 19.

35

J. F. Edwards, Dnyaneshwar: The Out-caste Brāhmaṇ, (Poona: The Poet Saints of Maharashtra series, 1941), p. 74.

36

B. P. Bahirat, op. cit., p. 13.

they were denied their right to the property and they had to resort to begging.<sup>37</sup> Because of this harsh treatment, the children became keenly aware of the frustration of the downtrodden and oppressed masses and they sought a spiritual path which would alleviate such situations.<sup>38</sup>

Jñāneśvar was initiated into the Nātha Saṁpradāya by his eldest brother Nivṛttināth.<sup>39</sup> After the initiation, Jñāneśvar started his life-mission. He began to expound his ideas on socio-religious matters. He selected the Bhagavadgītā, the most famous text of sectarian Hinduism and the text which had earlier been commented on by Saṁkarācārya (A. D. 788-820), Rāmānujācārya (A. D. 1017-1137), Madhvācārya (A. D. 1197-1276), etc., in Saṁskṛt. He wrote his commentary in Marāṭhī, the vernacular of Mahārāṣṭra. He wrote his commentary at Nevāse (district of Ahmednagar) in A. D. 1290. His commentary is called by various names: Gītārtha,<sup>40</sup> Gītāṭikā, Gītā Devi,

37

J. R. Ajaganvakar, Mahārāṣṭra Kavīcaritramālā, ed. D. S. Yande, (2nd ed., Bombay: D. S. Yande & Co., 1929), I, 37f.

38

G. B. Sardar, op. cit., p. 75.

39

Jñ. xviii. 1760-1763; P. R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 81.

40

Jñ. xii. 16; xiii. 1161-1163; Amritānubhava, tr. B. P. Bahirat, (Bombay: Popular Prakāśan, 1963), x.24, 31.

<sup>41</sup> Jñāneśvari, and <sup>42</sup> Bhāvārthadīpikā. The Jñāneśvari became one of the first important Marāṭhī books. His purpose in writing the Jñāneśvari was to promote social and religious harmony in society, <sup>43</sup> a concern which arose from the suffering his family had undergone.

Jñāneśvar also wrote two other books. The first book is called 'Anubhavāmṛta' which is popularly known as 'Amṛtānubhava' at Nevāse (district Ahmednagar) in A. D. 1292. He wrote this book in response to Nivṛttināth's desire for a more original work because he felt the scope for originality in the Jñāneśvari was limited by the framework of the Gītā.<sup>44</sup> In the Anubhavāmṛta, Jñāneśvar tells us of his own religious experience and expounds the sphurtivāda which is different from Saṅkara's māyāvada and also refutes Sāṅkhyān dualism, <sup>45</sup> ajñānavāda (i.e. doctrine of mystical Ignorance), etc..

<sup>41</sup> 'Śri Nāmdevāñce Abhaṅg' Śri Sakal Saṅta Gāthā, ed. K. A. Jośi, (2nd ed., Puṇe: Śri Saṅtavāñmaya Prakāśan Maṅdir, 1967), 909, 912; S. G. Tulpule, op.cit., p. 13.

<sup>42</sup> J. F. Edwards refers to Visoba Khecar's Abhaṅg (?), op. cit., p. 288.

<sup>43</sup> Jñ. xiii. 1161-1163; xviii. 1794.

<sup>44</sup> S. R. Sharma, Teachings of Jñānadeva, (Bombay: Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan, 1965), p.2.

<sup>45</sup> B. P. Bahirat, op. cit., p. 16.



The second book of Jñāneśvar is called 'Cāṅgadev Pāsasthi' which was written at Ālaṅdi (district of Pune) in A. D. 1294. The Anubhavamṛta and the Cāṅgadev Pāsaṣṭhi expound the philosophy of the Nātha Saṁpradāya.<sup>46</sup>

After writing the Jñāneśvari and the Anubhavāmṛta, Jñāneśvar left Nevase and went back to Ālaṅdi. He went to Paṇḍharpur in A. D. 1293 and met St. Nāmdev there. They became spiritual friends and thus Jñāneśvar became a preacher of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya.<sup>47</sup> Jñāneśvar's parents and his grandfather had also gone to Paṇḍharpur to bow down before Viṭṭhal's image. St. Nāmdev tells us that Jñāneśvar's grandfather, Siddhopant, had taken Jñāneśvar's parents to Paṇḍharpur to bow down before Viṭṭhal's image after their marriage.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, Jñāneśvar, as a youth, had some knowledge about the Vārkarī Saṁpradāyā and was taught respect for the central deity of the Saṁpradāya. When Jñāneśvar later joined the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya his theological works provided a sound foundation for the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya. Because of this, he later came to be honoured as the founder of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya and the Jñāneśvari came to be accepted as the

46

G. D. Dhavle alias Jñānadevopāsak, Nāthasaṁpradāya āṇi Jñāneśvar, (Nāgpur: L. Dhavle, 1969), p. 83.

47

R. D. Ranade, op. cit., p. 34.

48

Nāmdev Gāthā 889, ed. Avate, referred by S. V. Dānḍekar, op. cit., pp. 13f.

49

principal text of the Saṃpradāya.

Jñāneśvar also wrote Haripāth which has twenty-eight 50  
poems remembering the name of God as the means of liberation.  
He also wrote 900 lyrics emphasizing the supremacy of the 51  
path of devotion, the futility of asceticism and other subjects.  
In addition the following works are ascribed to Jñāneśvar:  
Yogavaśiṣṭha, Bhaktirāj, Pañcikaṇṇ, Śukāṣṭak, Gāyatriṭikā,  
52  
Prākṛtagītā, Uttaragītā, Samās, etc..

Jñāneśvar who suffered from the ill treatment accorded to him and his family by orthodox Brāhmaṇas initially embraced Nathism because of its liberal outlook on the socially downtrodden. Wanting to expound his ideas on social and religious matters, he wrote the Jñāneśvari, the Anubhavāmṛta, the Cāṅgadev Pāsaṣṭhi, the Haripāth, and the Abhaṅgs, etc.. In these works he expounded both the advaita philosophy of Nāthism and the bhaktimārga (i.e. way of devotion) of the Bhāgavat Dharma or sectarian Hinduism. He later joined the Vārkarī Saṃpradāya in order to make his message available to

49

J. R. Ajaganvakar, op. cit., I, 31.

50

B. P. Bahirat, op. cit., p. 21.

51

Ibid., p. 22.

52

Ibid., p. 16.

53

a larger number of people. Having done this work, Jñāneśvar took samādhi (was buried alive) in A. D. 1296, at Ālāndi.

(2) Saint Tukārām-

After Jñāneśvar, the Vārkarī movement was led by St. Nāmdev (A. D. 1270-1350) and St. Eknāth (A. D. 1548-1599), for a time before it found its final form around the works of St. Tukārām. Tukārām was born in A. D. 1598, a year before St. Eknāth died. He was born in a religious and well-to-do family. His ancestor Viśvambhar More used to go to Paṇḍharpur on pilgrimage. When he was unable to go there, he had a vision that Viṭhṭhal had come to see him at Dehu. He then built a temple for the deity right there and Dehu too became a holy place of pilgrimage. <sup>54</sup> Tukārām was of the Marāthā caste, a caste which claims to have sprung from the old order of Kṣatriyas but is considered by others to be of the Śūdra order. Tukārām's ancestors were grocers or tradesmen by profession. Tukārām talks about his life in a poem, as follows:

By caste I was a Śūdra, I became a trader, this God from the first had been worshipped by my family...  
A famine used up my money, and took away my good name;  
one wife of mine died crying for food. I grew ashamed  
and was tormented by this grief; I saw that I was  
losing my business... So I learned by heart some  
speeches of the saints... When others sang first, I

53

P. B. Kavade, Śaṅṅaśreṣṭha Tukārām Mahārāj, (Pune: Śri Lekhan-Vācan Bhāṇḍār, 1966), p.135.

54

J. Hastings, ed., Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, XII. 466.

took up the refrain, purifying my mind by faith.

55

His autobiographical note states how Tukārām learned religious knowledge. As Tukārām's caste was traditionally considered a Śūdra caste, he had no access to the Veda and other Saṅskṛt books. The source of his knowledge was listening to the kirtans (i.e. preaching) of the saints, reading the books of the saints, and personal meditation. According to Mahipati, Tukārām studied the Jñāneśvari, Yogavaśiṣṭha, and the Anubhavāmṛta of St. Jñāneśvar, the Bhāgavat and the Bhāvārtha Rāmāyaṇa of St. Eknāth, the Abhaṅgs of St. Nāmdev, and the Vacanāmṛta of St. Kabir.

56

After studying the works of the saints, Tukārām began to compose abhaṅgs (i.e. poems) and to perform kirtans. His preceptorship was opposed by a few orthodox Brāhmaṇas. Mambājī, a professional teacher of Dehu, was angry with Tukārām because people began to attend Tukārām's kirtan instead of Mambājī's teaching. Another Brāhmaṇa of Dehu, Rāmeśvar Bhaṭṭa, became furious because of Tukārām's popularity. He issued an injunction prohibiting Tukārām from writing abhaṅgs and ordered him to throw his works in the Indrāyaṇi river. He also induced

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The Poems of Tukarama 101, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe.

56

Mahipati, Bhaktalilāmṛta chs 25-40: Tukārāma, tr. J. E. Abbot, (Poona: The Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra series, 1930), xxx.40-53.

herdsmen to drive Tukārām out of the village, Dehu. <sup>57</sup> Tukārām's abhaṅgs or gāthā (i.e. collection of the abhaṅgs) were <sup>58</sup> miraculously saved, says the tradition.

In his gāthā, Tukārām has emphasized bhaktimārga as the way of liberation. He criticized the saṁnyāsa cult and <sup>59</sup> emphasized purity of heart. He emphasized that a saint <sup>60</sup> should do his duties for the welfare of the people. He himself led a householder's life. In his works, he dealt with the advaita philosophy and some socio-religious issues. His work brought him honour as a great saint of the Saṁpradāya. Having served the Saṁpradāya, he died in A. D. 1650. How he <sup>61</sup> died remains a mystery.

Jñāneśvar, Nāmdev, Eknāth, and Tukārām were the prominent saints of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya. Their contribution to the development of the Saṁpradāya was traditionally recognized by Bahinābāī, one of the disciples of St. Tukārām

57

C. A. Kincaid and D. B. Parasnis, A History of the Marāṭhā People, (Delhi: S. Chand & Co. 1968), p. 186.

58

The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 1569.

59

'Sri Tukārām Mahārājāñce Abhaṅg' Śri Sakal Sañt Gāthā, ed. K. A. Jośi, (2nd ed., Pune: Sañtavāñmaya Prakāśan Mañdir, 1967), 1750, 1971, 3017, 3073-3078.

60

Ibid., 204, 1014.

61

The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 1457; P. B. Kavde, op. cit., p. 104; C. A. Kincaid, op. cit., p. 21.

when she said:

The grace of saints was showered [on the Saṃpradāya] and the building was completed. Jñānadev laid the foundation and started to erect the temple. Nāmdev was its evangelist (kiṅkar); he built a compound around it. Janārdan and Eknāth gave the pillars of the Bhāgavat. And Tukārām became its steeple.

62

The building of the Vārkarī Saṃpradāya was erected in about five centuries by the contributions of many saints among whom Jñāneśvar, Nāmdev, Eknāth, and Tukārām were prominent. Jñāneśvar and Tukārām were considered more important than the others because Jñāneśvar provided a sound foundation for the theology of the Vārkarī Saṃpradāya and the teaching of the Saṃpradāya culminated in the works of Tukārām. For these reasons, it seems that Ṭīlak concentrated on these two saints when he was writing the Gītārahasya.

Jñāneśvar and Tukārām emphasized bhaktimārga as the central way of liberation implying that the way of liberation was open to Śūdras, women, and all. This position ultimately stands against the orthodox position concerning Vedic authority, the privileges of the Brāhmaṇas, the exclusion of the Śūdras and women from the right to religious knowledge and the prerequisite of scriptural knowledge for liberation. The saints were trying to address a problem which had arisen in the Hindu social order in that they were trying to re-unite Hindu society

by criticizing those who took pride in being born in the upper castes and by emphasizing that devotion (bhāv) was the only requirement of liberation. They also criticized the saṁnyāsa cult and praised the importance of householdership. Except for Jñāneśvar, the Vārkarī saints were householders and they taught that one should discharge one's social and domestic duties disinterestedly. They also tried to show how advaita philosophy could be interpreted in such a way as to provide a positive attitude towards society and the world.

(3) The Samartha Rāmdās Svāmi-

Another Marāṭhā saint who was a contemporary of St. Tukārām and Śivāji Mahārāj was the Samartha Rāmdās. He was born in A. D. 1608 at Jāmbagānv (district of Nasik) in a Brāhmaṇa family. His parents were devotees of Rāma. His marriage was arranged when he was about twelve. He fled from the marriage hall in A. D. 1620 in order to realize God (īṣṭha i.e. Rāma).<sup>63</sup> He then spent twelve years (A. D. 1620-1632) in meditation and realization of God. He then travelled far and wide through India, for about twelve years. His travel helped him to assess the social, religious, and political condition of India. He returned to Mahārāṣṭra in A. D. 1644.

Rāmdās established his own Saṁpradāya called 'Rāmdāsi

Sampradāya' which was different from the Vārkarī Sampradaya in some respect. The objectives of the Sampradaya were outlined in the works of Rāmdās as follows: The principal objective was to expound religious stories (harikathā nirupaṇ); the second objective was to awaken the people for political concern (rājakāraṇ); and the third objective was to be aware of all things (sāvadhāṇpaṇ sarvā viṣayī or vartāyāce lakṣaṇ).<sup>64</sup> In order to accomplish these objectives, Rāmdās established seven or eight hundred maṭhs (i.e. monasteries) in different provinces of India. For Rāmdās, Harikathā nirupaṇ meant to popularize the worship of Rāma, his family deity. He also popularized the worship of Hanumān, a devotee of Rāma and a symbol of physical power. He set up eleven images of Hanumān at Cāphal, Śāpur, etc. and introduced the festival of Rāma's birth-day (i.e. Rāmanavami) in A. D. 1645 at Masur and in A. D. 1647 at Cāphal.<sup>65</sup> Rāmdās' second objective was to take part in rājakāraṇ. For Rāmdās, rājakāraṇ meant to undertake those activities which would strengthen Hindu dharma. When Śivāji (A. D. 1630-1680) started to organize the Marāṭhās against Muslim rule in Mahārāṣṭra, it is assumed that the Rāmdāsi Sampradāya supported Śivāji in his effort, for Rāmdās had asked

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<sup>64</sup>  
Dās. 11.v.4; 11.vi.4; 12.ii. 29.

<sup>65</sup>  
V. H. Date, op. cit., p. 6.



his mahañts (i.e. disciples) to participate in the process of political awakening.<sup>66</sup> His third objective was to ~~make~~ the people alert about every thing (sāvadhapāṇ sarvā viṣayī). For Rāmdās, sāvadhapāṇ or vartāyāce lakṣaṇ meant to discharge individual and social duties skillfully; this was a code of ideal behaviour followed by the disciples of Rāmdās.<sup>67</sup>

Rāmdās wrote books to-propagate his teaching: Ekavis Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsboḍh,<sup>68</sup> Manāce Ślok,<sup>69</sup> Abhaṅgs,<sup>70</sup> Dāsboḍh,<sup>71</sup> Pañc Samās, Pañcikaraṇ, Rāmāyaṇa, Ātmārāma, Gurugītā, etc.. Rāmdās' outstanding book is the Dāsboḍh. In his works, Rāmdās emphasized bhaktimārga as the way of liberation within a traditional Hinduism which recognized Vedic authority, the

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Rāmdās, Ekavis Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsboḍh, (Pūṇe: R. S. Sahasrabuddhē, 1964), vi. 22-24; Dās.11. vi. 12ff; V. H. Date, op. cit., p. 66.

67

V. K. Rājvāḍe Lekhasaṅgrah, Saṅkirṇa Nibaṅdh, ed. S. N. Josi, (Pūṇe: Bhārat Itihās Saṅśōdhak Maṅḍal, 1935), III, 220.

68

Manāce Ślok (Karūnāṣṭakāsaḥ), (Pūṇe: Anmōḷ Prakāśaṇ, n.d.).

69

Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg, ed. K. A. Jośi, (Pūṇe: Śri Saṅtavāṅmay Prakāśaṇ Maṅḍir, 1967).

70

Sārtha Śri Dāsboḍh, ed. & interpreter L. R. Pangarkar, (7th ed., Bombay: K. B. Dhavle, 1975).

71

J. F. Edwards, op. cit., p. 24; P. R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 152.

privileges of the Brāhmaṇas, the heirarchical caste system, and the necessity of karmakānda. His bhaktimārga was especially characterized by emphasis on action (karmamārga or prayatnavāda). He synthesized prapañca (i.e. social and domestic duties) and paramārtha (i.e. religious duties and goal).<sup>72</sup> In short, Rāmdās was instrumental in restoring the orthodox religious traditions (sanātan adhyātmavāda) in Mahārāṣṭra.<sup>73</sup>

Rāmdās and his disciples indirectly participated in the political awakening associated with Śivāji. He was honoured as the preceptor of Śivāji. After the death of Śivāji in A. D. 1680, Rāmdās continued his mission of giving advice to Sambhāji, Śivāji's successor. Rāmdās died in A. D. 1681.

#### C) The Lokamānya Tilak and His Milieu:

Having dealt with the life and works of the prominent Marāṭhā saints, we now proceed to study the life and work of Tilak who at the beginning of the century organized the people of Mahārāṣṭra and of India to fight against British rule in India.

Tilak was born on 23 July 1856, thirty-eight years after the fall of the Marāṭhā Confederacy in A. D. 1818, and a year before the independence war or mutiny of A. D. 1857.

72

Ekavis Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsboḍh v. 102f, xi. 50, xviii. 18-22, xx. 9-12; Dās. 12.i, 1-4; 11.iii. 2.

<sup>73</sup>S. G. Tulpule, op. cit., p. 456.

He was born in the Citapāvan Brāhmaṇa caste, the caste of the Peśwas, in Ratnāgiri.

Mahārāṣṭrians reacted variously to British rule.

Their reactions can broadly be classified in three types. The first type of reaction was represented by the Lokahiṭavadi and J. G. Phule. The first type of reaction was positive because Mahārāṣṭrians experienced peace, order, safety, and happiness<sup>74</sup> at the initial stage of British rule. They appreciated British rule in Mahārāṣṭra. Elphinstone, the first Governor of Bombay Presidency, introduced English in a school in A. D. 1842 and the school grew up and was renamed the Deccan College in A. D. 1848. English literature and history, Western philosophy and science were taught in the College. English education affected the outlook of educated Mahārāṣṭrians. Many of them became critical of Hindu social customs and practices and developed a broader perspective. They began to talk about social reform. The second type of reaction of Mahārāṣṭrians was represented by M. G. Rāṇḍe who appreciated British rule as a blessing in disguise and who advocated reforms in all spheres of life and who gave priority to social reform over political reform. The third type of reaction was represented by Ṭīlak and his colleagues. They considered British rule

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S. N. Banhatti, Ṭīlak āṇi Āgarkar, (Nagpur: Suvicār Prakāśan Maṇḍaḷ, 1957), p. 6.

to be a curse. They began to instill patriotism among Mahārāṣṭrians, preparing them to fight against foreign rule. They blamed western values and culture for the moral and social disintegration of Hindu society. They wanted to revive Hindu values and institutions. They reacted against the social reforms suggested by some Hindu social reformers. They gave priority to political reform over social reform. These three types of reactions will be discussed in detail in the following pages.

(1) The First Type of Reaction:

(a) Sardār Gopālraṅg Hari Deśmukh (A.D. 1823-1892)-

Sardār Gopālraṅg Hari Deśmukh (A. D. 1824-1892), popularly known as the Lokahitavādi (i.e. advocate of people's welfare) and Mahatmā Jotibā Goviṅd Phule (A.D. 1827-1890) were prominent figures representing the first type of reaction. Deśmukh was especially influenced by his study of European culture, western ideology, and science. His ideals of social equality, humanitarianism, and democracy were formed out of western values. He wrote 'Śatpatre', edited a newspaper, and established societies like 'Paramhansa Maṅḍal', 'Students' Literary and Scientific Society', 'Bombay Association' in order to propagate his ideals. Deśmukh was critical of the excessiveness of rituals, gifts, hypocrisy, and blind belief among Hindus; he emphasized the virtues of purity of heart, honesty, and benevolence. In this endeavour he turned to the

Marāṭhā saints like Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, etc..<sup>75</sup> His primary concern was social reform. He advocated re-marriage,<sup>76</sup> adult marriage, female education, and other social reforms.

Deśmukh believed that social progress would automatically lead to political independence.<sup>77</sup> He emphasized that people should first be educated and qualified before trying to run a democracy in India. He considered British rule to be a blessing in disguise. He did not fail, however, to criticize the British policy of keeping India economically poor.<sup>78</sup> He welcomed the industrialization of India and asked people to be self-reliant, and advocated swadeśi (i.e. using indigenous products).<sup>79</sup> In short, he was a pioneer of Marāṭhī journalism,<sup>80</sup> the first advocate of social reforms in Mahārāṣṭra,

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N. Pandit, Mahārāṣṭrātil Rāṣṭravādācā Vikās, (2nd ed., Pune: Modern Book Depot Prakāśan, 1972), p. 13.

76

Ibid., pp. 15f.

77

S. L. Karandikar, Lokamānya B. G. Ṭilak: the Hercules and Prometheus of Modern India, (Poona: the author, 1957), p. 15.

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N. Pandit, op. cit., p. 21.

79

Ibid., pp. 1, 18f.

80

R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 278.

and an initiator of modern nationalism.<sup>81</sup>

(b) Mahātmā Jotibā Goviṅd Phule (A. D. 1827-1890)-

If Deśmukh represented educated Brahmanas, Phule represented educated non-Brāhmanas. He noticed that the non-Brāhmaṇa castes were groping in ignorance, living in poverty, and suffering social miseries because of the Brāhmanas' dominance in the social, religious, and economic spheres. In order to propagate his concerns, he founded a society known as the 'Satyaśodhak Samāj' in A. D. 1873. The object of the Society was not only to defy the Brāhmaṇa dominance, but also to ask for educational, social, and economic parity with the Brāhmanas, and to ask for human rights.<sup>82</sup>

Phule advocated female education and opened a school for women in A. D. 1851. He also tried to popularize the re-marriage of widows in A. D. 1864. He suffered for these causes at the hands of orthodox Brāhmanas and other Hindus.<sup>83</sup>

(2) The Second Type of Reaction:

Mr. Justice Mahādev Goviṅd Rānaḍe (A.D. 1842-1900)-

A social reformer, who represented a second type of

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N. Pandit, op. cit., pp. 12, 27.

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D. Keer, Lokamānya Tīlak Rājarsi Śāhu Mahārāj: Ek Mulyamāpan, (Bombay: Sri Gajānan Book Depot Prakāśan, 1971), pp. 6f. pp. 6f.

83

G. D. Parikh, Bhāratīy Rāṣṭravādāce Śilpakār: B. G. Tīlak, (Bombay: Mauj Prakāśan Grh, 1969), p. 6.

reaction towards British rule, was M. G. Rāṇaḍe. He believed, as Desmukh did, that British rule was a blessing in disguise for India. The British conquest of India, according to him, was for the ultimate welfare of India and Britain.<sup>84</sup>

Rāṇaḍe, being influenced by western education, wanted reform in all spheres of life, when he wrote:

The change which we should seek is thus a change from constraint to freedom, from credulity to faith, from status to contract, from authority to reason, from unorganized to organized life, from bigotry to toleration, from blind fatalism to a sense of human dignity. This is what I understand by social evolution, both for individuals and societies in this country.

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He gave priority to social reform over political reform, thinking that people should be socially fit to exercise political rights.<sup>86</sup> He urged Hindu society to bring all socio-religious codes into conformity with rationality, justice, and conscience.<sup>87</sup>

Rāṇaḍe advocated social reform by writing in magazines, by organizing public meetings and oratory competitions. He edited 'Induprakāś', the official organ of social reformers.

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P. J. Jagirdar, Studies in the Social Thought of M. G. Ranāḍe, (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963), p. 97.

<sup>85</sup>Miscellaneous Writings of the late hon'ble Mr. Justice M. G. Ranāḍe, (Bombay: R. Ranāḍe, 1915), pp. 116f.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

He was against child marriage, and for widow re-marriage. He joined the Prārthanā Sāmāj (i.e. prayer society) in A. D. 1967, which was a religious reform movement in Bombay. He was also associated with the Female High School Society, the Marāṭhī Literature Encouragement Society, the SārvaJanik Sabhā, etc..<sup>88</sup>

Rānaḍe formed his philosophy of religious and social reform out of the teachings of Christian reformers- Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, St. Augustine-, the western philosophy of Kant and Spencer, and the religious tradition of the Marāṭha saints- Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās. He interpreted the works of the Marāṭhā saints, as follows:

Ancient authority and tradition had been petrified here, ... but in the monopoly of the Brāhman caste, and it was against the exclusive spirit of this caste dominion that the saints and prophets struggled most manfully to protest. They asserted the dignity of / the / human soul as residing in it quite independently of the accidents of its birth and social rank.<sup>89</sup>

He was attracted by the principle of spiritual equality and dignity taught by the saints.<sup>90</sup> He said that the work of the saints influenced all strata of society, male and female, high and low, literate and illiterate, Hindu and Muslim alike.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>P. J. Jagirdar, op. cit., p.8.

<sup>89</sup>M. G. Ranade, Rise of the Marāṭhā Power and Other Essays..., p. 18.

<sup>90</sup>R.I. Cashman, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>91</sup>M. G. Ranade, Rise of the Marāṭhā Power and Other Essays..., p. 79.



He put forth the thesis that Marāṭhā spirituality was responsible for the emergence of Marāṭhā nationality, when he said:

By the influence of Rāmdās and Tukārām the national sentiment was kept up at a higher level of spirituality and devotion to public affairs than it would otherwise have attained. In token of the work of liberation being carried on, not for personal aggrandisement but for the higher purpose of service to God and man, the national standard received, at the suggestion of Rāmdās, its favourite orange colour, which was and is the colour of the clothes worn by anchorites and devotees.

92

He added that the religious work of the Marāṭhā saints created patriotism and sustained it in the time of crises.<sup>93</sup>

(3) The Third Type of Reaction:

(a) Vāsudev Balavañt Phaḍke (A. D. 1845-1883) -

The third type of reaction to British rule in Mahārāṣṭra and India was represented by V. V. Phaḍke, Viṣṇuśāstri K. Ciplunkar, Ṭilak, and his colleagues. Phaḍke looked at British rule as a curse and proclaimed that the duty of every patriot was to fight against the British regime and to liberate unfortunate poor people.<sup>94</sup> In order to arouse patriotic feeling among the people he reminded Marāṭhās of their past glory and of their Marāṭhā kingdom. He organized an armed

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<sup>92</sup> M. G. Ranade, Rise of the Marāṭhā Power and Other Essays..., p. 44.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp. 7f.

<sup>94</sup> I. M. Reisner and N. M. Goldberg, eds., Ṭilak and the Struggle for Indian Freedom, (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1966), p. 21.

revolution against British rule, but it was a failure.

(b) Viṣṇu Śāstri K. Ciplunkar (A. D. 1850-1882)-

Phadke's anti-British attitude was followed by Ciplunkar. He started write a series of articles, called 'Nibaṅdhamālā' from A. D. 1874 to the end of his life. He argued that the cause of the miserable condition of the people was 'only the loss of our independence' and from this loss all other losses followed.<sup>95</sup> Thus, according to Ciplunkar, the existence of British rule was the basic cause of people's misery.<sup>96</sup>

Ciplunkar, on the one hand, was attempting to disenchant people from their belief in British rule as a blessing. On the other hand, he was trying to make people proud of their ancient culture and history and was arousing them to recognize their self-importance. In this, his means were two-fold.<sup>97</sup> He reminded Marāṭhās of the glorious achievements of their heroes and of the Peśwas in establishing the Marāṭhā empire

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<sup>95</sup>S. A. Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 10.

<sup>96</sup>D. P. Karmarkar, Bāl Gaṅgādhār Tilak: A Study, (Bombay: Popular Book Depot, 1956), p. 32.

<sup>97</sup>S. N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 40.

and Mahārāṣṭra dharma.<sup>98</sup> His objective in doing so was to instil patriotism among the people, and to encourage them to fight for political liberation,<sup>99</sup> and to fill them with the spirit of self-respect and self-confidence.<sup>100</sup>

Ciplunkar was proud of Hinduism. He believed that the structure of Hindu society was perfectly compatible with social progress and looked forward to an age which would see the revival of Hindu values and institutions.<sup>101</sup> He, therefore, attacked Hindu social reformers: "the Lokahitavādi or Deśmukh, M. G. Rāṇaḍe, and others who were finding faults with Hinduism and its institutions and who were influenced by western values and Christian theology."<sup>102</sup> He reacted against the criticisms of social reformers saying that they were humiliating Hindus. He blamed western values and culture for the moral and social disintegration of Hindu society and criticized the social reformers for propagating those values.<sup>103</sup> He opposed radical

<sup>98</sup>V. G. Bhat, Lokamānya Tīlak (His Life, Mind, Politics and Philosophy), (Poona: Prakāsh Publication, 1956), p. 5.

<sup>99</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Tīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, (2nd ed., Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1969), p. 25.

<sup>100</sup>V. G. Bhat, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>101</sup>R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 309.

<sup>102</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Tīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, p. 24.

<sup>103</sup>V. Ciplunkar, Nibaṅdhamālā, (Pune: Citraśālā, 1917), p. 1085.

changes in the values and institutions of Hindu society.<sup>104</sup>

Ciplun̄kar opened the New English School on 1 January 1880, with the objective of reviving Hindu values, imbuing self-respect and pride in Hindu culture, and saving Hindu society from the disintegrating effects of foreign rule. Ṭiḷak joined Ciplun̄kar in planning the school. The Principal, Vāman S. Āpte (A. D. 1858-1892) read a statement prepared by Gopāl G. Āgarkar (A. D. 1856-1895) and Ṭiḷak,<sup>105</sup> before the Hunter Commission in September 1882, expressing thier objective:

We have undertaken this work of popular education with the firmest conviction and belief that of all agents of human civilization, education is the only one that brings about material, moral and religious regeneration of fallen countries and raises them up to [the] level of the most advanced nations by slow and peaceful revolutions and in order that it should be so, it must ultimately be in the hands of the people themselves.

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(c) The Lokamānya Tilak, His Life and Works-

Ṭiḷak (A. D. 1856-1920) joined the aforesaid School after completing his academic studies. He obtained the B. A. in A. D. 1876 from the Deccan College. He passed the LL. B. in A. D. 1879. He specialized in Hindu law. While he was

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<sup>104</sup>R. Kumar, op. Cit., p. 310.

<sup>105</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭiḷak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, p. 36.

<sup>106</sup>T. V. Parvate, Bāl Gaṅgādhār Ṭiḷak, a Narrative and Interpretative Review of His Life, Career and Contemporary Events, (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1958), p. 57.

studying Hindu law, he read almost all the important works on Hinduism, including the Saṅskṛt commentaries.<sup>107</sup>

Ṭīlak, like every other educated person, could have secured a Government job, but he preferred to serve the society independently. His decision can be explained in terms of his heritage. His great grandfather Keśavrāv, who served the Peśwas in the capacity of a high ranking civil servant, refused to serve the British Government because of his patriotism and loyalty to the Peśwas.<sup>108</sup> His grandfather Rāmacaṅdrapaṅt (A.D. 1802-1872) told Ṭīlak horrible stories of what took place during the Independence War of A. D. 1857, and the condition of the Peśwas family in exile.<sup>109</sup> Rāmacaṅdrapaṅt was a religious person who used to recite vedic hymns and do rituals (snāna-saṅdhyā), and as a young man Ṭīlak used to imitate his grandfather. Thus Rāmacaṅdrapaṅt was responsible for instilling patriotism and Hindu piety in Ṭīlak. Rāmacaṅdrapaṅt went to Benares and took samnyāsa and finally entered into samādhi (i.e. to be buried alive) in A. D. 1872.<sup>110</sup> Ṭīlak's father Gaṅgādharpaṅt (A.D. 1820-1882) was an orthodox Hindu rigidly

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<sup>107</sup> N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Lokamānya Ṭīlak, tr. D. V. Divekar, (Madras: S. Ganesan, 1928), p. 57.

<sup>108</sup> D. V. Tahmankar, Lokamānya Ṭīlak, Father of Indian Unrest and Maker of Modern India, (London: J. Murray, 1956), p.10.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 10; S. L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>110</sup> B. D. Kher, Lokamānya Ṭīlak Darśan, (2nd ed., Pune: Kesari Prakāśan, 1972), p. 4.

observing religious rite and observances.<sup>111</sup> He used to take Ṭīlak to listen to akhyāns (i.e. religious narrations) in a temple.<sup>112</sup> Gaṅgādharpant was an educationist and taught his son Marāṭhī, Saṅskṛt, and mathematics at home and often asked his son to recite Marāṭhī poems and Saṅskṛt verses.<sup>113</sup> Gaṅgādharpant's philosophy about education and social service influenced Ṭīlak's philosophy of life. Gaṅgādharpant said, "A human being... attains [the] dignity of man through his second birth, viz. education" and "A sense of duty to God and religion, to family and society ought to characterize an educated man".<sup>114</sup> It seems that his father's philosophy made Ṭīlak very conscious of his responsibility as an educated Indian towards his country and fellowmen.<sup>115</sup>

The primary objective of Ṭīlak and his colleagues was to impart national education in order to create national consciousness. They used different means to achieve the goal. They started two newspapers namely, the Mahrāṭṭā in English and the Kesari in Marāṭhī. The first issue of the Mahrāṭṭā

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<sup>111</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, p.3.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>113</sup>V. Venkatesvarulu, All About Lok. Ṭīlak, (Madras: V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu & Sons, 1922), pp. iif.

<sup>114</sup>S. L. Karndikar, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., p. 645.

came out on 3 January 1881. Tilak was its first editor.<sup>116</sup>

The Mahrāṭṭā stated its purpose clearly thus:

When we reflect upon the condition of our country... pause to think upon the social status of the nation of Shivaji... the why of such a state, we come to the inevitable conclusion that all evils, social and political, from which the Mahratta population is at present suffering, are to be traced to the unique system of education now followed by Government. The instinct of nationality being wide awake within us, we have already undertaken the arduous duty of educating the young portion of the Mahratta community; but our experience shows that our labours will not be appreciated nor will our teaching be of good avail, if we neglect the task of, at the same time, educating the more ~~advanced~~ portion of the community.<sup>117</sup>

The first issue of the Kesari came out on 1 January 1881. Agarkar was its first editor. Tilak became its editor from A. D. 1887.<sup>118</sup> The Kesari stated its purpose, as follows:

Just as street lights and the rounds of police constables bring to light anything wrong or unjust happening on the roads in the dark, the editorial pen brings to light the injustices and the wrongs of the administration.<sup>119</sup>

During the first year, the Mahrāṭṭā and the Kesari dealt with the affairs of the native States of Boroda and

<sup>116</sup>S. A. Wolpert, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>117</sup>Mahrāṭṭā I, 3 January 1881, quoted by S. A. Wolpert, op. cit., pp. 19f.

<sup>118</sup>G. D. Parikh, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>119</sup>V. G. Bhat, op. cit., p. 28.

Kolhāpur which were survivals of the Marāṭhā Confederacy. These newspapers exposed M. V. Barve, the Dewan of Kolhapur. Barve filed a suit against the editors who were sentenced to four months of simple imprisonment on 17 July 1882.<sup>120</sup> Ṭīlak and Āgarkar were accorded a magnificent welcome upon their release from the prison and were honoured as patriots.<sup>121</sup>

In A. D. 1888 Ṭīlak focused on the 'Crawford Case'. He criticized Crawford, the Revenue Commissioner, for taking bribes and for corrupting Indian Mamlatdars.<sup>122</sup> He exposed the "topsyturvydom" of the Government's justice and defended the Indian Mamlatdars.<sup>123</sup>

By the end of A. D. 1889, Ṭīlak was involved in the 'Sārada Sadan' controversy with the Paṇḍitā Ramābāī and her supporters, the Lokahitavādi, M. G. Rānānde, Justice Telaṅg, and R. G. Bhāṇḍārkar who were prominent social reformers. Ramābāī founded a school to take care of "destitute high-caste widows". It was made clear at the beginning that the school would not be used to gain converts to Christianity. Ṭīlak exposed that the school was carrying on the work of conversion

<sup>120</sup>D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., pp. 28f.

<sup>121</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, p. 35.

<sup>122</sup>Lokamānya Ṭīlak Lekhasaṅgrah: Kesaritil Nivāḍak Lekh Saṅgrah, ed., L. Jośi, (New Delhi: Sāhitya Academy, 1969), p. 43.

<sup>123</sup>N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Lokamānya Ṭīlak, I, 175.



under a pretext of educating widows. Tīlak advised people to disavow all connection with the Śāradā Sadan.<sup>124</sup>

Tīlak and his colleagues had opened the New English School in order to instill patriotism among youth. The School was to run on the principle of self-sacrifice and selfless work.<sup>125</sup> When the School was prospering, Tilak's colleagues asked for more money for their service and they opposed the idea of complete dedication which Tīlak was insisting. This controversy was ended by Tīlak's resigning from the Deccan Society on 15th December 1890.<sup>126</sup>

After resigning from the Deccan Education Society, Tīlak had more time for the politics of Mahārāṣṭra. Tīlak was involved in the controversy of 'The Age of Consent Bill' in A. D. 1891. The bill was introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council to raise marriageable age from ten to twelve years, by the reformers. Tīlak opposed social reformers like M. G. Rānade,<sup>127</sup> Justice K. T. Talaṅg, and

<sup>124</sup>D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>125</sup>N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Lokamānya Tīlak, p. 36; S. N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>126</sup>N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Lokamānya Tīlak, p.44.

<sup>127</sup>M. G. Ranade, Religious and Social Reform, ( a Collection of Essays and Speeches), ed. M. B. Kōaskar, (Bombay: Gopal Narayan & Co. , 1902), pp. 92-114.

R. G. Bhāṇḍārkar,<sup>128</sup> because he thought that such a method of imposing social reform on Hindus would be dangerous to Hindu religion and culture.<sup>129</sup> He advised the Government not to interfere with the social customs of Hindus.<sup>130</sup> After this controversy, Tīlak became known as an "orthodox" leader.

After the Age of Consent Bill controversy, Tīlak became involved in the Hindu-Muslim riot issues in August 1893 and he popularized the Gaṇeś festival which became a national festival in A. D. 1896.<sup>131</sup> Tīlak also introduced the Śivāji festival in A. D. 1896 and asked the people not to observe caste distinctions in the festival because Śivāji was the symbol of their unity.<sup>132</sup>

The year 1893 was important from the point of literary achievement because Tīlak published his first book, The Orion or Resaerch into the Antiquity of the Vedas. In this book, he criticizes the literary or linguistic method for ascertaining

<sup>128</sup>R. G. Bhandarkar, 'A Note on the Age of Marriage and Its Consumation According to Hindu Religious Law' Collected Works of Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, ed. N. B. Utgikar, (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1928), II, 538-558.

<sup>129</sup>N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Lokamānya Tīlak, p. 201.

<sup>130</sup>Mahratta I:22, 29 May 1881, quoted by S. A. Wolpert, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>131</sup>N. Pandit, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>132</sup>S. N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 135.

the age of the Vedas as applied by Max Müller and Dr. Haug, describing it as 'most vague and uncertain'.<sup>133</sup> He suggested that scholars calculate the Vedic age on the basis of the astrological references in the Veda. By publishing the book, Tīlak was able to enhance his prestige among his orthodox compatriots and to argue for the superiority of the Āryan civilization over Western civilization on the basis of its greater antiquity.

The Congress had two political parties. One party was led by social reformers who were moderate in their political demands. Another party was led by the "orthodox" who were extremist in political demands. The social reformers used to hold their Social Conference in the same pandal as the Congress. This practice gave the impression that the Congress as a whole was in favour of social reform. Tīlak belonged to the second party which wanted to separate social reform from political reform. Tīlak was gradually making his political party stronger than that led by the social reformers. In A. D. 1890 and again in A. D. 1895 Tīlak and his group objected to holding the Social Conference of the reformers in the Congress pandal. In December 1895, the Congress session was held in Poona and Tīlak and his party were finally successful in forcing the reformers to hold

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<sup>133</sup>B. G. Tīlak, The Orion or Research into the Antiquity of the Vedas, (Poona: Tilak Bros., 1893), pp. 3f.

their Conference separately.<sup>134</sup> Thus Ṭīlak and his party were successful in separating social reform from political reform. They also by A. D. 1895 had ousted their opponents from their position of provincial leadership.

In A.D. 1896 Mahārāṣṭra was struck with famine. Ṭīlak translated the Famine Code into Marāṭhī and made people conscious of their rights during the famine.<sup>135</sup> At the end of the year, plague broke out in Bombay and Poona. Walter C. Rand was appointed the Plague Commissioner in A. D. 1897 and he used British soldiers to enforce the precautionary sanitary measures. Ṭīlak warned the Government against the harrassment being caused the poeplē by the plague administration. At the time of the Śivāji festival of A. D. 1897 Ṭīlak published the discussion of Prof. Parāñjape, Jinsivāle, and Bhānū concerning the question 'Did Śivāji commit a crime by killing Afzul Khan?' He also published Dāmodar H. Cāphekar's controversial poem in the Kesari on 15 June 1897. On 22 June 1897 Rand and another administrator, Ayerst, were shot dead by the Cāphekar Brothers and Ṭīlak was arrested and sentenced to eighteen months rigorous imprisonment. While he was serving his time, he wrote some chapters of his second book, Arctic Home in the Vedas. He was given an early release from prison on 6 September

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<sup>134</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, pp. 95-99.

<sup>135</sup>D. V. Athalye, The Life of Lokamānya Ṭīlak, (Poona: Annasahib Chiploonkar, 1921), p. 85.

1898.

After the release, Ṭīlak was busy with the Tāī Mahārāj Case for several years. Tāī Mahārāj was the young widow of Bābā Mahārāj who wrote a will and appointed Ṭīlak, G. S. Khāparde, Mr. Kumbhojkar, and Nāgpurkar to be trustee of his property, authorizing them to adopt a boy if his wife give birth to a girl or if her baby-son died. Tāī Mahārāj wished to adopt Bālā Mahārāj of Kolhāpur and Mr. Nāgpurkar supported her. The other trustees were not in favour of this proposal and they took Tāī Mahārāj to Aurangabad and with her consent adopted Jagannāth. When she returned to Poona, she came under the influence of Ṭīlak's rivals and lodged a complaint against Ṭīlak for forcing her to adopt Jagannāth. She applied for revocation of the probate granted to Ṭīlak and the other trustees. Mr. Aston the judge decided in the widow's favour and revoked the probate. Mr. Aston also charged Ṭīlak with perjury, forgery, and the illegal detention of Tāī Mahārāj in her wādā. Ṭīlak was sentenced to eighteen months rigorous imprisonment with a fine of Rs. 1,000. It would appear that the Government had taken a special interest in the case in order to call into question Ṭīlak's personal integrity. Ṭīlak finally won the case in A. D. 1917: <sup>136</sup>

While Ṭīlak was busy with the Tāī Mahārāj case, he

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<sup>136</sup>D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., pp. 101ff.

became involved in the Vedokta controversy. The Vedokta controversy reflected a dispute between the Brāhmaṇas and non-Brāhmaṇas. The dispute arose in A. D. 1901 when Sayājirāv of Baroda raised a question as to why the rites prescribed in the Vedas could not be performed on Marāṭhās, the non-Brāhmaṇas. This question was also raised in Kolhāpur. The Chatrapati Śāhu Mahārāj used his power and demanded that the Brāhmaṇas perform the Vedic rites in his palace, telling them that the temple of Ambābāī and its grants would be forfeited if they would not comply with the order. Tīlak wrote in the Kesari that Śāhu Mahārāj as a king should protect tradition and well-established practices and should not interfere in the caste system.<sup>137</sup>

The partition of Bengal took place in A. D. 1905, and this infuriated the people of Bengal and all India was drawn in. Tīlak mobilized the Indians against British rule by advocating a fourfold programme: Boycott British products, Swadeśi (i.e. the use of indigenous products), National Education, and demand for independence (Swarāj).<sup>138</sup> He started what was called the non-co-operation movement in A. D. 1906 throughout India and in some places people became violent and used bombs. Tīlak

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<sup>137</sup>N. C. Kelkar, Lokamānya Tīlak yāñce Caritra, (Pune: the author, 1928), II.ii. 7-13.

<sup>138</sup>N. C. Jog, Lokamānya Bāl Gaṅgādhar Tīlak, (Delhi: Govt. of India, 1959), p. 96.

wrote two controversial articles namely, "The Country's Misfortune" and "These Remedies Are Not Lasting" in the Kesari on 12 May and 19 June 1908 respectively. Because of these articles, Tīlak was accused of being a chief instigator of Indian unrest, and of provoking sedition and the use of violent means. He was sentenced to six years penal transportation on 22 July 1908 and was sent to Mandalay jail (Burma). While he was serving his time, he wrote the third book, Śrimadbhagavadgītārahasya Athavā Karmayogaśāstra: The Hindu Philosophy of Life, Ethics and Religion, his magnus opus which Tāhmankar describes as 'a socio-political thesis'<sup>139</sup>. It is this work with which this thesis is mainly concerned.

Tīlak was released on 16 June 1914. Germany and Britain declared war on 4 August 1914. Tīlak used the opportunity to launch the Home Rule (Swarāj) movement during the war years and gained a measure of responsible government for India. He formed the Home Rule League on 28 April 1916. Afterwards, he unified the Extremist and the Moderate fractions of the Congress and even brought in the Muslim League at the Lucknow Congress session held in December 1916. Then all the parties unitedly asked for Swarāj or Home Rule. After his return from England, on 27 November 1919, he began to talk

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<sup>139</sup>D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 40.

about responsive co-operation with the government and founded the Congress Democratic Party on 18 April 1920. In his last months, he saw M. K. Gāndhī (A. D. 1869-1949) being recognized as the national leader. The mantle of Tīlak gradually fell on Gāndhi who announced the non-co-operation programme, on 1 August 1920, the day on which Tīlak breathed his last.<sup>140</sup>

In this section, we have reviewed Tīlak's career and his works in the context of his milieu. We described the various controversies he became involved in during his fight against the social reformers and the British government in the course of defending Hindu tradition and values and seeking to obtain political independence for India. His struggle was the struggle of a nationalist. Tīlak was recognized as a national hero in whom the Indian struggle against British rule was epitomized. His national leadership, however, was an extended form of his leadership in his province, Mahārāṣṭra. His national leadership was grounded on his solid rootage in his own Marāṭhā tradition. This fact has been emphasized by scholars such as, Aurobindo and Cashman. Aurobindo commented:

They [Marāṭhās] felt him to be of one spirit and make with the great men who had made their past history, almost believed him to be a reincarnation

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<sup>140</sup> I. M. Reiser and N. M. Goldberg, eds., op. cit., p. 652.



of one of them returned to carry out his old work in a new form and under new conditions. They beheld in him the spirit of Mahārāshtra once again embodied in a great individual.

141

Similarly, Cashman noted:

Although Tīlak was a national figure who epitomized the Indian struggle against the British in his day, he was primarily a Maharashtrian politician deeply imbued with the cultural traditions of the region. His influence at the national level was based on a sizeable local following achieved by the development of a style of politics in harmony with the region.

142

In other words, Tīlak was a Marāthā politician and nationalist who was deeply indebted to the tradition of Mahārāshtra.

D) The Lokamānya Tīlak and the Marāthā Tradition:

In a general way Tīlak might be said to have utilized the whole tradition of Mahārāshtra. In A. D. 1896 Tīlak introduced the Śivāji festival in order to generate patriotism among Mahārāshtrians and Indians. He thought of Śivāji as an ideal hero who could serve as a source of inspiration for Mahārāshtrians involved in the freedom struggle. He wrote in the Kesari (2 July 1895) that Mahārāshtrians should enthusiastically help build a monument to Śivāji for they would be expressing their gratitude to Śivāji by laying the foundation of their

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<sup>141</sup> Śri Aurobindo, Baṅkim-Tīlak-Dayānānda, (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1940), p. 26.

<sup>142</sup> R. I. Cashman, op. cit., p. 6.

national welfare.<sup>143</sup> ṭīlak became involved in raising funds for a monument to Śivāji in August 1896 and celebrated the Śivāji festival annually. He wrote in the Kesari (26 May 1896) before the first celebration of the festival, "It is our first duty to celebrate the festival of Śivāji as other heroes in order to remind our country-men of the deeds and efforts of our heroes, for the sake of our gratitude to them and for the sake of national wellbeing".<sup>144</sup> On the occasion of the Śivāji coronation festival held in Poona in A. D. 1906, he described the purpose of the festival in these terms:

To turn to the Shivaji festival, the knowledge we have, or the knowledge which we want to inculcate among the people in this connection, relates not to the actual measures which Shivaji for instance took but to a proper appreciation of the spirit in which he resorted to the measures suitable to his time. Festivals like these prove an incentive to the legitimate ambitions of a people with a great historic past. They serve to impart courage, such courage as an appreciation of heroes securing their salvation against odds, can give. They serve as antidote to vague despair.

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For ṭīlak, Śivāji was an ideal hero under whose leadership social unity was formed for political purposes.

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<sup>143</sup> Lokamānya ṭīlak Lekhasaṅgrah, Kesaritul Nivāḍak Lekh Saṅgrah, ed. L. Joṣi, p. 378.

<sup>144</sup> Nibandhakār ṭīlak (Lokamānya ṭīlakāni 'Kesaritun' Lihilelyā Kāhī Nivāḍak Nibandhācā Saṅgrah), ed. N. C. Kelkar, (Pune: Kesari Prakāśan, 1971), p. 67.

<sup>145</sup> B. G. ṭīlak, His Writings and Speeches, (3rd ed., Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1922), p. 70.

He, therefore, wrote in the Kesari (28 April 1896) pleading with Mahārāṣṭrians to remain united, "The symbol which can be loved by different castes in Mahārāṣṭra is Śivāji's life; this should be borne in mind by the people who celebrate the Śivāji festival. It is not appropriate to maintain differences like Marāṭhās and Brāhmaṇas, Brāhmaṇas and Prabhus".<sup>146</sup> He appealed not only to Mahārāṣṭrians but both the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal to accept Śivāji as their national hero, at the time of the first celebration of the Śivāji festival in A. D. 1906.<sup>147</sup> In doing this he was asking Indians to unify themselves for political strength.

A second way in which Ṭilak grounded his political struggle in the Marāṭhā tradition was in claiming political freedom as his 'birth right'. A. S. Karandikar observed:

'Svarājya is our birth-right' said Tilak on 2 May 1908, the day of Śivāji festival at Akola. Such was his proclamation. The term 'svarājya' came into being at the time of Śivāji. The term became popular in the Rāṣṭriy Sabhā twelve years after celebration of the Śivāji festival. The idea of svarājya is given to us by the ancestors of Mahārāṣṭra. It is said that svarājya is the ultimate aim. I say, it is our natural right. Even though we have forgotten the idea of svarājya for some time, the idea is still alive in

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<sup>146</sup>The Kesari, 22 August 1899, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak: Sāmāj v Saṅskṛti, (Pune: Kesari Prakāśan, 1976), V, 539; also quoted by S. N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>147</sup>S. L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 225.

Mahārāṣṭra. We have forgotten the idea of svarājya. It is the duty of the leaders to try to see that we should not forget it. Man has nose and ears; similarly, he had the idea of svātāntra (i.e. self-rule). He is a beast who does not think of the svātāntra as any thing but natural.

148

T. L. Shay also noted the depth of this idea in Ṭīlak's thought, as follows:

He [Ṭīlak] also made continuous reference to the great Shivāji and the history of his Marāthā people, the fiery tradition of their independence [svātāntra], their war against the Mogul Empire to restore svarāj and to serve the Dharma. The Marāthā people had not forgotten that they had been free; the Svarāj had been their birth-right. From his childhood, he inherited a vision of new India arising, firmly based on the spirit and traditions of her civilization and her glorious past.

149

The fact that Ṭīlak's inspiration for political freedom was derived from the struggle Śivāji had in carving Marāthā Rāj out of the Muslim rule, has also been noted by scholars such as I. M. Reisner and N. M. Goldberg,<sup>150</sup> D. V. Athalye,<sup>151</sup> and R. I. Cashman.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup>A. J. Karandikar, Krāntikārak Ṭīlak ni Tyānca Kāl, (Pune: Kāl Prakāśan, 1969), p. 295.

<sup>149</sup>T. L. Shay, The Legacy of the Lokamānya: The Political Philosophy of Bāl Gaṅgādhara Ṭīlak, (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 53.

<sup>150</sup>I. M. Reisner and N. M. Goldberg, eds., op. cit., pp. 94, 274f, 380.

<sup>151</sup>D. V. Athalye, op. cit., pp. 104, 106.

<sup>152</sup>R. I. Cashman, op. cit., p. 114.

Another festival which Tīlak popularized was the Gaṇeś festival. That Tīlak used the religious tradition connected with the god 'Gaṇeś' for a plotical purpose has been pointed out by I.M. Reisner and Goldenberg:

According to Rām Gopal... Tīlak's ultimate objective always being to stir up the masses against the British rule, he placed this political propaganda under the special patronage of the most popular deity in India i. e. Ganesh, the Elephant God, son of Shiva. The legendary conqueror of the demon Gajasuara, Ganesh became a symbol of the emancipation of the country from its foreign rulers.

153

A. J. Karandikar has argued that Tīlak popularized the Gaṇeś festival in order to revive the memory of Peśwa rule (A. D. 1713-1818) because the Gaṇeś festival had been a big annual celebration of the Peśwas.<sup>154</sup> According to Karandikar, Gaṇeś was the deity of freedom because Gaṇeś fought against demons.<sup>155</sup> Tīlak's use of the Gaṇeś festival to deepen patriotism or nationalism has also been observed by scholars such as Cachman, Kher, Banhatti, Kelkar and others.<sup>156</sup>

Tīlak's purpose in restoring the traditional festivals

<sup>153</sup>I. M. Reisner and N. M. Goldberg, eds., op. cit., pp. 64f.

<sup>154</sup>A. J. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 138.

<sup>155</sup>Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>156</sup>R. I. Cashman, op. cit., p. 13; J. F. Edwards, op. cit., p. 312; V. Venkatesvarulu, op. cit., p. 248; N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Lok. Tīlak, I, 282; S. N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 133; B. D. Kher, op. cit., p. 43.

of Mahārāṣṭra clearly had the political intention of unifying the people and giving them courage. Ṭīlak also recognized the deeper spiritual purpose of the traditional festivals as D. P. Karmarkar read into Tilak's argument in the Kesari (1, 8 September 1896):

Here in India, as religion occupied a vital place in the life of people, our festivals normally assumed in the past a religious character, but the object was essentially to keep the religious instinct of the people alive and in addition the occasions were utilized as a means of educating the people in the moral, social, and political spheres. In recent history, both before and after Shivaji, similar festivals and jatras [i.e. a large gathering of people in honour of deity] were held when people in the thousands gathered in a devotional atmosphere. Saints like Eknāth also participated in such festivals. It was also Saint Rāmdās who started the Rāmnāvami festival. These festivals helped largely in the galvanization of the Marāṭhā people and it was this strength that enabled them to meet the fierce attacks of the armies of Aurangzeb. In fact the jatras of olden times were huge exhibitions of religious, industrial and social activities of the people... In brief, a national festival is one of the principal means of the all-round development of the Nation.

157

As we have seen the scholars are very much aware that Ṭīlak utilized the political and religious tradition of Mahārāṣṭra in formulating his political philosophy and in generating patriotism or nationalistic enthusiasm and zeal in Mahārāṣṭra and in India in general. But much less

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<sup>157</sup>D. P. Karmarkar, op. cit., p. 77.

attention has been given to the fact that it was the Bhāgavat Dharma of the saints of Mahārāṣṭra which influenced the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical thought of Tīlak, as he expounds it in the Gītārahasya.

E) The Bhagavadgītārahasya:

(1) The Gītārahasya as a Nationalistic Work-

The Gītārahasya is conceived by Tīlak as a nationalistic work to sustain Hindu tradition. This characteristic of the work is highlighted by Tīlak in the statement he made upon the completion of the Gītārahasya, in the letter dated 2 March 1911 from Mandalay:

About the Gītā, I have finished what I call Gītā Rahasya, an independent and original book investigating the purpose of [the] Gītā and showing how our religious philosophy is applied therein to the solution of the ethical problem. ...I have compared throughout the Gītā Philosophy with the Western, both religious and ethical, and have tried to show that our system is, to say the least, not inferior to any of the Western methods.

158

Tīlak thus wants to reject the prevailing attitude of his day which said that Western values were superior and Indian values inferior. Scholars commenting on the Gītārahasya also emphasized this characteristic. N. Paṇḍit observed that Tīlak compared Indian philosophy (adhyātmavāda) with modern

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<sup>158</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Tīlak: Towards Independence, (Poona: Kesari Prakāshan, 1975), VII, 769; quoted by D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 204 and by T. V. Parvate, op. cit., p. 302.

philosophical trend of Europe and tried to prove the superiority of Indian philosophy. His Gītārahasya, according to Paṇḍit, reflects traditional patriotism (paramparāniṣṭha rāṣṭravāda).<sup>159</sup> S. Radhakrishnan said, "It is needless to say that it is Mr. Tilak's robust patriotism that predisposed his mind to his activistic view".<sup>160</sup> S. A. Wolpert observed:

Like Tilak's earlier scholarly efforts, the Gītārahasya was in fact more important [as a] work of Nationalist literature than of philosophy, though it was certainly the latter as well. Essentially, however, in this last of his books the Lokamanya bequeathed to his country-men a stirring and rigorous call to selfless action.

161

D. V. Tahmankar called the Gītārahasya 'a socio-political thesis based on the most sacred books of the Hindus'.<sup>162</sup> D. Mackenzie Brown considered the Gītārahasya 'the major philosophical work of the Indian Nationalist movement'.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>159</sup>N. Pandit, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>160</sup>Eminent Orientalists: Indian, European, American, (Madras: G. A. Natesan & Co. , 1922), p. 332.

<sup>161</sup>S. A. Wopert, op. cit., p. 261.

<sup>162</sup>D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>163</sup>D. Mackenzie Brown, "The Philosophy of Bāl Gaṅgādhar Tilak- Karma vs. Jñāna in the Gītā Rahasya", The Journal of Asian Studies, (Feb. 1958), xii. 198.



B. D. Kher<sup>164</sup> and G. P. Pradhān<sup>165</sup> also shared the interpretation of the Gītārahasya as a nationalistic work.

The Gītārahasya is considered to be a nationalistic literature at two levels. The first is a general level derived from the fact that Ṭīlak was known for his patriotism or nationalism which was reflected in his earlier works<sup>166</sup> and in his active political career. This work carried on that spirit. But it is nationalistic at a deeper spiritual level in that Ṭīlak utilized the national or Hindu tradition in formulating a scheme of Hindu ethics which would be competitive with Western ethics. In using the Hindu tradition in order to find a basis for a Hindu ethics, Ṭīlak based himself primarily on the best known Sanskrit work, the Bhagavadgītā. But the Gītā had been subjected to many interpretations over the centuries, some of which did not lend themselves very well to an activist interpretation. So it was the more activist interpretation of the Marāṭhā tradition which became the more immediate support for his interpretation of the Gītā.

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<sup>164</sup>B. D. Kher, op. cit., p. nine (of introduction).

<sup>165</sup>G. P. Pradhan, Lokamānya Ṭīlak Vyakti v Kārya, (Pune: Kesari Prakāśan, 1971), p. 2.

<sup>166</sup>S. A. Wolpert, op. cit., pp. 64f, 125, considered Ṭīlak's The Orion or Research into the Antiquity of the Vedas as a nationalist literature. N. C. Kelkar, Life and Times of Ṭīlak, I, 468f., considered the Orion... and The Arctic Home in the Vedas to be the nationalist literature.

(2) Stages of Writing the Gītārahasya-

The Gītārahasya is regarded in Marāṭhī literature as an epoch making book.<sup>167</sup> In the preface of the Gītārahasya, Ṭīlak mentioned the various stages he went through in preparing to write the Gītārahasya. Ṭīlak was first asked to read out a commenatry on the Gītā to his father during his last illness in A. D. 1872. His liking for the Gītā was the reason of his regular reading of Saṅskṛt commentaries, and of criticisms and expositions by scholars in English and Marāṭhī. He became unclear about the import of the Gītā as the commentators tended to say that the Gītā teaches either jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the way of liberation instead of karmayoga. He was dissatisfied with the solutions given by the commentators and he set them aside and independently read the Gītā several times. He was then convinced that the Gītā teaches karmayoga and not renunciatory philosophy (nivṛttimārga). His conviction was strengthened by the study of the Mahābhārata, the Vedānta Sutras, the Upaniṣads, and Saṅskṛt and English books on the vedānta. He had to study again the commentaries with a view to find out the reasons why he could not accept their opinions. He wrote the first draft of his commentary on the Gītā in the Mandalay jail in the winter of A. D. 1910-1911, the draft was revised several times, and the work was completed after his

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<sup>167</sup>N. R. Phatak, Lokamānya, (Bombay: Mauj Prakāśan Gṛh, 1972), p. 363; Sri Aurobindo, op. cit., pp. 17f.

release.<sup>168</sup> The work was first published in June 1915.

(3) Indebtedness of the Gītārahasya-

Ṭīlak, in the preface, has acknowledged his indebtedness to the ancient and modern commentators on the Gītā, to western scholars, to the Marāṭhā saints, and to others.<sup>169</sup> This indebtedness implies their influence on Ṭīlak's Gītārahasya. Ṭīlak specially acknowledged the influence of Spencer when he wrote in Spencer's memoir, in A. D. 1903, as follows:

We have never before attempted to write the philosophy of Vedānta or Sāṅkhya from [the] practical point of view (in accordance with [the] Ethics of Spencer). [The] Bhagavadgītā is [the] only... exception. But Vedantins have distorted this book which is uniquely practical. If we want to advance in a new direction, as [... ] in Spencer's book, we should think of the liberated philosophers not sitting idle. The duty of the philosophers to reflect upon these incomprehensible principles is as important as is their duty to demonstrate how these principles can be applied to everyday life and to advise as to how perfection of the human race can be achieved.<sup>170</sup>

Similarly, Ṭīlak acknowledged the influence of T. H. Green, in his letter dated 2 March 1911, from the Mandalay jail:

For my view of Gītā is that it is a work on ethics- not utilitarian, nor intuitional- but transcendental,

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<sup>168</sup> GR. pp. 10f (M); pp. xvii-xix (E).

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., pp. 16f (M); pp. xxvii-xxix (E).

<sup>170</sup> The Kesari, 15 Dec. 1903, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak: Samāj v Saṅskṛti, V, 949; quoted by G. V. Ketkar, Lokamānyāncī Bhāṣāsailī, (Pune: Ṭīlak Mahārāṣṭra Vidyāpīṭh, 1962), p. 123; GR. pp. 58, 70, 82, 137, 191 (M).

somewhat on the lines followed in Green's Prologue to Ethics.<sup>171</sup>

Ṭīlak also referred to the works of Kant, Butler, Mill, Hume, and Sidgwick.

Secondly, Ṭīlak was influenced by various commentators on the Gītā, both ancient and modern commentators. He mentioned, for instance, Śaṅkarācārya, Brooks, and S. Rādhākṛiṣhaṇ.<sup>172</sup>

Thirdly, Ṭīlak acknowledges the influence of the religious tradition of Mahārāṣṭra by putting a poem of Tukārām at the beginning of the preface. Our thesis is intended to investigate the influence of the prominent Marāṭhā saints, namely, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās on the Gītārahasya.

F) The Hypothesis:

(1) The Literary Evidence for the Hypothesis-

Our hypothesis is that the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical dimensions of the thoughts of some prominent saints of Mahārāṣṭra namely, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās, influenced the Gītārahasya. The literary evidence for the hypothesis is that Ṭīlak cites and refers to the works of the prominent saints in the Gītārahasya. He often quotes from the Jñāneśvari, the commentary of Jñāneśvar on the Gītā, the

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<sup>171</sup>Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak: Towards Independence, VII, 769; cf. GR. p. 17 (M) preface; quoted by D. V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 204.

<sup>172</sup>GR. pp. 16f (M); pp. xxviff (E).

abhaṅgs of Tukārām, and the Dāsboḍh, and occasionally refers to the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra in general, in order to support his interpretation of the Gītā. Tīlak directly quotes from the Jñāneśvari three times (pp. 225, 292 (M));<sup>173</sup> he directly quotes the abhaṅgs of Tukārām more than twenty times (pp. 73, 77, 96, 208, 209, 223, 252, 300, 346, 387, 389, 390, 391, 294, 397, 398 (M));<sup>174</sup> and he quotes from the Dāsboḍh more than ten times (pp. 38, 130, 143, 165, 288, 340, 348, 352, 381, 394, 395 (M)).<sup>175</sup> In the course of different arguments he refers to Jñāneśvar three times (pp. 151, 356, 451 (M)),<sup>176</sup> Tukārām five times (pp. 16, 210, 223, 225, 391 (M)),<sup>177</sup> Rāmdās seven times (pp. 92, 252, 274, 340, 358, 359, 451 (M)),<sup>177</sup> and the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra in general six times (pp. 16, 206, 352, 397, 688, 785 (M)).<sup>178</sup> This evidence

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<sup>173</sup>GR. pp. 345, 449 (E).

<sup>174</sup>Ibid., pp. 110, 115, 144, 318, 320, 343, 388, 461, 534, 598, 600, 601, 602, 606, 615, 617 (E).

<sup>175</sup>Ibid., pp. 57, 197, 216, 251f., 443, 524, 536, 543, 588, 611, 612 (E).

<sup>176</sup>Ibid., pp. 229, 549, 705f. (E).

<sup>177</sup>Ibid., pp. 25, 321, 343, 346, 605 (E).

<sup>178</sup>Ibid., pp. 25, 315, 543, 615, 1060, 1198 (E).

clearly indicates that in some degree the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra explicitly influenced Ṭīlak or at least that Ṭīlak thought of himself as agreeing with the teaching of the saints.

(2) Scholars Suggesting the Possibility of the Hypothesis-

Among the scholars who have indicated the influence of the Marāṭhā saints on the Gītārahasya is J. F. Edwards who saw a parallel between the Gītārahasya and the Jñāneśvari and suggested the possibility of the influence of the Jñāneśvari on the Gītārahasya:

His [Ṭīlak'] greatest claim on the affection of religiously minded India is his acknowledged success in expounding and applying to modern condition the message of the Bhagavadgītā, the message of Dnyaneshwar first put into Marathī in his Dnyaneshwari.

179

D. Mackenzie Brown elaborated J. F. Edwards' point and argued that there was a definite influence of the Jñāneśvari on the Gītārahasya and even referred to certain passages in the Gītārahasya:

Ṭīlak's interpretation of the Gītā is consistent with a lifetime of thought and action. As a student and admirer of the thirteenth-century Marāṭhā philosopher, Jñānadeva, he had a familiar precedent for attacking the quietism and renunciation of Śaṅkara. In a renowned commentary on the Gītā, and in his Amṛtānubhava, Jñānadeva rejects Śaṅkara's concept of the illusory and meaningless world and describes the material universe and man as 'natural expression of Reality'. Even the jīvanmukti, or liberated soul [sic] of Śaṅkara and the Vedantists fail to achieve the bliss of Jñānadeva's devotee living in the material world.

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<sup>179</sup> J. F. Edwards, op. cit., p. 306.

Tilak, in the Rahasya, cites Jñānadeva's description of the devotee (I, 345-346).

180

S. A. Wolpert concurred with the opinion of J. F. Edwards and argued that he, too, thought the activist interpretation of the Jñāneśvari had influenced the Gītārahasya.<sup>181</sup>

Though D. Mackenzie Brown pointed out a similarity between the Jñāneśvari and the Gītārahasya, he indicated a difference between them and emphasized the uniqueness of the Gītārahasya:

In rejecting the renunciatory elements of Śaṅkara's teaching and in appealing to the Marāṭhā masses in their native tongue, both Dnyanadeva and Ṭilak had a common approach, although the latter's emphasis was on a social action for public welfare rather than devotive action for individual salvation.

182

R. I. Cashman seemed to agree with the opinion of Brown as he added:

Although a political activist, Ṭilak admired the commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā produced by the thirteenth century saint Jñāneshwar. This work represented an attack on the renunciatory philosophy of Śaṅkara, for Jñāneshwar believed the material world and man to be 'a natural expression of Reality'. But, true to the Vaishnava bhakti tradition, Jñāneshwar's emphasis was on individual sālvation through devotional action, whereas Ṭilak preferred

<sup>180</sup>D. Mackenzie Brown, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>181</sup>S. A. Wolpert, op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>182</sup>D. Mackenzie Brown, op. cit., p. 204.

'social action for public welfare'.

183

M. R. Lederle explicitly stated Tīlak's dependence on the tradition of Mahārāṣṭra in general and on the Jñāneśvari in particular, when he said:

When Tīlak sought a basis for his ethics, he found a model in the tradition of Mahārāṣṭra. He gives us a clue that he knew of this tradition. He explained that the final ethical stage could be described by the words aham brahmāsmi, and concluded that to attain the true knowledge of Parameśvara means to realise the identity of the Brahman and the ātman and to understand that there is only one ātman in all created beings. To behave accordingly is the climax of spiritual knowledge. He, then quoted Jñāneśvara:

Who does not know mine or thine, like the all-pervading sentience, will not bear hatred towards any living being. The earth does not sustain only the good and reject the bad. Life, full of mercy, does not activate only the body of the king, and avoid the poor man. Water does not think of quenching the thirst of the cow, and turning itself into poison in order to kill the tiger. In the same way acts one who befriends the entire realm of living beings evenly. In his forgiveness he is like the earth. He does not know the words 'I' and 'thou', He does not claim anything as 'mine'. He does not feel joy or sorrow.

184

In short, scholars have suggested the possibility of the Jñāneśvari influencing the Gītārahasya, but they have not dealt with the issue in detail.

Scholars have also suggested the possibility of some

<sup>183</sup>R. I. Cashman, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>184</sup>M. R. Lederle, Philosophical Trends in Modern Mahārāṣṭra, (Bombay: Popular Prakāshan, 1976), p. 263.



influence of Tukārām on the Gītārahasya. V. G. Bhat referred to two verses of Tukārām which he thought may have influenced Ṭīlak and the Gītārahasya. One of these verses is, "He, who owns as his own the distressed and the harassed, should be known as a saint and the abode of God".<sup>185</sup> Ṭīlak quoted the verse in the Gītārahasya.<sup>186</sup> D. Mackenzie Brown also pointed out the influence of Tukārām on the Gītārahasya:

He [Ṭīlak] also refers to the Marāṭhā poet Tukārām, who was deeply influenced by Jñānadeva. He describes Tukārām as one of those who (in contrast to the renunciatory philosophers) inherited and carried on the true science of spiritual knowledge in an unbroken line from the time of the Upaniṣads (I, 346).

187

Among the Marāṭhā saints, Tukārām is quoted most often by Ṭīlak, but scholars have not paid much attention to this fact and have not tried to explore in any depth the influence of Tukārām on the Gītārahasya.

The last prominent saint of the Marāṭhā Bhāgavat Dharma is Rāmdās who has influenced the Gītārahasya to a remarkable extent. D. P. Karmar emphasized the influence of Rāmdās on Ṭīlak's patriotism, when he quoted a part of Ṭīlak's speech on the life of Rāmdās:

<sup>185</sup>V. G. Bhat, op. cit., p. 90.

<sup>186</sup>GR. pp. 300, 393 (M); pp. 461, 609 (E).

<sup>187</sup>D. Mackenzie Brown, op. cit., pp. 203f.

Therefore have faith, make your mind strong, have faith in religion and God. Religion and practical life are not different. To take to saṁnyāsa is not to abandon life. The real spirit is to make the country your family instead of working only for your own. To step beyond is to serve humanity and the next is to serve God.

188

S. L. Karandikar also referred to Tīlak's speech on Rāmdās,<sup>189</sup> but he did so in reference to Tīlak's patriotic philosophy in general and not in reference to the influence of Rāmdās on the Gītārahasya.

Other scholars, however, have indicated a possibility of the influence of Rāmdās on the Gītārahasya. G. P. Pradhān mentioned that Tīlak had gradually become convinced of the idea that the spiritual goal (paramārtha) could be achieved through doing this-worldly duties (aihika niṣṭha), a point emphasized by Tīlak in the Gītārahasya. According to Pradhān, Tīlak had read the works of Rāmdās earlier, but it was, while he was reading Western philosophy, that he understood the activist (prayrttipara) teaching of Rāmdās in a unique way. D. Keer stated the relationship more clearly than Pradhān did:

It seems that Tīlak was much influenced by the 'Dāsboḍh' of Rāmdās. It is the essence of the 'Gītārahasya' that a jñāni / i. e. a mystic or a

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<sup>188</sup>D. P. Karmarkar, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>189</sup>S. L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 283.

knower of spirituality 7 should keep followers or collect people (lakasaṅgrah karāvā) for the wellbeing of people and man should do his duty disinterestedly. 190

M. R. Lederle, too, emphasized Ṭīlak's debt to the Dāsboḍh:

Ṭīlak does not sufficiently distinguish between conclusions drawn from mythology, and those from natural sciences or philosophy. The eight million four hundred thousand species of living beings mentioned in the Dāsboḍha of Rāmdāsa are brought into connection with the number of generations required for the evolution of life from the first living cell to the highly developed organisms... (Dāsboḍha 13.3.14. cf. GR, pp. 181-82 (M); pp. 252-53 (E)).

191

In short, scholars have suggested the possibility of the influence of Rāmdās on the Gītārahasya, but they have not studied in detail the nature and the extent of that influence.

From this review of what has been said by previous scholars about the influence of the prominent Marāṭhā saints of the Bhāgavat Dharma on the Gītārahasya, we can briefly conclude that none of the scholars have studied and demonstrated in detail the nature and the extent of the influence of the Bhāgavat Dharma or the teaching of the prominent saints of Mahārāṣṭra on the Gītārahasya. This is the gap in the scholarship on Ṭīlak, which needs to be filled. Our thesis, therefore, will be a first detailed study of the influence of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra on the Gītārahasya. In other

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<sup>190</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭīlak Rājarsi Śāhu Mahārāj: Ek Mulyamāpan, p. 26.

<sup>191</sup>M. R. Lederle, op. cit., p. 247.

words, this thesis, as stated in the beginning of the chapter, will be an investigation of the hypothesis that the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical dimensions of the thought of the prominent saints of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra have influenced and shaped the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical thought of the Gītārahasya.

G) Scope and Limitations of the Thesis:

Our hypothesis has to be argued in terms of the major concerns which Tilak seems to have shared with the prominent Marāṭhā saints. They defined their position over against traditional orthodoxy and the traditional social order. They also expounded advaita (i.e. non-dualism) philosophy and emphasized that a liberated person (or saint) should not withdraw from society but should discharge his duties (dharma) disinterestedly. Tilak, being a nationalist, defended the traditions of Hinduism, its values, and principles of its social order. He argued that the Gītā teaches advaita philosophy.<sup>192</sup> He added that the jñāni or the sthitaprajña of the Gītā continues to do his duties (dharma) disinterestedly, even after release (mokṣa).<sup>193</sup> Tilak has argued his religious, social, philosophical, and ethical ideas on the basis of and with reference to the Marāṭhā saints. Because of the dimensions

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<sup>192</sup>GR. p. 212 (M); pp. 324f. (E).

<sup>193</sup>Ibid., pp. 275, 740 (M); pp. 423, 1133 (E).

of the thought of the saints and of Ṭīlak, our thesis has to be divided into two sections, namely (i) religious and social dimensions, (ii) philosophical and ethical dimensions. These sections will be further divided into chapters. The first section will be divided into two chapters, one dealing with the problem of orthodoxy and another dealing with the problem of social order. Similarly, the second section will be divided into two chapters, one dealing with the problem of advaita and another dealing with the problem of saintly action.

Our investigation will be limited to the major works of the prominent Marāṭhā saints. Ṭīlak has directly quoted the Jñāneśvari, Abhaṅgs (or Gāthā) of Tukārām, and the Dāsboḍh. In addition to these works, we shall refer to Jñāneśvar's Anubhavāmṛta, Cāṅgadev Pāsaṣṭhi, Haripāṭh, and Abhaṅgs, and Rāmdās' Ekavis Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsboḍh, Manāce Ślok, and Abhaṅgs.

PART ONE

THE LOKAMĀNYA B. G. ṬĪĻAK'S THOUGHTS  
ABOUT ORTHODOXY AND SOCIAL ORDER

## CHAPTER II

### THE PROBLEM OF ORTHODOXY

In the first part of the thesis, which consists of two chapters, we shall attempt to demonstrate the nature and the extent of the influence of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra on the religious and social aspects of the philosophy of the Gītārahasya. In the first chapter, we will concentrate on the problem concerning the influence of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra on Ṭīlak's religious philosophy. The term "religious" in this context is to be understood as meaning his approach to "tradition" or to the authority of that which was generally considered to be "orthodox". In other words, we will deal with the problems (i) of defining Hindu orthodoxy, (ii) of how the Marāṭhā saints, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās, responded to the traditional Hinduism, and (iii) of the influence of the Marāṭhā saints on Ṭīlak's working out of his position regarding orthodoxy.

#### A) Hindu Orthodoxy:

As Hindu orthodoxy is not officially defined by any institutional structure, its definition presents problems and different aspects can be emphasized. A.N. Deśpāṇḍe, a noted Marāṭhā scholar, has offered a workable definition of

orthodoxy by suggesting that there are five features or facets (sāpekṣatās) that taken together seem to point to the central features of orthodox Hinduism. Deśpāṇḍe delineates the five features of Hindu orthodoxy namely, Vedasāpekṣatā, Yajñasāpekṣatā, Brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā, Āryasāpekṣatā, and Saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā.<sup>1</sup> We will take this scheme of Deśpāṇḍe as our starting point. Let us first briefly explain each of these five facets.

(1) The Vedasāpekṣatā

The first and most fundamental facet of Hindu orthodoxy is vedasāpekṣatā. The Vedas are the oldest and most sacred scriptures of Hinduism. The term 'Veda' comes from the root 'vid' meaning 'to know', therefore Veda means the 'knowledge' or 'wisdom' which was accumulated by the ancient ṛṣis (i.e. seers, mystics, philosophers). The Vedas are also called 'Śruti'. The term 'Śruti' comes from the root 'śru' meaning 'to hear', therefore Śruti means 'that which is heard' by the ṛṣis, or that which was revealed to the ṛṣis. The Vedas or Śruti came to be regarded as the revealed scriptures of Hinduism. As the Vedas had been generally revered as the revealed scriptures of Hinduism they were recognized as the final authority of Hindu orthodox philosophy and practice. The ultimate authority of the Vedas was recognized by the Dharmaśāstras (i.e.

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<sup>1</sup>A.N. Deśpāṇḍe, op. cit., I, 109.



religious code books) which serve as the actual sources of authority on specific matters concerning orthodoxy:

Now, therefore, we will declare the acts productive of merit which form part of the customs of daily life, as they have been settled by the agreement (of those who know the law). The authority (for those duties) is the agreement of those who know the law, (and the authorities for the latter are) the Vedas alone. 2

Or, "The Veda is the source of the sacred law, and the tradition and practice of those who know the Veda."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the Dharmaśāstras of Manu<sup>4</sup> and of Yajñavalkya<sup>5</sup> recognize the authority of the Vedas (vedo'khilo dharmamūlam, tr. the Vedas are the roots of all religious practices). P. V. Kane explains the position of the Dharmaśāstras regarding the Vedas as the final authority on religious matters and also answers the question as to why the Vedas be regarded as the final authority on dharma despite the fact that they do not contain formal rules on dharma, when he says:

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<sup>2</sup>Apastamba, Aphorisms on the Sacred Law of the Hindus, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Book of the East (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), I.1.1.1-2.

<sup>3</sup>Gautama, Institute of the Sacred Law, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Books of the East (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), I.1-2.

<sup>4</sup>The Manusmṛti with the Commentary of Manvarmuktavali of Kulluka, ed. Narayan Ram Acharya, (10th ed., Bombay: S. Pandurang, 1946), II.6.

<sup>5</sup>Yajñavalkya Smṛiti with the Commentary of Vijñāneśvara called the Mitākṣarā..., tr. S.C. Vidyarnava (Allahabad: The Panini Office, 1918), I.7.

The foregoing brief discussion will make it clear that the later rules, contained in the dharmasūtra and other works on dharmasāstra had their roots deep down in the most ancient Vedic tradition and that the authors of the dharmasāstras were quite justified in looking up to the Vedas as a source of dharma. But, as said above, the Vedas do not profess to be formal treatises on the various aspects of dharma; we have to turn to the Smritis for a formal and connected treatment of the topics of the dharmasāstras. 6

M.R. Gopalacharya,<sup>7</sup> V.G. Bijapurkar,<sup>8</sup> and others also come to the conclusion that the Vedas are the final authority determining the religious practices and beliefs of Hinduism.

## (2) The Yajñasāpekṣatā

As the Vedas are traditionally considered to be the final authority on Hindu religious practices, i.e. rites, ceremonies, and the ways of worship, Hindu rituals or karmakāṇḍa are traced back to the Vedas. The Vedic religion seems to be characterized by the worship of many gods such as Agni, Varuṇa, Indra, Uṣas, Āditi, etc., and by doing sacrifices to these gods. The Saṅskṛt 'yaj' which originally meant 'to worship' includes both the concept of praying and

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<sup>6</sup>P.V. Kane, History of Dharmasāstra (Ancient and Mediaeval Religious and Civil Law), I.7.

<sup>7</sup>M.R. Gopalacharya, The Heart of the Rigveda (Bombay: New Delhi: Samaiya Pub. Pvt. Ltd., 1971), pp. 1f.

<sup>8</sup>V.G. Bijapurkar, Riksangraha or a University Selection of Vedic Hymns with the Commentary of Sāyaṅhārya (Bombay: Tukaram Javaji, 1907), p. 1 (preface).

of offering or sacrificing.<sup>9</sup> Among the gods whom the Aryans worshipped and sacrificed to, Agni, the fire god, seems to be the most prominent because Agni-hymns stand at the beginning of each of the family-books (II-VII) and every book of the ten books (mandālas) of the Rgveda, except two, begins with a hymn to Agni.<sup>10</sup> Agni is honoured as the king of sacrificial rites<sup>11</sup> and is considered to be the mediator and messenger between gods and men,<sup>12</sup> or the divine priest.<sup>13</sup>

Sacrifices were offered to deities so that they might grant the wishes of their worshippers, such as a long life,<sup>14</sup> a happy life,<sup>15</sup> offspring,<sup>16</sup> etc. Thus there was a frank

<sup>9</sup>P.S. Deshmukh, The Origin and Development of Religion in Vedic Literature (London: New York: Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 130.

<sup>10</sup>H.D. Griswold, The Religion of the Rigveda (Delhi: Varanasi: Patna: Motilal Banarasidass, 1971), pp. 151, 164f.

<sup>11</sup>RV. VII.11.4; VIII.43.24; I.1.8; I.27.1, tr. R.T.H. Griffith (Banares: E.J. Lazarus & Co., 1926).

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., I.26.6; I.94.3; I.59.1; VII.11.1; X.80.4; IV.8.4; VII.5.1, etc.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., I.94.6; I.1.1, etc.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., VII.66.16; X.161.1.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., I.89.9.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., VII.57.6.

reciprocity between deities and worshippers.<sup>17</sup> This practice of sacrificing was developed into a complex ritual system when later on the emphasis was laid on correct performance or the mechanics of the sacrifice. The later collections (saṁhitās) and the Brāhmaṇas (books on sacrifices and rites) reflect this development.<sup>18</sup>

It is debatable whether the modern ritual of Hinduism which is prescribed in the Dharmasāstras, Purāṇas and Āgmas, is derived and developed directly from the Ṛgveda.<sup>19</sup> It seems, rather, that the modern ritual or karmakāṇḍa is the result of the fusion of two streams -- Ṛgvedic ritual and the Dravidian ritual. The Ṛgvedic ritual did, however, play some part in the formation of the complex modern ritual,<sup>20</sup> and the karmakanda of Hindu orthodoxy is certainly in some degree an extension of the Vedic yajñasāpekṣatā.

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<sup>17</sup>M. Bloomenfield, The Religion of the Veda, The Ancient Religion of India (from Rig-Veda to Upanishads) (New York: London: Putnam's Sons, 1908), p. 184; H.W. Wallis, The Cosmology of the Rigveda: an Essay (London: Williams & Norgate, 1887), pp. 6, 64f; P.S. Deshmukh, op. cit., p. 144.

<sup>18</sup>P.S. Deshmukh, op. cit., p. 133.

<sup>19</sup>J. Gonda, A History of Indian Literature: Vedic Literature (Saṁhitās and Brahmanas) (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975), I, 88, 84.

<sup>20</sup>H.D. Griswold, op. cit., pp. 336f.

(3) The Brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā

As the importance of the mechanics of the sacrifices was emphasized, the importance of the officiating priests who were Brāhmaṇas by varṇa was enhanced. The ritual or karmakāṇḍa was controlled by the Brāhmaṇas who were traditionally authorized to perform sacrifices:

The Brāhmaṇas (priests) are the guardians of this sacrifice; for guardians of the sacrifice, indeed, are those Brāhmaṇas who are versed in the sacred writ, because they spread it, they originate it; these he thereby propitiate; for this reason he says, the Brāhmaṇas are the guardians of the sacrifice. 21

The Dharmaśāstra writers defined orthodoxy primarily in terms of the rights of the Brāhmaṇas. Their attitude is characterized by Manu's famous phrase: "buddhimatsu narāh śreṣṭha nareṣu brāhmaṇāh smṛtāh" (tr. among the intelligent beings men are supreme and among human beings the Brāhmaṇas are supreme<sup>22</sup>).

The Brāhmaṇas were given exclusive authority to do the karmakāṇḍic rituals as well as to teach and interpret the scriptures. Teaching was their specific duty:

Let the three twice-born castes (varṇas) discharge their (prescribed) duties, study

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<sup>21</sup>The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, tr. J. Eggeling, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East (2nd ed., Delhi: Patna: Motilal Banarasidass, 1966), I.5.1.12.

<sup>22</sup>The Manusmṛti with The Commentary Manvarmuktavali of Kulluka, ed. Narayan Ram Acharya, i.96; ii.135.

(the Veda); but among them the Brāhmaṇa (alone) shall teach it, not the other two; this is an established rule [prabrūyādbrāhmaṇstēsām netarāviti niścayah]. 23

Teaching implies the authority to interpret the scriptures for in the Hindu scheme of things the remoteness and mystery associated with the Veda made interpretation very important to political, social, and religious rulings. The Brāhmaṇas were exclusively given these privileges. Recognizing and protecting the exclusive traditional rights of the Brāhmaṇas is construed as brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā.

#### (4) The Āryasāpekṣatā

The Brāhmaṇas played an important role in preserving the Vedas because they alone could do rituals, recite Vedic hymns, and teach the scriptures.<sup>24</sup> In thus preserving the Vedic tradition, they have preserved the religion and culture of the Āryans against the inroads of non-Āryan culture and religion. The Vedas were accessible only to men of the three higher varṇas who were thought to be Āryans, and others were prohibited from hearing the Vedas. According to Āpastamba, the study of the Vedas was allowed only to men of the higher

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<sup>23</sup>The Laws of Manu, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Books of the East (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), x.1, cf. x.76.

<sup>24</sup>L. Renou, The Destiny of the Veda in India (Delhi: Patna: Varanasi: Motilal Banarasiidass, 1965), p. 12.

varṇas (castes):

(For all these), excepting Śūdras and those who have committed bad actions, (are ordained) the initiation, the study of the Veda, and the kindling of the sacred fire. 25

The Dharmasāstras prescribe that Vedic teaching be kept secret from Śūdras, the fourth varṇa, the masses of society, and from women.<sup>26</sup> Even the recitation of the Vedas in their presence was prohibited.<sup>27</sup> This policy of preserving the Āryan religion and culture from the inroads of the non-Āryan people is construed as āryasāpekṣatā.

(5) The Saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā

The Vedas which are the final authority of Hindu beliefs and religious practices were composed in Saṅskṛt, the language of the Āryans. The Āryan priests (Brāhmaṇas) used to chant the Vedic mañtras (hymns) at the time of the Vedic sacrifices and rituals. Religious books were written

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<sup>25</sup> Apastamba, Aphorisms on the Sacred Law of the Hindus, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Books of the East, I.1.1.5.

<sup>26</sup> Baudhayana, Dharmaśāstra, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Books of the East (Delhi: Patna: Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1965), I.5.11.7.

<sup>27</sup> Vasishtha, Dharmaśāstra, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Books of the East (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1882), xviii, 12; The Institutes of Vishnu, ed. F. Max Müller, The Sacred Books of the East (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1880), xxx.14.

only in Saṅskṛt and religious discussions were conducted only in Saṅskṛt. Therefore, Saṅskṛt came to be regarded as the official medium of religious communication among Āryans. It was honoured as the language of the gods (devavāṇi). In order to retain Saṅskṛt as the exclusive medium of religious knowledge, the Brāhmaṇas were forbidden from learning any language spoken by non-Āryans or barbarians.<sup>28</sup> Retaining Saṅskṛt as the only medium of religious rites and communication is construed as the saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā.

These five facets (sāpekṣatās): Veda, Yajña, Brāhmaṇa, Ārya, and Saṅskṛt, which can comprehensively define the traditional orthodoxy of Hinduism, seem to be inter-related. The Vedas are the final authority of Hindu dogma and practice. The Vedic religion was centred around the performance of sacrifices and rites which were developed into a complex system of rituals or karmakāṇḍa. The priests (Brāhmaṇas) were exclusively authorized to perform sacrifices and to teach the scriptures, thereby the power and authority of the Brāhmaṇas was increased. The Āryans preserved their religion and culture by making the Brāhmaṇas their officiating priests and religious teachers, on the one hand, and by denying accessibility to the Vedas to non-Āryans and women, on the other hand. The Āryans preserved not only Vedic or

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<sup>28</sup> Vaśiṣhta, Dharmaśāstra, ed. F. Max Müller, vi.41.



Brāhmaṇic religion and culture but also preserved the Āryan language, Saṅskṛt, by making it the only medium of religious communication.

### B) The Marāṭhā Saints and Hindu Orthodoxy

Having briefly explained the five facets of orthodox Hinduism and their inter-relatedness we should proceed to examine how the Marāṭhā saints viewed these five facets of Hindu orthodoxy. Let us begin with the prominent saints of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, Jñāneśvar and Tukārām.

#### (1) Jñāneśvar and Hindu Orthodoxy

Jñāneśvar whose theology became the basis of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya generally accepted the authority of the Vedas but he took a critical look at the traditional practice of excluding Śūdras and women from studying and listening to the Vedas. He focused attention on the Gītā because the Gītā, he thought, opened the door of liberation (mokṣa) to all people including Śūdras and women, and in practice he seemed to ascribe more authority to the Gītā than to the Vedas. In his commentary on the Gītā, he says:

Śri Kṛṣṇa has thus revealed the philosophy of the Gītā (Gītāsāstra), which is the fundamental text (mūlasūtra) of the Vedas, and is holy because it is authoritative over all (sarvādhi-kāraikapavitra). If you ask [me] how I realized (bodhā āle) that the Gītā is the root (mūl) of the Vedas, I shall explain it to you in terms of a well established doctrine (upapatti). The Vedas were born out of the breath (niśvāsi) of [the Parabrahman]; [but] He, whose nature is truth (satyapratijñā), told [the philosophy of

the Gītā] by His own lips (svamūkhe). Therefore, it is appropriate to say that the Gītā is the root (mūlabhūt) of the Vedas. Moreover, there is another doctrine [in support of that proposition].... The three divisions (kāṇḍa-trayātmaku) of scriptural knowledge (sabdarāśī) [or the Vedas] are in the Gītā without division (aśekhu), even as trees are [potentially] in seeds. Therefore, I understand (game) and clearly recognize that the Gītā is the seed (bij) of the Vedas. 29

Jñāneśvar later on identified the Gītā with the Lord or the Parabrahma.<sup>30</sup> He thus heightened the importance of the Gītā.

The Gītā or the Bhagavadgītā is a part of the Mahābhārata which is included in the secondary tradition called Smṛti. The term Smṛti comes from the root 'smṛ' meaning 'to remember' or 'to reflect'. Smṛti therefore means the reflection on the revealed scriptures (Śruti) or the Vedas which are traditionally regarded, as we stated before, as the primary source of Hindu beliefs and practices. The Mahābhārata, which includes the Gītā, is a Smṛti text and is also called a fifth Veda.<sup>31</sup> This kind of respect to the Mahābhārata seems to be an effort to give that text an equal status with the four Vedas. We have above noted that Jñāneśvar gives the Bhagavadgītā a higher status than the Vedas.

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<sup>29</sup> Jñ. xviii.1426-1432.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., xviii.1684-1685.

<sup>31</sup> L. Renou, op. cit., p. 14.

Next to the vedasāpekṣatā comes the yajñasāpekṣatā or karmakāṇḍa. In the historical setting of the Marāṭhā saints, we have referred to Hemadri's encyclopaedic book called the Caturvargaciñtāmaṇi whose emphasis was on worship of various deities, of the manes, the daily and seasonal duties and penances for failure, and performance of all rites mentioned in the Gṛhyasūtras, the Kaplasūtras, Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, the Epics, and traditional usage. Jñāneśvar's reaction to this emphasis on ritual (karmakāṇḍa) was as follows:

Otherwise, O son of Pāṇḍu, if one's heart is not pure, his exterior actions are a caricature (vitāmbu) really. It is like a corpse adorned with ornaments, a donkey being washed in holy water, and a bitter pumpkin being smeared with jaggery. [It is like] tying a festoon (toran) on a deserted house, putting layers of food around the body of a hungry person, a widow putting red powder on [her forehead].... This is like a decorated fruit which has dung (śeṇ) within. So are external actions. A false thing (kuḍā) cannot be sold at a high price. A pitcher of liquor cannot be holy even though it is put in the holy Ganges. Therefore, there must be knowledge within; then external purity results from knowledge and actions. By what means can one attain that purity? Therefore, let the exterior part be purified (cāṅg) by action, and the filth (vaṅg) of the heart be removed by knowledge. Then the distinction between internal and external will disappear and purity will become unified (ek); then, finally purity becomes a whole. 32

In these verses, Jñāneśvar is sharply critical of the external karmakāṇḍa which is performed without internal purity or knowledge. He does not condemn ritual as such, but emphasizes inner purity and seeks to maintain a balance between inner purity and external or ritual purity.

Jñāneśvar's emphasis on inner purity and knowledge (of god) in the context of the traditional karmakāṇḍa seems to have some effect on his view of the brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā. His position seems to have not only weakened karmakāṇḍa but also weakened or lessened the authority of the Brāhmaṇas which had been enhanced primarily because only the Brāhmaṇas were authorized to do sacrifices and rituals.

The brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā was further weakened by Jñāneśvar's position about scriptural knowledge and about who is qualified to interpret the scriptures. Jñāneśvar considers scriptural knowledge as a necessity in the process of liberation:

Wind blows away clouds; without [such an action we cannot see the sun covered behind the clouds]; but that action does not create the sun. Do hands not take moss (bābulī) away from water? [Without such an action we cannot see the water that was covered under the moss;] but that action does not create the water. Similarly, the dirt of avidyā (metaphysical Ignorance) is an obstacle in realizing the Self; it (viz. the dirt of avidyā) is wiped out (lit. destroyed) by the study of the scriptures. The One [Self] is pure and I become illumined to myself. Therefore, all the scriptures are means (pātre) of destroying avidyā; Self-knowers (ātmabodhī) do not become liberated without studying the scriptures. 33

But Jñāneśvar distinguishes redemptive knowledge from the knowledge of the scriptures and the related sciences:

He is [expert] in discussing Smṛtis (traditions); he knows the secrets (daṅśu) of Gāruḍi vidyā (i.e. evil devising and scheming); he is sharp (prajñecā) in the Nighaṅṭū (i.e. dictionary of the Vedas). He is excellent (cokaḍā) in grammar and very proficient in inference. But he is ignorant (phuḍā) about the knowledge of the Self; [therefore] he is blind by birth....It is like a peacock whose feathers have eyes all over but none of those eyes have vision.... Similarly, O Arjuna, know that the knowledge of the scriptures is completely unauthoritative (apramāṇ) without Self-knowledge. 34

In these verses, Jñāneśvar says that one should have redemptive knowledge or Self-knowledge in order to interpret the scriptures more authoritatively and that verbal knowledge of the scriptures is not sufficient. This position of Jñāneśvar seems to suggest that Jñāneśvar questioned the traditional authority of the Brāhmaṇas to interpret the scriptures on the basis of their verbal knowledge alone.

As the Brāhmaṇas were exclusively authorized to teach and to interpret the scriptures, they took pride in the privilege, because of their monopoly. Jñāneśvar was critical of the pride of the learned on the one hand and he emphasized that redemptive knowledge is obtained by bhaktimārga, on the other hand:

It is a suprising matter about egoism (ahaṁkāra) that it does not pursue the ignorant closely but

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<sup>34</sup> Jñ., xiii.833-839.

it grasps the throat of the learned (viz. egoism makes the learned to speak egoistically) and puts them in many difficulties (saṅkaṭi). 35

Again,

O knower of secrets, this condition is otherwise called brahmatva (i.e. being or realizing Brahman). He who worships me attains this condition. My devotee in the world is commonly (puṣhatī) characterized by the sign (liṅgī) that he is with brahmata (i.e. liberated condition) as a devoted wife (pativrata) is with her husband. 35

While dealing with the vedasāpekṣatā, we have noted that Jñāneśvar gives a higher status to the Gītā than to the Vedas because it opened the door of liberation to all including Śūdras and women. Jñāneśvar makes this point clear in his commentary on the Gītā:

The great book of the Bhagavadgītā is thus the ocean of the entire Sāṅkhya philosophy. Know it in reality that this book is a distinctive (āgalā) Veda by its generosity (audārye). The Veda is originally rich [by knowledge] but no one is as miserly as it is for it can be heard by the three varṇas only. Women, Śūdras and other [human] beings have, [like the three varṇas,] to suffer the miseries of earthly existence. [But denying right to women, the Śūdras, etc., the Vedas] has created a difficult situation (anavasaru). Therefore, I think that in order to make good this defect and to be in service of anyone the Veda is embodied in the form of the Gītā. 37

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<sup>35</sup> Jñ. xiii.82.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., xiv.398-399.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., xviii.1456-1459.

In these verses, Jñāneśvar criticizes the Vedic or Brāhmaṇic stand concerning the āryasāpekṣatā viz. denying the Śūdras, women, and others the right to study and listen to the Vedas. He praised the Gītā for overcoming this defect and showing its generosity in serving all.

The last facet of Hindu orthodoxy was the saṅskṛta-sāpekṣatā. In discussing the historical setting of the Marāṭhā saints, we have referred to a few sectarian movements of Mahārāṣṭra: the Liṅgāyata Saṁpradāya, Nātha Saṁpradāya, Mahānubhāva Saṁpradāya, and the revived Brāhmaṇism or Hinduism. The Liṅgāyata Saṁpradāya challenged the saṅskṛta-sāpekṣatā by writing religious books in Kanarese. The Nātha Saṁpradāya encouraged the use of regional languages and produced religious literature in Marāṭhī, Hindi, Beṅgālī, Tāmil, and other languages. The Mahānubhāvas produced a large body of literature in Marāṭhī. While these sectarian movements were challenging saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā, Hemadri, Bopdev, and Vijñāneśvar were reviving Brāhmaṇism and were writing religious books, like the Caturvargacīntāmaṇi, in Saṅskṛt and thus were attempting to reinforce saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā. Jñāneśvar, who was initiated into the Nātha Saṁpradāya, followed the policy of his Saṁpradāya by writing his religious books in Marāṭhī,<sup>38</sup> the language of the people. He argued that it was necessary that the religious knowledge

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<sup>38</sup>G.D. Dhavle alias Jñānadevopāsak, op. cit., p. 4.

which was stored in Saṅskṛt be shared with others if people were to be enlightened:

I shall spread the knowledge of Brahman (brahma-vidyā) limitlessly (sukāḷ) in towns where Marāṭhī is spoken. Let this world receive and give the blessing of happiness (sukhaci varī). 39

In doing this Jñāneśvar was following the tradition of the Nātha Saṁpradāya and his teacher Nivṛttinath who rendered knowledge from Saṅskṛt into Marāṭhī.<sup>40</sup> Jñāneśvar himself admits that part of his reason for writing in Marāṭhī was aesthetic for he had confidence when expressing the ideas of the Saṅskṛt tradition in Marāṭhī:

My Marāṭhī tongue (bolu) is wonderful; it can certainly (paijā) excel [the taste] of nectar. I shall gather such savory (rasike) words (akṣare, lit. letters). 41

Elsewhere he justifies his writing a commentary on the Gītā (i.e. the Jñāneśvari) in Marāṭhī when he says:

Aruṅ resides near the sun; therefore he sees it. Can an ant on the earth not see the sun? Therefore, [it was possible to produce] the Gītā with a commentary in Marāṭhī (deśikāre) for us who are ordinary people (prākṛtā). There is no reason to consider our position as improper (anucitā). 42

<sup>39</sup> Jñ. xii.16.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., xi. 9f.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., vi. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., xviii. 1719-1720.



For these ostensible reasons, Jñāneśvar wrote the Jñāneśvari and other religious books in Marāṭhī and broke the traditional Brāhmaṇic practice of saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā.<sup>43</sup>

(2) Tukārām and Hindu Orthodoxy

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, generally accepts the authority of the Vedas and even took a stand against the critics of the Vedas when he said:

If a man destroys the source of milk, what will he gain by doing so? He who finds fault with the Vedas is low and sinful, a polluted wretch. If a man sets fire to his own house, where will he find a place to live in? Tukā declares the secret; the rest are led astray by error. 44

Again,

A reviler of the Vedas is not of a pure seed; know him for a low caste man. He who credits not the Vedas nor heeds the speech of the wise. Tukā says, his pleasant words are like sweet food with spirit, touch him not. 45

While Tukārām accepts the authority of the Vedas, he seems to hold that one should have access to an even higher authority for he warns an aspirant (mumuksū) to use his discretion and not to accept everything in the Vedas as authoritative, when he says: "If you seek salvation, first

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<sup>43</sup>N.C. Kelkar, Jñāneśvari-Sarvasva (Pune: Manohar Granthamālā, 1970), p. 202.

<sup>44</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 1063.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 1102.

sift the Vedas, discard those sayings in them which are fruitless."<sup>46</sup> The authority which is higher than the Vedas is God Himself, according to Tukārām when he says:

He is the essence (sār) of the scriptures and the embodiment (mūrti) of the Vedas; He is our companion (sāṅgātī) and bosom friend (prāṇasakhā). 47

Again,

The Vedas sing His praise; we have His company. His name is on our lips (kanthī); He is completely stored in [our] hearts (lit., stomach). 48

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, is sharply critical of the external karmakāṇḍa and he emphasizes purity of heart and virtuous conduct when he says:

What have you done by visiting holy places? You have merely washed your skin. Is your heart purified by it? You have secured for yourself worldly distinction (bhūṣaṇ). Even though a fruit of colocynth (vr̥ṇḍāvan) is marinated with sugar, its internal essence (thārā) or bitterness does not change. Tukārām says, "While you have no peace, forgiveness, and compassion [within], you sob (phuṇḍā)". (In other words, external bathing in holy waters is in vain, if there are no good qualities in the heart). 49

Again,

Does a snake not give up food? Does a heron not contemplate? [But] their internal mind (buddhi)

<sup>46</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 507.

<sup>47</sup>Sri Tukārām Mahārājāñce Abhaṅg, Śri Sakal Saṅt Gāthā, 3334.1.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 1924.1-2.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 1750.

is deceptive (khōṭī); their heart (pot, lit. stomach) is filled with evil. Does a rat not abide in a hole? Does a donkey not smear (his body) with ashes? Does a crocodile not stay in water? Does a crow not bathe? says Tukārām. 50

Tukārām is also critical of the traditional means of karmakāṇḍa and considers the bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya superior to traditional karmakāṇḍa, as he says:

Let the birth (jyālepaṅ) of a man be accursed, who had visited a million holy places and has not visited Paṇḍharpur, and has not seen the even feet (samacaran) of [Viṭṭhobā]. He has done innumerable things such as practising yoga and doing sacrifices; but as he has not seen the feet of Viṭṭhobā, he has not obtained the merit of visiting innumerable holy places. 51

Tukārām's position about the karmakāṇḍa seems to have lessened the necessity of karmakāṇḍa and in turn weakened the authority of the Brāhmaṇas or the brāhmaṇa-sāpekṣatā. The brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā was further weakened by Tukārām's position about the scriptural knowledge as a necessity of liberation and about who is qualified to interpret the scriptures. Tukārām, unlike Jñāneśvar, does not see the necessity of scriptural knowledge in the process of liberation:

What avails me the dry knowledge of Brahma? It is a measure filled with nothing but illusion. Something wherein thou art not. That is not my

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<sup>50</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg, Śri Sakal Saṅt Gāthā, 1971.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 324.

soul's desire; give me a vision of thy feet, says  
Tukā. 52

Or,

Listen, O pious ones, whoever you may be, cast  
aside association with philosophers and worship  
Pāṇḍuraṅg, seek not the many opinions of men, they  
will drown you certainly. 53

Tukārām who advocates bhaktimārga considers the  
scriptural knowledge without faith (bhāv) to be a useless  
thing:

While the heart is not pure, rote knowledge (pāṭhāntar)  
acquired to the fullest extent (bharovarī), is in  
vain. Does a horse not carry a heavy burden? Similar  
is rote knowledge, if it is acquired without faith. 54

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, distinguishes direct  
redemptive knowledge from scriptural knowledge when he says:

The knowledge of Brahman (brahmajñāna) cannot be  
proved (or established or realized) by talking  
about it; it is not realized unless one has  
experienced it (in himself (citti)). What will this  
vain, unfounded (laṭikāci) tall talk (pālhāl) do?  
This is just a labour of knowing [the scriptures]  
(jānivecā śram). Having given up the happiness of  
sense-objects, you tell the people that you are god.  
You talk about the taste of nectar to your audience  
but you are dying of starvation. 55

<sup>52</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe,  
1626 cf. 453.

<sup>53</sup>Mahipati, Bhaktalilāmrit chs 25-40: Tukārāma, tr.  
J.E. Abbot, xi. 144.1-3.

<sup>54</sup>Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg, Śri Sakal Saṅt Gāthā,  
1124.2-3, cf. 1561.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 1813.1-4.

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, holds that religious experience or Self-knowledge is necessary in the interpretation of scriptures when he says:

Only we know the meaning of the Vedas; others do not know the meaning of the Vedas (lit., others carry the burden of the Vedas on their heads as coolies do). The relish which one gets out of eating food cannot be regarded as equal with just seeing that food; [in other words, we have tasted the food but others have only seen the food], (lit., others carry the burden of food for wages).... Tukārām says, 'We have found the root, (therefore,) the fruit has come into our hands naturally. 56

Again,

[with our own efforts] we will milk the white cow of Vedic truth; we will wrestle with the Vedas ourselves.... 57

These two poems clearly imply that according to Tukārām, a direct spiritual experience is a better guide to interpret the scriptures than the traditional scholastic method. This position of Tukārām that the immediate experience of God is the highest authority directly undercuts the exclusive right of the Brāhmaṇas to interpret the scriptures.

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, is critical of the Brāhmaṇas' pride in knowledge when he says:

You may treat me, O God, as you will, but I will not call these men saints; for they have set their hearts on rule and wealth. Their desires have

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<sup>56</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg, Śri Sakal Saṅt Gāthā, 2180.

<sup>57</sup> The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 1266.

made them victims of hypocrisy. Though they be Brāhmanas, I shall hold them none such. They bear knowledge blindly as a burden. Tukā says, I shall not fear mankind in the persons of such men, though I suffer for it. 58

Again,

Weighed down by pride of knowledge, you are drowning in the gulf of the world; why will you not rise out of it? Tukā says, you will reach God by faith, through [the] effort to know him, you will not understand him. 59

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, not only distinguishes .. redemptive knowledge and scriptural knowledge but also holds that redemptive knowledge comes through bhaktimārga:

Truly, God dwells in all souls, yet none can be saved without seeing that other one. Truly, knowledge dwells in all men, yet without devotion it does not become Brahma. What would be the good of practising postures, though they had been explained to you and you had learned them, unless the light of emancipation was kindled within you? 60

Again,

If God shows me any favour, then the knowledge I receive will be Brahma itself. There will be no need to bring anything from anywhere, or to go anywhere to get salvation. 61

While dealing with the vedasāpekṣatā, we have noted that Tukārām gives less importance to the Vedas than to the

<sup>58</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 1192.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 505 cf 555, 1013.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 2080.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 3219 cf. 2080.

God who is the source of the Vedas. He seems to view the vedasāpekṣatā together with the āryasāpekṣatā, as Jñāneśvar does, when he says: "The Vedas left us in anger (rusoniyā gelā); but their author (lit. father) is in our hearts (kaṇṭhī)".<sup>62</sup> Tukārām seems to have reacted against the āryasāpekṣatā as he, being a Śūdra, was prohibited from reading and listening to the Vedas. However, this prohibition did not hinder his own spiritual quest, as he said:

We have been barred access to the Vedas, but our inner spirit urges us to seek ceaselessly the core of Vedic philosophy. 63

Thus in his view, it was not absolutely necessary to have access to the Vedas in order to be liberated because God, the source of the Vedas, was with him and it is He who grants liberation to all including Śūdras, women and others.<sup>64</sup>

The last facet of Hindu orthodoxy was the saṅskṛta-sāpekṣatā. We have noted that Jñāneśvar wrote religious books in Marāṭhī in order to impart the knowledge stored in Saṅskṛt books. It seems that he made Marāṭhī the medium of religious communication as far as the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya was concerned. The majority of the Vārkarī saints were

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<sup>62</sup>Quoted by S.G. Tulpule, op. cit., p. 361.

<sup>63</sup>Tukārām Gāthā 1316, quoted by G.B. Sardar, The Saints-Poets of Mahārāshtra: Their Impact on Society, tr. K. Mehata p. 119.

<sup>64</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, 689.

from the masses and they wrote their books in Marāṭhī. Marāṭhī thus became an official medium of religious communication. Tukārām, concerning whom we said in the historical setting that his sources of religious knowledge were the Marāṭhī works of Jñāneśvar, Eknāth, and others, of course, wrote his poems in Marāṭhī. Even though he does not justify the use of Marāṭhī over against Saṅskṛt, he holds his mission to be like that of Jñāneśvar to enlighten the masses by explaining Hindu scriptures:

The ancient things (purānas) have lost their meaning; verbal knowledge (sabdajñāna) (or idle skill in words) has destroyed [their meaning]; men's minds are greedy of pleasure; the way of liberation is spoiled. We shall loudly proclaim the name of god and terrify the evil. Tukārām says, 'Raise a joyful shout of victory'. 65

In the above poem, Tukārām wants to explain traditional knowledge which had been beset with irrelevant things (āḍarāne) and overshadowed by verbal knowledge (sabdajñāna).

### (3) Rāmdās and Hindu Orthodoxy

Having thus reviewed how the Vārkarī saints responded to the five facets of Hindu orthodoxy, let us proceed to examine how Rāmdās responded to Hindu orthodoxy. Rāmdās not only accepts the authority of the Vedas as the Vārkarī saints do but also argues in favour of re-affirming it:

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<sup>65</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg, Śri Sakal Saṅt Gāthā, 236.3-4, cf. 119, 334.



The Vedas have power to save people. If the Vedas had no power [to save the people] who would have cared for the Vedas? He who has access to the Vedas (vedākṣare) has been regarded as righteous (punyarāsī). Are the Vedas, therefore, lacking power [to save all]? 66

Rāmdās thus re-affirms Vedic authority on the one hand and acknowledges the limitation of the Vedas as far as revelation of God through bhaktimārga is concerned:

The Vedas have illumined (prakāśile) all knowledge and there is no knowledge outside of the Vedas. [However,] the Vedas cannot show one substance (vastu) which one can know [only] by his own experience (svānubhava) in the company of saints (sāntasāṅge). Who can tell His greatness (mahimā) in words (vacani)? Māyā is wonderful but it cannot introduce that Thing. The saints tell the means (soy) to know the Infinite (anant) who is beyond Māyā. 67

In these verses, Rāmdās seems to ascribe more importance to the company of saints (or the bhaktimārga) than to the Vedas as far as the revelation of God (Vastu) is concerned.

Rāmdās, unlike the Vārkarī saints, encourages traditional rites and other religious practices when he says:

Because of our laziness (cukurpane), we should not give up ritualistic bathing and worship (snānasāṅdhya), and break the family-practices (kulācār). Because of the pressure of domestic life (prapañcabale), we should not neglect listening to stories of Hari (god), and fail to

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<sup>66</sup> Dās. 7.vi.29-30.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 1.v.12-13.

attend the exhortations (nirūpaṇ), or disrupt our spiritual life (paramārtha). 68

Rāmdās classifies the rite, performed without a selfish motive, as the sāttvik (i.e. good) duties<sup>69</sup> and regards a non-observer of karmakāṇḍa as an educated fool (paḍhata-mūrkhā).<sup>70</sup> He has emphasized the necessity of performing the rituals. This is a major concern in Rāmdās' works. However, he also shares a few ideas with the Vārkarī saints.

Rāmdās, like the Vārkarī saints, occasionally criticizes the mechanical or habitual performance of the karmakāṇḍa.<sup>71</sup> He also occasionally emphasizes the idea of purity of heart accompanied by rituals:

We should do ritualistic bathing, worship, meditation (jap), concentration (dhyān), going to holy places, and the worship of the Lord. (And thus) should maintain our holiness (pavitrāpaṇ) and keep our heart pure. 72

But he was not as critical of the karmakāṇḍa and as emphatic about purity of heart over against karmakāṇḍa, as the Vārkarī saints were. He did not advocate bhaktimārga as a substitute for karmakāṇḍa, as the Vārkarī saints did.

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<sup>68</sup> Dās. 2.ii.34-35.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 2.vii.17,36.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 2.x.24.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 18.x.26; GR. p. 588 (E).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 2.ix.20.

Though Rāmdās agrees with the Vārkarī saints on some points about the karmakāṇḍa, he is trying to revive the traditional karmakāṇḍa and thereby to reinstate the authority of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā) who were traditionally authorized to do rituals. Now let us see Rāmdās' position about scriptural knowledge with a view to examining whether it is similar to that of the Vārkarī saints and whether it intends to restore the exclusive preceptorship of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā).

Rāmdās, like the Vārkarī saints, distinguishes between scriptural knowledge and redemptive knowledge when he says:

Herein actual first-hand experience (pracit) is the authority (pramāṇ) and inference based on the scriptures is not needed. Or what is given in the scriptures should actually be experienced. Talk without direct experience (pracitīvīp) is entirely detestable (kaṅṭhālvāṇe); it is like a dog barking with a wide open mouth. What is there to listen to and to find out, as the talk is drearily empty (śūnyākār) as far as the actual first-hand experience is concerned. 73

Again,

Knowledge without first-hand experience is inference only; such knowledge cannot serve men as a means of attaining the other world (paratra). Therefore, experience is the major factor (mukhya); knowledge without experience is useless. Even though bookish knowledge (apāy) appears similar to knowledge based on experience, the wise distinguish them. 74

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<sup>73</sup>Dās. 9.v.14-16.

<sup>74</sup>Dās. 14.vii.18-19, cf. 12.vi.29-30.

Moreover, Rāmdās recognizes the limitations of trying to understand the divine mystery or God by intellect and logical reasoning. In another work he says:

He is infinite (or incomprehensible) (vād) even though we search many scriptures; He is not expressed by any statement (niścay) (viz. He is indescribable). Minds quarrel over controversies arising from trying to understand the scriptures; intellection (prabodhe) and comprehension by knowledge (jñānabodhe) fall short (of knowing Him). The revealed scriptures, Nyāya, philosophy, logic, traditions (Smṛti), Vedas, aphorisms of Vedānta philosophy, and various schools (cannot apprehend Him). Śeṣ (i.e. a thousand-headed snake) himself became silent and therefore sees steadily. (Therefore,) O mind, give up all knowledge (jānīv). 75

Rāmdās, like the Vārkarī saints, recognizes the necessity of having spiritual experience (pracit) to interpret the scriptures when he says:

Taking medicine without actual experience, following a diet (pathya) without experience; and imparting knowledge without the direct experience are all called delusion (bhram). 76

Rāmdās, like the Vārkarī saints, is critical of pride in scriptural knowledge and considers it a barrier to the spiritual life:

How can a man digest food, who has swallowed the fly (of pride) of knowledge (jānīv)? The stomach of man cannot digest knowledge-food, if its mental egoism (mānsicā ahambhāv) has not passed away (jirenā). 77

<sup>75</sup> Manāce Ślok 157-158.

<sup>76</sup> Dās. 10.vi.32.

<sup>77</sup> Manāce Ślok 159 cf. Dās. 14.i.47.

Or,

A person who is highly learned and is conversant with the scriptures (vyutpanna) and talks of the knowledge of Brahman (brahmajñāna) explicitly is an educated fool (paḍhatmūrkha) if he has evil desires and pride in himself. 78

Though Rāmdās does not explicitly say that redemptive knowledge comes from bhaktimārga as the Vārkarī saints have said, his stand on bhaktimārga as the only way of liberation implies a similar position because there is no liberation without redemptive knowledge. He propagates bhaktimārga as the way of liberation:

Man certainly reaches (pāvati) God by devotion alone (bhakticenayoge); this is the contention (abhiprāv) of the book (i.e. Dāsbodh). 79

He also, like the Vārkarī saints, considers bhaktimārga sufficient for liberation and says that other means are not required of a devotee:

Rāmdās says, "If you have faith in the name of God, you are not required to do rites (karma), religious duties (dharmā), yogic practices; (you are not required) to eat specific food (bhoga) or to renounce (something) (tyāga) or (to follow) the order (sāṅg) (of someone). You should meditate on the name of Rāma at dawn. 80

<sup>78</sup>Dās. 2.x.3.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 1.i.4.

<sup>80</sup>Manāce Ślok 76 cf. Dās. 4.iii.13-25.

Again,

Great faults go away by (the reciting of) His name;  
people are liberated by (the reciting of) His name. 81

Rāmdās thus agrees with the Vārkarī saints on many points but he differs from them when he tries to restore the traditional practice of allowing only the Brāhmaṇas to teach and to interpret the scriptures and blames the Śūdras for trying to assume the role of teachers:

As inferior men (prāṇī) have assumed preceptorship, religious practices have sunk and nobody cares for the teachings of the Vedas (vedaśāstra) and the Brāhmaṇas. Only the Brāhmaṇas are authorized (adhikāru) to reflect on the knowledge of Brahman (brahmajñāna, lit. studying the scriptures). "Varnānām brāhmaṇo guruḥ" (tr. the Brāhmaṇa is preceptor of (all) varṇas) is the authoritative saying (vacan) [of the scriptures]. The Brāhmaṇas have madly turned away (cevale) from intellectual pursuit (buddhi); they have given up their preceptorship and have become disciples of disciples... The degraded castes (nicayāti) have taken over the preceptorship and their greatness (mahaṅti) has been enhanced; the Śūdras are degrading the religious practices of the Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas do not realize this fact; they have not changed their behaviour (vṛtti); and they do not give up false pride in their own foolishness. 82

Rāmdās tries to restore the traditional preceptorship of the Brāhmaṇas on the basis of scripture. He also advises the people not to select preceptors from the lower castes:

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<sup>81</sup>Manāce Ślok 76 cf. Dās. 4.iii.13-25.

<sup>82</sup>Dās. 14.vii.29-35.

Selecting a preceptor of an inferior caste is in itself a degrading idea (kānkoṇḍā vicāru). The preceptor hides himself as a thief in an assembly of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmasabhā). In the presence of the assembly of the Brāhmaṇas, (a disciple) should not take holy water (tirtha) from the feet of such a preceptor or should not receive holy food (prasād) from him because the disciple will have to do atonement (prāyaścita). If the disciple does not receive tirtha and prasād from his preceptor, he exposes the inferiority of his preceptor and his devotion to his preceptor (gurubhakti) dies (saṭvali) immediately. If the disciple treats his preceptor with respect, the Brāhmaṇas certainly will become angry with him; and if the disciple respects the practice of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇya), his preceptor will become angry with him. As these are embarrassments (saṅkaḍi) on both sides, the disciple repents (for having selected a preceptor of inferior caste); for this reason, inferior castes are not given preceptorship. 83

Ramdas repeats the idea that one should not select a preceptor from the lower castes in another place in the Dāsboḍh,<sup>84</sup> and he reproduces the whole argument, quoted above, in another work.<sup>85</sup>

Rāmdās' brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā becomes very clear as he says:

Even though a Brāhmaṇa becomes void of duties (kriyāhīn) he remains the preceptor (guru) of all; (and) we should submit ourselves to him with special devotion. 86

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<sup>83</sup> Dās. 5.ii.58-62.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 2.iii.39.

<sup>85</sup> Ekavīs Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsboḍh v. 58-62.

<sup>86</sup> Dās. 5.i.6.

Rāmdās stands for the traditional practice of venerating the Brāhmanas not because they are Brāhmanas by merit (guṇas) but only because they are born in the Brāhmaṇa caste. He also asks the people to protect the brāhmaṇa-dharma (i.e. rights and privileges of the Brāhmanas) with respect and to continue their preceptorship with determination (nirdhāre).<sup>87</sup> He also stands for their social superiority,<sup>88</sup> a matter which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Rāmdās tries not only to restore the preceptorship of the Brāhmanas (brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā) but also tries to re-inforce the traditional limits of imparting religious knowledge in accordance with the Brāhmaṇic or Vedic imperative when he says:

He (a devotee of the Lord) protects all and imparts knowledge in such a way that the command of the Vedas is not disobeyed. He thus leads all people (prānimātra) by the good and right way. 89

Rāmdās' emphasis on the Vedic imperative implies the traditional exclusion of the Śūdras, women, and all others who are not qualified to study the Vedas or who are not regarded

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<sup>87</sup> Dās. 4.ii.20.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 2.iv.2; 5.i.6-18.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 4.ii.25.



as righteous (puṇyarāsi) to study the Vedas.<sup>90</sup> Rāmdās stands for the āryasāpekṣatā by re-inforcing the traditional policy of imparting religious knowledge only to the twice-born (dviyas) and of excluding the Śūdras and others from it.

The final sāpekṣatā is the saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā. Now, let us examine what Rāmdās thinks of the saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā. Rāmdās maintains the superiority of Saṅskṛt books over Prākṛt (i.e. Marāṭhī) books when he says:

Books in Saṅskṛt are superior to books in Marāṭhī. Books on the Vedānta are the best (thor) among the books in Saṅskṛt. 91

However, he does not really accept the saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā because he recognizes the importance of Marāṭhī as a medium of religious communication when he says:

The book which talks about non-dualism (advaita) should not be regarded as inferior (prākṛt), because its vedānta philosophy is true as far as its import (artha) is concerned. The vedānta philosophy which is found in all scriptures is understood in Marāṭhī (Prākṛt) and one gets satisfaction and becomes mature (nivāḷe) in his heart. The book which is a resource (upāy) of knowledge should not be regarded as inferior (prākṛt). Can a fool understand this? It is like a monkey understanding a coconut. Now, enough is said; one should understand it according to one's calibre (adhikārparatve). One should not say that pearls are inferior (une) because they come from shells. 92

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<sup>90</sup> Dās., 7.vi.30.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 5.vi.36.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 7.x.46-49.

Again,

Import is not lost a little because of another language (bhāṣāpālṭe); (because) all success or accomplishment (kāryasiddhi) depends on the import only. However, Saṅskṛt books have attained significance (sāṛthakatā) because of books in Marāṭhī (Prākṛt). Otherwise, who would know that secret import (guptārtha)? Now, this talk is enough. We should pick up the import and give up the language even as one takes the best and gives up peels and husks. 93

The aforestated argument is repeated by Rāmdās in another place, as follows:

The Marāṭhī language seems to you [Paṇḍits] to be inferior, but whether in Marāṭhī or Saṅskṛt the meaning is the same. If one reads the Purāṇas in Saṅskṛt, one has to explain the meaning in Marāṭhī, just as a king's glory is not manifested except through his subjects. "God created the Saṅskṛt language, and Marāṭhī originated from a thief", so the wise should not speak. 94

Even though Rāmdās initially recognized the superiority of Saṅskṛt over Marāṭhī, he justified the use of Marāṭhī in imparting religious knowledge, as the Vārkarī saints did.

At this stage, we can summarize how the Mārāṭha saints viewed the five facets (sāpekṣatās) of Hindu orthodoxy. First, they all accept Vedic authority in general. Jñāneśvar, however, departed from a narrow view of the Vedas by arguing that the Gītā contains the essence of the

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<sup>93</sup> Dās. 7.i.41-43.

<sup>94</sup> Mahipati, Saṅtavijaya-Rāmadās, tr. J.E. Abbot (Poona: The Poet Saints of Mahārāshtra Series, 1932), xiv.130ff.

Vedas and overcomes their defect. Tukārām also departed from the narrow view of the Vedas saying God is a higher authority than the Vedas. Rāmdās re-affirmed Vedic authority. Secondly, Jñāneśvar and Tukārām took a critical look at the traditional karmakāṇḍa and propagated bhaktimārga as a substitute for karmakāṇḍa; but Rāmdās tried to revive the traditional karmakāṇḍa. Thirdly, the Vārkarī saints tried to undercut the brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā but Rāmdās tried to restore it. Fourthly, the Vārkarī saints were critical of the traditional stand on excluding the Śūdras, women, and others from the study of the Vedas; but Rāmdās tried to re-affirm it. Finally, all the Marāṭhā saints stood for the use of Marāṭhī for imparting religious knowledge.

### C) The Lokamānya Ṭīlak as an Orthodox Hindu

Our thesis is that Ṭīlak's Gītārahasya followed to a substantial degree the Marāṭhā religious tradition in which he was raised and that in particular his thought was indebted to the saints of Mahārāṣṭra. Let us examine his view of orthodoxy and see to what extent it is indebted to his Marāṭhā heritage.

D.P. Karmarkar thought of Ṭīlak as an orthodox Hindu because of his life style:

Ṭīlak's way of life in college was of the orthodox type. He used to sit for meals with a silk

dhoti as was common amongst the orthodox and his outlook in social matters also was more conservative than liberal. 95

The Marāṭhā social reformers, R.G. Bhāṇḍārkar (A.D. 1837-1925), M.G. Rāṇḍe, Mr. Justice K.T. Telāṅg (A.D. 1850-1894), and G.G. Āgarkar (A.D. 1856-1915), labelled Ṭīlak orthodox on account of three major controversies they had with him. The reformers began to describe Ṭīlak as a 'champion of orthodoxy', a 'reactionary', and an 'enemy of progress'<sup>96</sup> when he criticized the 'Śārādā-Sadan' and its founder the Paṇḍitā Ramābāī (A.D. 1858-1922). Ramābāī founded the Sadan (i.e. home or an institute) in A.D. 1889 with the intention of taking care of 'destitute high-caste widows' and improving the social condition of 'fallen women'. Her work was admired by the reformers. But Ṭīlak was sceptical about the work of Ramābāī. He did not approve of the idea of a school run by a Christian lady for Hindu girls<sup>97</sup> for he suspected that the school might be used for gaining Christian converts. He drew attention to the report of the progress of the Sadan, published in the Christian Weekly (New York,

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<sup>95</sup> D.P. Karmarkar, op. cit., p. 5 cf. p. 11.

<sup>96</sup> D.V. Athalye, op. cit., p. 56; D.V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

December 1889) declaring the Sadan to be a 'Christian institute'.<sup>98</sup> When he accused Ramābāī of being a hypocrite the public raised a strong outcry against Ramābāī's work. That protest eventually forced the reformers to sever their connection with the Sadan and identified Tilak with orthodox Hindus.

Tilak was again identified as a 'conservative' (sanātani), 'anti-reformist' and 'an orthodox Hindu who was against social change' when he opposed the 'Age of the Consent Bill' in A.D. 1890. The bill was supposedly introduced to reduce the abuses connected with Hindu child-marriage by raising the marriageable age for girls from ten to twelve. Tilak, however, sided with the orthodox Hindus and undermined the cause of the Hindu reformers. He argued against the reformers saying, "If a part of the body is decaying, it should be cut off; similarly we have to deal with this group",<sup>99</sup> and called them "the wicked people adorned with knowledge".<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Quoted by D.V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 43f.

<sup>99</sup> The Kesari, 24 March 1891; quoted by D. Keer, Lokamānya Tilak Rājārṣi Śāhu Mahārāj: Ek Mulyamāpan, p. 9.

<sup>100</sup> The Kesari, 7 April 1891; quoted by D. Keer, op. cit., p. 9.

Western scholars have condemned Tīlak for this stand.

J.F. Edwards wrote concerning Tīlak's attitude in this context:

The life record of the author of the Gītā Rahasya is sadly marred by his fierce opposition to the noble moral effort represented by the Age of Consent Bill in 1890 which was introduced to mitigate the indescribable wrongs and sufferings of Hindu child-marriage. His influence as proprietor of the Kesari was seen in his use of its columns to denounce as renegades and traitors of Hinduism all those Hindus who supported this crying need of [for] Indian social reform, though it was happily placed on India's statute-book as an Act in 1891. 101

V. Chirol, referring to Tīlak's writing in the Kesari, made a similar observation:

Tīlak raised against them [reformers] a storm of passion and prejudice. In the columns of the Kesari, ...he denounced every Hindu who supported the measure as a renegade and a traitor to the cause of Hinduism, and thus won the support of conservative orthodoxy, which was [had] hitherto viewed with alarm some of his literary excursions into the field of Vedāntic exegesis. 102

D. Keer, a Hindu scholar, made a similar observation on Tīlak. 103

<sup>101</sup>J.F. Edwards, op. cit., pp. 313f.

<sup>102</sup>V. Chirol, Indian Unrest (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1910), p. 42.

<sup>103</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Tīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, p. 67; -----, Lokamānya Tīlak Rājarshi Sāhu Mahārāj: Ek Mulyamāpan, p. 39.

The third incident which led to Tīlak being identified as orthodox was when the political party led by Tīlak opposed another political party holding the Social Conference in the Indian National Congress pandal (maṇḍap) in Poona in 1895.<sup>104</sup> The Congress was comprised of two political parties: the Moderate Party and the Extremist Party. The Moderate Party was made up of the social reformers who were moderate in political reform but revolutionary in social reform. On the other hand, the Extremist Party, led by Tīlak, was moderate in social reform but revolutionary in political reform. . In the early years of the Congress, the Moderate Party was in the majority and it became customary to hold the Social Conference, sponsored and conducted by members of the Moderate Party, in the same pandal as the Congress. This practice gave the impression that the whole Congress was in favour of social reform. Therefore, Tīlak and his party decided to show the people that the Congress as a whole was not in favour of social reform. Tīlak's orthodox party opposed this practice in A.D. 1890 but its protest was not successful.

The Congress session was to meet again in Poona in A.D. 1895. Tīlak had appealed to all parties and classes in Mahārāṣṭra to support the work of the Congress and had

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<sup>104</sup>T.V. Parvate, op. cit., p. 157.

for the time being put aside his differences with others on the question of social reform. Tīlak's work popularized the Congress in Mahārāṣṭra. Nevertheless, the Moderate Party, led by the reformers, again stirred up the fury of the Extremist Party, by insisting that its Social Conference would be held as usual in the Congress pandal in A.D. 1895, in spite of the Extremist Party's opposition. This insistence of the Moderate Party gave rise to a vigorous demand from the Extremist Party not to hold the Social Conference in the Congress pandal in Poona, in A.D. 1895.<sup>105</sup> Tīlak's party was successful this time in separating political reform from social reform and in forcing the Moderate Party to hold its Social Conference in a separate pandal.

D) Tīlak's Middle Stand on Social Reform

The aforesaid controversies made Tīlak appear to be an orthodox Hindu because he was on the side of the orthodox Hindus who were totally opposed to social reform. He sided with the orthodox Hindus at least partly for the practical reason that as he said, "If I adopt heterodox ways, I would not be in a position to influence them [orthodox] to the same extent as I could do by keeping to my orthodox ways".<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup>T.V. Parvate, op. cit., p. 157.

<sup>106</sup>S.V. Bapat, op. cit., II, 7 (English section).



But while he chose to side with the orthodox masses, he took a positive stand on social reform even though he opposed the westernized reformers. His position seems to be a middle ground between the extreme positions of the westernized reformers who had set out to change Hindu society on the basis of western values and the strict orthodox Hindus who did not want to change at all.

In order to understand Tīlak's middle stand, we should know the reasons he opposed the reformers and what kind of social reform he advocated. Tīlak opposed the westernized reformers on the following grounds. First, the reformers, being influenced by western life and values, wished to re-build Hindu society on the basis of foreign values at the expense of Hindu values. Tīlak thought this attitude would undermine the Hindu heritage in blindly copying western values. For this reason, he opposed the Paṇḍitā's mission because he thought converting Hindu women to Christianity would directly undermine Hindu society and its values.<sup>107</sup> He set forth his own principle of social reform in these terms:

In brief, every person who strives for the welfare of a country, must first attempt to awaken pride in our institutions and in our country rather than to reconstruct the society. It is not enough to

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<sup>107</sup>D.V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 47.

say 'do not leave the old'. In order to fulfil the task, one must indeed be 'properly' proud of the old institutions. 108

This statement of Tīlak was asking of the reformers that their social reform should not go against the religious and patriotic susceptibility of the people<sup>109</sup> and also asking the orthodox people not merely to cleave to the old but to be 'properly' proud of the old institutions.

Secondly, Tīlak opposed the reformers not only because their reforms were imitative, but also because they were asking a foreign government to legislate the social reforms. Tīlak opposed this policy of the reformers because he thought the policy would grant officials of a foreign culture opportunities to interfere in the religious customs and beliefs of Hindu society and thereby they would lose their religious independence as they had lost their political independence.<sup>110</sup> Ten years before the Consent Bill, he put his stand about foreign government intervention in these words:

We would not like that Government should have anything to do with regulating our social customs or ways of living...even supposing that the act of

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<sup>108</sup>The Kesari, 28 Jan. 1896, Nibāṇdhakār Tīlak... (ed.) N.C. Kelkar, p. 97.

<sup>109</sup>D.V. Athelye, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>110</sup>D.V. Tahmankar, op. cit., p. 46.

Government will [would] be a very beneficial and suitable measure. 111

Moreover, the Government had promises not to interfere in socio-religious matters,<sup>112</sup> since A.D. 1857. On the basis of that principle, Ṭīlak opposed the Consent Bill legislated by the foreign government. But he called for Hindu volunteers to discourage their sons marrying before sixteen, eighteen, or twenty and to keep their daughters from marrying before twelve and fourteen. He signed a circular supporting this kind of reform in August 1889.<sup>113</sup> On 26 October 1890 he went further and proposed that girls and boys should not be married until they reached the age of sixteen and twenty respectively.<sup>114</sup> This means that Ṭīlak was in favour of social reform, but without government intervention.

Thirdly, Ṭīlak opposed the reformers because they gave priority to social reform over political independence and even held the view that the foreign power should rule over India until Indians became qualified to rule

<sup>111</sup>The Mahrāṭṭā, 22 May 1881, quoted by S.A. Wolpert, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>112</sup>S.A. Wolpert, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., pp. 51f.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., pp. 55f.

themselves.<sup>115</sup> Tīlak understood this policy of allowing foreign rule several centuries to mean that India would not get her political freedom even after five hundred or a thousand years.<sup>116</sup> His policy was radically different in that he gave priority to political independence over social reform when he said:

Self-respect, enthusiasm, loyalty to freedom in the real life of a nation; and as long as there is vitality social reform follows as a thread follows a needle; this is evidenced by history. Therefore, the nationalists party does not ascribe as much importance to it as it ascribes to political movement. It does not say there should be no social progress of the nation; but it should be done in harmony with political progress and self-respect. 117

On the basis of this policy, Tīlak opposed the Moderate Party, holding the Social Conference in the Congress pandal in A.D. 1890. The Congress decided to separate social and political concerns in A.D. 1891 in response to Tīlak's argument.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup>S.N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 115

<sup>116</sup>S.V. Bapat, op. cit., III, 4f (intro).

<sup>117</sup>Lokamānya Tīlakāñce Kesaritil Lekh, ed. N.C. Kelkar, (Pune: Kesari-Mahrāṭṭā Saṁsthā, 1926), III. 436, quoted by S.N. Banhatti, op. cit., p. 100; S.V. Bapat, op. cit., III, 4 (intro.).

<sup>118</sup>T.V. Parvate, op. cit., p. 157.

Finally, Tīlak opposed the social reformers because they were trying to impose social reform on the people without their consent. Tīlak thought such a policy would divide society and the reform would not be genuine and beneficial to the public. He said in a public meeting held on 1 November 1890, attended by M.G. Rāṇaḍe and R.G. Bhāṇḍārkar, the social reformers:

There has been much talk but little action regarding social reform, with the result that even those reforms, the vital need of which has been generally admitted, have not been carried out into practice. We must not only see what reforms are required, but also whether and how they can be made popular; for in reforming society, care ought to be taken to avoid the creation of any gulf between the people on the one hand and the reformers on the other. We must carry public opinion with us; and this can be done, inter alia, by securing for our reforms the sanction of religion. I am in favour of Social Reform. 119

In this statement, Tīlak admitted the need for social reform and suggested that the reforms should have the sanction of Hinduism. This idea is made clear by T.L. Shay when he says: "He [Tīlak] was loyal both to his convictions about the need for reform and to the classical heritage which was his guide".<sup>120</sup> As R. Kumar puts it: "Although Tīlak opposed the social programme of the liberal Brāhmaṇs on grounds of

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<sup>119</sup> Quoted by D.V. Athalye, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>120</sup> T.L. Shay, op. cit., p. 68

expediency, he cheerfully accepted the need and the inevitability of change".<sup>121</sup> This statement of Ṭīlak makes it clear that if reforms had the sanction of Hinduism there would be popular support and the reforms would be implemented.

The foregoing discussion about Ṭīlak's position regarding social reform should lead us to conclude that Ṭīlak was in favour of social reforms provided they were made within the framework of Hinduism. This means that he took a middle stand between the two extreme positions taken by the reformers and the strictly orthodox people.

#### E) The Gītārahasya and the Marāṭhā Saints

Ṭīlak's middle stand on social reform seems to have been influenced by the Marāṭhā saints who remained within the framework of Hindu tradition but advocated change. Let us now examine whether Ṭīlak follows the saints in formulating his views on the five facets of orthodoxy we have already outlined.

Ṭīlak, like the Marāṭhā saints, accepts the authority of the Vedas. He once defended the traditional view of the Vedas in an important public debate held in A.D. 1903. The debate was organized to examine the growing opposition to the traditional view that the Vedas were apauruṣeya (i.e. of non-human origin) and anādi (i.e. eternal). Though

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<sup>121</sup>R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 321.

S.G. Jinsiwāle (A.D. 1852-1903), the other participant, was a staunch believer in Hinduism, he held that the Vedas were pauruṣeya (i.e. of human origin) and were not īśvarapraṇita (i.e. divinely inspired).<sup>122</sup> Ṭīlak sided with the orthodox scholar, Kṛṣṇānaṅd Swāmi and opposed Jinsiwāle, arguing:

If the Vedas are eternal (nitya) as far as their meaning is concerned, and beginningless (anādi) as far as their antiquity is concerned, it can not be proved that they have a human origin (pauruṣeya). And as it is not proved that they have a human origin nobody should say that they have. 123

Ṭīlak outlines the theological view of the Vedas in his book, The Arctic Home in the Vedas, published in A.D. 1903:

According to the view held by Hindu theologians, the Vedas are eternal (nitya), without beginning (anadi), and also not created by a human author (a-paurusheya); and we are told that these attributes have been predicted of our sacred books from the most ancient times known to our divines or philosophers. 124

Ṭīlak goes on to argue that his scientific research re-affirms the theological view of the Vedas:

Such, in brief, are the views entertained by Hindu orthodox theologians, scholars and philosophers in regard to the origin, character and authority of the Vedas; and on comparing them

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<sup>122</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak: Sāmāj v Saṅskṛti, V, 935.

<sup>123</sup> N.C. Kelkar, Lokamānya Ṭīlak yānce Caritra (A.D. 1899-1914), II.ii.18.

<sup>124</sup> B.G. Ṭīlak, The Arctic Home in the Vedas, (3rd impression, Poona: Messrs Ṭīlak Bros., 1971), p. 366.

with the results of our investigation, it will be found that Patanjali's and Vyāsa's view about the antiquity and the eternity of the Vedas derives material support from the theory of the Arctic home which we have endeavoured to prove in the foregoing pages on strict scientific and historical grounds. 125

Ṭīlak makes it explicit that the purpose of his book is to re-affirm the traditional authority of the Vedas (veda-sāpekṣatā), the cardinal principle of orthodox Hinduism.<sup>126</sup> In this general sense, Ṭīlak accepts the authority of the Vedas as had all the Marāṭhā saints before him.

Ṭīlak also seems to follow Jñāneśvar when he departs from the narrow view of the Vedas and raises the authority of the Gītā over the Vedas on the ground that the Gītā overcomes the defect of the Vedas and opens the door of liberation to all. In the Jain Conference held at Baroda on 22 November, 1904, Ṭīlak said:

There were no equal rights to the four varṇas in Brāhmaṇism. The Brāhmaṇas believed that one could get liberation by doing sacrifices; but the way of sacrifice was not open to the Śūdras,...a problem arose at that time whether all have equal rights in the house of God. Jainism, without discriminating one person from another, propagated the way of liberation to all. A slok, 'sriyo vaiśyastathā śūdraste'pi param gatiṃ', (tr. women, Vaiśya, and the Śūdras also attain liberation) is due to the influence of Jainism... It has fulfilled a deficiency in Hinduism. 127

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<sup>125</sup> B.G. Ṭīlak, The Arctic Home in the Vedas, p. 372.  
Cf. Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VII.325.

<sup>126</sup> S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>127</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI. 798.



We should take note of the fact that Tīlak's major work was on the Gītā as had been that of Jñāneśvar.

The second facet of Hindu orthodoxy is the yajña-sāpekṣatā and its extended form, the karmakānda. Tīlak, in the preface to Saṃskār-Meemāṃsā by Shri Saraswati-Bhushan Vamanshastri Kinjawadekar, expresses a few of his thoughts on the rituals of Hinduism. He seems to justify the universal practice of rites in these words:

Every religious community required that its members should lead a particular kind of domestic life in order to obtain admission into that religious community and maintain their social and religious status therein. The rites and the acts prescribed in this behalf have thus a clear socio-religious purpose in view. To belong to a particular religion a man must live in a particular way, marry in a particular way, pray in a particular way and be initiated into that community in a specific manner; and there must also be a definite set of rules out of these rites so as to secure uniformity of practice in that community or sect. 128

Later on he makes two further points in this regard. The first point is:

But there is not the slightest doubt that the practices so codified and defined were handed down from generation to generation from times immemorial. Thus we find that the marriage ceremony is expressly referred to in the Rigveda, the Jātakarma, Nāmakarana, Upanayana and Garbhadhāna in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa of the White Yajurveda. Many of the Maṅtras used in the Grihya Saṃskāras are also found in the Atharvaveda Sāmhita. This proves that the domestic ceremonies defined and described in the different

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<sup>128</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Tīlak, VII, 332-333.

Grihya Sūtra were no new inventions, but were the domestic customs of the Vedic communities from times immemorial and that in consequence they created obligations as much binding on the Vedic society as the Srauta rites prescribed in the Srauta Sūtras. 129

The second point is:

The Saṃskāras are obviously of Āryan origin. But when the Āryans and non-Āryans came in contact it was inevitable that these Saṃskāras should be extended to non-Āryan people also. Thus even in the Srauta rites and sacrifices we find a place assigned to Rathakara and Nishadasthapati (Jaimini VI.144-51) and the reasons for which the Srauta restrictions were so relaxed, applied with greater force in the case of Grihya rites as the Āryan community absorbed into its fold the non-Āryan communities in India. The growing and expanding custom in this behalf is found fully recognized in the Smṛtis and the Purāṇas which consequently are justly regarded as the authoritative and religious text for the Shudras. 130

In this way, Ṭīlak traces the origin of all Hindu rites, ceremonies, and ways of worship, or the whole karmakāṇḍa, to the Vedas, and holds the view that the Vedic karmakāṇḍa was extended to non-Āryans. This means that he holds that the karmakāṇḍa is prescribed to all Hindus.

We have already seen how Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās thought of the Hindu karmakāṇḍa. These saints were critical of the external karmakāṇḍa and they emphasized one's purity of heart against it. As the saints of the Marāṭhā tradition were known to be critical of the

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 333.

<sup>130</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VII, 335.

karmakāṇḍa, Ṭīlak explains why the traditional karmakāṇḍa had come to be looked down upon, in his comment on the Gītā ii.45:

yāvādartha udapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake /  
tāvānsarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ //  
 (tr. To the extent to which there is a use (that is, necessity) for a well there is a flood of water everywhere (clearly, there is no necessity whatsoever), to the same extent is any necessity for the Vedas (containing the ritualistic Karma-kāṇḍa) for the enlightened Brāhmaṇa (that is to say, for him, there is no more any necessity of the Vedic Karma-kāṇḍa which describes desire-fulfilling ritual). 131

In the above slok, a criticism or an indication of the inferiority of the desire-prompted Vedic actions is pointed out [but] the inferiority is not of the ritual itself, but of the desire-prompted motivation. If this desire-prompted motivation is not in the mind the mere yajñayāga would not obstruct, in any way. (GR. pp. 262-274) 132

It seems that Ṭīlak interprets the Gītā as favouring karma-kāṇḍa done with a disinterested frame of mind. We have noted that Rāmdās classifies the rite performed without a selfish motive, as the sāttvik (i.e. good) duty and encourages karmakāṇḍa. Ṭīlak seems to develop a similar idea in his comment on the Gītā ii.46:

But the Gītā does not agree that the inference drawn by some persons that as a jñāni one is not required to do yajña, yāga, etc. karmas, he should not do actions (karme) and should absolutely give them up. Though the jñāni does not want the

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131 GR. p. 573 (M); p. 891 (E), tr. B.S. Sukthankar.

132 GR. p. 573 (M); p. 890 (E).

reward of his actions, he cannot give up actions, for he does his ritual actions, not for the reward, but as the prescribed duty. The Lord has clearly expressed His opinion, in the eighteenth chapter, that the jñāni should also do ritual actions detachedly as he does other selfless actions. 133

Ṭīlak thus understands the jñāni of the Gītā as the disinterested karmayogi doing his karmakāṇḍa.

The Marāṭhā saints emphasized purity of heart and virtuous conduct and they were critical of the karmakāṇḍa without these qualities. Ṭīlak's position on the karmakāṇḍa was similarly ambiguous as that of the saints, especially the modified version of the karmakāṇḍa as expounded by Rāmdās. Ṭīlak, in his criticism of the show of ritualistic actions unaided by pure devotion (śuddha bhāṅ) thus consciously follows Rāmdās:

If your bhāṅ (i.e. faith, sincerity) is not pure, however good the symbol (pratik) may be, what is the use of it? It is impossible to attain God if you deceive people all the day along and after that go to worship an idol in a temple every morning and evening or on feast days. Samartha [Ramdas] has described some persons going to temple to listen to sermons (pūrāṅ) as follows:

Sensual persons go to listen to [the sermon]; but they look at the ladies only. Persons who are thieves go away after stealing shoes (Dās. 18.x.26) 134

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<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 575 (M); pp. 894f (E).

<sup>134</sup>GR, p. 381 (M); p. 588 (E).

Ṭīlak even concurred with Tukārām's saying that 'God craves bhāv (i.e. devotion or faith) and not the symbol (pratik)".<sup>135</sup>

Ṭīlak, in his interpretation of the Gītā, over and over emphasizes bhāv (i.e. purity of heart, sincere devotion), a favourite theme of the Marāṭhā saints.

The third sāpekṣatā is the brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā. We have seen that the Vārkarī saints were weakening the authority of the Brāhmaṇas, and that Rāmdās, though agreeing on some points with the Vārkarī saints, was trying to restore the authority of the Brāhmaṇas and was advocating the protection of their rights. How Ṭīlak responds to the brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā in his time is our concern now.

Ṭīlak in the preface to Sāmsakār-Mimāṃsā states:

Only the first three of these are called Dvijas or twice-born and their Sāmskāras from cradle to the grave are performed with the Vedic Maṅtra... The later Smṛiti and Prayoga writers have fully recognized the extension of Grihya rites, excepting Upanayana, to the Shudra class provided no Vedic Maṅtras are used.... Carried to its logical conclusion this means that a Shudra may have all the Sāmskāras if Vedic Maṅtras are not used or if the study of the Veda is not their object, as is the case with the Upanayana. 136

Ṭīlak took this stand when he became involved in the Vedokta controversy in A.D. 1901. The Marāṭhās had the right only to the purāṇic rites and their sāmskāras were done without

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<sup>135</sup>GR. p. 382 (M); p. 590 (E).

<sup>136</sup>Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VII, 335-336.

reciting Vedic mantras. But the Brāhmaṇas had the exclusive right to the Vedic rights and their samskāras were done with Vedic mantras. This was the traditional practice. The Marāṭhās claimed that they were Kṣatriyas and demanded the right to the Vedic rites and to have their samskāras done with Vedic mantras. The demand of the Marāṭhās was supported by Śahu Mahārāj of Kolhāpur who used his power and demanded that the Brāhmaṇas perform the Vedic rites in his palace. He threatened them, saying that their inherited land and grants (vatane) would be confiscated if they failed to comply with the order. Ṭīlak wrote two articles in defence of the Brāhmaṇas. Because of these articles (the Kesari 22, 29 October 1901) Ṭīlak was accused of fighting for the cause of the Brāhmaṇas and against allowing non-Brāhmaṇas to read the Vedas.<sup>137</sup> Ṭīlak wrote in defence of the Brāhmaṇas who were not ready to obey the order of Śahu Mahārāj:

In accordance with the prescription of caste order (jñātīdharmā), the prescribed rites (grhya samskāras) of the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas are to be done with Vedic mantras. Verses of Smṛtis support this position. But according to...all authorities on the Dharmasāstras, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas do not exist at the present and one should use one's discretion (tārtamya) in bestowing rites on the castes that exist between the Brāhmaṇas and the Śūdras. Now, the problem is whether Marāṭhās are real Kṣatriyas or Śūdras or between these two castes. 138

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<sup>137</sup>D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭīlak Rājarṣi Śahu Mahārāj: Ek Mulyamāpan, p. 33; Lokamānya Ṭīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, pp. 174f.

<sup>138</sup>The Kesari, 22 October 1901, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, V, 149.

Ṭilak added in defence of the Brāhmaṇas:

If we take into account individual freedom, it would be not only improper but also oppressive for a Brāhmaṇa to be compelled to bestow Vedic sacraments on the Marāṭhās and if a Brāhmaṇa would not comply with this [order] his property be confiscated.... No one should interfere in the old religious tradition.... The British government continued the grants of land (vatane) previously given to Deśpāṇḍe and Jośi even though the government had no need of doing so. The same rule applies to religious grants and grants of land. 139

Ṭilak defended the rights of the Brāhmaṇas to discharge their religious privileges but he did not say that non-Brāhmaṇas have no right to study the Vedas:

If sahibs are permitted to recite or to learn the Vedas, non-Brāhmaṇa castes of Hindus must be permitted to do so. The present time emphasizes individual freedom; it is logical to say that as we cannot prohibit Europeans from studying the Vedas why should we prohibit Marāṭhas from studying the Vedas. 140

Ṭilak had earlier written in the Kesari in A.D. 1894 about the problem of why the Śūdras were prohibited from reading the Vedas:

As far as acquiring knowledge of Brahman is concerned the Vedānta philosophy does not mention caste-distinction or superior-inferior status. The store of religious knowledge (brahmajñāna) was accessible to the first three varṇas and the Śūdras were prohibited from having access to it; according to Max Müller, this prohibition was not due to inferiority of caste but due to their

<sup>139</sup>The Kesari, 29 October 1901, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, V, 154-155.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

intellectual capacity (buddhivaikalpa). And he has clearly said that imparting religious knowledge to the Sūdras in ancient times would have been similar to inviting wild Africans to listen to scholarly lectures on the Royal Institute. 141

Though Ṭīlak defended the rights of the Brāhmanas he did not advocate a monopoly of religious knowledge in the hands of the Brāhmanas at present but he was rather liberal in his approach. Ṭīlak's views on the traditional Brāhmaṇa privileges (brāhmanasāpekṣatā) did not, however, constitute a one-sided defence of the Brāhmanas for he saw the distinction of duties and rights conferred on non-Brāhmanas as well. In a political sense Ṭīlak's position must have proved satisfactory, for his supposedly pro-Brāhmaṇa stance did not lose him the support of non-Brāhmaṇa parties. In A.D. 1917, a non-Brāhmaṇa party emerged in Madras which was opposed to Ṭīlak's Home-Rule League and received the encouragement and co-operation of the British officials. But a few years later when the party left government tutelage it accorded a welcome address to Ṭīlak, indicating that even the militant non-Brāhmanas had gained confidence in Ṭīlak as a leader of all. 142

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<sup>141</sup>The Kesari, 4 September 1894, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, V, 527.

<sup>142</sup>B.D. Kher, op. cit., p. 247.



Ṭīlak expressed his view on the growing Brāhmaṇa-non-Brāhmaṇa controversy in the Kesari in A.D. 1917:

Muslims comprise the largest group among the non-Brāhmaṇas in India. A person, who knows the unanimous compromises which took place at the Lucknow Congress session, with regard to Muslims...would not be doubtful about the policy of protecting the rights of Muslims by Hindus; and it should be clear that the policy, which all Hindus adopted towards Muslims, would essentially be the same policy of the Brāhmaṇas towards non-Brāhmaṇas. What is the reason to change it? ... Dividing up Indians between Brāhmaṇas and non-Brāhmaṇas and stirring up hatred of the Brāhmaṇas is a work of evil intention. 143

At the end of his life Ṭīlak had to face the Brāhmaṇa and non-Brāhmaṇa controversy at the Belgaum District Conference held at Saṅkeśvar on 6-7 March 1920. In that Conference, he challenged the allegations which had been made against him that he favoured the Brāhmaṇas. In a similar spirit, Ṭīlak addressed the Gopāl Club of non-Brāhmaṇas in Poona, on 16 March 1920.<sup>144</sup> He also wrote articles about the issue and published their summary in the Mahrāttā (21 March 1920). Thus Ṭīlak's political actions clearly indicate that he did not fight for the exclusive rights of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā) but his struggle transcended such distinctions and he was liberal in his attitude.

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<sup>143</sup>The Kesari, 18 September 1917, Lokamānya Ṭīlak Lekhasaṅgrah, ed. L. Jośi, p. 38.

<sup>144</sup>S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., pp. 626f.

Ṭīlak's liberal attitude toward non-Brāhmanas while at the same time vindicating the brāhmanasāpekṣatā seems to illustrate how he tends to follow the ideas of the Vārkarī saints who had earlier weakened the brāhmanasāpekṣatā. Ṭīlak, like the Marāṭhā saints, distinguishes between the scriptural knowledge or bookish knowledge and redemptive knowledge. This reminds us of Tukārām specially:

There are many who give dry discourses on Brahman and also many who hearing those discourses nod their heads in appreciation...or who are like courtiers in a drama saying 'once more' (Gī. ii.29; Ka. ii.7). But, as stated above, the man who is internally and externally purified viz. who has become equable (sāmyaśīla), is a true Self-devoted (ātmaniṣṭha) one and he alone gets liberation, and not a mere learned man who is extensively learned or intelligent. 145

Ṭīlak supports this argument by quoting a poem of Tukārām:

(You) have become a pandit (i.e. scholar) (and) you tell (us) pūrāns (i.e. exhortation); but you do not know who you are (Gā. 2599). 146

Ṭīlak, like the Marāṭhā saints, considers redemptive knowledge to have come primarily from bhaktimārga:

It will be clearly seen that though there are two paths (jñānamārga and bhaktimārga) yet they have the attainment of only one God in common and finally the same equanimity is generated in mind; these are eternally established different staircases, leading to the same floor, used by (people)

<sup>145</sup> GR. p. 455 (M); p. 713 (E).

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

according to their respective qualifications; paths are different but not the goal...though these two means are different initially because of (people's) qualifications, they are effectually of the same significance (and) they both are called 'adhyātma' in the Gītā (Gī. xi.1)... The ultimate resolution of bhakti is jñāna (and) bhakti is it means, and not a goal. 147

Again,

There is a proposition (siddhānta) of the religion of the Gītā that once a devotee of the bhaktimārga has submitted himself to God, God gradually increases the devotee's faith and finally grants the perfect knowledge of His nature (Gī. vii.21; x.10), and by that knowledge (not by dry and blind faith) the devotee finally gets the perfect attainment. 148

Ṭīlak tends to follow the Marāṭhā saints in holding that redemptive knowledge comes from bhaktimārga. On the basis of this view he answers the objection that bhaktimārga does not yield true knowledge, by referring to Tukārām:

But the actual experience of the saints is the only incontrovertible answer (bintoḍ uttar) to the objection, and among all these experiences, I consider the experience of Tukārām, the best among the devotees of Bhagavān (bhagavadbhaktaśiromaṇi), especially significant (viśeṣ mahatvācā). No one need to be told that the saint Tukārām obtained the adhyātmajñāna without studying the Upaniṣads and other books. Nevertheless, there are about 300 or 350 poems in his Gāthā devoted to the description of the state of non-duality (advaita); and in those poems 'Vasudev is all' (tr.) (Gī. vii.19)...has been expounded on the basis of

147 GR. pp. 373f (M); p. 576 (E).

148 Ibid., p. 386 (M); p. 595 (E).

personal experience. For example-

As sweetness of jaggery (is in every part), so God is in all. Now, in what manner should I worship? God is outside and inside. Apart from water the waves of water do not exist; as gold is called (differently) because of (different) ornaments, so we are, says Tukārām (Gā. 3627)....

When the saint Tukārām himself describes the supreme state of the devotee, on the basis of his personal experience, it is strange that anybody dare to make loquacious (bāṣkaḷ) assertions, by inference, such as: 'It is impossible to have knowledge of advaita by the bhaktimārga' or 'only by blind faith in God is liberation achieved, one does not need knowledge'.

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Ṭīlak here approvingly refers to Tukārām as the most authoritative source to answer the objection raised against the bhaktimārga by scholars. His special regard for Tukārām as bhagavadbhaktaśiromaṇi (i.e. best of devotees of the Lord) is clear evidence of Tukārām's influence on Ṭīlak.

The fourth sāpekṣatā is the āryasāpekṣatā. According to it, knowledge of the Vedas is a pre-requisite of liberation and the Vedas are inaccessible to the Śūdras, women, and others. Even though Ṭīlak upholds the veda-sāpekṣatā, he seems not in favour of the āryasāpekṣatā because he challenges the traditional presupposition on the basis of the revealed scriptures viz. Upaniṣads and other scriptures:

Well; if one says that women and Śūdras can never attain Release [mokṣa] because the Vedas are thus

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<sup>149</sup>GR. p. 387 (M); p. 598 (E).

inaccessible [abolā] to them, then, there are statements in the Upaniṣads that Gargi and other women obtained Perfection (siddhi) by acquiring Knowledge; and there are statements in the Pūrāṇas that Vidura and other Śūdras did likewise (Ve. Su. 3.4.36-39). Therefore, one cannot lay down the proposition that it is only the men folk belonging to the upper three classes (varṇa) who attain Release.... 150

In order to buttress his point of view, Ṭīlak refers to the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra, as a living example:

Thus, when the door of release is opened for all people in the society, there emerges a distinguished awareness (vilakṣaṇ jāgṛti) whose nature can be easily comprehended from the history of the Bhāgavat Dharma in Mahārāṣṭra. As far as God is concerned, women, Cāṇḍāl, and the Brāhmaṇas are equal (sārkhec). 'God craves for bhāv (i.e. devotion, faith)' and not for symbols (prātiks), nor white and black colour, nor differences between man and woman, and the Brāhmaṇa and Cāṇḍāl. 151

Ṭīlak more precisely sustains his argument by quoting Tukārām:

Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra, Cāṇḍāl, children, man, woman, and prostitute, and all have right. Tukārām says, 'He is convinced by experience that others and devotees experience the happiness by good fortune' (Gā. 2382.5-6). 152

Ṭīlak seems directly dependent on the Marāṭha Bhāgavat Dharma in his understanding of the all-inclusiveness of the religion

<sup>150</sup> GR. p. 396 (M); p. 614 (E). tr. B.S. Sukanthar.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 397 (M); p. 615 (E).

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

of the Gītā. Tīlak goes on asserting the all-inclusiveness of the Gītādharma in these words:

The religion of the Gītā is undauntable and all-inclusive (vyāpak) and equitable (sam) which means that it does not maintain any distinction between varṇas, castes, countries or anything else, (but) grants release to everyone equally,... (it is) endowed with knowledge, devotion, and action, and is the highly sweet and immortal fruit of the tree of the Vedic-Dharma. 153

Tīlak considers the Gītādharma as the 'immortal fruit' of the Vedic-dharma because the Gītādharma is all-inclusive (vyāpak). We have already shown that Tīlak considers the Gītā to overcome the fault of the Vedas by opening the door of liberation to all.<sup>154</sup> As Tīlak thinks highly of the Gītā in these terms, he seems to follow Jñāneśvar who departed from the narrow view of the Vedas and praised the Gītā for overcoming the defect of the Vedas.

The final sāpekṣatā of orthodox Hinduism is the saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā which needs to be considered in the context of existing tendencies among scholars in the age in which Tīlak lived. English had occupied the status of Saṅskṛt, as the language of the elite. In the context of Tīlak's milieu the concept of saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā be extended to include the use of English as opposed to Marāṭhī. Why

<sup>153</sup>GR. p. 455 (M); p. 713 (E).

<sup>154</sup>vide, p. 119.

did Tīlak favour the vernaculars as the mass media?

Tīlak had received his preliminary academic education from his father who was an educationist, a profound scholar in Marāṭhī and Saṅskṛt and who made Tīlak recite Marāṭhī poems and Saṅskṛt verses.<sup>155</sup> His father thought that a sound grounding in the mother tongue accompanied by a sound study of Saṅskṛt was more valuable than an early acquaintance with English;<sup>156</sup> therefore, he was not in a hurry to send Tīlak to the Government High School, Ratnagiri. This early training seems to have influenced Tīlak in giving priority to Marāṭhī and other vernaculars over English.

Tīlak and his colleagues urged the acceptance of Marāṭhī as the medium of instruction.<sup>157</sup> They opened a school in Poona, with the determination:

Let us, said this school of Poona Patriots, cultivate our own vernaculars, let us awaken the people by teaching them the greatness of our History and our religion and excellence of our civilization. 158

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<sup>155</sup> vide, p. 37.

<sup>156</sup> S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>157</sup> D.V. Athalye, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>158</sup> 'Hindu Missionary', quoted by V. Venkatesvarulu, op. cit., p. 98.

Ṭīlak and his colleagues also started two newspapers: the Mahrāttā in English and the Kesari in Marāṭhī. Ṭīlak worked as an editor of these newspapers. However, he concentrated more on the Kesari than the Mahrāttā. He spelled out his policy of favouring vernaculars as the mass media, in his address at Madras:

I am one of those who hold that the development of India will be facilitated if [the] vernaculars are developed and if [the] provinces are distributed according to language.... We can appeal to our people better through [the] vernaculars than in English. English can never become the language of the masses. We must appeal to them through their own vernaculars, and this has been one of the chief objectives of my life, and [I therefore] tell you once [and] for all why I devoted more attention to the Kesari than to [the] English paper. 159

Ṭīlak believed in the vernaculars as one of the chief means of national awakening.<sup>160</sup>

Ṭīlak seems to follow the examples laid by the Marāṭhā saints in using Marāṭhī as the medium of mass instruction when he says:

Europe was revived when the Bible was translated; similar work was done when Jñāneśvar translated the Gītā. Therefore a collection of Marāṭhī books would bring about the recollection of (our) past glory and of the service rendered by the saints. If (such a work) is done, there would be an awakening that would accomplish much. 161

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<sup>159</sup> B.G. Ṭīlak, His Writings and Speeches, pp. 326f.

<sup>160</sup> D.V. Athalye, op. cit., p. 325.

<sup>161</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 926.



Again,

When the Bible was translated into European languages, the people became illumined by knowledge and were revived. Similarly, the books of Rāmdās, Tukārām, and others effected a renaissance (bhāgyoday) in Mahārāṣṭra. It is unfortunate that these books are not read in that perspective. When the saints and poets opened the knowledge stored in Saṅskṛt (to the people) and when exhortations (kirtane) were given, the people became conscious of their pride in religion (dharmā) and in country. Can the task, which these books undertook two hundred years ago, not be done today? 162

Ṭilak interprets the saṅskṛtasāpekṣatā in the context of his time and asks the educated people to develop Marāṭhī:

The educated class of the country was talking Saṅskṛt in the past. The class, reared up in Saṅskṛt, persecuted the saints of Mahārāṣṭra. The learned humiliated the Marāṭhī speaking people. A difference between the learned of the past (śāstri) and the educated of today is that the ancient śāstri used to talk Saṅskṛt from which Marāṭhī is derived and the educated of today speak a foreign language... The educated should have the zeal to develop Marāṭhī. 163

Ṭilak praises the work of the Marāṭhā saints and asks the people to develop Marāṭhī and make it a means of communication:

The saints of Mahārāṣṭra developed Marāṭhī. They had to render in Marāṭhī the knowledge stored in Saṅskṛt. Along with that work, the work of

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<sup>162</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, VI, 125.

<sup>163</sup> The Kesari, 11 September 1906, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, VI, 928.

developing Marāṭhī was accomplished. Language is a means of communicating one's ideas to another. Those who talk Marāṭhī should communicate more (in Marāṭhī). One should have a desire to develop language and have the zeal for it. 164

Ṭīlak criticizes the existing tendency among writers and scholars to write books in English on the ground that Marāṭhī has an inadequate vocabulary for expressing their ideas. To such writers, Ṭīlak once said in the context of the Jñāneśvari:

The complaint that there are not many words in Marāṭhī is in vain. There should be no shortage of words to those writers who sincerely want to explain any important concern to their countrymen and who want to exhort their ignorant countrymen to make them knowledgeable (sujña) and all-round progressive. When Jñāneśvar Mahārāj started to write the Jñāneśvari, six centuries ago, he did not feel the shortage of [Marāṭhī] words in simplifying the secret knowledge of Saṅskṛt to his brethren in Mahārāṣṭra. 165

Ṭīlak proved this fact by writing articles in Marāṭhī and writing the Gītārahasya in Marāṭhī. The Gītārahasya is considered to be the 'first prose writing of the front rank in weight and importance in the Marāṭhī language',<sup>166</sup> an 'epoch making book' (yugpravartak grāntha).<sup>167</sup> In order to

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<sup>164</sup>The Kesari, 11 September 1906, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 928.

<sup>165</sup>Quoted by J.R. Ajaganvakar, op. cit., I, 76.

<sup>166</sup>Aurobindo, Baṅkim-Ṭīlak-Dayanaṅda, pp. 17f.

<sup>167</sup>N.R. Phatak, Lokamānya, p. 363.

impart religious knowledge and to reveal the secret of the Gītā to the common people of Mahārāṣṭra Ṭīlak wrote the Gītārahasya in Marāṭhī.<sup>168</sup> Thus he followed the Marāṭhā saints in practice.

#### F) Conclusion

In this chapter, we explained how the Marāṭhā saints responded to the five facets of Hindu orthodoxy and how Ṭīlak was guided by these responses in working out his position in his day. His position was a middle position between two extreme positions taken by the strictly orthodox Hindus and the westernized liberal Hindu reformers. Ṭīlak defended and re-affirmed the traditional authority of the Vedas (Vedasāpekṣatā), the cardinal principle of Hinduism. His position was similar to the position taken by all Marāṭhā saints concerning the final authority of the Vedas. Even though he upheld the final authority of the Vedas, he did not fight exclusively for the rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas. But his struggle transcended caste distinction viz. Brāhmaṇas and non-Brāhmaṇas, therefore, he gained the confidence of the non-Brāhmaṇas. He expressed his concern for all castes. Ṭīlak's position on this was in conformity with the Vārkarī saints. Even though he accepted

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<sup>168</sup>G.P. Pradhan, op. cit., p. 31; N.C. Kelkar, Lokamānya Ṭīlak yāñce Caritra, III.vii.22.

the final authority of the Vedas he did not vindicate the prohibition against imparting Vedic knowledge to the Śūdras and women. Nor did he hold Vedic knowledge to be an absolute pre-requisite for liberation. For this position, Ṭīlak turned to the Gītā and the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra. He praised the Gītā for not maintaining distinctions such as varna and caste as far as granting liberation is concerned. He praised the Gītā Dharma as the fruit of Vedic Dharma. Ṭīlak made a distinction between scriptural knowledge and salvific knowledge, the same distinction made by the Marāṭhā saints. He also held, like the Marāṭhā saints, that salvific knowledge is a fruit of bhaktimārga. Ṭīlak held that a jñāni should do rituals (yajñasāpekṣatā) with a disinterested frame of mind. This position is similar to that of Jñāneśvar and Rāmdās. Finally, Ṭīlak favoured the vernaculars as a means of mass education and national awakening. From this fact, we can conclude that Ṭīlak was indebted to the Marāṭhā saints and thereby was influenced by them in working out his position in his day.

CHAPTER III  
THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL ORDER

In the last chapter, we attempted to demonstrate the influence of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra on Ṭīlak's religious philosophy by showing that the moderate position he took on the issues of the authority of tradition was essentially the position taken by the prominent Marāṭhā saints. In this chapter, we shall try to demonstrate how Ṭīlak's thoughts about the ideal social order (samāj vyavasthā) were also influenced by the Marāṭhā saints. In setting forth our argument we will: (i) outline the traditional social order and the caste system; (ii) set forth the interpretation of the social order by the Marāṭhā saints, and (iii) demonstrate the influence of the Marāṭhā saints on Ṭīlak's thoughts about the proper social order for Hinduism.

A) Traditional Hindu Social Order

(1) Social Order in the Śruti

In the last chapter, we noted that Hinduism holds the Veda to be the final authority on Hindu dharma (i.e. socio-religious practices). It is generally held by most scholars that the 'Purūṣasukta' hymn of the Rgveda contains one of the earliest accounts of the traditional social order

of Hinduism. The Purūṣasukta hymn talks of the social order as follows:

Then they dismembered Purūṣa. How many portions did they make? What was his mouth called, what his arms, what his two thighs, and what his feet?

His mouth [mukham] became [āsīd] the Brāhmaṇa; and His two arms [bāhu] the Kṣatriya; His thighs [uru] became [kriṭaḥ] the Vaiśya-class. And from His feet [padbhyām] the Śūdra sprang [ajāyata]. <sup>1</sup>

These two stanzas refer to the four fundamental social orders or divisions (varṇas) of Hindu society namely, the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, and Śūdra. They tell us that these orders or classes (varṇas) originated from the various parts of the body of the all-pervading Purūṣa or God.<sup>2</sup> This means that there is a religious basis for the social order.

According to these stanzas, the Brāhmaṇas, who are imagined to have originated from the mouth or head of the all-pervading Purūṣa, seem to be on top in the Hindu social order, and Śūdras, who are imagined to have originated from the feet, the lowest part of the body of the Purūṣa, seem to be on the lowest rung of the social order. This means that there is a kind of hierarchy in the social order of Hindus. A.B. Keith brings out a far-reaching implication

<sup>1</sup>RV. X.90.11-12, tr. H.D. Griswold, The Religion of The Rigveda, pp. 344-346; Griswold acknowledges his indebtedness to Macdonell, Hillerbrant, Griffith, Scherman, and Deussen in translating the hymn.

<sup>2</sup>C.V. Vaidya, History of Saṅskrit Literature (Poona: the author, 1930), pp. 83, 85.

of the religious monopoly of the Brāhmaṇas, when he observes on these stanzas:

The mere precision by which the four castes are equated with the appropriate parts of the giant [Purūṣa] is clear proof that the ideas found in the hymn have been completely worked over in the interest of the priests. <sup>3</sup>

As these stanzas of the hymn of the Rgveda mention the four fundamental divisions of Hindu society, it seems probable that the Ṛgvedic poets already knew the system which distinguishes the Brāhmaṇa varṇa from other Āryan varṇas -- Kṣatriya and Vaiśya (non-priestly classes) -- and also distinguishes all Āryan varṇas from Śūdra or Dāsa (serf) group which was made up of the aborigines.<sup>4</sup> The Rgveda mentions the four basic social divisions of Hindu society, but it does not talk about criteria or norms of social division. Secondly, the Rgveda does not talk about the ordained and specific duties of every social division (varṇa-dharma). These were tasks which were to be taken up by later writers.<sup>5</sup>

The Ṛgvedic version of the social order is adopted by the later saṁhitās (i.e. hymn books). The stanzas of the

<sup>3</sup>A.B. Keith, The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 81.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

Purūṣasukta hymn, stated above, appear in the White Yajurveda<sup>6</sup> and in the Black Yajurveda.<sup>7</sup> These two stanzas and other stanzas of the Purūṣasukta hymn appear in the Atharvaveda<sup>8</sup> which is supposed by scholars to be the latest saṁhitā. The Atharvaveda also begins the theory of social order for it not only mentions the four varṇas but also mentions in a number of hymns the privileges of the Brāhmaṇas (priestly class) and calls them the 'gods' of this earth.<sup>9</sup>

Another division of the Śruti is called 'Brāhmaṇas' which are priestly commentaries on the Vedic rituals. The period of the Brāhmaṇas is a very important one because in it the social order of the four varṇas "assumed definite shape, furnishing the framework within which the highly complex network of the castes of today has been developed."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>The Yajur Veda, tr. Devi Chand, (New Delhi: S. Paul & Co., 1965), xxxi. 10-11.

<sup>7</sup>Black Yajurveda, T. Aranyaka iii, Anuvakya 12, C.V. Vaidya, op. cit., p. 186.

<sup>8</sup>Hymns of the Arthavaveda, tr. M. Bloomfield, ed. F. Max Muller (Delhi: Varanasi: Patna: Motilal Banarasidass, 1964), XIX,6, (p. 682).

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., XII.3.38; XII.4.23; Taitirīya Saṁhitā I.7.3.1, M. Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, tr. Mrs. S. Ketkarm (2nd ed., New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1972), I, 198.

<sup>10</sup>A.A. Macdonell, A History of Saṁskrit Literature, (2nd ed., Delhi: Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, 1961), pp. 32f.



The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa seems to follow the lead of the Atharvaveda in calling the priestly class the 'gods' of the earth:

Verily, there are two kinds of gods; for, indeed, the gods are the gods; and the Brahmanas who have studied and teach sacred lore are the human gods. The sacrifice is divided into two kinds: oblations constitute the sacrifice to the gods; and gifts to the priests that to the human gods, the Brahmanas who have studied and teach sacred lore. With oblations one gratifies the gods, and with gifts to the priests the human gods, the Brāhmaṇas who have studied and teach sacred lore. Both these kinds of gods, when gratified, place him in a state of bliss (sudhā). 11

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa goes on heightening the socio-religious position of the Brāhmaṇas (priests) as beings in whom even the deities are incorporated<sup>12</sup> and therefore the ones who should be given special respect and dignity.<sup>13</sup>

The final division of the Śruti is called the 'Upaniṣads' which are usually described as philosophical treatises. They undertake the task of developing philosophical theories to account for the social order. The

<sup>11</sup>The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, tr. J. Eggeling, ed. F. Max Muller, II.2.2.6, cf. IV.3.4.4.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., XII.4.4.6.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., XI.5.7.1; XIII.1.5.4; cf. XIII.3.5.3; cf. Taittiriya Saṃhitā, II.5.11.9, M. Winternitz, op. cit., p. 199.

Upaniṣads mention sometimes two,<sup>14</sup> three,<sup>15</sup> and four varṇas.<sup>16</sup> They hold that these different varṇas were created by Brahmā, who was originally only one, as part of his own development.<sup>17</sup> They explain the differences among the four varṇas by the theory of karma (i.e. action) and punarjanma (i.e. rebirth as the result of previous actions):

Accordingly, those who are of pleasant conduct here - the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a pleasant womb, either of the womb of a Brāhmaṇ or a womb of a Kshatriya, or the womb of a Vaiśya. But those who are of stinking conduct here - the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a stinking womb, either the womb of a dog, or the womb of a swine, or the womb of an outcaste (cāṇḍāla). 18

According to this karma theory, Hindu society is primarily divided into two sections: one formed of those who are born in the pleasant wombs and another formed of those who are

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<sup>14</sup> 'Katha' ii.25; 'Praśna' ii.6; The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, tr. R.E. Hume, (rev. 2nd ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1975).

<sup>15</sup> 'Chāndogya', viii.14; 'Kaushitaki' ii.9; The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, tr. R.E. Hume.

<sup>16</sup> 'Chāndogya' v.10.7; The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, tr. R.E. Hume.

<sup>17</sup> 'Brihad-aranyaka' i.4.11-15; The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, tr. R.E. Hume.

<sup>18</sup> 'Chāndogya' v.10.7; The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, tr. R.E. Hume.

born in unpleasant wombs. The people born in the pleasant wombs are the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas. The people of these varṇas are considered to be of the Āryan race. But the people born in unpleasant wombs seem not to belong to the Āryan race because they are considered to be outcaste (cāṇḍāla). This theory explains these differences between Āryans and non-Āryans on the basis of the merits and demerits (karmaphala) of previous lives and thus justifies the superiority of the Āryan people over the non-Aryan people.

Some Upaniṣads explain the differences among all creatures including human beings by the theory, later identified as a Sāṅkhyan theory of the guṇas of Prakṛti:

With the one unborn female, red, white, and black, who produces many creatures like himself, there lies the one unborn male taking his delight. Another unborn male leaves her with whom he has had his delight. 19

The unborn female has three colours: red, white, and black. These colours are identified with the three constituents (guṇas) of Sāṅkhyan Prakṛti namely, sattva, rajas, and tamas.<sup>20</sup> According to this guṇa theory, the differences among human beings are due to the three guṇas and their

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<sup>19</sup> 'Śvetasvatāra' iv.5; The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, tr. R.E. Hume. Samkhya Philosophy, The Sacred Books of the Hindus, ed. B.C. Basu, p. 8 (appendix v).

<sup>20</sup> The Samkhya Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, tr. & ed. R. Phukan, (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960), lxi.

combinations. Thus in the Upaniṣads, we note that there are two theories: the theory of karma-punarjanma and the theory of guṇas, which explain differences among Hindu people.

We have noted the four basic divisions (varṇas) of the Hindu social order, the guṇa and karma theories which explain those social divisions, and attempts to heighten the socio-religious importance of the Brāhmaṇas (i.e. priestly class). We have noted that the Brāhmaṇas have the top position and the Śūdras the lowest position in the social order, according to the Purūṣasukta hymn of the Rgveda.

The name Śūdra seems to be given later to the Dāsas or Dasyus, the original inhabitants, when they were thoroughly subjugated by the Āryans.<sup>21</sup> In a number of hymns, the Āryans invoked their gods to destroy the Dāsas:

Ye smote and slew his Dāsa and his Āryan enemies,  
and helped Sudas with favour, Indra-Varuṇa. 22

Demolish thou the Dāsa's might. May we with Indra's  
help divide the treasure he hath gathered up. 23

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<sup>21</sup>A.A. Macdonell, A History of Saṅskrit Literature, pp. 153f.

<sup>22</sup>RV. VII.83.1, cf. VIII.24.27, tr. R.T.H. Griffith, ed. J.L. Shastri (new rev. ed., Delhi: Patna: Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1973).

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., VIII.40.6, cf. VIII.59.10, tr. R.T.H. Griffith.

In the mid-way of heaven the Sun unyoked his car;  
the Ārya found a match to meet his Dāsa foe. 24

Sublime from birth, mayst thou O Indra, Hero, with  
Surya overcome the Dāsa races. 25

These Ṛgvedic verses indicate that the Āryan had to fight with the aborigines of India before they were able to settle down in India. The Dāsas are described in the Ṛgveda as follows:

Indra, thou justifiest us, and tramplest down thy slanderers. Guard thyself, valiant Hero, in thy vital parts; strike down the Dāsa with thy blows. The man who brings no sacrifice, inhuman, godless, infidel, Him let his friend the mountain cast to rapid death, the mountain cast the Dasyu down. 26

Around us is the Dasyu, riteless, void of sense, inhuman, keeping alien laws. Baffle, thou Slayer of the foe, the weapon which this Dāsa wields. 27

These Ṛgvedic verses indicate that the Dāsa or Dasyu were followers of different religious practices and also were ethnically different from the Āryans. The ethnic difference of the Dāsa is noted in another Ṛgvedic hymn:

Day after day far from their seat he drove them,  
alike, from place to place, those darksome creatures.

<sup>24</sup>RV. X.138.3, tr. R.T.H. Griffith.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., X.148.2, tr. R.T.H. Griffith.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., VIII.59.10-11, tr. R.T.H. Griffith.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., X.22.8.

The Hero slew the meanly-huckstering Dāsas...,  
where the waters gather. 28

Thus there were racial, religious, and colour differences between the Āryans and the Dāsas. The Āryans were a fair-skin people and the Dāsas a dark-skin people. This colour contrast seemed to have served as the original distinguishing mark of the varṇa vyavasthā (i.e. social order) for the term varṇa means 'colour'.<sup>29</sup> In the varṇa vyavasthā, the varṇa (i.e. class) of the Śūdras is the lowest. It was already argued that the aborigines, originally called Dāsas or Dasyus, were later on called Śūdras by the Āryans after the complete submission of the Dāsas and their acceptance into the Āryan community as serfs (dāsas). The defeated Dāsas were accepted as a servile class (Śūdra) in the Āryan community.<sup>30</sup> However, the Śūdras were on the social periphery.

The Śūdras who were different in race and colour were also different in religious practices. The Āryans who kept the Śūdras on the social periphery also wanted to keep the Śūdras away from the Āryan religion. The Āryans had

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<sup>28</sup>RV. VI.47.21.

<sup>29</sup>A.B. Keith, op. cit., p. 23; H.D. Griswold, op. cit., pp. 335f; A.Macdonell, A History of Saṅskrit Literature, p. 153.

<sup>30</sup>A.A. Macdonell, A History of Saṅskrit Literature, p. 162.

instituted the upanayana saṁskāra (i.e. initiation ceremony). After this ceremony, the Āryan males were considered to be qualified to study the Vedas and to do the Vedic rituals.<sup>31</sup> This ceremony was categorically denied to the Śūdras and thereby the Śūdras had no access to the Āryan scriptures and rituals. On the basis of the upanayana saṁskāra, Hindu society was sharply divided into dvijātayaḥ (twice-born) and ekajātayaḥ (once-born). These two major divisions of society seem to be similar to the earlier divisions - born in pleasant wombs and born in unpleasant wombs - outlined by the Upaniṣads. However, the task of defining varṇas strictly on the basis of birth and of setting forth the distinctive features of the later caste system had not yet been completed.

## (2) Social Order in the Smṛti

It was explained in the last chapter that Smṛti means the reflection on the Śruti and the Smṛti texts include the two epics - the Mahābhārata (including the Bhagavadgītā) and the Rāmāyaṇa - the Purānas, and the Dharmasastras (i.e. religious code books). The Dharmaśāstras took as their task the responsibility of developing the short statements of the Śruti into a complete theory of social order. The Manusmṛti is the best known of the Dharmaśāstras and is often thought

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<sup>31</sup>A.A. Macdonell, A History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 255.

of as the single source of the Hindu social order. It adopts the idea of the varṇa vyavasthā as given in the stanzas of the Purūṣasukta hymn of the Ṛgveda and expands it as follows:

But [for] in order to protect [preserve, guptyartham] He, the resplendent one, assigned separate (duties and) occupation [prthakkarmāṇi] to those who sprang [jagam] from his mouth [mukha], arms [bāhu], thighs [uru], and feet [pad]. 32

In this stanza, Manu tells us the purpose of creating the four-fold social order and of assigning separate duties to each varṇa. Manu goes ahead and talks of the specific duties of each varṇa:

To Brāhmaṇas he assigned teaching and studying (the Veda) [adhyāpanadhyayānam], sacrificing for their own benefit and for others [yajanaṁ yājanaṁ], giving and accepting (of alms) [dānaṁ pratigrahaṁ]. The Kshatriya he commanded to protect the people [prajānām rakṣaṇam], to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study (the Veda), and to abstain from attacking himself of sensual pleasures. To Vaiśya to tend cattle, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study (the Veda), to trade [vanikpatham] and to cultivate land [krṣim]. One occupation [karma] only the Lord prescribed [samādiṣat] to the Sūdra, to serve meekly [suśruṣamanasuyayā] even these (other) three castes [varṇānām]. 33

This version of the social order, which is found in the Manusmṛti, is also found with only minor modification in

<sup>32</sup>The Laws of Manu, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, i.87.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., i.88-91.



the other important Dharmaśāstras, e.g. Āpastamba,<sup>34</sup> Viṣṇu,<sup>35</sup> Vaśiṣṭha,<sup>36</sup> and Yajñavalkya,<sup>37</sup> etc.

In the version of Manu's social order, Manu assigns six religious duties to the Brāhmaṇas: studying the Vedas and teaching religious knowledge to other Āryan varṇas, doing sacrifices for themselves and doing them on behalf of others, and giving gifts to others and receiving them from others. But Manu withholds from the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas, the other Āryan classes (varṇas), the privileges of teaching religious knowledge to others, of doing sacrifices on behalf of others, and of receiving gifts from others. He especially assigns to the Kṣatriyas the duty of protecting the people and to the Vaiśyas, the duty of cultivating land and trading. He excludes the Śūdras from religious duties such as studying the Vedas, doing sacrifices, and giving gifts but he asks them to serve the three upper varṇas without contempt (anasuyayā).

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<sup>34</sup>Āpastamba's Aphorisms on the Sacred Law, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, ii.4-7.

<sup>35</sup>The Institutes of Vishnu, tr. J. Jolly, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, ii.5-14.

<sup>36</sup>Dharmaśāstra, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, ii. 13-20.

<sup>37</sup>Yajñavalkya Smṛti, tr. S.C. Vidyarnava, v.118.

It has already been shown how Hindu society was divided into two main blocks of people on the basis of the upanayana saṁskāra (i.e. initiation rite); twice-born (dviija) and others (viz. Śūdra). Manu maintains this position by calling the three Aryan classes (varṇas) 'dviijātayaḥ' (i.e. twice-born) and by calling the Śūdras 'ekajātaḥ' (i.e. once-born).<sup>38</sup> As the Śūdras were considered to be the lowest class by the Āryan society, Manu, therefore, calls them 'āntajātaḥ' (i.e. lowly born).<sup>39</sup> These epithets - ekajātaḥ and āntajātaḥ - used with reference to the Śūdras seem to point up the religious and ethnic differences which existed between the Āryans and Dāsas or non-Āryans.

It was also noted that the upanayana saṁskāra was traditionally conferred only on the male of the upper varṇas. This means that the Āryan women were traditionally excluded from doing Vedic rites and studying the Vedas. Manu reaffirms the Vedic position concerning women as he specifically excludes women from the right to perform religious rites and sacrifices.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>The Laws of Manu, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, x.4.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., i.93.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., ix.36.

The Dharmaśāstras take the task of consolidating the social order as their responsibility. They seem to follow the trend of the Brāhmaṇas (i.e. priestly commentaries on the Vedic rituals and religious practices) in seeking to strengthen the socio-religious status of the Brāhmaṇas (i.e. priestly class), when they talk of the lordship of the Brāhmaṇas. The Manusmṛti talks of the lordship of the priestly class in the following terms:

As the Brāhmaṇa sprang from (Brahman's) mouth, as he was the first-born, and as he possesses the Veda [Brahman], he is by right [dharmataḥ] the lord of this whole creation. 41

In this stanza, Manu vindicates the lordship of the Brāhmaṇas over all creation, interpreting the Purūṣasukta hymn of the Rgveda in the interest of the priestly class. He also justifies the lordship of the Brāhmaṇas over other varṇas (classes) in these words:

On account of his pre-eminence [vaiśeṣyāt], on account of the superiority of his origin [prakṛtiśreṣṭhyāt], on account of his observance of (particular) sanctification the Brāhmaṇa is the lord [prabhu] of all castes [varṇa]. 42

Thus the Manusmṛti accords the lordship of creation and of

<sup>41</sup>The Laws of Manu, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, i.93.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., x.3; cf. The Institutes of Vishnu, tr. J. Jolly, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, lxviii.31.

the social order to the Brāhmaṇas. It goes on vindicating the highest position of the Brāhmaṇas saying that 'the very birth of a Brāhmaṇa is an eternal incarnation of the sacred law [utnattireva viprasya mūrtirdharmasya sasvati]'<sup>43</sup> or 'a Brāhmaṇa by the very fact of his birth is an object of honour even to the deities',<sup>44</sup> 'a Brāhmaṇa, be he ignorant or learned, is a great divinity',<sup>45</sup> and 'though Brāhmaṇas employ themselves in all (sorts of) mean occupations, they must be honoured in every way; for (each of) them is a very great deity'.<sup>46</sup> In these verses, Manu insists that there is a religious significance to the life of the Brāhmaṇas strictly on the basis of their birth. As Manu ascribes religious significance to the life of the Brāhmaṇas in terms of their physical birth, he seems to introduce the principle that varṇa is determined by one's birth.

Manu also enhances the social position of the Brāhmaṇas by saying that a Brāhmaṇa determines the duties of other varṇas (or castes), and by asking the Kṣatriyas to be guided by the Brāhmaṇas in all matters of administration,<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>The Laws of Manu, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, i.98.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., x.84.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., ix.317.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., ix.319.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., x.2.

and by asking the upper castes - the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas - to force the lower castes - the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras - to do their social duties lest negligence of these duties bring about complete disorder.<sup>48</sup> In brief, Manu set forth the lordship (prabhutva) of the Brāhmaṇas and thereby subjects secular power to religious authority. This position made the Brāhmaṇas religiously and socially superior to all.

It has already been shown that Manu calls the Śūdras 'āntajātaḥ' (i.e. lowly born) because they were considered the lowest class (varṇa) by the Āryans. This implies that the varṇa of the Śūdras was determined by their physical birth. Manu brings out the implications of the principle, varṇa by birth, in the case of the Śūdras, as follows:

But a Śūdra, whether bought or unbought, he may compel to do a servile work [dāsyam]; for he was created [srṣtaḥ] by the Self-existent [svayaṁbhū] to be the slave of a Brāhmaṇa.

A Śūdra, though emancipated by his master, is not released from servitude; since that is innate [nisargaḥ] in him, who can set him free from it? 49

In these stanzas, Manu says that a Śūdra is created by god to be a slave of a Brāhmaṇa and servitude is intrinsically in him. In other words, a Śūdra is a slave by birth and

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<sup>48</sup>The Laws of Manu, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, vii.37.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., viii.413-414.

remains a slave throughout his life and nothing changes his position. A Śūdra remains in the lowest position in the social order.

Having accorded the highest religio-social status to the Brāhmaṇas and the lowest status to the Śūdras, the Dharmaśāstras define the position or status of the other two varṇas in the religio-social hierarchy as follows:

(There are) four castes - Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras. Among these, each preceding (caste) is superior by birth to the one following. 50

This stanza clearly states the principle that a varṇa of a Hindu is determined in terms of his biological birth and natural heredity, and also the status of a Hindu in the religio-social hierarchical social order is determined by that birth. Fixing a varṇa of a Hindu by birth and natural heredity seems to be a significant contribution of the Dharmaśāstras in the development and solidification of the caste system.

In the foregoing discussion, we have shown the role of the Dharmaśāstras in the development of the social order. They specifically prescribed duties for each varṇa in order to run Hindu society properly. They reinforced the principle of varṇa in terms of the natural birth of a Hindu. They contributed to the solidification of the religio-social

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<sup>50</sup> Apastamba's Aphorisms on the Sacred Laws of the Hindus, tr. G. Buhler, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, I.i.1.3-4.

hierarchy by vindicating the religio-social status of the Brāhmaṇas in terms of their birth. As the Dharmaśāstras determined the social and religious status of a Hindu in terms of his birth in a social order which is religiously and socially hierarchical, the result of this doctrine would be (i) social separation or exclusion of one varṇa or caste from another, (ii) emphasis on one's rights and privileges rather than duties, and (iii) social immobility and rigidity.

### (3) Social Order in the Bhagavadgītā

We first dealt with the contribution of the Dharmaśāstras to the development of social order because their line of thought was in accord with the Brāhmaṇas which are generally supposed to be composed before the Upaniṣads. Having dealt with the contribution of the Dharmaśāstras, we will proceed to examine the position of the Bhagavadgītā which seems to take a different position from that of the Dharmaśāstras and which seems to take a position more in line with the Upaniṣads which are generally supposed to be composed after the Brāhmaṇas.

The Gītā which is included in the Smṛti texts has occupied a special position among Hindu scriptures. It was shown in the last chapter that the Gītā is sometimes given an equal status with the four Vedas (Śruti).<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> vide, pp. 80f.

Therefore, the Gītā's ideas about social order must be considered to be important. Moreover, St. Jñāneśvar gives the Gītā a position higher than the Veda<sup>52</sup> and Ṭīlak follows Jñāneśvar in this.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the Gītā's ideas about social order are important for us.

The Gītā explains how the four-fold social order came into being in these words:

I [the Blessed Lord] have created the four varṇas (cāturvarṇyaṁ) according to the division of aptitude and action (or functions) (guṇakarma-vibhāgāṣaḥ).... 54

According to the Gītā, the four-fold social order called cāturvarṇyaṁ or varṇa vyavasthā is formed on the basis of divisions of karma (i.e. duties or functions) and guṇas (i.e. qualities, aptitude, or strand). In the Gītā's theory of social order we find a combination of the karma and guṇa theories which were held by the Upaniṣads and which we have discussed earlier.

The Gītā elsewhere talks about the four varṇas and their duties and qualities:

Of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras, O Paraṁtapa, the duties are distributed according to the Strands [guṇas] which prevail in the nature

<sup>52</sup> vide, pp. 80f.

<sup>53</sup> vide, pp. 119ff.

<sup>54</sup> BG. iv.13.



of each [svabhāvaprabhava].

Quietude, self-restraint, austerity, cleanness, longsuffering, and uprightness, knowledge, experience, and belief, are the Brāhmaṇa's duties [karma], born of his nature [svabhāvajaṁ].

Bravery, spirit, constancy, adroitness, and courage to face the foe, generosity and lordliness, are the Kṣatriya's duties [karma], born of his nature.

Tilling the soil, herding cows, and commerce, are the Vaiśya's duties [karma], born of his nature; and of a Śūdra service is the proper duty, born of his nature [svabhāvajaṁ]. 55

In these verses, the Gītā repeats its theory that the four-fold social order is due to the divisions of karma and guṇas. As the Gītā tries to reaffirm the guṇa-karma theory about the social order, it follows the Upaniṣadic philosophical trend.

It seems that the Gītā does not subscribe to the view that varṇa is determined by birth,<sup>56</sup> the view held by the Dharmaśāstras. Therefore, it differs from the Dharmaśāstras in a significant way on the issue of the proper social order. The Gītā is a part of the Mahābhārata and the Gītā seems to share the general view of the Mahābhārata on this issue. The Mahābhārata holds a theory that not birth, but virtuous life, makes one a Brāhmaṇa:

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<sup>55</sup> BG. xviii. 41-44, tr. W.D.P. Hill, The Bhagavad-gītā (2nd ed., Madras: Oxford University Press, 1969).

<sup>56</sup> A Source Book in Indian Philosophy, ed. S. Radhakrishnan and C.A. Moore, p. 119.

I certainly consider you [butcher] even now as a Brahmin, because a Brahmin who is proud and does wrong and follows evil practices, is not better than a Śūdra. The Śūdra who has dharma, truth, and self-control, I take to be a Brahmin. A man becomes a Brahmin by his deeds; bad deeds drive him to a terrible doom. 57

In these verses, emphasis is on qualities rather than on birth. The Gītā's guna-karma theory seems to be in accord not only with the Upaniṣads but also with the Mahābhārata.

#### B) Actual Social Order of Hindu Society

According to the Hindu scriptures, Hindu society should have been divided into four fundamental orders (varṇas) and the existing social groups should be classified under the four fundamental orders. But this is not carried out in practice because in fact Hindu society has hundreds of groups and it includes groups which are considered asprśya or untouchable which were nowhere part of the theory. As the untouchable castes claim to be Hindus, they form a fifth fundamental order of Hindu society. This means that Hindu society seems to be actually divided into five fundamental social categories. As Hinduism recognizes only four fundamental categories and does not recognize the fifth category in theory, they would remain outside the fold of Hinduism as Śūdras remained outside the fold of

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<sup>57</sup>The Mahābhārata, tr. P. Lal (Calcutta: the translator, 1974), III. 216. 13-15.

the Āryan twice-born (dvijas) society.<sup>58</sup>

Hindu society is actually divided into many castes. The problem of how the hundreds of groups called jātis came into being has been discussed by many scholars without arriving at an agreed conclusion. Some scholars attempt to explain the phenomenon by a theory called the traditional theory of caste or Hindu theory of caste.<sup>59</sup> According to the traditional theory the caste system (jāti vyavasthā) emerged out of the traditional four-fold theory (cāturvarṇa vyavasthā). This theory seems to be helpful to the extent that it throws light on the problem of why the actual system has some features of the theoretical system. The caste system, like the varṇa system, is hierarchical. The Brāhmaṇas are on the top,<sup>60</sup> but the untouchables rather than the Śūdras are on the lowest rung.<sup>61</sup> The principle of

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<sup>58</sup>L. Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications, tr. M. Sainsbury (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 68.

<sup>59</sup>R. Guenon, Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines, tr. M. Pallis (London: Luza & Co., 1945); A.K. Coomarswamy, Hinduism and Buddhism (New York: Philosophical Library, 1943); Bhagavan Das, The Science of Social Organization or the Laws of Manu in the Light of Atmavidya (Adhyar: Theosophical Pub. Society, 1933-35), vol. 2.

<sup>60</sup>L. Dumont, op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>61</sup>(Eds.) A. de Reuck & J. Knight, Caste and Race: Comparative Approaches (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), pp. 10, 20-21; L. Dumont, op. cit., p. 47.

jāti-dharma (i.e. doing one's caste-duty) is similar to the 'svadharma' of the varṇa vyavasthā in the sense that these principles have religious connotations rather than purely economic ones.<sup>62</sup> The caste system, like the varṇa vyavasthā, divides society into different groups and keeps them separate from each other by rules and yet at the same time it asks the groups to work together towards the common goal of the wellbeing of all.<sup>63</sup>

While the caste system seems to have derived these features from the varṇa vyavasthā, the caste system also has its distinctive feature: a birth criterion. According to this arrangement the jāt or jāti (caste) of every individual is solely and permanently determined by his biological birth and heredity,<sup>64</sup> irrespective of his good and bad qualities (guṇas). As the jāti vyavasthā is based solely on birth and heredity it is characterized by the rigidity with which it divides the society into birth-ascribed groups. It strictly separates one caste from another by restrictions such as endogamy, commensality, and traditional or inherited occupations.<sup>65</sup> In addition, as the jāti vyavasthā is rigidly

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<sup>62</sup>(Eds.) A. de Reuck and J. Knight, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>63</sup>L. Dumont, op. cit., pp. 9, 92.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>65</sup>J. H. Hutton, Caste in India, Its Nature, Function, and Origin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), p. 49.

hierarchical, it stands for social inequality, it extends the Dharmśāstras' regulations by insisting on the non-admittance of the lower castes into temples, and the total prohibition of the learning of scriptures by the lower castes.<sup>66</sup>

The jāti vyavasthā, even if it has evolved out of the varṇa vyavasthā, has a distinctive emphasis on birth and heredity. Scholars point out a difference of emphasis between varṇa vyavasthā and jāti vyavasthā. P.V. Kane observes that the jāti vyavasthā lays all emphasis on birth and heredity; and it tends to create the attitude of clinging to rights and privileges without fulfilling duties corresponding to the privileges and rights.<sup>67</sup> L. Dumont agrees with Kane<sup>68</sup> and says, "heredity is more important than function, which is true of caste but not of the varṇa"<sup>69</sup> and again says, "the feature [of the varṇa vyavasthā] which most contrasts with the caste-system is perhaps the stress laid on function rather than birth."<sup>70</sup> Thus Kane and Dumont point out a

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<sup>66</sup>G.S. Gurye, Caste, Class and Occupation (Bombay: Popular Book Depot, 1961), pp. 2ff.

<sup>67</sup>P.V. Kane, op. cit., I, part 1, pp. 54f.

<sup>68</sup>L. Dumont, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

difference of emphasis in the varṇa vyavasthā and the jāti vyavasthā.

C) The Maratha Saints and Social Order

We first studied the position of the Śruti - Vedic Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads, and of the Smṛti - Dharma-sāstras and the Gītā on the social order and their contribution to the development of the ideas of the social order. We then studied the jāti vyavasthā which seems to have evolved out of the theory of the varṇa vyavasthā and saw a difference of emphasis between the varṇa vyavasthā and the jāti vyavasthā. The Marāṭhā saints had these scriptural traditions (i.e. Śruti and Smṛti literature) in front of them and were confronted with the actual caste system and its social and religious effects on the life of Hindus. We must now proceed to examine how the Marāṭhā saints interpreted the Hindu scriptures on this matter and how they thought about the caste system and its practical implications. Let us begin with Jñāneśvar, the founder of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya.<sup>71</sup>

(1) St. Jñāneśvar and Social Order

We have already shown that the Gītā explains the four-fold social order in terms of the guṇa-karma theory. Jñāneśvar's commentary on the same crucial verses of the

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<sup>71</sup>M.G. Panse, op. cit., p. 149.

Gītā (xviii. 41-44) will serve to give us his ideas of the social order. In his commentary on the Gītā xviii.41, he talks about the cāturvarṇa vyavasthā as follows:

Among the four varṇas, the Brāhmaṇas are head (mukhya) and foremost (dhurece). The other two are the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas; they also should be respected (mānī) as the Brāhmaṇas are respected (brāhmaṇānci māniḥ); they are worthy (yogya) because they (too) have the right to do Vedic rites (vaidikavidhāni). O Dhananjay, the fourth is the Sūdra varṇa; this varṇa has certainly (kīr) no access (lāg) to the Vedas. However, his vṛtti (i.e. conduct, profession) is (rather) dependent on the three other varṇas. The Sūdras became the fourth varṇa because they were close (javaḷika) to the three varṇas - Brāhmaṇas and others - due to their profession (vṛtticiyā). The Śruti accepts the Sūdras because they are with the twice-born (dvijasāṅge) just as a noble man accepts (turaṁbiḥ, lit. smells) the threads (tāntu) because it is with the flowers. O Pārtha, this is the order (vyavasthā) of four varṇas.... 72

In these verses, Jñāneśvar seems to acknowledge the prominence of the Brāhmaṇas in society. The religio-social prominence of the Brāhmaṇas, as already shown, had been set forth by the Dharmaśāstras in particular. The Dharmaśāstras have made the Brāhmaṇas superior to the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas - varṇas which were also of Āryan origin - by emphasizing the distinctive privileges of the Brāhmaṇas over the other varṇas and also by ascribing religious significance to being born in the Brāhmaṇa caste. As Jñāneśvar acknowledges the prominence of the Brāhmaṇas, a question

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<sup>72</sup> Jñ. xviii. 818-823.

arises whether he endorses the entire position of the Dharmaśāstras on this matter. In his commentary, cited above, he does not say that the Brāhmaṇas are superior to the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas and does not ask for special treatment of the Brāhmaṇas. He rather says that the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas should be respected as the Brāhmaṇas are respected. This seems to mean that they have more or less equal respect (mān). He thus differs from the position taken by the Dharmaśāstras in enhancing the religio-social position of the Brāhmaṇas over other varṇas.

In the quotation, cited above, Jñāneśvar argues for equal respect to the three upper varṇas on the basis of their having a common right to do the Vedic rites. He seems to find here a common ground of social unity. He, therefore, differs from the Dharmaśāstras which sought grounds for justifying the distinctive privileges of each varṇa and the consequent separation and exclusion of one varṇa from another. Jñāneśvar's exploring the common ground of social unity implies his intention of unifying society rather than maintaining strict social divisions. His intention of unifying society becomes even more clear when he says that the Śūdras should be included in the varṇa vyavasthā. In his commentary, mentioned above, he says that according to the Śruti the Śūdras are accepted into society



because of their closeness (javalika) to the twice-born, even though they have no access to the Vedas. Jñāneśvar's emphasis is on the acceptance of the Śūdras rather than their being treated as a separate and isolated group. He seems to differ sharply from the Dharmaśāstras on the question of the treatment of the Śūdras.

Jñāneśvar reaffirms the Gītā's guṇa-karma theory of social order when he adds in his comments on the Gita xviii.41:

Prakṛti, which resides in the Self, has three qualities (guṇas) - sattva and other guṇas. It has divided four duties (karme) among the four varṇas.... The guṇas of Prakṛti have divided (velhāvani) duties of the four varṇas. The sattva guṇa, in its various divisions (saminaniminbhāgi, lit. equal and unequal divisions), has appointed (niyogi) both the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas. The Vaiśyas are due to the mixture of sattva and rajas and the Śūdras are due to the mixture rajas and tamas guṇas. O enlightened one, know that four-fold (caturvarṇadhā) order is made for human beings (prāṇivṛndā) by guṇas. 73

In these verses, Jñāneśvar explains how the four varṇas came into being out of the mixture of the three guṇas of Prakṛti and says that four duties were divided among four varṇas according to the guṇas of Prakṛti. His reference to the four duties of the four varṇas has to be understood as the three common duties - yajan, adhyayana, and dāna - of the twice-born and serving the three varṇas as a duty of the Śūdras.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Jñ. xviii. 825-830.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., xiii. 883f.

Here he seems to emphasize again the common grounds of social unity rather than the specific duties of each varṇa which tend to divide society. Jñāneśvar's intention of emphasizing the common ground was pointed out before.

In the verses, cited above, Jñāneśvar affirms the Gītā's theory that the social order is based on the division of the three guṇas of Prakṛti and on the division of duties according to the guṇas. He reaffirms this theory of the social order when he comments on the Gītā iv.13, as follows:

Now, understand thus that I (Kṛṣṇa) created the four varṇas according to the division of the guṇas (aptitudes) and karma (duties or actions). The duties were assigned (vivañcile, lit. explained) on the basis of Prakṛti and the mixture (vyabhicāre) of the guṇas. 75

Jñāneśvar goes on emphasizing the qualities of each varṇa, as the Gītā does, in his commentary on verses xviii. 42-44.<sup>76</sup> In brief, he follows the Gītā's theory of social order, viz. the guṇa-karma theory, very closely.

As Jñāneśvar upholds the Gītā's theory of social order, he seems to differ from the theory of the Dharmaśāstras about social order, viz. varṇa by janma (birth), as we discussed before that the Gītā differs from the Dharmaśāstras on this problem.

<sup>75</sup> Jñ. iv. 77-78.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., xviii. 833-884.

As Jñāneśvar upholds the guṇa-karma theory of social order, he does, of course, recognize the distinctions among the varṇas. Even though he recognizes such distinctions, however, he does not regard them as absolute for he considers bhaktimārga (i.e. way of devotion) to be a religious means to level all such distinctions. Commenting on the Gītā ix.32, he argues:

As long as brooks and water-streams do not reach the Ganges, (they are different); when they reach it they become identical with the Ganges (gaṅgārūp). Are not Khair [a kind of tree] and sandal considered to be different (vivañcanā) woods until they are put together in fire? Similarly, the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Sūdras, low-born (aṅtaja), women, and others are considered to be different castes (jāti), until they have reached me. When they are united (minale) with me by their faith (bhāv), their differences as castes and individuals are dissolved (biṅdule), even as the salt dissolves when it is put into an ocean. 77

In these verses, Jñāneśvar seems to think of the bhaktimārga as a way of dissolving social distinctions including not only the four varṇas but also the distinction between out-caste and caste, and man and woman as well. This seems to mean that the bhaktimārga is intended to create a spirit in which social distinctions are forgotten and all feel part of a common society under a common deity. His actual intention of uniting the different castes under the umbrella

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<sup>77</sup> Jñ. ix. 458-461.

of bhaktimārga becomes clear when he asks people to give up the practices which cause social isolation and dissension:

Do not give up faith (bhāv) but give up doubts (saṅdeh) and always cry (tāho phoḍi) in the name of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. (Discard ideas) of caste (jāt), wealth, family (got), ancestry (kul), character, and reputation, and worship (God), being filled with (pious) feelings (bhāvanāyukta). Jñāneśvar has Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in his mind [therefore] he abides in the world of God (vaikuṅṭha). 78

Jñāneśvar repeats the idea of giving up pride in caste and pride in knowledge, and provides a religious rationale for his argument when he comments on the Gītā ix. 31-32:

Neither purity of family (kul) nor noble birth (abhi jātya) is required. Why should we bear the burden of knowledge in vain? If they have no devotion (bhāv), (everything of theirs) becomes meaningless (pālhāl).... They might be born in sinful families (pāpayoni), they might be stupid (srutadhita), but if they are devoted to me entirely (sarvabhāve), they do not lack (tuṭi nāhī) when they are compared with me.... Actually (Pralhād) was born in the family of a daitya (barbarian) but Indra could not excel him. Therefore, devotion excels; and caste (jāti) is not a standard (apramāṇ) [in judging an individual]. 79

In these verses, Jñāneśvar argues that people should not be proud of the purity of their family line, of being born in the upper castes (viz. noble birth), of having knowledge,

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<sup>78</sup> Haripāṭh 24. 2-4, Śri Śāntārām Mahārāj, Haripāṭh Praveś (Bombay: Śri Jñāneś' Bhaktabhaj Prakāśan, 1963).

<sup>79</sup> Jñ. ix. 431-452.

and of having the worldly things which give them a sense of superiority over others. He tells them to give up these matters of pride because they are worthless if possessors of them have no devotion (bhāv). He tells them that God takes into account the devotion (bhāv) of His devotees only, and He does not think of the other factors which are responsible for giving superior status to people. He goes on to tell the people that in the sight of God a person who is born in a lower caste and has devotion (bhāv) can excel another person born in an upper caste. He then emphatically argues that devotion (bhakti) is the only standard of excellence, not caste (jāti):

Therefore, family (kul), caste (jāti), and social order (varṇa) and all these (avagheci) are not instrumental (akāraṇ). O Arjuna, attaining my being (māzapan) is the only fulfillment (sārthak) (of life). 80

Commenting on these verses, a Marāṭhā writer says that this kind of thinking is non-conformist (bandākhori) in a manner of speaking for it opposes a traditional idea (parampārik vicār).<sup>81</sup> The traditional idea, as shown in our discussion about the Dharmaśāstras, was that the socio-religious worth of an individual was determined in terms of his birth in a

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<sup>80</sup> Jñ. ix. 456.

<sup>81</sup> N.N. Relekar, H.V. Inamdar, N.D. Mirajkar, eds., op. cit., p. 751.

hierarchical caste system. In the verses cited above, Jñāneśvar says that devotion (bhāv) is the only criterion for judging the worth of an individual and all devotees, irrespective of their castes, can attain the same spiritual status.

From the foregoing discussion, we can conclude that Jñāneśvar differs from the teachings of the Dharmaśāstras on the following issues. First, it was shown that the Dharmaśāstras vindicate the highest social position of the Brāhmaṇas because of their birth, ritualistic purity, and their scriptural knowledge; the Dharmaśāstras assign the lowest position to the Śūdras because of their birth, ritualistic impurity, and their lack of Vedic knowledge. They seem to consider the social hierarchy to be an outward form of the religious condition of individuals. In short, they uphold the theory according to which birth is the sole basis of social order. But Jñāneśvar differs from the Dharmaśāstras because he upholds the guṇa-karma theory of social order rather than the janma theory. Because of the guṇa-karma theory, Jñāneśvar also differs from the Dharmaśāstras on the other issues referred to above. He does not ascribe importance to being born in the upper castes or to having scriptural knowledge as far as liberation (mukti or sārthak) is concerned. He argues that a Śūdra can excel

an upper caste person in religious worth. In other words, for Jñāneśvar, social inferiority is not an expression of inherent religious condition and social superiority is not necessarily expressive of religious superiority. He thus distinguishes between social position and religious condition. Secondly, Jñāneśvar differs from the teachings of the Dharmaśāstras because he ascribes more importance to bhāv (devotion) than to birth. As he argues that bhāv is the only criterion in judging the religious worth of man, he seems to be inclined towards relativizing the rigid hierarchical caste system. Because of this inclination, he differs from the Dharmaśāstras on other social concerns. He emphasizes the common ground of social unity rather than special privileges and strict social divisions. He sees bhakti as a religious force which levels all social distinctions and creates a spirit in which social distinctions are forgotten and all feel part of a homogenous society under a common deity.

These differences, which Jñāneśvar held with the teaching of the Dharmaśāstras, seem to have appealed to the people belonging to the lower castes and particularly to the untouchable castes. The Vārkarī Sampradāya gained devotees from all castes, creeds, and sexes. Its doors were open to anyone. Many of the devotees eventually became

saints of the Saṃpradāya. Some of the saints were from castes traditionally grouped under the Śūdra varṇa, e.g. Gorā Kuṃbhār (A.D. 1267-1317), Sāṃvatā Mālī (A.D. 1350-1395), and Narahari Sonār (died in A.D. 1313).<sup>82</sup> Some of the saints were even from the castes traditionally grouped under the untouchables, e.g. Visobā Khecar (died in A.D. 1309), Cokhāmeḷā Mahār (died in A.D. 1333), Rohidās Cāmbhār, etc. Some of the saints were women, e.g. Muktabāī (A.D. 1279-1297), Janābāī (died in A.D. 1350), Nirmalā, and Kānhopātrā, etc. Some of the saints were even Muslims, e.g. Sajan Kasāi, Dādu Piñjāri, Sheikh Mahamud.<sup>83</sup> Thus the Vārkarī Saṃpradāya in actual practice opened the door of liberation to people of whatever caste, creed, and sex.<sup>84</sup> Secondly, the Vārkarī Saṃpradāya gave canonical status to the writings of the saints who belonged to the lower castes and even the untouchable castes. Recognizing the sainthood of devotees belonging to the lowest castes and giving canonical status to their writings was a very radical step

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<sup>82</sup>N.K. Behare, The Background of Maratha Renaissance in the 17th Century (Bangalore: Bangalore Press, 1946), p. 115.

<sup>83</sup>L.R. Paṅgārkar, Śri Tukārām Caritra (2nd ed., Bombay: K.B. Dhavle, 1926), p. 198.

<sup>84</sup>'Mahārāṣṭrātil Sprśykr̥t Asprasyatānivāraṇce Prayatna', the Kesari, 16 July 1929, Sār Saṅgrah arthāt Kesarice Chote Phāil (Pune: Kesari Marāṭhā Trust, 1929), p. 316.



to take at a time when Hindu society, dominated and led by the Brāhmaṇas, denied all religious rights to the lowest castes, including entering temples, reading Hindu scriptures, and writing on religious matters. The stand of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya was taken in order to extend the right of religious pursuit to those who were socially neglected and degraded, to give them education and to uplift them socially. In other words, the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, through the teaching of the Bhāgavat Dharma, brought about a modification of the position set forth in the Dharmaśāstras.

We have summarized above how Jñāneśvar differed from the Dharmaśāstras on the major issues about social order and we have also shown how the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya attempted to modify the position set down in the Dharmaśāstras. Now we should proceed to examine Jñāneśvar's teachings about ordained social duties (svadharma).

Jñāneśvar, in his commentary on the Gītā xviii.41, takes a position similar to that of the Gītā, in holding that the varṇa dharma (i.e. socio-religious duties of the varṇas) is divided on the basis of the guṇas of Prakṛti:

Prakṛti has three guṇas namely, sattva and the other guṇas. It has divided the duties among the four varṇas. As a father assigns (duties) to his sons, as the sun divided the road for the travellers, and as a lord assigns different duties to his servants, so the guṇas of Prakṛti have divided the duties among the four varṇas. 85

In these verses, Jñāneśvar says that the duties are divided on the basis of the guṇas of Prakṛti. He differs from the Dharmaśāstras on this issue because he does not accept the view that duties are determined by birth (janma).

Jñāneśvar exhorts people to verify their duties and to discharge them, when he comments on the Gītā xviii. 45:

It is proper for rain to mingle with the water of a river and it is proper for the river to merge with an ocean. Similarly, the duties assigned to varṇa and āśrama (varṇāśramavāse) should be (properly) discharged. (It is as natural) as white colour of white body. These naturally ordained duties (svabhāvavihita karma) should be verified by the scriptures which set criteria (pramā) for day-to-day conduct. 86

Jñāneśvar here exhorts the reader to discharge the natural duties spontaneously as the river merges with an ocean naturally. This implies that there is no necessity of external force to enforce duties. Jñāneśvar differs from the Dharmaśāstras which asked the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas to force the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras to do their duties.

Jñāneśvar's emphasis on discharging one's ordained duties (svadharma) is also found in his commentary on the Gita iii.10:

I (Kṛṣṇa) have ordained your duties (svadharma) according to your specific varṇa. If you follow

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<sup>86</sup> Jñ. xviii. 886-888.

(upāsā) them, your desire will automatically be fulfilled. [If you do not follow them] you need not do any self-imposed religious observances (vrata) or obligatory religious observances (niyam); you need not chastise your body or go to distant holy places. 87

These verses glorify discharging one's natural duties (svadharma) over other means, saying that if one does his ordained duties he need not follow other means of liberation. Jñāneśvar, like the Gītā ii.47, says that one should not abandon one's appointed duties but should do them disinterestedly (hetūvīṇ).<sup>88</sup> Jñāneśvar develops the principles of doing duties, called saṅkalpasamnyasa (i.e. renunciation of selfish desires) and brahmasamarpaṇa (i.e. dedication of actions and the fruit thereof to the deity) in the light of the teaching of the Gītā. These principles are discussed in the final chapter.<sup>89</sup> It suffices to say that Jñāneśvar develops his philosophy of action in accordance with the Gītā rather than in accordance with the Dharmaśāstras.

## (2) St. Tukārām and the Social Order

Tukārām talks about the origin and relativity of the varṇa vyavathā in the following poems:

<sup>87</sup>Jñ. iii. 88-89.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid. ii. 266.

<sup>89</sup>vide, pp. 317-319, 325.

I declare the secrets in the presence of saints. Listen to the actions (karme) ordained by the Vedas (vedavihit). The four varṇas sprang from One's body (ekāciye aṅgi), divided according to merits and sins (pāpapuṇya bhāgi). At the initial stage, there was no distinction (bhed) such as top (ādi), middle (maddhya), and bottom (aṅta). Mango, jujube, banian, and sandal are different in quality (guṇāguṇa) but they are one (viz. not different) (ek) for fire. Tukārām says, 'I shall observe duties prescribed by the Vedas (vidhi) as convenience (soy) until my mind escapes from the consciousness of personality and is swallowed up in the deity (man unman jo hoy)'. 90

Again,

God intervened and he completely removed (nivārilā) languor (śiṇ) of sacred and profane (śubha-aśubha). Individual self and God (jīvaśiva) played a children's game (bhātuke) and created this wonder (kautuk), the world here (yethe loke) which is an illusion (ābhāsa) and which is not eternal (anitya). The world is in fact filled with Viṣṇu (visṇumay jag). In this world, relationship (lāg) is made obligatory, and divisions are made (vāṭile); duties of varṇas (varṇadharmā) are like a play (kheḷ). All this is the texture (vin) of One only. Why then are there differences and non-difference (bhinnā-bhinna)? God Nārāyaṇa, who is the Puruṣa of the Vedas (vedapurūṣa), decided (nivāḍā kelā) so. Tukārām tested His grace (prasād), he is at His feet closely and he is not different from Him (navhe nirālā). 91

In these poems, Tukārām seems to be alluding to the Puruṣasukta hymn of the Rgveda because he refers to the Puruṣa of the Veda out of whom the varṇa vyavasthā came into being. He says that the different varṇas came out

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90. Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg, Śri Sakal Saṅt Gāthā,  
970.

91. Ibid., 210.

of the One. This means that Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, recognizes the religious basis of the varṇa vyavathā and the qualitative differences of the four varṇas which exist at present. He holds, however, that these differences are not absolute because they were not at the initial stage and they are not important to God as fire does not treat one kind of wood differently from another. Secondly, Tukārām says that the different varṇas are determined according to the balance of merit and sin (pāpapunya). The concept of pāpapunya is a popular expression of the karma theory. This means that Tukārām holds the view that the social order is explained in terms of the karma theory. Thirdly, Tukārām talks about the top, middle and bottom of the social order and thus seems to suggest that he accepts a view of social hierarchy. Finally, Tukārām says that he will do the prescribed duties only as convenience (soy) till his mind transcends and becomes one with the deity (man unman jo hoye). These are the main ideas about the social order in Tukārām's theology. Let us see how these ideas are elaborated.

Tukārām holds a hierarchical view of the social order. He talks about the hierarchical social order in the following poem:

The chief honour belongs to the one at the head;  
the rest are esteemed according to certain rules;

there is a scale, as when large and small vessels are arranged in a pyramid. Tukā says, Go on worshipping them; no one can be angry with you; they will diffuse light in their own proper place. 92

The word 'pyramid' implies an idea of hierarchical social order. Tukārām explains the hierarchical social order in terms of traditional philosophical theories, as follows:

Look, O God, what mankind are like, each differing according to his store of merit. No one resembles another; men show themselves pure or base. In each the five elements form a single heap; how the threads set them dancing! Tukā says, Each finds himself in a position according to his nature. 93

In this poem, Tukārām tells us that individual differences are due to one's merit or karma and each individual is made out of the five elements of (Prakṛti) which determine his nature. An individual's position in the social order is dependent on the kind of nature he has. In other words, Tukārām holds a view that the social order is to be explained in terms of the guṇa-karma theory. It seems that Tukārām agrees with Jñāneśvar about the basis of the social order.

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, also acknowledges the prominence of the Brāhmaṇas in society. It was already

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<sup>92</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K.B. Marathe, 1170.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 2960.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid. 1573.

shown, however, that Jñāneśvar does not consider the Brāhmaṇas to be superior because of their birth. Tukārām seems to agree with Jñāneśvar when he talks about who should be considered a Brāhmaṇa:

Listen to the Śruti; it says that he is not a Brāhmaṇa who does not like praise (kirtan) of the name of Hari and dancing of the devotees of Viṣṇu. In fact, [such a Brāhmaṇa] was conceived of his mother's adultery with a lowest person (aṅtaja)... Certainly consider him a Brāhmaṇa, even though he is born in the lowest caste (aṅtaja), who utters correctly the name of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa and remembers his brown form (sāvale rūp). He is characterized by inner peace, forgiveness, and mercy and shows courage at the time of praising god (abhaṅg prasaṅgī). A person who has given up six evil emotions-[passionate desire (kama), anger (krodha), pride (mada), temptation (moha), greed (lobha), and envy (matsara)] - is a real Brāhmaṇa. 95

In this poem, Tukārām argues that religious qualities make a person a true Brāhmaṇa, whatever be his caste by birth, and a person born in the Brāhmaṇa caste should be considered a low person if he has no religious qualities. This means that religious qualities (gunas) rather than biological birth are the criteria of the ideal social order, according to Tukārām. Tukārām's emphasis on religious qualities and especially on devotion as a criterion of the social order becomes clear to us when he defines who is twice-born (dviija):

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<sup>95</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 848-849.

He who delights in reciting the name of God  
(Harināma) is very pure (śuci). He who meditates  
on the name of God is the twice-born (dviija)... 96

On the same religious basis, Tukārām condemns a Brāhmaṇa  
because of lack of devotion and praises a low born person  
because of it:

Shame on a Brāhmaṇa who is void of devotion  
[abhakta]. Blessed is the Vaishnava who is a  
Chamar [cobbler]; his image [kul yāti, i.e. family  
and caste] is pure [śuddha] on both sides. So the  
Purāṇas have decreed [nivāḍā jālāse]; this is not  
a private opinion of my own. Tukā says, Cursed  
be their self-conceit [thorapaṇā, i.e. greatness];  
may I never behold a bad man [durjana] of that kind.

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In short, Tukārām uses the guṇa-karma theory to explain the  
ideal social order; he does not consider birth a determining  
factor in an individual's position in the ideal social  
order. He is in general accord with Jñāneśvar on these  
matters.

We have already shown that Jñāneśvar does not justify  
the special privileges of the twice-born but rather empha-  
sizes the common rights of all with a view to unifying  
society. Tukārām again follows Jñāneśvar when he similarly  
emphasizes the common rights of all people:

He who talks of castes (yāti) of devotees of  
Viṣṇu falls into hell (kuṁbhapāki). The Vedas

<sup>96</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 1062. 1-2.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 755, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe, The Poems of Tukārāma 946.



and the Purāṇas declare that these faults (duṣaṇe) are not true in the case of the devotees of Hari. They are dear to Nārāyaṇa; one should not talk of them belonging to higher and lower varṇa. All four varṇas have a right (adhikār). When they start worshipping God their defects (doṣ) go away. It is like the fact that a śāligrām [i.e. consecrated black stone] is not called a stone because it becomes respectable to all.... Those who are devoted to the name of Rāma become themselves like gods (devarūp). 98

Again,

The essence of all scriptures, the bursting forth (gavhar) of the Veda, and the idea (vicār) of the Purāṇas is that the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Cāṇḍālas, children, men and women, prostitutes and all have the right (adhikār). Tukārām says, "I have experienced the fact that many devoted people experience bliss (sukh). 99

In these poems, Tukārām talks of a common right, acknowledged and emphasized by bhaktimārga, to worship God and to work out liberation. He also says in one of the poems that devotees of God do not belong to any varṇa because they transcend caste limitations when they worship God. Tukārām goes on describing how the bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya makes devotees forget their differences:

They play on the sandy banks of the river (vālvaṅṭi); the devotees of Viṣṇu dance speedily; they have forgotten anger and pride; one prostrates to another.... They are merged in contemplation (samādhi); they seem to be foolish to other people. To devotees (siddhasādhaka), a

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<sup>98</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 3354.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 808. 4-6.

learned person, a scholar, a yogi, and a great soul are identical (ekaci). They have forgotten pride in varṇa and in caste (yāti); one prostrates to another.... Tukārām says that the way of liberation is made easy. 100

Tukārām repeats the idea in other poems, like this:

We have forgotten our castes and the four varṇas became one. They have become one by the bliss of Kṛṣṇa; they will certainly play childish games. 101

Tukārām elaborates this idea saying that God does not observe distinctions such as social status, profession, and caste:

With thee...there is no distinction; kings and clowns are equal at the feet of God. 102

Again,

Here prince and peasant are alike; there is no difference of person in your home. 103

Or,

The Lord (Bhagavaṅta) does not consider whether (His devotee) belongs to either high or low caste; He stands in front of him seeing the devotion of His devotee (bhāvabhakta). He ate broken kernels of rice given by Vidur; He protected Pralhad at

<sup>100</sup> Sri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 3707.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 3824. 7-8.

<sup>102</sup> The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe, 1439.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 521.

the house of the daitya; He tanned hides with Rohidas; He wove scarfs on the loom of Kabir; He sold beef with Sajan, a butcher; he mowed grass with Savata, a gardener; He blew fire with Narahari, a goldsmith; He dragged away dead animals with Cokhamela.... He fetched clay with Gora, a potter. 104

In these poems, Tukārām says that God treats everybody equally, irrespective of the devotees' caste and traditional profession. In the last poem, he refers to a string of devotees whose names are mentioned in the Purāṇas and who also were the earlier saints of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya. Many of the saints of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, mentioned in the list, were from lower castes and even outcastes. This means that people of the lower castes and the outcastes were saved by God because of their devotion. Tukārām depicts God as having a special interest in saving the people of the low castes:

My faults (doṣ) could not be corrected by whatever I did. Finally I embraced your feet. Why can he not accept me? Is Pāṇḍuraṅg cruel? He has given bliss (pad vaikunṭhice) to the one who has not heard the Vedas because of his being born in the lower caste. Tukārām says, "Why did you oblige me? Why did you carry this burden on your head? 105

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<sup>104</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 1135. 1-5.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 1849.

Tukārām's emphasis on God's special concern for the people of the lower castes and the outcastes and his emphasis on the equal religious rights of all seem to constitute an idea similar to the argument of Jñāneśvar that the twice-born have common rights and that the Śruti accepts the Śūdras in the Āryan community so that they are not excluded from the right of religious pursuit.

We have already shown that Jñāneśvar exhorts people to give up pride of caste, profession, and of knowledge, and other matters which are responsible for social dissension, social separation and isolation. Tukārām follows Jñāneśvar in this when he says:

Glory, princely power, and wealth let us renounce,  
 ... Let us first secure our true welfare; this is  
 what the rules of conduct enjoin on us. Pride of  
 caste or lineage, worldly honour we should  
 renounce. 106

Tukārām exhorts people to give up pride in caste and family because they are a delusion:

Pride in varna, caste, and family are like a  
 mirage (mṛgajal); it is a childish play (bhātuke)  
 played by young girls (kumāri); is that game  
 real? 107

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<sup>106</sup> The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe, 3496.

<sup>107</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 1776.2.

Tukārām is critical of the Brāhmaṇas in this matter, as he says:

Panḍit, a scholar in Vedas, or a man of high learning (daśgrāṅhī) cannot excel Tukārām. Even though they regularly read the Gītā, Purāṇas, and other scriptures, they cannot understand the real meaning (varma). The Brāhmaṇas are badly affected (nāḍle) by pride in rituals (karma abhimāne) and in varṇa (varṇa abhimāne)... Tukārām is not like them in his job; he is devoted to Viṭhobā. 108

He condemns people full of pride (garvaśiromaṇi), calling them Cāṇḍals (i.e. lowest born people) in the three worlds.<sup>109</sup> Tukārām asks people to give up pride in caste and other matters and follow bhaktimārga, giving his own example:

Tukā says, Shunning the pride of caste and learning, I seek the protection of the saints. 110

Again,

Give up the dispute about differences and attain bliss (paramānaṅd) by one faith (bhāve). Life goes away gradually and ask soon what is (our) welfare (hit). Tukārām says, 'devotion is the name of liberation and he who is without devotion (dūṣaṅ) is a hypocrite (daṁbh), leading a wild life (nāgavi)'. 111

<sup>108</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 3352. 1-4.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 3329.

<sup>110</sup> The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe, 2443 cf. 1358.

<sup>111</sup> Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 2474.1-3.

It has already been shown that Jñāneśvar lays a special emphasis on devotion and religious qualities and considers that caste is no criterion (jāti apramāṇ).

Tukārām seems to follow Jñāneśvar when he says:

He is devilish by nature, merciless in heart, and cruel in mind. Caste (yāti) and family (kul) are not criteria (apramāṇ) herein; this is due to his natural qualities (guṇāce...aṅgi). 112

Tukārām's emphasis on bhāv rather than on caste becomes very clear when he says:

If an onion springs up on a pediment for the tulsi it pleases thee not, O Govinda, whatever we do for it. So too, men void of devotion, though born in high ranks, we should look on as demons, as the scentless core of the ketaka flower. Tuka says, A maggot in a piece of sandal wood will never be placed on God's forehead. 113

Tukārām's emphasis on bhāv as the only means and criterion becomes clear when he says:

Why do you worship stone images, brass images, and eight-metal images? Without devotion (bhāvevin) they are nothing. Bhāv and only bhāv is the means of liberation; it is thus said. What would a rosary do, if you often think of pleasure? What would a learned speech do? It would be only a great pride of letters. What would skillful singing do if the mind is impure (maḷiṇ)? Tukārām says, 'If you serve God without devotion (bhāv), you would not be worthy [of being accepted] by God, even if you do these things'. 114

112, Sri Tukārām Maṅārājānce Abhaṅg 195. 1-2.

113, The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe, 3497.

114, Sri Tukārām Maṅārājānce Abhaṅg 1142.

In short, Tukārām seems to consider bhāv as the only criterion of an individual's worth in the sight of God. This means that Tukārām follows Jñāneśvar.

It was shown earlier that Tukārām teaches people that God does not observe social distinction and he considers bhaktimārga as a means of forgetting social distinctions. He exhorts the devotees not to observe such differences because such an observance is unholy (amaṅgal) and despising anyone is contrary to the conviction that God pervades all:

According to the religion of devotees of Viṣṇu, the world is filled with Viṣṇu (viṣṇumay jag) [therefore] observing difference is unholy (amaṅgal). O devotees of the Bhāgavat religion, listen and practise the truth (in daily life). This is the secret (varma) of the worship of the Lord that you should not despise (matsar) anyone. Tukārām says, "We are parts of one body; we experience the happiness and pain of others". 115

Tukārām gives another reason why a devotee should not observe differences:

He, who knows by experience that the world is in reality God, feels God nearby him and his sins are destroyed because of that vision (darśane). Desires and anger do not attack him because he sees equality (samatā) in all beings. Tukārām says, "A dispute about differences is over for him". 116

115' Sri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 21.

116 Ibid., 1038.

From the foregoing discussion about Tukārām's ideas of social order, we can conclude that Tukārām closely follows Jñāneśvar in developing his ideas on social matters.

Finally, we should examine Tukārām's position on svadharma. Tukārām emphasizes discharging svadharma thus:

Your proper course is to ask nothing of him; to do the work appointed you to do - provided it is not done through any sort of desire. Tukā says, Devotion will carry you to the goal, if you keep your soul intent on service alone. 117

However, svadharma in Tukārām's theology is not in itself important if it is not grounded in devotion to God:

The performance of prescribed duties, apart from God, is like the pliant smoothness of a reptile's skin. Tukā says, If you are wanting in devotion, you are truly unfortunate. 118

As Tukārām emphasizes disinterested performance of svadharma as a devotee, he seems to follow Jñāneśvar in this case also.

We have attempted, in the foregoing discussion, to show how Tukārām's theology is similar to that of Jñāneśvar. It was already shown that Jñāneśvar differs from the Dharmaśāstras on many points. As Tukārām agrees with Jñāneśvar on most of those points, we can infer that Tukārām also differs from the Dharmaśāstras on those issues. As

<sup>117</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe, 3199.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., 3686.



Jñāneśvar was attempting to modify the position of the Dharmaśāstras, so too, we must conclude, was Tukārām. Jñāneśvar and Tukārām, the two best known Vārkarī saints, were no doubt attempting to modify the caste system by the way in which they taught the Bhāgavat Dharma in Mahārāṣṭra.

(3) The Samartha Rāmdās and the Social Order

Having dealt with how the Vārkarī saints interpreted Hindu scriptures and how they attempted to modify the caste system, we will now proceed to consider how Rāmdās interpreted the scriptures and how he thought of the caste system. It should be born in mind that Rāmdās was confronted both by the scriptural tradition and by the teachings of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya<sup>119</sup> which were widespread by his time.

One does not find Rāmdās commenting on either the Purūṣasukta of the Rgveda or the Gītā when he explains his position on the social order. Therefore, one has to construct Rāmdās' position on the social order from a variety of sayings in his works.

Rāmdās follows both the Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya systems in the way he explains the creation of the universe. Like a Vedantin he says:

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<sup>119</sup>W.S. Deming, Rāmdās and the Rāmdāsis (Calcutta: Association Press; London: New York: Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1928), pp. 32, 47.

The One has become many (udaṇḍ); though He has become many, He is still one. He bears His own hubub (gaibalā). Though He is one, He is divided (phuṭī jālī); though He is divided, He is one; the divided condition (vicitra kalā) is wide spread (paisāvali) in beings. 120

Rāmdās also explains the evolution of the universe in terms of the Sāṅkhya theory of the gunas:

The original māyā (mūlamāyā) was born of quality-less māyā (nirgunamāyā); māyā with qualities (gunamāyā) was born of the original māyā. The sattva guṇa was born of the māyā with qualities. The rajoḡuṇa was born of the sattva guṇa. The tamoḡuṇa was born of the rajoḡuṇa. Know that the sky (vyoma) was born of the tamoḡuṇa. Air (vāyu) was born of the sky, and light (teja) of the air, water (āpa) of the light, and earth (bhumaṇḍal) from the water. Rāmdās says, "These are declarations (vacane) of the scriptures. 121

Rāmdās adds that the diversity of forms is due to the gunas of māyā:

The Lord (Īśvara) had to create all these things (sakaḷ), therefore He made differences. When one looks above [to Brahman] he does not see the differences. The differences were necessary for creating the world (srṣṭi); the differences naturally do not exist when the world is destroyed (saṁhāre). The talk of difference and non-difference is due only to the gunas of māyā. 122

Rāmdās explains this diversity of forms and beings on the background of a spiritual oneness or unity, when he says:

<sup>120</sup> Dās. 15.v.8-9; cf. 15.viii. 12.

<sup>121</sup> Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg, ed. K.A. Jośi, 431; cf. Dās. 11.i.8f.

<sup>122</sup> Dās. 20.viii. 16-17.

One God resides in these beings - kings, poor people, Brahmā and other gods. He moves their sense-organs. He is called the Paramātmā.... People see different forms (lit. bodies) but the wise see what is in the bodies; the learned see them with the view of equanimity (samadarsan). 123

He continues explaining the phenomenon of One-and-many with reference to the Fire God (Vaiśvānara) and the Air God (Vāyu):

There are different varṇas and various other differences, but the fire is non-different (abheda) to all beings; it is non-different and highly purifying even to Brahmā and the other gods. The creation is sustained by fire; people cook (dhāle) because of fire; the great and the small are all living (jyāle) because of fire. If fire is brought from the houses of the lowest caste (aṅtaja), nobody finds fault with it because fire (Vaiśvānaru) from all houses is holy. 124

And,

There are various differences in human beings; and there are beasts (śvāpade) of innumerable differences. The creatures of jungles and of water play happily. In all of them, air is moving; all birds fly because of air; fire blazes up because of air (Vayu). 125

Rāmdās thus argues that all human beings have come from one source and God resides in all different beings. He also argues that all beings will merge in one Brahman ultimately:

<sup>123</sup>Dās. 11.i.21-24.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., 16.v.3-12.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., 16.vi. 7-8.

Greatness of consciousness (dehabuddhi) is not honoured (cale) in the transcendent state (parabrahmi); egoism is extinguished therein. There is no difference between high and low; kings and the poor are of one rank; all have only one status (ekaci pad) whether they are men or women. There is no difference such as Brahman of the Brāhmaṇas is pure (sovale) and Brahman of the Śūdras is impure (vovale). There is no difference such as the high Brahman is given to kings and the lower Brahman to kings' servants (parivār). All have one Brahman and there are no various Brahman; the poor and the Brāhmaṇas and others all go to Him. He is the only one abode (sthal) of rest to all learned people of the three worlds - heaven, earth, and hell. 126

In short, Rāmdās argues, like an advaitin, that all human beings come from one spiritual source and all differences will ultimately disappear in Brahman who is equally present in all beings. Thus Rāmdās speaks of primordial and ultimate spiritual oneness or unity basing his argument on absolutism. He also holds, like an advaitin, that social differences are due to the guṇas of māyā or Prakṛti.

As Rāmdās talks of ultimate spiritual oneness, one is likely to conjecture that Rāmdās would advocate mitigating social differences and lessening caste exclusiveness. The task of mitigating social distinction and exclusiveness was undertaken by the Vārkarī saints. We have shown their efforts in this matter in our foregoing discussion. Rāmdās seems to differ from the position taken by the Vārkarī

saints because he firmly advocates observing social differences (bhed) for he believes that these differences are also created by God Himself:

The Lord (Īśvara) has created various differences; the whole creation is sustained by differences. 127

Again,

There are all kinds of beings in the world. How can all have grandeur (vaibhava)? Therefore God created positions of more or less grandeur (ṭhāyāṭhāy). 128

Rāmdās thus firmly believes that as these differences are made by God nobody could do away (lit. break) with them and these differences are built into the social order.<sup>129</sup>

This means that the social differences (bhed) must be observed. This idea is evident in what he advocates as far as the daily life (vyavahār) is concerned, even though he believes in the primordial unity:

There are hārī (rows or ranks) from lords to the poor. How can we treat all of them equally? It is abundantly clear scriptural opinion (udapṇ abhiprāv) that gods, demons, human beings, beings of low origin and inferior beings are (born) according to their sins (pāp) and good deeds (sukṛti) [committed in their previous births]. The world is maintained by one God (ekāñśe), but every being is endowed with different powers.

<sup>127</sup> Dās. 17.x.20.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 17.vi.22.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. 17.iv.27-29.

Association with one leads to liberation and association with another, to hell (ravray). Sugar and dust are from the earth; but we should not eat dust (māṭī). Is poison not like water? But it is not true (khote). The inner spirit (aṅtarātmā) is in both a good man (puṇyātmā) and a sinner (pāpātmā); but we should not give up the line between a saint and a hypocrite. It is true that there is one inner Self (aṅtar ek); but we should not take a Mahār [i.e. an untouchable] for a company (sāṅgāte). How are learned persons and naughty children alike? 130

In these verses, Rāmdās argues that even though there is only one inner Self of all, there are differences among all beings because of their karmas (sins and merits) in their previous lives. He, therefore, advocates that one must not regard them as equal but should treat them differently. In these verses, he also says, as far as the caste system is concerned, that one should not keep contact or company with the untouchables. This means that he advocates the observance of untouchability and other social differences. He seems to be arguing against the Vārkarī saints who were advocating the non-observance of social distinction and also were recognizing bhāy and other religious qualities of people born in the lower castes and in the untouchable castes, when he says:

Rāmdās says: "It is shameful to say that superior and inferior people are equal (sārkheci). If we bow down before a donkey he kicks in our face. Why

do the foolish people say (bhajan) that the superior and inferior people are equal? 131

Rāmdās goes on arguing that a person who treats everybody without considering differences and treats them equally is not necessarily a liberated person. Rāmdās does not regard the person who does not observe social distinctions and treats all equally, as an ideal person or saint, but compares such a person with a fly, a sub-human being. He, on the other hand, appreciates the Brāhmaṇas' maintenance of social differences:

A Brāhmaṇa sees differences and non-differences (bhedābheda) but a fly regards all as non-different. But the behaviour of the fly does not suggest that the fly has received self-realization (jñānabodha). 132

In short, Rāmdās advocates the observance of social differences and of untouchability.

As Rāmdās advocates the observance of social differences, he seems to justify the caste system, which is hierarchical and based on birth, rather than varṇa vyavasthā which is justified in terms of guṇa-karma theory. He talks about the superiority of the Brāhmaṇas being based on the fact that they are born in the Brāhmaṇa caste:

<sup>131</sup> Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg, ed. K.A. Josi, 69.1-3.

<sup>132</sup> Dās. 9.x.6.

This human body is itself a reward for various good deeds. Besides that, if a man is fortunate enough he goes by a good path. The body of a Brāhmaṇa is special (viśeṣ) among the bodies of human beings. Besides that, a Brāhmaṇa gives ritualistic baths (saṅdhyāsnān) to his body; he has good desires and devotion to the Lord; all these happen to a body of a Brāhmaṇa because of the merit acquired in previous births (pūrvapuṇye).

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Rāmdās talks about the religious significance of the Brāhmaṇa caste and the importance of their religious roles in justifying their socio-religious superiority:

A Brāhmaṇa is the preceptor (guru) of all people, even though he does not do his duties (kriyāhīn). However, we should submit to him with special devotion. Nārāyaṇa became an avatār [i.e. manifestation of god] and Viṣṇu bore srivatsa [i.e. the mark on the breast of Viṣṇu made by the foot of a Brāhmaṇa] for the sake of the Brāhmaṇas. There are many such examples. The words of the Brāhmaṇas are authoritative (pramāṇ); Sūdras [viz. uninitiated men of the Brāhmaṇa and other upper varṇas] become Brāhmaṇas by the words of Brāhmaṇas; metal and stone become deified at a chanting (maṅtra) of Brāhmaṇas. When they are without the initiation ceremony (munjibaṅdhan), they are undoubtedly Sūdras; they are only called twice-born because they are the offsprings (saṅtat) of twice-born people. That the Brāhmaṇas should be venerated by all people is the main imperative of the Vedas (vedājña), which is authoritative (pramāṇ). What-ever is without the sanction of the Vedas is unauthoritative and unpleasant (apriy) to the Lord (Bhagavaṅta). Yoga, sacrifices, religious observances, giving gifts, pilgrimages, and discharging religious duties (karmamārga) can not be done without the Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas are the Vedas embodied (murtimaṅta) and they are the Lords themselves. All desires are fulfilled by the words of the Brāhmaṇas. By adoring the Brāhmaṇas, our attitude is purified and we are attached to the Lord. Men attain



liberation (uttam gati) by drinking water which falls off the feet of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇa-tīrtha). The Brāhmaṇas are respected at the time of great feasts (lakṣabhojani); and no one then cares (puse) about other castes (yāti). Even great gods honour the Brāhmaṇas; man is just a poor creature (in respecting the Brāhmaṇas). A Brāhmaṇa is venerated by the world (jadagvaṇḍya) even though he may be a fool (mūḍhamatī). 134

In these verses, Rāmdās emphasizes the priestly role of the Brāhmaṇas and the fact that they have the exclusive right to perform sacrifices and do other religious functions such as the right of performing the initiation which qualifies others to be twice-born. Because of these exclusive privileges, he argues, the Brāhmaṇas remain to be preceptors of all even though the Brāhmaṇas do not discharge their duties. They should be venerated by all even though they may be fools. This means that the preceptorship and veneration of the Brāhmaṇas are determined by their birth and not necessarily by their qualities. Rāmdās differs in this from the Vārkari saints who consider the religio-social superiority of individuals in terms of their merits rather than birth.

Rāmdās enhances the prestige of the Brāhmaṇas by grouping their traditional duties under sattva guṇa, as follows:

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134 Dās. 5.i.6-15.

Sacrificing for oneself (yajña), sacrificing on behalf of others (yājan), studying (the scriptures) and teaching others, and acquiring for them the merit of gifts (dānapuṇya) are the functions of sattva guṇa. 135

Rāmdās differs from the Vārkarī saints who do not talk about the religious duties of the Brāhmaṇas. Rāmdās selects one of the religious duties of the Brāhmaṇas, namely studying and teaching the scriptures, and emphasizes it as their exclusive prerogative by birth when he says:

The body of a human being (naradeh) [is best] among the bodies of beings; a body of a Brāhmaṇa [is best] among the bodies of human beings. A body of a Brāhmaṇa has the authority (adhikār) [of studying and teaching] the Vedas. 136

In this verse, Rāmdās emphasizes not only the religious significance of a physical body which is a result of birth but also the exclusive teaching privilege of the Brāhmaṇas. Rāmdās' emphasis on the religious rights (adhikār) enables us to say that Rāmdās seems to re-enforce the position of the Dharmaśāstras on these issues. Rāmdās differs from the Vārkarī saints who were trying to modify the position taken by the Dharmaśāstras on these issues. As the exclusive role of the Brāhmaṇas to impart religious knowledge to people had been usurped by non-Brāhmaṇas, the Vārkarī saints in particular, Rāmdās expressed his concern and opposition

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<sup>135</sup>Dās. 2.vii.13.

<sup>136</sup>Ibid., 10.ii.17.

by re-affirming that the traditional preceptorship (gurutva) was meant for the Brāhmaṇas only. We have already shown in the last chapter how Rāmdās stood for the brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā in this case.<sup>137</sup>

The second varṇa in the hierarchical social order of Hindus is the Kṣatriyas (i.e. rulers and fighters). Rāmdās asks the Kṣatriyas to do their traditional duties (kṣātradharmā) fearlessly:

He, who is afraid of death, should not do the duties of the warrior class (kṣātradharmā); he should sustain himself by some other means. If he turns away from death, he goes to hell; if he comes alive from a battle-field, he is ridiculed. Thus he loses this world and the other world (paralok). He should die while he kills (the enemy), for he will attain liberation (gati). If he comes back alive (after defeating the enemy) he will enjoy a great fortune... A fighter should not give up courage (takvā) for he will be victorious; he should know [the proper] occasion and time [in order to be successful].<sup>138</sup>

Again,

The kings should do their royal duties, the Kṣatriyas, the duties of warriors, and the Brāhmaṇas, their own duties (svadharmā), all in a variety of ways.<sup>139</sup>

Thus Rāmdās exhorts the Kṣatriyas to do their duties fearlessly. It is traditionally supposed that Śivāji went to see Rāmdās, after killing Afzul Khan. In their meeting,

<sup>137</sup> vide, pp. 101-103.

<sup>138</sup> 'Samarthāncī Kavitā', Y.D. Pendharkar, Samartha Rāmdās: Ek Abhyās (Pune: Continental Prakāśan, 1964), p. 207.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

Rāmdās advised Śivāji to protect the Brāhmaṇas, gods, and traditions and take care of the Brāhmaṇas.<sup>140</sup> Rāmdās took care of the interests of the Brāhmaṇas through Śivāji, a Marāthā king and warrior.

The Vaiśyas and the Śūdras are on the lower rungs, and the untouchables on the lowest rung of the social hierarchy. Rāmdās does not mention the duties of the Vaiśyas and Śūdras in his works. It seems that he is more concerned with the interests of the upper castes than the interests of the lower castes.<sup>141</sup>

Having shown how Rāmdās reaffirms the position taken by the Dharmasāstras on some issues about the social order and how he differs from the position of the Vārkarī saints, we should now proceed to examine the question of whether Rāmdās' doctrine of bhaktimārga serves to minimize the social differences and thus to unify the society, as it did in the hands of the Vārkarī saints.

Rāmdās propagates bhaktimārga as the way of liberation:

The Supreme Self (Paramātmā) pervades all; it is the One abiding in the many; its wisdom (vivek) is incomprehensible (atarkya). The Vedas thus speak about the condition of the Supreme Self. There is no doubt that the Supreme Self is obtained (pāvije) by devotion (bhakti).<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup>G.B. Sardar, op. cit., p. 122; P.R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>142</sup>Dās. 8.viii. 4-5.

Rāmdās qualifies his bhaktimārga as ninefold (navavidhā) bhaktimārga.<sup>143</sup> One of the characteristics of his bhakti-mārga is 'reciting the name of god'. Even though he stands for exclusive privileges of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā) and for withholding religious knowledge from the Śūdras and the untouchables,<sup>144</sup> he recognizes the right of all to recite the name (nāmādhikār) of god, when he says:

The four varṇas are authorized to recite the name (nāmādhikār); the name of God does not take into account whether the devotees are great or small. The rocklike (jaḍ) and foolish (mūḍh) [people] have crossed over (the world) by (reciting) the name. 145

He mentions the names of the Purānic persons who were liberated by repeating the name of God, e.g. Vālmiki, Pralhād, Ajamelā, and concludes by saying that grave sinners (mahāpāpi) were liberated by the name of God.<sup>146</sup>

Rāmdās occasionally says that God sees the bhāv (i.e. devotion) of a devotee and goes not care for other things.<sup>147</sup> He also occasionally says that God goes away

<sup>143</sup> Dās. 9.viii.6.

<sup>144</sup> vide, pp. 101-102.

<sup>145</sup> Dās. 4.iii.24.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 4.iii.16-19; cf. 7.viii.34, 4.viii.26-28.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 4.iii.24; Ekavis Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsboḍh; 6.10; 16.5-6.

from man because of his pride;<sup>148</sup> therefore, he thinks of pride of body (deh), action (karma), caste (yāti), family and knowledge as illusion.<sup>149</sup> Even though he is not as emphatic as the Vārkarī saints are in these matters, his position seems similar to that of the Vārkarī saints as far as his teaching about the bhāv and pride is concerned. Nevertheless, his intention in emphasizing these matters does not seem to modify his support of the social order set forth in the Dharmaśāstras.

Finally, Rāmdās, like the Vārkarī saints, emphasizes svadharma (i.e. doing one's socio-religious duties). It has already been shown that Rāmdās asks the people of the upper castes - the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas - to discharge their inherited duties. He also supports the contention of the Gītā and the Dharmaśāstras that:

Renunciation (uḍavaṇ) of one's own duties (svadharma) is called the dropping (buḍvaṇ) of the ultimate goal (paramārtha), therefore, it is obligatory (agatya ādhī) to do one's duties (svadharma). If one does duties as prescribed (yathāvidha) and he fails intermittently he will not be unhappy but he will get gold and fragrant things. Our mind does not comprehend giving up duties on any ground (ādhāre); one should not give up his own duties (svadharma) at all. 150

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<sup>148</sup> Dās. 8.i.14.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 10.vi.29; cf. 14.i.48; 7.vii.43-52.

<sup>150</sup> Ekavis Samāsi arthāt Junā Dāsbodh 20.18-20.

He emphatically says that one should not shirk one's duties and responsibilities, even if others do.<sup>151</sup> He thus asks everyone to follow his own duties (svadharmā or jāti dharmā) as ordained by the scriptures.<sup>152</sup>

(4) The Marāṭhā Saints and the Social Order: A Brief Comprehensive Statement

We have discussed the views of Jñāneśvar and Tukārām - the two Vārkarī saints - and Rāmdās on the social order, and are now in a position to make a comprehensive statement about their positions. Even though the Vārkarī saints and Rāmdās teach bhaktimārga as the way of liberation, they have different socio-religious perspectives. First, Rāmdās, like the Vārkarī saints, holds that there is only one primordial, undifferentiated source of origin, implying that there is spiritual oneness. But he differs from the Vārkarī saints in that he wants to retain social or caste differences (bhed) as far as daily life (vyavahār) is concerned.<sup>153</sup> Secondly, followers of the Rāmadāsi Sampradaya,

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<sup>151</sup>V.H. Date, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>152</sup>B.V. Bhat, Mahārāṣṭradharma: arthāt Marāthyāncyā Ītihāsāce Ātmik Svarup (Dhule: Mahārāṣṭradharma Granthamālā, 1925), IV, 188.

<sup>153</sup>N.R. Phatak, Śri Samrtha Caritra Vanmay āṇi Sampradāya (Pune: Prasād Prakāṣan, 1972), p. 51.

founded by Rāmdās, were exclusively conservative (nakhaśikhānta) Brāhmaṇas;<sup>154</sup> whereas followers and saints of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya were from all castes. Thirdly, Rāmdās wanted to restore the preceptorship of the Brāhmaṇas but the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya extended the preceptorship to saints irrespective of their castes.<sup>155</sup> Fourthly, Rāmdās holds, like the Vārkarī saints, that God sees the bhāv (devotion) of devotees and nothing else, but he does not make the bhāv the universal criterion to judge the spiritual worth of an individual as the Vārkarī saints did. Fifthly, Rāmdās is not critical of the factors which divide society, as the Vārkarī saints are. This means that the Vārkarī saints are more concerned with the problem of social unity than Rāmdās is. Sixthly, Rāmdās does not use bhaktimārga as a means to mitigate social differences as the Vārkarī saints do. Seventhly, as Rāmdās considers the superiority of the Brāhmaṇas to be based on biological birth and inheritance, he seems to justify the caste system as the Dharmaśāstras have done. He, therefore, differs from the Vārkarī saints who wish to modify the position

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<sup>154</sup>V.K. Rajvade, Rajvāde Lekhasaṅgrah, Saṅkirṇa Nibaṅdha, ed. S.N. Jośi, III. 114.

<sup>155</sup>P.R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 179.



on the social order taken by the Dharmasāstras. Finally, even though these Saṃpradāyas have different perspectives on the social order, it seems that they have agreed on the idea that every individual should do his prescribed duties (svadharma).

#### D) The Lokamānya Ṭīlak and the Social Order

Having shown how the Marāṭhā saints interpreted the Hindu scriptures and what positions they took on the social order, we should now proceed to inquire into the question of whether the Marāṭhā saints influenced Ṭīlak's ideas of an ideal social order. First let us examine Ṭīlak's views about an ideal social order and then see whether Ṭīlak's positions on the social order are in agreement with and in any way dependent on the Marāṭhā saints.

In the last chapter, we attempted to show how Ṭīlak took a middle stand on social reform and why he opposed Hindu social reformers. Ṭīlak seems to defend the traditional social order against the criticism levelled by social reformers, like M.G. Rāṇaḍe, R.G. Bhāṇḍarkar, etc., who were saying, as Ṭīlak understood them:

Our dharma is useless, our social structure is completely wrong, varṇa vyavasthā is disadvantageous to all and it creates feelings of division (dvaīdhibhāy), and unless it is broken our country will not flourish. 156

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156 Lokamānya Ṭīlak Lekhasaṅgrah, ed. L. Josi, pp. 14f.

Ṭīlak also refers to the critical stand taken by the social reformers against the caste system, in his article 'The Hindu Caste from an Industrial Point of View':

Of course there are gentlemen who hold that any amelioration of the industrial classes of this land is impossible without a religious revival, or at any rate without a complete annihilation of the caste system, which they have been taught to regard as the prime source of all evil in Hindu society. 157

Ṭīlak seems to defend the caste system on the basis of its usefulness in the ancient time and its possibility of being re-organized to serve modern Hindu society, when he says:

The free competition of foreign countries has well nigh threatened the very existence of many industrial classes in the land, and the ignorance of the latter leaves them completely helpless in such crisis in spite of their inherited skill.... Under these circumstances, I think it will be readily conceded by every one that our industrial classes badly want an organization which will prevent them from sinking down into helpless agriculturalists or what is still worse from total ruin and extinction. The organization of caste already prevails among them, and its history shows that it has saved them from similar crises in ancient times. It is true that in some particulars it has become rather inconvenient, but as I have shown before the evils are not irremediable, and if we prudently attempt to build on these existing foundations there is every hope that the organization of caste may again become a living force and under the altered circumstances of the country protect the working classes in the same way as it did in ancient times. 158

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<sup>157</sup>'The Hindu Caste from an Industrial Point of View', the paper read by Ṭīlak in the second Industrial Conference held in Poona from 5th to 8th Sept. 1892, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak: Towards Independence, VII, 468.

<sup>158</sup>Ibid. pp. 474f.

Ṭīlak opposed the social reformers who were advocating the reconstruction of Hindu society and its social order in the image of a European social order, when he said:

Briefly, take any social order (samājaracānā), it can never be completely faultless, many people have understood the principle. "Cāturvarṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭam guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ" is the foundation of Hindu society. If one is not bound by contract, he is at liberty to do what he wills; this is the principle of the society of the western nations. Now, Mr. Ranade and other gentlemen are saying that the building of society should be taken off from the old foundation and replaced on another (western) foundation; otherwise we cannot stand in the national struggle of the 19th century. I think it is not convincing (sayuktik). Even though the European societies are built up on the different principle, there are social evils. 'Every town has its slum' (gāṇv āhe tethe mahārvādā āhe). In accordance with that proverb, there is a lot of scope for social reform in European nations. 159

In this quotation, Ṭīlak asserts the principle of the social order as given in the Gītā and he also sees the necessity of social reform in all societies - Indian and European. He argues for the inevitability of change in the social order due to the encounter with the European social order when he says:

When the eastern and western social orders which are spiritual and materialistic, and which are controlled by the varṇa vyavasthā and free enterprise (yadṛcchācārapravartak), and which are old and new, have come into contact (saṁyog), there would be some changes in the principle of the old social order; anybody would agree with this, and there would be no dispute about it. The dispute remains which of the two aforesaid ways should be followed: either

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159 Lokamānya Ṭīlak Lekhasaṅgrah, ed. L. Jośi, p. 14.

to demolish one and to establish another or to make appropriate changes in the old and revitalize (punaruḥivan) it. 160

Ṭilak seems to be in favour of revitalization of the Hindu social order.<sup>161</sup> He advocates change in the social order in the spirit of the Gītā:

The time in which our social institutions (samāj-samsthā) were originated is now changed; according to the change of time, our social institutions need to be modified. If we do not modify them they will be changed by the impact of circumstances and against our wishes as the Bhagavadgītā says...  
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Ṭilak advocates social changes in the spirit of the Gītā and without hurting Hindus' pride in their religious tradition:

Many educated people are thinking that if we give up the foundation of Hinduism we will not have anything of ours. Everybody wants social changes to be in accord with the new circumstances. But everybody must be on guard that those changes do not destroy our pride in Hinduism. 163

Ṭilak advocates social changes when he considers them to be suitable to the altered circumstances of India.<sup>164</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Lokamānya Ṭilak Lekhasaṅgrah, ed. L. Josf, p. 14.

<sup>161</sup> R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>162</sup> The Kesari, 10 Jan 1907, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, V, 174.

<sup>163</sup> The Kesari, 5 Jan 1904, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, V, 172.

<sup>164</sup> 'The Hindu Caste from an Industrial Point of View', Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, VII, 470.

This indicates that he is well aware of the dark side of the caste system. He often explains how social defects, such as feelings of inferiority and pollution, which are associated with the caste system, came into being:

It is now well-known that in the oldest parts of [the] Rigveda there are no traces of caste. But though the sense of superiority or inferiority was thus absent amongst the members of the Āryan race inter se in those old days, yet we find verses in the Rigveda which shew that the Āryan always treated the Dāsa or aborigines with contempt.... In Rig. X.86.19, Indra says that he is careful to distinguish an Ārya and a Dāsa and whom to protect. Here in my opinion, we have a clue, as to how the idea of inferiority and pollution came to be afterwards attached to the members of [the] lower caste. It appears to me that originally the only distinction known to the Āryas was that of an Ārya and a Dāsa, the latter of whom was always treated with contempt by his conquerors. In the course of time as the Āryas become settled they came to be divided into Brahmanas, Ksatriyas, and Vaishyas according to their trades and professions, but for a long time all the three enjoyed the same rights and privileges, and the oldest customs recorded in the Smrtis shew that inter-marriage and inter-dining were once freely allowed amongst these three castes - known by the common name of twice-born. The origin of castes must therefore be traced chiefly to the difference of occupation amongst all the castes except the lowest, and the idea of inferiority and contempt [came in] only so far as the aboriginal races were concerned. Gradually as the lower castes came to be admitted into the pale of Hinduism and as the society became more and more settled the idea of inferiority appears to be spread more or less to other castes. 165

In this quotation, Ṭilak explains not only how the feelings of inferiority and pollution came into the Hindu social

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165, 'The Hindu Caste from an Industrial Point of View', Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, VII, 470f.

order but he also argues that Hindu society was divided into two blocks, namely Āryas and Dāsas. All Āryas, on the basis of their right to initiation which made them "twice-born", had the same or equal rights and privileges. The divisions amongst the Āryas were in terms of their occupations [karma] and among them there was no restriction of inter-marriage and inter-dining. Ṭīlak seems to be talking about the varṇa vyavasthā in this quotation although he uses the term "caste" interchangeably with "varṇa". In the Gītārahasya, Ṭīlak discusses why varṇa vyavasthā was formed and how it turned into a caste system:

The ancient ṛṣis had laid down the institution of four varṇas (cāturvarṇyasamsthā) which was in a form (or nature) of division of labour (śramavibhāgarup) in order that all affairs of society should go on smoothly, and in order that the society be protected and maintained on all sides, without a particular person or group bearing a whole burden. Later on, people (puruṣ) of the (social system) became jātimātropajivi (i.e. determined by caste only) viz. they forgot their own respective duties (svadharma) and became nominal Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas or Śūdras because of their birth in that particular varṇa. 166

In this quotation, Ṭīlak says clearly that the caste system came out of the varṇa vyavasthā. As Ṭīlak holds this view of the caste system, his theory of social order could be called a traditional or Hindu theory of social order.

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<sup>166</sup>GR. pp. 59f (M); pp. 89f (E).

Ṭīlak seems to justify the traditional varna vyavathā and at the same time he is critical of the defects of the caste system when he argues:

The Hindu polity which is included in the king's duty in the Manusmṛti text lays down a kind of social organization which is known as Chatur Varṇa. Many of you now believe that Chatur Varṇa consists merely of [the] different castes that divide us at present. No one thinks of the duties belonging to these castes. A Kṣatriya will not take food with the Brāhmin and a Vaiśya will not take food with a Shūdra, it was not so, let me point out, in the days of Manu and the Bhagavadgītā. The Bhagavadgītā expressly states that this division was made not by birth but by the quality [guṇa] and by the profession [karma] which were necessary to maintain the whole society in those days. 167

In the foregoing discussion, Ṭīlak has often said that the varṇa vyavasthā is based on a distribution of professions (karma) and on a distinction of qualities (guṇas). He thus emphasizes the position taken by the Gītā on the social order. He repeats his position with an intention to remove and minimize the defects of the caste system, when he says:

Caste distinctions were originally planned on the principle of division of labour [karmavibhāgaśaḥ]. They were meant for a better organization... It is true that there are defects in the system, and we must try to remove them. But until they are removed, they must be minimized. 168

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<sup>167</sup> B.G. Ṭīlak His Writings and Speeches, pp. 218f.

<sup>168</sup> The Mahrāṭṭā, 22 March 1920, quoted by S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., pp. 627f.

In our foregoing discussion, we have shown that Ṭīlak holds the traditional theory of social order, according to which the caste system originated from the varṇa vyavasthā. Ṭīlak justifies the varṇa vyavasthā in terms of its being based on the division of professions and qualities rather than its being determined solely by birth. Ṭīlak is aware of the defects of the caste system and he wishes to remove them so that the social order of the Hindus can be properly established on its ancient foundation and can begin to serve its original purpose, namely the wellbeing of all. In a lecture at Cawnpore on the 3rd January 1917, he said:

Today Brāhmins are not Brāhmin, Kshatriyas are not Kshatriyas, nor Vaishyas. Some honourable exceptions, . . . , are of course to be found in every class. The true Sūdra is he who is unqualified for any higher task than that of intelligent labour. He has his place in the national family. But the true Vaishya has a higher place. And the true Brāhmin stands highest, while the Kshatriya comes next to the Brāhmin in the ideal hierarchy. We have need today and there always is, if a nation is to prosper continuously, of ripe scholarship, undaunted bravery, sagacious enterprise, as well as tough and sturdy muscles. These are severally the distinguished marks of the true representatives of the four classes which constitute the ideal Chāturvarṇya. 169

In this quotation, Ṭīlak seems to argue that people who claim to be Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas are not truly

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<sup>169</sup>The Mahrāṭṭā, 7 Jan 1917, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VII. 630.



so, because they do not possess the qualities which go with their varṇas. His definition of a Śūdra is a person who only does intelligent labour and is not qualified to do any higher task. This definition is intended as a criticism of those members of elite castes who were serving the foreign government. Tīlak calls them Śūdras even though they claimed to be Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas, the members of the upper varṇas. In this quotation, Tīlak seems to assume a hierarchy, but a hierarchy understood in terms of qualities (guṇas). Tīlak considers the four varṇa system an ideal system if it is based on qualities which help develop the nation.

Tīlak applies the principle of guṇas (qualities) in his criticism of the actual social order viz. the caste system which divides the Hindu community into Brāhmaṇas and non-Brāhmaṇas and implies that all Brāhmaṇas are good and non-Brāhmaṇas not good. Tīlak addresses such an attitude, as follows:

This dichotomous division [the Brāhmaṇas and non-Brāhmaṇas] is unnatural and artificial. Among Brāhmins as in other castes there are many men who follow what are comparatively degrading professions. Among them, as in other communities, there are good and bad men. They have bad and good qualities also. Wisdom consists not in accentuating [the] defects in all communities, but in recognizing them and removing them. It really consists in organizing all the communities in the nation on some broader basis than these caste distinctions. 170

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<sup>170</sup>The Mahrāṭṭā, 21 March 1920, quoted by S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 627.

This quotation implies that Tīlak does not consider the Brāhmaṇas socially superior because of their birth and he recognizes that there are bad persons in the Brāhmaṇa caste and good persons in non-Brāhmaṇa castes. This means that Tīlak does not think of birth as the criterion to judge the worth of an individual, but considers the qualities (guṇas) of persons to be the criterion.

Tīlak holds a different view about the feeling of superiority and inferiority built-in in the caste system. In one of the quotations cited above,<sup>171</sup> Tīlak explains how the feeling of superiority and inferiority originated in the caste system. That explanation was not intended as a justification because he does not see a religious ground for such feelings in true Hinduism as he argues, "There is no more tolerant religion (sahiṣṇu dharma) than Hinduism in the world. [Therefore,] there should be no superiority-inferiority feeling among Hindus".<sup>172</sup> Tīlak denies that there could be a religious basis to such feelings when he argues, "the institution of caste was not originally religious, and the feeling of inferiority which it implies in some cases is not its necessary consequence".<sup>173</sup> R. Kumar

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<sup>171</sup>vide, p. 215.

<sup>172</sup>Samagra Lokamānya Tīlak, VI, 807.

<sup>173</sup>'The Hindu Caste from an Industrial Point of View', Samagra Lokamānya Tīlak, VII, 473.

points out that Tīlak rejects "the notion that distinctions of castes implied differences in status and ranks".<sup>174</sup>

Thus Tīlak does not see the feeling of superiority and inferiority arising out of ideal or true Hinduism.

Tīlak also holds a special view of the exclusive rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas who are considered to be highest in the socio-religious hierarchy. Later in the quotation referred to above, Tīlak argues that all the twice-born people enjoyed the same rights and privileges as the Brāhmaṇas. In the last chapter we noted that Tīlak did not fight for the exclusive rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas but recognized the rights of all Indians and fought for them.<sup>175</sup> When he discussed 'Caste and Social Equality' in the Gaṇeś festival of A.D. 1907, he said that it appeared absurd to him that certain castes alone should have Vedic rites as their privilege.<sup>176</sup>

Tīlak also takes a critical look at the practice of pollution and untouchability. He once argued against this evil practice in the Gaṇeś festival held in Poona in A.D. 1907:

<sup>174</sup>R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 310.

<sup>175</sup>vide, pp.124ff.

<sup>176</sup>S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 247.

The Vedas mention four varṇas. The Brāhmaṇas are supposed to be originated from the mouth, the Kṣatriyas from the arms, the Vaiśyas from the thighs, and the Sūdras from the feet [of the Virāt Puruṣa]. How then is the head polluted by the legs or arms? 177

In this quotation, Ṭīlak refers to the Puruṣasukta hymn of the Rgveda and seems to argue that the Vedas do not support the practice of pollution. He expressed his view about the problem again in the All India Depressed Classes Conference at Bombay, on 24 March 1918:

The Hindu Dharmaśāstras do not support the notion of treating any class of human beings as untouchable. When the Āryans entered India they defeated the non-Āryans, the aborigines; afterwards, the Āryans considered them (non-Āryans) inferior and excluded them. But this policy did not last for a long time. The Āryans began to include non-Āryans in their society and granted them the right of Vedic rites. The social unification stopped after some time. And some groups of non-Āryans remained isolated from the Āryans. Whatever may be the genesis of untouchability, the sinful nature of the notion (of untouchability) is beyond doubt. Untouchability must go. For the sake of the progress of the nation, and social reform, the notion (or stigma) of untouchability must go. Mistakes committed by the Brāhmaṇas (or the Brāhmaṇa bureaucracy) of old time must be rectified. 178

In the same Conference, Ṭīlak emphatically said, "If a God were to tolerate untouchability, I would not recognize

<sup>177</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 806.

<sup>178</sup> The Mahrāṭṭā, 24 March 1918, quoted by S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 492; B.D. Kher, op. cit., pp.287f.

him as God at all".<sup>179</sup> Ṭīlak again said in a meeting in Sāṅgli that he was concerned, as much as the reformers, with uplifting the untouchables and the depressed classes, but his way was different from that of the social reformers.<sup>180</sup> In his private conversation with his disciples he said that he did not observe untouchability, but the people - both untouchables and touchables - first must be educated so that tradition (ruḍhi) might be broken gradually.<sup>181</sup> As an indication that he was not observing untouchability, Ṭīlak placed an image of the Gaṇeś of the Cāmbhār (untouchable) along with his own image of the Gaṇeś in the procession.<sup>182</sup>

Finally, Ṭīlak takes a new position about the feeling of inferiority and superiority of social duties as they are assigned to various castes in the religio-social hierarchy. He seems to dissociate such a feeling from social duties and considers all equally valuable in the work of national upliftment, when he exhorts:

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<sup>179</sup> S.V. Bapat, op. cit., II.204; S.L. Karandikar, op. cit., p. 492.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., II. 108f.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., II, 108; II, 279.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., II, 108.

We must learn to live the truth that all work is noble and do away with his 'touch-me-not' notions. He must be ready to put his hands even to 'Sūdra' work. And he must rouse up and foster Kshatriyatva in himself for, in the new world every one must be a soldier on pain of national ruin. To this Sūdra-Kshatriya training one may join either the Brāhmin or the Vaishya education or a suitable admixture of either division. Thus equipped let every Indian place his equipment and himself at the service of the motherland. For thus alone will his mental, physical and worldly belongings be sanctified. And thus alone will he - the soul - find his way to Himself, or, in other words, to Bliss ineffable (Moksha). 183

Ṭilak thus sees the necessity of all social duties being performed in the development of the country and asks all people to discharge their duties (svadharma) disinterestedly as the Gītā teaches:

For whatever reason, when one has once accepted some duty (karma) as his own he must do it disinterestedly, however difficult or detestable (apriy) it might be. Because the greatness and (or) smallness of man does not depend on his profession; and his worth (yogyatā) from the spiritual point of view (adhyātmadr̥ṣṭyā) depends on the frame of mind (buddhi) with which he does that particular profession (Gī. 2.49). A person, whose mind is peaceful, who has realized the unity (aikya) underlying all beings (sarvabhūtāntargat) may be, by profession or caste, a merchant or a butcher. If he does his profession disinterestedly, he is equally great and equally entitled to liberation (mokṣālā ādhikāri) as is a Brāhmaṇa, who does ablution and religious duties, or as is a brave Kṣatriya. 184

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<sup>183</sup>The Mahrāṭṭā, 7 Jan. 1917, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭilak, VII, 930.

<sup>184</sup>GR. pp. 746f (M); pp. 1198f (E).

In this quotation, Tilak emphasizes the performance of one's socio-religious duties (svadharna) disinterestedly as an evidence of realizing one's mystical unity with all beings, however difficult and detestable that svadharna may be, because the spiritual worth of an individual depends on the frame of mind rather than on the profession itself.

E) The Gītārahasya and the Marāṭhā Saints

Having stated the views on the social order taken by the Vārkarī saints, the Samartha Rāmdās, and the Lokamānya Ṭīlak, we should now proceed to inquire into the question of whether Ṭīlak developed his position on the social order in agreement with and in dependence on the Marāṭhā saints.

First, we have shown that Jñāneśvar re-affirmed the Gītā's theory of the social order that the division of the four varṇas is based on the guṇa-karma theory. Tukārām agreed with Jñāneśvar on this issue. Rāmdās also applied the guṇa theory to the social order. Ṭīlak seems to be in agreement with the Marāṭhā saints as he re-affirms the Gītā's theory of the social order.

Secondly, the Vārkarī saints distinguished between the varṇa vyavasthā as based mainly on the guṇas and the actual caste system as based mainly on birth. This distinction is not maintained in Rāmdās. Ṭīlak seems to

follow the Vārkarī saints when he says that the caste system is based on birth and the varṇa vyavasthā on the guṇa-karma theory.

Thirdly, the Vārkarī saints held that the highest position of the Brāhmaṇas in the varṇa vyavasthā was based on the qualities (guṇas) and not on birth. Ṭīlak seems to agree with the Vārkarī saints when he says that the true Brāhmaṇas hold the highest position in the varṇa vyavasthā because of the qualities (guṇas) rather than birth.

Fourthly, the Vārkarī saints did not uphold the exclusive rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas as Rāmdās did. Ṭīlak seems to follow the Vārkarī saints for he does not emphasize the exclusive rights of the Brāhmaṇas nor does he fight for those rights and privileges.

Fifthly, the Vārkarī saints recognized the equal right of all people, including the Śūdra castes and the untouchables, to pursue religious goal. Rāmdās also recognized the right of all people to recite the name of God (nāmādhikār), though he was not in favour of imparting religious knowledge to the Śūdras and untouchables. In practice the Vārkarī saints made bhaktimārga accessible to all castes without social distinction. Ṭīlak seems to be influenced by the Vārkarī saints in this when he argues:

Caste distinction (jātibhed) has become inseparable from the Hindu society. If dharma means only the



way of attaining the Parameśvar, it becomes evident that Hinduism has nothing at all to do with caste or eating and drinking or other manners. Because, according to our religion, as God was accessible to Vaśiṣṭha [Brāhmaṇa] He was equally accessible to Vaśvāmītra [non-Brāhmaṇa]; [as He was accessible] to Yajñavalkya [Brāhmaṇa], he was equally accessible to Janak [non-Brāhmaṇa]; and Tukārām [Śūdra], Gorā Kumbhār [Śūdra], and Cokhāmeḷā [untouchable] obtained liberation as Jñāneśvar and Eknāth [Brāhmaṇa] did. In such a religion, eating-drinking and castes are not considered. They are independent practices. 185

In this quotation, Ṭīlak not only argues for the religious right of all, but also argues that the caste system is independent of dharma. This means that he argues for a distinction between the caste system and the varṇa vyavasthā and in this is dependent on the Vārkarī Sampradāya.

Sixthly, the Vārkarī saints used the bhaktimārga to mitigate or lessen the feeling of superiority and inferiority among the Hindus, arguing that all are equal in the sight of God. Ṭīlak seems to argue in a similar way in dependence on the Vārkarī saints when he says:

There is no more tolerant religion than Hinduism in the world. There is [should be] no feeling of superiority-inferiority among Hindus.... There are many castes in our society. There might be low and high status [among us] but the Hindu scriptures say that all - Mahār, Māṅg [the untouchables], and the Brāhmaṇas - are Hindus. In addition to this, the Bhāgavat Dharma does not agree with the feeling of superiority and inferiority. Pāṇḍuraṅg of Pāṇḍharpur loves all

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<sup>185</sup>The Kesari, 29 October 1901, quoted by B.D. Kher, op. cit., p. 299.

including Mahār, Māṅg, Cāmbhār [the untouchables], and Sonār [a Śūdra]. If any person goes to Paṇḍharpur he will notice that all are embracing the feet of Pāṇḍuraṅg. 186

Seventhly, the Vārkarī saints argued that God grants equal liberation to all in order to mitigate the feeling of superiority and inferiority. Ṭīlak takes up this idea in dependence on the Marāṭhā saints when he says in the Gītārahasya:

The true greatness (mahti) of this royal way (rājamārga) of devotion to the Blessed Lord, which grants the identical liberated status (ekac sadgati) to all, without maintaining difference of castes, of varnas, of man and woman, and of other kinds, or black and white skin people, will become intelligible to anyone from the history of the saints of Mahārāṣṭra. 187

Eighthly, the Vārkarī saints regarded bhāv (devotion) rather than birth as the criterion by which to judge the worth of an individual. Rāmdās also emphasizes bhāv. Ṭīlak seems to be influenced by the Marāṭhā saints on this when he says in the Gītārahasya:

Thus, when the door of release is opened for all people in the society, there emerges a distinguished awareness (vilakṣaṇ jāgrti) whose nature can be easily comprehended from the history of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra. As far as God is concerned, women, Cāṇḍāl, and the Brāhmaṇas are equal (sārkhec). "God craves for bhāv (devotion)" and not for symbols

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<sup>186</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 807.

<sup>187</sup> GR. p. 688 (M); p. 1060 (E).

(pratiks), nor white and black colour, nor differences between man and woman, and the Brāhmaṇa and Cāṇḍāl. 188

Ṭīlak quotes Tukārām in this connection:

Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra, Cāṇḍāl, children, man, woman, and prostitutes, all have right. Tukārām says, 'He is convinced by experience that others and devotees experience the happiness by good fortune' (Gā. 2382. 5,6). 189

Ṭīlak repeats the idea in the Gītārahasya saying:

That omnipresent Parameśvar, who gives rewards for all actions, looks only to the bhāv (devotion or faith) of devotees. Therefore, Tukārām had said that the Parameśvar takes into account only the bhāv and not the pratik (symbol) which is worshipped. 190

Ninthly, the Vārkarī saints were attempting to unify society which was divided by pride of ancestry, of knowledge, and of rights and privileges. In order to do this they emphasized common religious right (dharmādhikār) and exhorted people to give up pride of various kinds. Rāmdās also upheld the common religious right of all to recite the name of God and exhorted people to give up pride in caste and in knowledge. Thus the Marāṭhā saints were attempting to unify society on a common religious ground (dharma). Ṭīlak seems to follow them as he, in

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<sup>188</sup> vide, p. 132.

<sup>189</sup> vide, p. 132.

<sup>190</sup> GR. p. 382 (M); p. 590 (E).

his address at Benares in A.D. 1906, made an appeal for social unity on the basis of dharma:

The word Dharma means to tie and comes from the root dhri [dhṛ] to bear or hold. What is there to hold together? To connect the soul with God, and man with man. Dharma means our duties towards God and duty towards man. Hindu religion as such provides for a moral as well as social tie.... The study of the Gītā, Rāmāyaṇa, and Mahābhārata produce the same ideas throughout the country... If we lay stress on it forgetting the minor differences that exist between different sects, then by the grace of Providence we shall ere long be able to consolidate all the different sects into a mighty Hindu nation. This ought to be the ambition of every Hindu. 191

A similar definition of dharma appears in the Gītārahasya.<sup>192</sup> This definition of dharma is made in the context of religious texts namely, the Mahābhārata, Gītā, and the Rāmāyaṇa, which are supposed to be texts of Bhāgavat Dharma. The concept of dharma seems to be a better basis for social unity to Ṭīlak than the caste system. It was already shown that Ṭīlak was seeking such a basis for social unity.<sup>193</sup> Ṭīlak's definition of dharma and his appeal for unity seem to be influenced by the Marāṭhā Bhāgavat Dharma because his concept of dharma is identical with theirs and his efforts to unify society on the basis of dharma are

<sup>191</sup> B.G. Ṭīlak, His Writings and Speeches, pp. 36f; Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VII, 633.

<sup>192</sup> GR., p. 60 (M); p. 90 (E).

<sup>193</sup> vide, p. 209.

similar to theirs. Ṭīlak is in agreement with the Marāṭhā saints in using dharma as a basis to unify the society. He seems to be inspired by them to make a similar effort when he says:

We must try to remove social defects and develop morality, courage, and unity (eki) in society. Śri Tukārām and others made such efforts. In the present situation which is more dangerous than that time, it is absolutely necessary to make such efforts. 194

Ṭīlak also argues the same with reference to Rāmdās:

In order to accomplish public welfare we have to mingle with people of all kinds and castes. We have to take up the task of preachers and guides as Ramdas did, giving up one's own interest and working without selfish motives. 195

Finally, the Vārkarī saints and Rāmdās had agreed on discharging one's prescribed duties (svadharma) with a disinterested frame of mind. Ṭīlak seems to depend on the Marāṭhā saints in similarly emphasizing the concept of svadharma along with the idea of a disinterested frame of mind in which to do svadharma:

The perfection which is to be obtained by abandoning action is equally obtained by those who do their professions (karme or svadharma) with a disinterested frame of mind. This is the innermost secret of the Bhāgavat Dharma; and this is

<sup>194</sup> Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 809.

<sup>195</sup> The Kesari, 28 July 1896, Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, V, 680.

clear from the history of the maṇḍalis (i.e. sects) of the saints of Mahārāṣṭra (GR. pp. 13, 396-397). 196

In this argument, Ṭīlak not only agrees with the saints but also depends on their ideas.

F) Conclusion:

In this chapter, we have shown how Ṭīlak develops a position on the social order which is in agreement with the saints in most cases and is in direct dependence on them in some cases. He justifies the traditional social order viz. varṇa vyavasthā in terms of the guṇa-karma theory. He criticizes the shortcomings of the caste system and wishes to remove them. His efforts to unify Hindu society on the broad basis of dharma were inspired by the saints. He argues for the equal right of all to pursue the religious goal even as the saints before him did. He makes bhāv (devotion) rather than janma (birth) and inheritance the criterion by which to judge the spiritual worth of an individual, even as the saints had. He emphasizes discharging svadharma (one's prescribed duties) with a disinterested frame of mind as the saints did. In short, he is indebted to and influenced by the Marāṭhā saints to a remarkable extent in his social teachings.

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<sup>196</sup>GR. p. 784 (M); p. 1199 (E).

PART TWO

THE LOKAMĀNYA B. G. ṬĪḶAK'S THOUGHTS  
ABOUT NON-DUALISM AND SAINTLY ACTION

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PROBLEM OF NON-DUALISM

Having shown that the religious and social aspects of Ṭīḷak's philosophical system were influenced and informed by the theology of the Marāṭhā saints to a remarkable extent, we ought now to proceed to ask whether the philosophical, viz., the vedantic and ethical, aspects of Ṭīḷak's system were influenced and informed by the theology of the Marāṭhā saints. This task will be dealt with in two chapters: one of dealing with the problem of whether Ṭīḷak's special vedāntic philosophy was influenced by the theology of the Marāṭhā saints, and the other dealing with the ethical problem of whether Ṭīḷak's concept of the sṭhitaprajña, a liberated person who has realized and experienced advaita or non-dualism, was influenced by the theology of the prominent Marāṭhā saints. We will deal with the first problem in this chapter.

#### A) The Gītārahasya's Advaita Philosophy:

Tilak, in the Gītārahasya, defines his philosophical position with reference to the bhāṣyas (i.e. commentaries) on the Gītā written by the ācāryas (i.e. preceptors who are founders of different schools of vedānta) which are considered to be the authoritative texts of the schools. Ṭīḷak has



referred to the bhāṣyas of Śaṅkarācārya,<sup>1</sup> the founder of the advaita school, Rāmānujācārya,<sup>2</sup> the founder of the qualified advaita school, Madhva,<sup>3</sup> the founder of dualism, Vallabha,<sup>4</sup> Nimbārka,<sup>5</sup> and others. After studying the bhāṣyas, Tīlak makes an over-all observation in these terms:

Briefly, different sectarian commentators and annotators have thus interpreted the meaning of the Gītā in their own way: They made the activistic (pravṛttipara) discipline or philosophy of action (karmamārṇa), taught in the Gītā, subordinate (gauna) a mere means of knowledge (jñāna), and went on saying that the Gītā asserts (pratipādyā āhet) their sectarian philosophy and practices prescribed from the point of view of liberation, e. g. monism characterized by the doctrine of 'Appearance' (māyāvādātmaka advaita) and renunciation of action (karmasaṅnyāsa); qualified monism characterized by the doctrine of 'Appearance' (māyāsatyatvapatipādaka viśiṣṭādvaita) and devotion to Vāsudeva; dualism (dvaita) and devotion to Viṣṇu; pure dualism (śuddhādvaita) and devotion; monism of Śaṅkara and devotion; only yoga; or only knowledge of Brahman (brahmajñāna). These are the various renunciatory (nivṛttipara) religious ways of liberation (mokṣadharmā). No one says that the Bhagavadgītā

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<sup>1</sup> GR. pp. 15f, 18-21, 427=429, 483, 510f, 703f(E).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-23, 25, 427, 475, 707, 780, 810 (E).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 23, 26, 428, 475, 766, 874, 875, 892 (E).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 24f (E).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 25 (E).

regards the Karmayoga as major (pradhān) or dominant.<sup>6</sup>

Having pointed out the various interpretations of the teaching of the Gītā Ṭīlak goes on to say:

The Gītā is not a jugglery (gaudabaṅgāl)-that any one can extract whatever meaning one desires out of it. The Gītā was produced before all the sects, mentioned above, came into being; the Gītā was preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna not to increase /his / confusion' (bhrama) but to remove it; and it / the Gītā / was, for Arjuna, an exhortation (upadeś) which had only one (ekac), specific (viśiṣṭa) and definite meaning (or purport) (niścitartha) (Gī. v. 1-2). The influence of the exhortation on Arjuna was as expected.<sup>7</sup>

The verses referred to (viz. Gītā v. 1-2) in the above quotation are important in discerning the specific meaning (niścitartha) or the purport of the Gītā, for Ṭīlak. These verses both raise the question and provide the answer concerning which of the two paths- renunciation of action (karmasamnyāsa) or performance of action (karmayoga)- is superior? Ṭīlak comments on these verses:

The question and answer mentioned above are both unambiguous and clear. The word 'śreya' in the first stanza grammatically means 'more praise worthy, better'; and 'karmayoga viśiṣyate' i.e. karmayoga is better, is the reply to Arjuna's question about the comparative value of the two courses.... The Gītā does not say that the way of renunciation (samnyāsamārga) described in the Upaniṣads is not conducive of liberation (mokṣapradā). Even though the paths of Karmayoga and Samnyāsa are equally conducive of liberation and both

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<sup>6</sup> GR. p. 17 (M); pp. 27f (E).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 18 (M); p. 28 (E).

yield the same result from the point of liberation, nevertheless from a pragmatic point of view (jagācyā vyavahārācā vicār karitā), one should continue to perform actions (karma) disinterestedly even after having acquired knowledge. This is the way which is more praise-worthy (ādhik praśasta) or superior (śreṣṭha); this is the firm stand or doctrine (ṭhām mat) of the Gītā. This interpretation of mine is not acceptable to the majority of commentators. They have treated the Karmayoga as subordinate (gaṇa).

8

Ṭīlak claims to differ from the commentators because he treats the Karmayoga as major or dominant (pradhān) and not as subordinate (gaṇa). According to him, the liberated person (jñāni or sṭhitaprajña) has to discharge his duties disinterestedly. In other words, according to Ṭīlak, the practice of action (karmayoga) is the prescribed religious way of life (ācāra) for the liberated person. This particular theological problem will be discussed in the next chapter, but it is alluded to here in order to introduce Ṭīlak's claim that he differs from other commentators.

Ṭīlak differs from the other commentators not only on what is the prescribed practice (ācāra) but also on what is the form of philosophy (tattvajñāna) or the form of Vedānta set forth in the Gītā. He has to do this because the commentators have interpreted the Gītā in terms of their different understandings of the Vedānta. He seeks to determine the specific form of the Vedānta in the Gītā as follows:

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GR. p. 626 (M); p. 969 (E).

There is room to doubt whether all the Upaniṣads have the same import because there are many Upaniṣads of the different branches of the Vedas, but this is not true in the case of the Gītā. It is clear that the Gītā expounds only one kind of Vedānta (ekāc prakārca Vedānta) because it is a single work. When one considers what kind of Vedānta [it expounds], one is obliged to say that [it expounds] non-dualism (advaitapara siddhānta) because [it teaches] "That which remains eternally after all beings are destroyed" (Gī. viii. 20). "That alone is really true and It has pervaded all the material bodies (piṇḍas) and the cosmos (brahmāṇḍa)" (Gī. xiii. 31). Nay, the ethical principle of ātmaupamyabuddhi [i.e. the mind which considers one's self in comparison with others' selves] in the Gītā cannot be fully established (upapatti) by any other form of Vedānta, except advaita (non-dualism).

9

Ṭīlak reaffirms his philosophical interpretation of the Gītā's advaita philosophy in his comment on the Gītā vii. 1-2:

From this, it is clear that having acquired knowledge (jñāna) and specific knowledge (viññāna) of the Parameśvara (the Supreme Lord), nothing remains to be known of the world because the fundamental element (mūlatattva) of the world is the same. It has pervaded names and forms (nāmarūpabheda), and there is nothing in the world beside it; this is the principle of advaita Vedānta which is intended (abhipret) herein.

10

As Ṭīlak is interpreting the philosophy of the Gītā in terms of advaita Vedānta, he has to issue a statement regarding whether the Gītā's philosophical system is similar to Śaṅkara's advaita system and whether Śaṅkara's Gītābhāṣya

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GR. p. 212 (M); pp. 324f (E).

10

Ibid., p. 656 (M); p. 1013 (E), cf. p. 871 (E).

is consistent with the purport of the Gītā. Tīlak makes the following statement on that issue:

The Gītā was produced before the dualistic, monistic, and qualified monistic sects came into being.... But this does not prevent [me] from saying that the Vedānta in the Gītā is similar to the advaita philosophy of Śaṅkara from the point of philosophy. Yet the Gītā gives more importance to Karmayoga than Karmasannyāsa. Therefore I say that the religion of the Gītā is different from the cult of Śaṅkara ... [but] the Gītā and the cult of Śaṅkara have advaita in common. And that is the reason why the Śaṅkarabhāṣya on the Gītā is more valuable than the other sectarian commentaries.

11

The quotation cited above implies that Tīlak finds similarity between the philosophy of the Gītā and that of Śaṅkarācārya. This claim forces us to review the advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara in so far as it is necessary for clarifying Tīlak's philosophy.

B) Śaṅkarācārya's Advaita Vedānta:

Śaṅkara (A.D. 788-820) is the founder of advaitavāda, the doctrine of absolute non-dualism. According to him,

Brahman (the ultimate or ontological reality) is alone (eva) true (satyaṃ), all (sarva) else (itarat) that has issued from it (tadvikāraṃ) is merely (or measured in terms of names) (nāmadheyamātram) untrue or false (anṛtaṃ); this universe (viśvaṃ), this entire world (jagat) is Brahman itself.

12

11

GR. p. 212 (M); p. 325 (E).

12

Brahma eva satyaṃ, sarvaṃ tadvikāraṃ nāmadheyamātram anṛtaṃ itarat / ... Brahmaivedaṃ viśvaṃ samastaṃ idaṃ jagat// Mund. Up.ii.2.12; cf. Brahma satyaṃ jagan mithyā jivo brahmaiva nāparāh, quoted by C. Sharma, A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1973) p. 213.

This is, in brief, the advaitavāda of Śaṅkara, but it needs to be explained with reference to how Śaṅkara accounts for the existence of the world and the individual selves (jīvas).

Śaṅkara explains the existence of the individual selves (jīvas) by two theories. According to the theory of limitation (avaccheda), the jīva is Brahman limited by the adjuncts (upādhi) of the body, mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), and sense-organs (indriyāṇi).<sup>13</sup> According to another theory, the theory of reflection (pratibimba), the jīva is a reflection of Brahman as the sun is reflected in water.<sup>14</sup> These two theories make possible the doctrine of the identity between an individual self (jīvātman) and Brahman. Śaṅkara argues the doctrine as follows:

The individual soul (jīva) is called awake as long as being connected with the various external objects by means of the modifications of the mind - which thus constitute limiting adjuncts of the soul - it apprehends those external objects, and identifies itself with the gross body, which is one of those external objects. When, modified by the impressions which the external have left, it sees dreams, it is denoted by the term 'mind'. When, on the cessation of the two limiting adjuncts (i.e. the subtle and the gross bodies), and the consequent absence of the modification due to the adjuncts, it is, in the state

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SBS. i.2.6; i.3.7; i.2.21; ii.1.14; ii.3.17.

14

ābhāsa eva caisa jīvaḥ parasyātmano jalasurya-kādivatpratipattavyah / SBS. ii. 3.50; iii. 2.18; Cf. Śaṅkarabhāṣya Mund. Up. ii.2.4; iii.2.7, etc..

of deep sleep, merged in the Self as it were, then it is said to be asleep (resolved into the Self). A similar etymology of the word 'hridaya' is given by Śruti, 'That Self abides in the heart. And this is the etymological explanation: he is in the heart (hridi ayaṁ)' (Kh. Up. VIII.3.3).

15

The individual self (jīva) is limited by the adjuncts of body, the sense-organs, mind, and others which are a creation of avidyā (ātmanāyāvisarjita).

16

When the avidyā is destroyed by mystical knowledge, the aspirant realizes himself to be

17

the immortal Brahman. The underlying reality or Ātman is

18

the infinite Brahman.

Śaṅkara explains the existence of the world (jagat) and its plurality of names and forms (nāmarūpaṇi), as follows: He distinguishes between two phases of **reality**. He calls the first phase of reality 'para Brahman' (i.e. the higher or

15

The Vedānta-Sutras with the Commentary of Śaṅkarācārya, tr. G. Thibaut, ed. F. Max Muller, The Sacred Books of the East, (Delhi: Patna: Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1962) i.1.9.

16

Śaṅkarabhāṣyayuta Maṇḍukyakārikāh iii.15; Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, (Delhi: Varanasi: Patna: Motilal Banarasidass, 1964), p. 459.

17

Maṇḍaka Upanishad III.ii.9; The Upanishads ... with Notes and Explanation based on the Commentary of Sri Śaṅkarācārya, ... by Swamy Nikhilananda, (New York: Bonanza Books, 1949), I, 309.

18

Kena Upanishad I.5; The Upanishads ... with Notes and Explanation based on the Commentary of Sri Śaṅkarācārya., by Swamy Nikhilananda, I, 233.

transcendent Brahman) which is without phenomenal attributes and determination (sarvadharmaviśeṣavarjitaṃ)<sup>19</sup> and which transcends all phenomena (sarvaprapañcavivarjitaṃ)<sup>20</sup> and all empirical existence (sarvavyavahāragocarātītaṃ)<sup>21</sup>. It is non-temporal and non-causal, therefore it is not responsible for the origin of the world. But another phase of Brahman called 'apara Brahman' (the lower Brahman) is, on the contrary, qualified by attributes (saguna), determinate (saviśeṣa), empirical and phenomenal (saprapañca)<sup>22</sup>. This phase of Brahman is called 'Īśvara' who is the creator, preserver, and destroyer (tajjalāniti)<sup>23</sup>. Īśvara is Brahman conditioned by māyā; he creates the world out of his magic power (māyāśakti) which is the matrix of names and forms. Metaphysically, only Brahman is real. The world is not a modification (pariṇāma)

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<sup>19</sup> Śaṅkarabhāṣyayuta Praśnopaniṣat v.2; Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, (Pub. Motilal Banarasidass), p. 412.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., v.7; Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, (Pub. Motilal Banarasidass), p. 415.

<sup>21</sup> Śaṅkarabhāṣyayuta Kathopaniṣat ii.14; Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, (Pub. Motilal Banarasidass), p.50.

<sup>22</sup> SBS. ii.1.14.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., i.2.1.



of Brahman but is its mere appearance (vivarta), it is mere <sup>24</sup> māyā, <sup>25</sup> unreal like an illusory snake in a rope.

In short, according to the advaitavāda of Śaṅkara, Brahman is the only reality; the Īśvara and the individual selves are empirically real but are essentially one with Brahman; the world and its plurality of names and forms is due to the māyāśakti of Brahman. It appears to be real (vivarta); and it is real from an empirical stand-point (vyavahārika satya), but it is unreal from the metaphysical stand-point (paramārthika satya) for Brahman is the only reality.

The preceding discussion about Śaṅkara's advaita system was undertaken because Ṭīlak has said that the Gītā and the cult (saṁpradāya) of Śaṅkara have the advaita system in common. This statement needs to be carefully examined pointing out the similarities between Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta and Ṭīlak's advaita philosophy in his Gītārahasya.

C) Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and the Advaita Philosophy of the Gītārahasya: (1) Similarities between These Systems-

Ṭīlak argues that the Gītā teaches the advaitic doctrine of identity between the Absolute (Brahman, which is called the Śrī Bhagavān in the Gītā) and the individual selves,

<sup>24</sup>, Śaṅkarabhāṣyayuta Maṇḍukyakārikāḥ i.18; Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, (Pub. Motilal Banarasidass), p. 437.

<sup>25</sup>

ayaṁ prapanco māyā rajyusarpavat, ibid., i.18.

as he comments on the Gītā ii.12, rejecting Rāmānuja's (A.D. 1017-1137) interpretation and affirming the advaitic interpretation:

In commenting on this stanza, it is stated in the Rāmānujabhāṣya that, if both 'I', that is, the Supreme Being, and 'you and these kings' that is, the other Ātmans, existed in the past and will be born in the future, then, according to this stanza, the Supreme Being, and the Ātman both become separate, independent, and permanent entities. But, this argument is not correct. It is a partisan argument in support of a particular doctrine; because, this stanza is intended to explain only that both are permanent; and their mutual inter-relation is not stated here, nor was there any occasion for doing so. When that occasion arose in the Gītā itself, the non-dualistic (advaita) doctrine that the Parameśvara, that is the Blessed Lord, is the embodied Ātman in the bodies of all created beings (Gī. 8.4; 13.31).

26

In this comment on the Gītā viii.4, Ṭīlak rejects the theory of a plurality of selves and affirms the advaitic doctrine of one Self abiding in many bodies. He thus rejects the non-advaitic principle and a major commentary supporting such a view.

27

Ṭīlak argues that the Gītā distinguishes between two phases of reality, in the manner of the advaita system:

It must be said that the cosmic form (viśvarūpa) mentioned in the Gītā, (and) shown to Arjuna, must be māyik (illusory). In short, although the Blessed Lord (Bhagavaṅta) has praised the manifested form (vyakta svarūpa) in the Gītā, for the sake of worship,

26

GR. p. 559 (M); pp. 870 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

27

Ibid., pp. 669f (M); pp. 1032 (E).

it is undoubtedly the doctrine of the Gītā... that the superior form of the Parameśvara is unmanifested (avyakta) i.e. imperceptible to sense-organs, that the unmanifested becomes manifest is His māyā, man cannot attain liberation unless he crosses over the māyā and knows the pure and unmanifested form (of the Parameśvara)... this māyāvāda is not an invention of Śaṅkarācārya; even before him, it was an accepted doctrine of the Bhagavadgītā, Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavat Dharma.

28

Ṭīlak, in the quotation cited above, not only upholds the distinction between the higher and lower phases of reality, but also alludes to the māyāvāda. He defines māyā in the Gītā iv.6, as an advaitin does:

This unimaginable power of the Parameśvara to create the entire cosmos from His Imperceptible form is called 'māyā' in the Gītā....

29

Ṭīlak argues that the Gītā teaches the māyāvāda of advaita Vedānta, in interpreting the Gītā xiii.12-17:

Therefore it is quite clear that the Gītā positively asserts the advaita doctrine (advaita siddhānta)- the māyā embodied in various names and forms (nāmarūpātṃaka) is an illusion (bhrama) and Brahman which indivisibly abides in it (illusion) is alone true or real (satya).

30

Ṭīlak accounts for the existence of the world as Śaṅkara had done. It was said before that Śaṅkara regarded the world (jagat) and its plurality of names and forms

28

GR. p. 184 (M); p. 280 (E).

29

Ibid., p. 609 (M); p. 943 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar

30

Ibid., p. 728 (M); p. 1115 (E).

(nāmarūpāni) as empirically real but metaphysically unreal or illusory. Śaṅkara recognized the empirical reality (vyavahārikasatya) of the world and therefore he accommodated the Sāṅkhyan theory of pariṇāmavāda (i.e. the Īśvara is the material and efficient cause of the world<sup>31</sup> and the world is the real transformation of the mayic power of the Īśvara) with a modification, that is, the Sāṅkhyan prakṛti which is not dependent on the Puruṣa is treated as māyā which is dependent on Īśvara in the advaita Vedānta. Śaṅkara also accepted the Sāṅkhyan distinction between the subtle elements (sukṣmabhūta) and the gross elements (mahābhūta)<sup>32</sup> and the order of cosmic evolution and dissolution.<sup>33</sup> Śaṅkara has thus accommodated the Sāṅkhyan pariṇāmavāda in his system, from the empirical stand-point. But as he emphasized Brahman as the only reality, he advocated the vivartavāda<sup>34</sup> 'the doctrine of false transformation or of apparent change' - from the metaphysical stand-point, as the proper theory of the world.

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31 cetanam brahma jagataḥ kāraṇam prakṛtiśca, SBS. ii.1.11.

32 Śaṅkarabhāṣyayuta Praśnopaniṣat iv.8 ; Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, (Pub. Motilal Banarasidass).

33 SBS. ii.3.15;ii.3.14.

34 M. Hiriyanna, The Essentials of Indian Philosophy, (8th impression, Bombay: George Allen & Unwin, 1973), p. 159; Tilak defines vivartavāda as the fundamental substance looking something different (atāttvika), GR.pp. 332f(E).

J. Sinha observes that Śaṅkara advocated vivartavāda from the metaphysical stand-point, and pariṇāmavāda from the empirical stand-point.<sup>35</sup>

Ṭīlak, like an advaitin, finds both these theories about the existence of the world in the Gītā:

When it has been proved by the Vivarta-vāda, that it is possible to see the Appearance of the three-constituted [sic] qualityful Prakṛti in [the] one qualityless Parabrahman. Vedānta philosophy has no objection to accepting [the idea] that the further development of that Prakṛti has taken place according to the Guṇapariṇāma-vāda. The chief doctrine of the Non-Dualistic Vedānta is that the fundamental Prakṛti is an appearance, or as Illusion, and that it is not Real. But once this first Appearance of Prakṛti begins to be seen, Non-Dualistic Vedantists have no objection to accepting [the idea] that the appearances... are not independent;... Therefore, although the Blessed Lord has said in the Gītā that 'Prakṛti is nothing but My Māyā' (Gī. 3.28; 14.23). From this it will be clear, that when once the appearance of Māyā has taken place in the fundamentally qualityless Brahman according to Vivarta-vāda, the principle of guṇotkarṣa (Development of Constituents) has been accepted even by the Gītā for explaining this Māyic appearance. That is this further development of Prakṛti.

36

As Tilak finds that on the various points of philosophy there is similarity between the metaphysics (adhyātma) of the Gītā and the advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara, he considers the Śaṅkarabhāṣya more valuable than the other sectarian

35

J. Sinha, A History of Indian Philosophy, (Calcutta: Central Book Agency, 1952), II, 538.

36

GR. pp. 217f (M); pp. 333f (E), tr. B. Sukthankar.

37

commentaries. Ṭīlak has taken pains to show the points of similarity between the adhyātmasāstra (spiritual philosophy) of the Gītā and the advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara, and it seems that Ṭīlak defines his own philosophical system vis-a-vis Śaṅkara as far as these points are concerned.

(2) Differences between Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and the Advaita Philosophy of the Gītārahasya-

But while Ṭīlak's philosophical system has some points in common with Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta, it also differs from Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta at certain points. The advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara distinguishes between two types of knowledge: parā vidyā (i.e. higher knowledge) and aparā vidyā, (i.e. lower knowledge). According to the aparā vidyā, the world (jāgat) and its named and formed diversity has empirical reality (vyavahārika sattā) which is higher than illusory reality (pratibhāsika sattā). This lower knowledge is the first step leading to parā vidyā (higher knowledge), according to Śaṅkara. The parā vidyā means that Brahman is the only reality and its diversity is but an appearance or illusion (mithyatva); and the world has no actual place in the ultimate reality.<sup>38</sup>

The parā vidyā, realized by a liberated self (jīvanmukta) denies the individual self its finitude and

37  
vide, p. 235.

38  
M. Hiriyanna, op. cit., p. 23.

separateness from other created beings and re-affirms its essential identity with Brahman. According to the parā vidyā, the jīva is not false or illusory (mithyā), as the world is. It treats the world as an illusory manifestation, but the jīva as Brahman itself, appearing under the limitations which form part of that illusory world. This brings out clearly that the identity of the jīva with Brahman is the doctrine of fundamental importance to the advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.<sup>39</sup> And the world is left out of the mystical unity of Brahman and the jīva.

Tīlak differs from Śaṅkara as he talks of the unity of the Absolute (viz. Bhagavān), the individual self (jīva or ātman), and the creation. In his comment on the Gītā iv. 35, he says:

Sarvabhūtatmaikyajñāna is mentioned here. That means the knowledge of all beings in oneself and oneself in all beings. The same idea is discussed later on (Gī. vi. 29).\* The Self (ātman) and the Blessed Lord (Bhagavān) are fundamentally identical, therefore, all beings are comprehended in the Self. That means that the threefold distinction (trividhabheda) among the Self (we) and other beings and the Blessed Lord disappears.

40

The quotation cited above implies a threefold identity. But in Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta there is a twofold identity viz.

39

M. Hiriyanna, op. cit., pp. 157f.

\* sarvabhūtasthamātmanam sarvabhūtāni cātmani /  
īkṣate yogayuktātma sarvatra samadarśanaḥ // Gī. vi.29.

40

GR. p. 622 (M); p. 964 (E).

identity between an individual self (jīvātman) and Brahman, and the world is left out of the complete (pūrṇa) unity. This point will become clearer when we consider Śaṅkara's prescribed mode of behaviour (ācāra) for a liberated self (jīvanmukta). The prescribed ācāra for a jīvanmukta is samnyāsa i.e. a negative attitude towards the world realized through physical withdrawal from society and the world. For Śaṅkara the mystical knowledge (jñāna) of identity between an individual self and Brahman does not go with karma i.e. action and world-involvement. To argue this hypothesis is the main purpose of Śaṅkara, when he says:

Therefore, this is a settled fact in the Gītā - not jñāna combined with action, but by pure knowledge of the Self alone immortality is attained. In the following passages we shall show that such is the import (of the Gītā) as occasion arises.

41

Ṭīlak differs radically from Śaṅkara when he argues in favour of a combination of knowledge with action (karma-jñāna-samuccaya):

There is a fundamental unity underlying the Logos / Īśvara / man and / the / world. The world is in existence because the Logos has willed it so. It is his will that holds it together. Man strives to gain union with God; and when this union is achieved, the individual will merges in the Mighty Universal Will. When this is achieved, will the individual say - 'I shall do no action, and I shall not help the world?'

41

Gītā in Śaṅkara's own Words ii.10, tr. P. V. Panoli, (Calicut: S. Paramasivan, 1975), p. 46; cf. The Bhagavad-Gītā with the Commentary of Sri Śaṅkarāchārya, tr. A. Mahādeva Śāstri (6th ed., Madras: V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu & Sons, 1972), pp. 28, 43ff, 48, 78, 89.



It does not stand to reason. Śri Krishna says in the Gītā that there is nothing in all the three worlds that he need acquire, and still he acts. If man seeks unity with the Deity, he must necessarily seek unity with the interests of the world also, and work for it. If he does not, then the unity is not perfect [pūrṇa], because there is union between [only] two elements out of the three-Man, Deity, and the World.

42

Thus Ṭīlak's philosophical system which holds the principle of the threefold identity differs from Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta which holds the twofold identity.

Secondly, though Śaṅkara and Ṭīlak hold the advaita philosophy in common, they differ in its practical application. We have already alluded to the fact that Śaṅkara prescribed the saṁnyāsa (i.e. renunciation of society and of the world) as the ācāra (i.e. moral code of behaviour) for a jīvanmukta. On the other hand, as the quotation cited above implies, Ṭīlak prescribes a different ācāradharma (ethics) for a liberated person. Śaṅkara prescribed karmasaṁnyāsa (i.e. renunciation of action), but Ṭīlak prescribes karmayoga (i.e. performance of action), though they hold advaita system in common. This distinction is very important and needs some elaboration.

It has been shown that Śaṅkara and Ṭīlak hold the principle of identity between the Self and Brahman

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quoted by R. Gopal, Lokamānya Ṭīlak A Biography, (London: Asia Publishing House, 1965), p. 356.

(brahmātmaikya) in common, but Ṭīlak differs from Śāṅkara in that he holds the threefold identity among the Deity, Man, and the world. The concept of identity between an individual self and the other created beings (sarvabhūtātmaikya) or the world (jagat) which Ṭīlak calls ātmaupamyā (self-identification) or ātmaupamyadr̥ṣṭi (self-identifying outlook or vision) seems to distinguish Ṭīlak from Śāṅkarācārya.

Although one may find altruistic teaching in Śāṅkara's advaita Vedānta, and although Śāṅkara exceptionally allowed liberated selves (jīvanmuktas or jñānins) to do social service as he himself did, one does not find an ethic of social action based on the principle of ātmaupamyā in Śāṅkara because he ultimately prescribes karmasamnyāsa (i.e. renunciation of action or duties) for the liberated selves. In contrast to Śāṅkara, Ṭīlak develops an ethic of social action (Karmayoga) based on the principle of ātmaupamyā along the following lines.

43

GR. p. 347 (M); pp. 534f (E).

44

Ibid., p. 349 (M); p. 538 (E).

45

Ibid., p. 435 (M); p. 681 (E).

46

SBG. xii.15; xiii.7,11; xvi.1-4.

47

Ibid., xiii.11; iv.19,20,24; SBS. v.7 cf. GR. p. 483 (E).

It has already been indicated that Ṭīlak considers  
the principle of ātmaupamya the same as sarvabhūtātmaikya.<sup>48</sup>

On the basis of this assumption, he argues:

If I am in beings and all beings in me, it  
naturally follows that I must ~~treat~~ treat other beings as I  
treat myself.

49

Ṭīlak considers this principle of ethics more satisfactory  
than any other principle of worldly morality.<sup>50</sup> He also  
considers this principle as the guide to evaluating pain and  
happiness;<sup>51</sup> and argues that other measures are inadequate.

Ṭīlak considers the principle of identifying the interests  
of others with one's own and makes it the principle of social  
action (Karmayoga), when he argues:

When the conviction (bhāvanā) that all persons are  
in me and I in them has been once affirmed, the  
question of one's interest (svārtha) as being different  
from others' interest (parārtha) does not arise at all.

52

Ṭīlak develops this idea with reference to the ethic of saintly

48

vide, pp. 246f.

49

GR.p. 349 (M); p. 538 (E).

50

Ibid., p. 347 (M); pp. 534f (E).

51

Ibid., p.433 (M); p. 678 (E).

52

Ibid., p. 348 (M); p. 536 (E).

persons, a matter which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Thirdly, even though Ṭīlak sees an inclusion of gunāpariṇāma<sup>53</sup> in Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta, he differs from Śaṅkara in interpreting the māyāvāda. This point becomes clear when he argues that there is karma (action) in the Absolute (or the nirguṇa Brahman) where the creation or extension of the world (sr̥ṣṭicā saṁsār) is concerned:

The transcendent Brahman (parabrahman) which is fundamental, unmanifested, and qualityless (nirguṇa), at the beginning of the creation (sr̥ṣṭi), becomes manifest with qualities embodied in name and form; that is, it appears to be perceptible in the form of creation; this (change) is called māyā in the science of Vedānta (Gī. vii. 24-25) and action is included in it (Br. 1.6.1). Nay, we may even say that 'māyā' and 'karma' are synonymous. Because, unless some action has been performed first, it is not possible for the unmanifest to become manifest and qualityless, qualityful.

54

Ṭīlak concludes:

In brief, karma is the activity (vyāpār) which takes place in the fundamental qualityless Brahman at the time when the visible world (sr̥ṣṭi) began to be created. This activity is called māyā with names and forms.

55

53

vide, pp. 242f.

54

GR.p. 236 (M); p. 362 (E).

55

Ibid., p. 238 (M); p. 365 (E).

Thus Ṭīlak has equated māyā with karma<sup>56</sup> and emphasized the necessity of action being performed in Brahman for the creation or evolution of the universe. The idea of the necessity of action is not emphasized in the māyāvāda or vivartavāda of Śaṅkara.

Having pointed out the similarities and differences between Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta and Ṭīlak's philosophical system, we proceed next to examine the issue whether Ṭīlak was influenced by the Marāṭhā saints in reaching this philosophical position. We also proceed to examine the issue did the saints utilize a philosophical position which had the same kind of similar and dissimilar points from the position maintained by Śaṅkara.

D) Ṭīlak's General Observation on the Marāṭhā

Bhāgavat Dharma:

We have already explained that Ṭīlak prefers the Gītābhāṣya of Śaṅkara because it upholds the advaita Vedānta. This means that the Śaṅkarabhāṣya has contributed to Ṭīlak's understanding of the Gītā. But proving the influence of the Śaṅkarabhāṣya on the Gītārahasya is not the immediate concern of our thesis. The major concern of the thesis is to examine whether and in what ways Ṭīlak's philosophy was influenced and informed by the thought of the Marāṭhā saints. We must

therefore ask what Ṭīlak thinks of Marāṭhā spirituality in general and more specifically what he thinks of their interpretation of the advaita philosophy. Having surveyed the commentaries on the Gītā by Rāmānujācārya (A.D. 1050-1135), Madhvācārya (A.D. 1197-1276), and Vallabhācārya (A. D. 1479-1531) which emphasize devotionalism, Ṭīlak makes an observation on the devotionalism of the Marāṭhā saints, by way of comparison, as follows:

Unless the things, directly perceived by the eyes, are believed to be true, individual's worship (upāsana), that is devotion (bhakti), would be without foundation (nirādhār) or would fall short of something. Because of this belief, various devotional Saṁpradāyas (cults or traditions), such as dualism (dvaita) and qualified non-dualism (viśiṣṭādvaita), came into being which rejected the māyāvāda of Śaṁkara's Saṁpradāya. This fact is quite clear. But it cannot be said that one has to give up advaita and māyāvāda in order to explain the theory (upapatti) of devotion. Because the saints of Mahārāṣṭra justified devotion without discarding the principles of māyāvāda and advaita. The [devotional] discipline (pañtha) of the saints of Mahārāṣṭra was in existence before Śaṁkarācārya. The tradition (pañtha) of [the Marāṭhā saints] takes the principles of the Saṁpradāya of Śaṁkara namely, non-dualism (advaita), the illusory nature of things (māyāmithyatva), and the necessity of abandonment of action (karmatyāgāvaśyakatā), for granted.

57

In commenting on the devotionalism of the Marāṭhā saints, Ṭīlak says about the Jñāneśvari, "Jñāneśvar himself has at the end of his book [Jñāneśvari] said that he has written

his commentary after consulting the Bhāṣyakāras  
 (Śaṅkarācārya)"<sup>58</sup>.

This over-all observation of Ṭiḷak on the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra leaves the superficial impression that the Marāṭhā saints, who, like Śaṅkara, were understood by Ṭiḷak to be propagating the necessity of abandonment of action (karmatyāgāvaśyakatā), have probably not, therefore, influenced Ṭiḷak's activistic (pravṛttipara) interpretation of the Gītā. One might conclude that Ṭiḷak thinks the saints have blindly followed Śaṅkara's teachings. This general remark of Ṭiḷak will, however, have to be evaluated again after we evaluate the philosophical position of the prominent saints. Let us first examine Ṭiḷak's specific comments on the Jñāneśvari.

Whether Jñāneśvar followed Śaṅkara's philosophy in writing the Jñāneśvari is a matter of controversy among scholars. S. D. Peṇḍase follows Ṭiḷak's contention and points out the many similarities between Śaṅkara's Gītābhāṣya and the Jñāneśvari<sup>59</sup> and concludes that Jñāneśvar followed Śaṅkara's Gītābhāṣya.<sup>60</sup> S. G. Tulpule supports the opinion

58

GR. p. 17 (M); p. 26 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

59

S. D. Peṇḍase, Śri Jñāneśvarāṅce Tattvajñāna, (Bombay: K. B. Dhavle, 1941), pp. 53, 59, 65, 149, 160f.

60

Ibid., pp. 166-168, 172.

of Peṇḍase.<sup>61</sup> G. S. Ghurye<sup>62</sup> and S. R. Sharma<sup>63</sup> also say that Jñāneśvar followed Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta. S. G. Tulpule also supports Peṇḍase's opinion that Jñāneśvar followed the Upaniṣads, the Gītā, Yogavaśiṣṭa, Gauḍapādakārikā, the philosophy of Śaṅkara, Kāshmiri Saivism, and the philosophy of the Nāthas.<sup>64</sup> But D. G. Divākar alias Jñānadevopāsak<sup>65</sup> argues that Jñāneśvar contradicts Śaṅkara's māyāvāda<sup>66</sup> and karmasamnyāsa (renunciation of (action) and teaches the philosophy of the Nāthas.<sup>67</sup> How can the issue be resolved?

61

S. G. Tulpule, Pañc Saṅtakavi, pp. 40f.

62

G. S. Ghurye, Religious Consciousness, (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1965), p. 263

63

S. R. Sharma, Teachings of Jñānadeva, p. 21.

64

S. G. Tulpule, op. cit., p. 41; S. D. Peṇḍase, op. cit., p. 451

65

D. G. Divākar, Nāthasampradāya āṇi Jñāneśvar, (Nagpur: Lilābāī Dhavle, 1969), pp. 7, 37.

66

Ibid., pp. 37f.

67

D. G. Divākar, op. cit., p. 82.



Jñāneśvar, at the end of the Jñāneśvari , says:

I have followed the foot-steps (māgovā) of Vyāsa  
 [the author of the Mahābhārata ] and have consulted  
 [all the ] interpreters (bhāṣyakārānte). How  
 then can I be wrong [in interpreting ] even though  
 I am not worthy?

68

The verse literally means that Jñāneśvar followed many commentators (bhāṣyakārānte). In Marāṭhī, however, the honorific plural is often used for a single person. It is likely that Jñāneśvar used the honorific plural in order to speak of the one commentator he was consulting. Tīlak understood him this way and concluded that Jñāneśvar referred to Śaṅkara with honour. However, the interpretation that Jñāneśvar followed many commentators cannot be ruled out. If Jñāneśvar was closely following Śaṅkara as the traditional authority, he might be expected to have mentioned Śaṅkara's name in his work. He does not mention Śaṅkara in the Jñāneśvari, but he does mention his own lineage at the end of the Jñāneśvari.<sup>69</sup> This evidence seems to suggest that Jñāneśvar, who was initiated into the Nātha Saṁpradāya, followed the theology of the Nāthas rather than Śaṅkara, in writing his commenatry.

The argument, stated above, suggests the possibility

68

Jñ. xviii. 1722.

69

Ibid., xviii. 1751-1763.

that Jñāneśvar consulted the works of the Nāthas and followed their theology rather than advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara, but this argument needs to be developed by pointing out the similarities and differences between Jñāneśvar's theology and Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta.

E) Similarities among Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Jñāneśvar's Theology, and the Gītārahasya:

(1) Similarities between Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Jñāneśvar's Theology-

Śaṅkara and Jñāneśvar are both advaitic as they believe in one absolute reality. For Śaṅkara, Brahman is the only reality. Jñāneśvar similarly believes in one absolute principle when he says, "There is no other thing besides the One Substance".<sup>70</sup> Or, "Thus there is only one (ekaci) Substance ; its threefold manifestation [drśya (i.e. a thing that is seen), draṣṭa (i.e. seer), and darśana (i.e. vision) ]<sup>71</sup> is misunderstood (brānti) to be three; when this threefold manifestation goes away, only one Person (Vyakti)<sup>71</sup> remains, (because) it is essentially one (ekapan)". Thus both Śaṅkara and Jñāneśvar are advaitic.

Secondly, Śaṅkara believes that the One Principle is eternal and whatever has issued from it is untrue or

70

Amritānubhava, tr. B. P. Bahirat, v. 34 cf. vi.14.

71

Cāṅgadevapāsaṣṭhi 25; P. Sarma, Svānaṅda Jīvan (Cāṅgadeva Pāsaṣṭhice Vīvaraṅ).

perishable. Jñāneśvar upholds a similar idea when he says:

Husks and seed remain together. When they are winnowed, the seeds remain (in the pan) because they are heavy and husks are fanned away. Similarly, when a knower reflects he realizes that the world (prapañcu) is naturally perishable and that whatever is left is essentially the Principle (tattva).

72

Thirdly, Śaṅkara holds the principle of identity between the Absolute (Brahman) and an individual self (Jīvātman). Jñāneśvar upholds a similar principle when he says:

There remains no obstruction (gābhāgobhā) for the reflection of a thing to become one with the thing when the water is drained away. There is nothing to prevent (ādavārā) wind becoming one with the ocean. You and I appear (different) because of the fact that we are embodied (dehadharmī). When our bodies are destroyed (virāmi) you and I will be one.

73

Again,

When a brook becomes dry, the reflection of stars in it disappears. Similarly, when the limiting condition disappears the conditioned self will disappear (i.e. self becomes unlimited).

74

Thus Śaṅkara and Jñāneśvar hold the similar idea that when the mental and physical limitations of an individual self are destroyed, the individual self becomes one with the Absolute.

72

Jñ. ii . 130-131.

73

Ibid., xviii. 1365-1367.

74

Ibid., xv. 499 cf. vi. 82-84.

Fourthly, as we have seen Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta has accommodated the Sāṅkhyan theory of pariṇāmavāda which deals with the evolution (nirmiti) and dissolution (saṁhāra) of the world (jagat). Jñāneśvar's system also includes the Sāṅkhyan theory of evolution (utpatti) and involution (pralaya). He devotes many verses to explaining the Sāṅkhyan theory. A few of them run as follows:

Prakṛti is the source (tāṅkasāl, lit. mint) of sounds; it is a busy creeper of wonders. Nay, all is its play. Evolution (utpatti) and dissolution (pralay) are its morning and evening (sāyamprāt). Thus it is surprising and enchanting (mohan).

75

**These** are the points of similarity between Śaṅkara and Jñāneśvar. Among these ideas, the idea of the identity between an individual self and the Absolute is of the most fundamental importance to Śaṅkara. <sup>76</sup> The issue of deciding whether Jñāneśvar depends on Śaṅkara might be resolved if one could prove that Jñāneśvar not only holds a similar view but also uses similar phrases. When, however, Jñāneśvar talks of the identity between an individual self and Brahman, he uses the language of Nāthism rather than of Śaṅkara:

That 'one body devours another body' is the secret (dañśu) of the teaching of the Nāthas. This has

75

Jñ. xiii. 995-996.

76

vide , p.246.

been revealed by Śri Mahāviṣṇu.

77

The principle of identity between an individual self and Brahman is stated by Gorakṣanātha, a major Nātha of the Nātha Saṁpradāya, in these terms: brahmāṇḍavartī yatkiṁścit tatpāinde'pyasati sarvathā / itī niścaya evātra piṇḍasamvittirucyate // <sup>78</sup> (tr. whatever is in the brahmāṇḍa (cosmos) is in a body completely...) Jñāneśvar's phrase "one body devouring another body" is very similar to Gorakṣanātha's phrase. From this evidence we are inclined to conclude that Jñāneśvar's advaitic interpretation of the Gītā is in agreement with Nāthism rather than with Śaṁkara's advaitavāda. This conclusion is further established by the other differences one finds between Śaṁkara's advaita Vedānta and Jñāneśvar's philosophical system. But before demonstrating these differences, we should return to Ṭīḷak and show Ṭīḷak's dependence on Jñāneśvar's theology in arguing for an advaitic interpretation of the Gītā even where points of similarity between Śaṁkara and Jñāneśvar are concerned.

In the beginning of this chapter, we have argued that Ṭīḷak thinks of the philosophy of the Gītā as advaitic, and therefore, he thinks of the Śaṁkarabhāṣya as more valuable

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77

Jñ. vi. 291.

78

Gorakṣanātha, Sidha Siddhānta Saṁhitā 32, quoted by P. R. Mokāsi, op.cit., p. 23.

than any other bhāṣyas (viz. commentaries on the Gītā). We have shown the similarities between Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta and Ṭīlak's philosophy, as follows: (i) that there is only one reality, (ii) that reality alone exists after everything is destroyed i.e. it is imperishable reality, (iii) that the unmanifest reality becomes manifest because of māyā the power of Brahman to create the world and its plurality of names and forms, (iv) that advaitavāda includes both vivartavāda and pariṇāmavāda, and (v) that there is identity between an individual self and Brahman.<sup>79</sup> We have also shown the similarities between Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta and Jñāneśvar's philosophical system, as follows: (i) that there is only one reality, (ii) that reality is imperishable, and (iii) that the advaita system includes pariṇāmavāda. From these similarities we are inclined to say that Śaṅkara, Jñāneśvar, and Ṭīlak hold that there is one reality, which is imperishable and eternal, which is manifested through māyā (i.e. divine power to create the world), and which is identical with the individual self.

As far as these points of similarity between Śaṅkara and Ṭīlak are concerned, we might say that Ṭīlak was influenced by the advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara and his advaitic interpretation of the Gītā directly, because he has said that the Gītā and

the school of Śaṅkara have advaita philosophy in common and therefore, that Śaṅkara's bhāṣya on the Gītā is more valuable than any other commentary. Before reaching that conclusion, however, we must ask in what way Ṭīlak's philosophy was influenced by Jñāneśvar.

(2) Jñāneśvar's Theology and Ṭīlak's Philosophical System=

First, Ṭīlak, like Jñāneśvar, believes in one reality. There is a similarity of ideas here but there is no specific evidence cited by Ṭīlak from the Jñāneśvari to show that he borrowed the idea from that source.

Secondly, there is a similarity between Ṭīlak's way of arguing for the imperishability of the Absolute and Jñāneśvar's. In the Jñāneśvari, Jñāneśvar argued for the imperishability of Brahman, as follow:

Similarly, one can discern, after reflecting that when the visible world (prapañcu) naturally vanishes, there remains One Principle (tattva), for the wise, essentially.

80

Ṭīlak has argued the imperishability of the Absolute in the manner of Jñāneśvar, as follows:

'That which remains eternally after all beings are destroyed' (Gī. viii. 20), That alone is really true and It has pervaded all the material bodies (piṇḍas) and the cosmos (brahmāṇḍa) (Gī. xiii.31).

81

80

Jñ. ii. 131.

81

GR. p. 212 (M); pp. 324f (E).

Thirdly, Ṭīlak seems to depend on Jñāneśvar's theology in his argument for the unity between an individual self and Brahman (brahmātmaikya) when he explains:

'Tattvamāsi' [i.e. That thou art ] is one of the main sacred utterances of the Upaniṣads (mahāvākya) of the advaita Vedānta and 'je piṇḍi te brahmāṇḍi' [tr. whatever is in body is in the cosmos ] is its translation into Marāṭhī.

82

The Marāṭhī phrase 'je piṇḍi te brahmāṇḍi' (i.e. whatever is in the body is in the cosmos) is advaitic in one sense, but one would not normally equate it, as Ṭīlak does, with the Saṅskṛt phrase 'tattvamāsi'. Ṭīlak does not differentiate between the different backgrounds of these two advaitic phrases. The Marāṭhī phrasing of advaitic philosophy is very important for Ṭīlak, and he repeats it as least

83

four times. The Marāṭhī phrase was popularized by the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya and is clearly based on the teaching of the Nāthas. We have earlier pointed out that the phrase originated with Gorakṣanātha and that it is given special attention in the Jñāneśvari where it is said, "one body devours another body' this is the secret of the teaching of Nāthas".

84

Jñāneśvar provided a theological foundation

82

GR. p. 205 (M); p. 313 (E).

83

Ibid., pp. 205, 206, 219, 388 (M); pp. 313, 315, 335, 600 (E).

84

vide , pp. 257f.



for the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya by writing a commentary on the Gītā in agreement with Nātha thought. Therefore, the advaitic teaching of the Jñāneśvari has to be understood in the context of Nāthism. However, Ṭīlak wrongly supposed that Jñāneśvar had consulted Śaṅkara in writing his commentary on the Gītā, and this assumption led him to equate the two ways of expressing advaitic thought. It was the Marāṭhī phrase, coming from the background of Nāthism, which was important in Ṭīlak's advaitic thought. Therefore, one can trace the influence of Nāthism through Jñāneśvar onto Ṭīlak's philosophy even when he himself was not fully aware of that influence.

Fourthly, Ṭīlak seems to be influenced by Jñāneśvar when he explains the ideas 'Viśvācī Ubhārṇi v Saṁhārṇi' ('Construction and Destruction of the Cosmos' ch. viii of the GR). Ṭīlak begins the chapter by referring to Jñāneśvar and says:

But how the bazaar (bājār) or playful activities (Kheḷ), which is called 'samsṛticā piṅgā' (i.e. the cyclic dance of the worldly life) by Marāṭhī poets and which is called 'prakṛticī tāṅkasāl' (i.e. a mint of matter) by Jñāneśvar Mahārāj, that is, how the evolution (samsār) of Prakṛti,... and its dissolution (lay) take place remains to be explained; and I shall do that in this chapter.

85

Ṭīlak seems to be impressed by Jñāneśvar's catch-word 'tāṅkasāl'. Jñāneśvar had used the word 'tāṅksāl' in discussing the functions of Prakṛti, i.e. the construction and destruction

of the universe. Ṭīlak was impressed by the simile used by Jñāneśvar to describe the functions of Prakṛti. Jñāneśvar's advaitic theology includes the pariṇāmavāda of the Sāṅkhyan system. This means that Jñāneśvar provided Ṭīlak with a theology which gives prominence to the pariṇāmavāda within advaitic philosophy. This too implies a direct influence of Jñāneśvar on Ṭīlak.

Thus far we have pointed out the influence of Jñāneśvar in helping Ṭīlak express the points on which they were in agreement with Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta. We should now proceed to ask whether Jñāneśvar's theology also influenced Ṭīlak to disagree at times with Śaṅkara. In order to see this point we must first discuss the difference between Śaṅkara and Jñāneśvar.

F) Differences among Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Jñāneśvar's Theology, and the Gītārahasya:

(1) Differences between Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Jñāneśvar's Theology-

Though Jñāneśvar and Śaṅkara have some points in common, they differ on some important points. First, their theories of creation have different philosophical implications. Śaṅkara's theory is called māyāvāda (i.e. theory of Illusion) or vivartavāda (i.e. theory of Appearance), according to which the world is false (mithyā), untrue (anṛt), or mere appearance (vivarta), from the metaphysical point of view. Brahman, the

Absolute, is not responsible for the world, but Īśvara, the lower Brahman, is responsible for its creation, maintenance, and destruction.<sup>86</sup> Jñāneśvar differs from Śaṅkara because he does not make a distinction between the Parabrahman (i.e. the higher Brahman) and the Aparabrahman (i.e. the lower Brahman) or the Īśvara.<sup>87</sup> He regards the One Principle as responsible for the creation of the world and also regards the creation as Its manifestation and essentially identical with it. As he says:

Is this whole world not an extension (vistāralepan) in terms of my names? [ This rhetorical question implies the positive answer 'yes' ] When milk is curdled it naturally becomes curd. Seeds grow into trees; or gold turns into ornaments. Similarly, this world is an extension of Myself alone. That which was frozen in the form of the unmanifest has become melted in the form of the world. Know thus that the unmanifest (Prakṛti) becomes manifest in the form of the three worlds.

88

Again,

As an ocean is related to waves (kalloḷ) so these beings are related to me; I am their supporter.

89

Or,

86

vide , p. 240.

87

P. R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 213.

88

Jñ. ix. 64-66.

89

Ibid., xiii. 921.

Just as water plays itself assuming the form of waves so the Ultimate Substance or Ātman plays happily with Himself.

90

Again,

Innumerable forms and sight arise but one Pure Intelligence underlies all.

91

That Jñāneśvar did not regard the world to be different from the Absolute but regarded it as Its real or actual manifestation is considered to be an original contribution of Jñāneśvar.<sup>92</sup>

This idea distinguishes Jñāneśvar's advaita theology from Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta because for Śaṅkara, the named and formed manifestation of Brahman is illusory while for Jñāneśvar it is real and actual. Jñāneśvar described an inter-dependent relationship (anyonya saṁbandha) between God and the world, when he said:

AA. both fire (vanhi) and flame are fire only, so all these are related to me.

93

Again,

The beings which have left this world were my forms

90

Amritānubhava vii. 135, tr. B.P. Bahirat.

91

Ibid., vii. 124 cf. vii. 129, 131, 156.

92

R. D. Ranade, Mysticism in Mahārāshtra, p. 158.

93

Jñ. xiv. 123.

and the beings which exist are my forms.

94

As the world and its beings are actual manifestation and not false appearance (mithyā), Jñāneśvar argued against the idea of leaving the world on the ground that it is a false way to try to know God:

If the world were different (paraute) from me, then you should leave it for my sake, but this truth cannot be asserted (ukhete) because I am all.

95

Again,

First the worldliness of the world should go away and then you could know me; but this view is not true because I am all.

96

In short, Jñāneśvar regarded the world as the real or actual manifestation of God.

Secondly, as Jñāneśvar regarded the world to be a real manifestation of God, he rejected the idea of the falsehood of the world, when he said:

What is seen [i.e. the world] (dṛsya) and who sees [i.e. individual self] (draṣṭatva) are originated from Ignorance (avidyānimitte); I do not understand (neṇe) this doctrine; whatever exists is an actual expression of (reality). It is like a sāri [made out of threads]; otherwise, a sāri is threads

94

Jñ. vii. 161.

95

Ibid., xiv. 128.

96

Ibid., xiv. 381.

obviously. It is like as earthen vessel made out of earth; [otherwise, an earthen vessel is earth].  
97

Jñāneśvar differed from Śaṅkara because he rejected the metaphysical falsehood (mithyatva) of the world and considered the ātman (i.e. an individual self) and the jagat (i.e. the world or cosmos) to be from the same source.

Thirdly, Jñāneśvar differed from Śaṅkara in his concept of the power of God to create the world and the beings in it. Śaṅkara called this illusion-creating power 'māyā'. Māyā in Śaṅkara's philosophy is dependent (upādhi) on Brahman. It is instrumental in creating the appearance or illusion of the world but it is not the intrinsic power of Brahman. On the contrary, in the theology of Jñāneśvar, the power of creating is intrinsic and identical with God. Jñāneśvar calls the power 'śakti'. Jñāneśvar's theory of the world seems to be a restatement of the theory of Nāthism, for he says:

It is through God that the other [the Power or Śakti] is Goddess and without her the Lord is nowhere. As a matter of fact their existence is due to each other.  
98

Again,

The essence of all void became Purusha through her, while the Shakti got her peculiar existence through the Lord. Shiva himself formed His beloved without whom Shiva loses his own Personality. Her form is

97

Cāṅgadev Pāsaṣṭhi 8-9; P. Sarma, Svānanda Jīvan (Cāṅgadev Pāsaṣṭhice Vivaran), pp. 121-140 cf. Jñ. vii.66; xiii. 872; xviii. 121, 360.

98

Amṛtānubhava i.10, tr. B. P. Bahirat.

the cause of God and His glory manifested in the process of the world. But her form itself is created by Him out of Himself.

99

These differences- the world as a real or actual manifestation of God, denial of the illusory nature of the world, and the power of creating as the intrinsic power of God- which Jñāneśvar had with Śaṅkara, constitute a theory which is different from the māyāvāda of Śaṅkara. In order to show the difference between them, Jñāneśvar's theory of creation is technically called 'sphurtivāda' or 'cidvilāsavāda'. Scholars have attempted to define the theory. B. P. Bahirat defines cidvilāsavāda as the theory, "which maintains <sup>100</sup> the universe as the expression of the Absolute Reality" and adds that according to cidvilāsavāda a knower (jñātā) and what is to be known (jñeya) are manifestations of the Self <sup>101</sup> whose nature is knowledge. R. D. Rānade defines it as the theory according to which 'the universe is an illumination of the Absolute' <sup>102</sup> (Amṛitanubhava vii. 289). S. G. Tulpuḷe says that according to the cidvilāsavāda, the world is cidvilāsa

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Amṛtānubhava i.27-29, tr. B.P. Bahirat.

100

B. P. Bahirat, The Philosophy of Jñānadeva, p. 19.

101

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Amṛtānubhavāce Tattvājñāna', Navabhārat, August, 1954, quoted by P. R. Mokasi, op. cit., p. 213.

102

R. D. Rānade, op. cit., p. 158.

or 'jag asiki vastuprabhā' (i.e. the world is a real manifestation) of the Paramātmā (the Supreme Self) who is beyond seer (draṣṭā), visible world (drśya), and vision (darśan) who assumes the form of the world. All these attempts to define the spurtivāda or cidvilāsavāda amount to saying that the cidvilāsavāda means that the world is the real manifestation or illumination of God through His intrinsic power (śakti).<sup>103</sup><sup>104</sup>

Fourthly, Jñāneśvar differed from Śaṅkara because he held that the world is the real manifestation of God, and God and the world are identical in the sense that they are essentially one. This point was discussed previously. It suffices to say that Jñāneśvar held the metaphysical unity or identity between God and the world.

Fifthly, Jñāneśvar differed from Śaṅkara because he held that there is identity between an individual self and the world. Jñāneśvar emphasized the vision of identity of the ātman with the world in these verses:

O Pāṇḍava, see the universe (viśva) in you and be yourself the universe. Thus you will experience (upāsije) identity (sāmya). There is no higher achievement in the world than this vision. Therefore, I have told you / to aspire toward achieving the vision of identity / on several occasions.

105

103

S. G. Tulpuḷe, Panc Santakavi, p. 56.

104

te aghaveci sākāre / kalpūni āpaṇpayā pure /  
jāle ase tadnusāre / caitanyaci // Jñ. xv. 486.

105

Jñ. vi. 409-410.



According to the fourth point, Jñāneśvar held the principle of the identity between God and the world, and according to the fifth point, the principle of the identity between and individual self and the world. Thus there is a perfect (purṇa) identity or unity among the constituents of Reality according to the advaitic theology of Jñāneśvar. Jñāneśvar differed from Śaṅkara because he held the three-fold unity or the three-fold essential unity among the constituents of Reality, whereas Śaṅkara held the principle of identity between Brahman and the individual self (ātman) and left the world out of the complete or perfect (purṇa) unity.

We had earlier shown that even contexts where Jñāneśvar was in agreement with Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta one could see the influence of Nāthism which was Jñāneśvar's spiritual heritage. These two reasons together distinguish Jñāneśvar's advaita theology from Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta. S. V. Dāṇḍekar attempts to distinguish these two schools of thought by calling Śaṅkara's system 'Kevala advaita (abstract or pure non-dualism) and Jñāneśvar's school 'Purṇa Advaita' (complete or perfect non-dualism).

## (2) Similarities between Jñāneśvar's Theology and Tukārām's Theology-

We have already shown that the purṇa advaita differs from the kevala advaita of Śaṅkara in that it holds the principle of the unity between God and the world and the

world and the beings in the world (nāmarūpātmak jagat).. Does Tukārām follow Jñāneśvar's theology in this respect?

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, talks of the identity between God and the world and the beings in the world, in his poems:

The whole world is God; this is the treasure (thev) of the teachings.

106

Again,

I shall explain to you that the essence of the Vedānta is that the Lord (Viśvaṁbhar) prevades the universe. The scriptures repeatedly tell us that the Lord of the world (jagadiś) is in the world. The Purāṇas loudly proclaim that the Lord (Nārāyaṇ) has pervaded all of this (viz. the world). The saints say that the Lord of the universe (Janārdan) is in the people.

107

The second form of the identity in the purna advaita is the identity between an individual self and the world and the beings in the world. Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, talks of the identification of an individual self with the world and the beings in the world, when he says:

As I have set this diversion affot, I have not neglected any aspect of it. I find the whole world peopled with relatives; I see nothing to cause contamination of man by man. At one stroke I am made acquainted with the whole world; I see nothing anywhere different from myself. Tukā says, I am not limited by time or environment or laws of mind; I regard nothing but God.

108

106

Sri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 771.1

107

Ibid., 2907. 1-4.

108

The Poems of Tukarama 832, tr. N. Fraser and K.

Marathe.

Again, "Tukā says, I look on all and I meet (them) as my part".<sup>109</sup>

(3) Indebtedness of the Gītārahasya to the Theology of the Vārkarī Saints--

We have now shown that both Jñāneśvar and Tukārām hold purṇa advaita. Having shown this, we should proceed to ask whether the purṇa advaita theology of the Vārkarī saints influenced Ṭīlak's advaitic philosophy.

We have shown that Ṭīlak was influenced by Jñāneśvar's way of describing the perishability of the visible world. He followed Jñāneśvar's Nātha theology when he described identity as 'whatever is in the body is in the universe'. He was impressed by Jñāneśvar's catch-word for Prakṛti, the 'tānkāsāl' (i.e. mint) in which the evolution and dissolution of the world take place. Moreover, as Jñāneśvar's advaitic theology included the Sāṅkhyan theory of pariṇāmavāda, this has served as a model to Ṭīlak for constructing an advaitic philosophy. Apart from these general influences of Jñāneśvar on Ṭīlak, there are some specific influences of advaitic theology of the Vārkarī saints on the advaitic philosophy of Ṭīlak.

First, it has been shown that Ṭīlak differs from Śaṅkara in that Ṭīlak holds the idea of the three-fold unity or identity. Because of the three-fold identity, Jñāneśvar's

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<sup>109</sup> The Poems of Tukarama 832, tr. N. Fraser and K. Marathe.

advaita school was called 'purṇa advaita'. As Tukārām also holds the principle of three-fold identity, his theological system can also be called 'purṇa advaita' theology. As Jñāneśvar differed from Śaṅkara's kevala advaita system so we can say that Tukārām also differed from Śaṅkara on the same grounds. We have also shown that Ṭīlak differs from Śaṅkara on the very same grounds. This fact suggests that there was probably an influence of the theology of the Vārkarī saints on Ṭīlak's advaitic philosophy. Can we find evidence in the Gītārahasya that Ṭīlak was aware of this influence?

The purṇa advaita system emphasizes two principles, namely, (i) the identity between God, the world, and the beings in the world, (ii) the identification (ātmaupamya) between an individual self, the world, and the beings in the world. Ṭīlak argues for the principle of identity between God, the world, and the plurality in the world by referring to Tukārām, whom Ṭīlak considers as authority on advaita doctrine:

But, the actual experience of saints is [a] more convincing answer to this objection than mere logic. And among these, I consider the practical experience of that king among Devotees, the saint Tukārām, as of the utmost importance. No one need to be told that the knowledge of the Absolute Self (adhyātma) which has been acquired by saint Tukārām, had not been acquired by him by reading treatises like the Upaniṣads. Nevertheless, in his Gāthā, about 300 to 350 abhaṅga stanzas are devoted to the description of the State of Non-duality, and in those stanzas, the doctrine of 'vasudevaḥ sarvaṃ' (Gī. 7.19) (i.e. 'Vasudeva is everything') or as stated by Yajñavalkya in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 'sarvaṃ ātmaivabhūte' (i.e. 'everything has become identified with the Self', trans. ), has been propounded, as being based on

personal experience. For instance:-

As every part of jaggery is sweet / so has God come  
to be everywhere / Now whom shall I worship / God  
is inside as also outside //  
The film on the water / is not separated from the water /  
Just as gold gets a name by being made into an  
ornament / Tukā says, so are we //  
(Gāthā 3627)

The two first lines have been quoted by me in the  
chapter on the Philosophy of the Absolute Self. 110

The last two lines of Tukārām's poem cited here suggests the  
identity of God and the world, including human beings. When  
Ṭīlak quoted the first two lines of Tukārām's poem, Ṭīlak  
praised Tukārām saying, "But that saint Tukārām about whom it  
was said 'jayācī vade nitya vedānta vāṇī' (i.e. one whose  
voice uttered Vedānta, trans. )".<sup>111</sup> Thus Ṭīlak treats  
Tukārām as the authority on Vedānta philosophy and used his  
poems in explaining the principle of the identity between  
Brahman and the world and the plurality of names and forms  
in the world.

In another place, Ṭīlak again argues for the doctrine  
of the identity between Brahman and the world and its  
plurality of names and forms and again uses Tukārām:

If all the things or qualities to be seen in the  
world are only forms [rūpe] or symbols [pratike]

110

GR. p. 387 (M); p. 598 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

111

Ibid., p. 208 (M); p. 318 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

of the Parameśvara, how can one say that the Blessed Lord is in one of them and not in another, ... and Tukārāma Buvā, a devotee of the Blessed Lord, has with the same import said:-

Tukā says whatever name you give / such name is proper for this Viththal // (Tu. Gā. 3065.4).

112

Another principle of the purṇa advaita is identification of the individual self with the world and the beings in the world (ātmaupamya). It seems that Tīlak also develops this principle by referring to Tukārām, when he argues:

As it is a doctrine of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, that there is only Ātman in the Body and in the Cosmos, / piṇḍi ani brahmāṇḍi ekac ātmā nāmarūpāne ācchādit zālā āhe / which has become clothed in a Name and Form, we say from the Metaphysical point of view that "sarvabhūtasthaṁ ātmānaṁ sarvabhūtāni cātmani" (Gī. 6. 29), i.e. "that Ātman which is in Me is also in all other created beings", or again, "idaṁ sarvaṁ ātmaiva" i.e. "all this is the Ātman"; and the saint Tukārāma has with the same idea said:

"Tukā says, Whatever I come across / I think that it is myself // " (Gā. 4444.4).

113

Secondly, it has already been shown that Tīlak made the advaita philosophy, which is the purṇa advaita, and especially its principle of ātmaupamya, a fundamental principle of social action. <sup>114</sup> Tīlak has given it that meaning by again referring to Tukārām, as follows:

112

GR. p. 379 (M); p. 586 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

113

Ibid., p. 388 (M); p. 600 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

114

vide, pp. 248ff.

As both one's self, and every one else, has been included in the Parameśvara, and as the Parameśvara is included in one's self and every one else, both one's interest and other's interest are merged in the highest goal in the shape of the dedication of Śri Kṛṣṇa; and then, the following words of the saint Tukārāma, namely,

"the incarnations of saints are for the benefit of the world / they labour their own bodies by philanthropy //"

applies everywhere.

115

The quotation cited above also implies that a saint is a benefactor of society, a social activist (karmayogi) and not a renouncer of social duties (karmasamnyāsi). Ṭīlak differs from Śaṅkara, who prescribed 'karmasamnyāsa' to a liberated person (jīvanmukta). But this issue will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter.

Thirdly, it was pointed out that Jñāneśvar explains the evolution or creation of the world by the cidvilāsavāda or sphurtivāda and Tukārām is in agreement with Jñāneśvar on this. According to the cidvilāsavāda, the world is a real manifestation of God's power (śakti). The real manifestation of God's power through the named and formed world requires action on the part of God. Jñāneśvar has emphasized the necessity of divine action for the manifestation of the world, when he says:

Action (karma) is the natural order (svabhāva) from which the manifestation of the universe (viśvakāru) has come into being (saṁbhava). You should thoroughly understand this.

116

Ṭīlak seems to be influenced by Jñāneśvar when he argues like Jñāneśvar:

In short, Karma is the activity which is to be seen in the fundamental qualityless Brahman, at the time when the visible world began to be created.

117

Again,

Unless some Karma or Action has been performed, it is not possible for the Imperceptible to become perceptible, or for the Qualityless to become Qualityful.

118

These are the points where Ṭīlak's advaitic philosophy is informed and influenced by the advaitic theology of the Vārkarī saints. Having shown the influence of the Vārkarī saints on Ṭīlak's Gītārahasya, we must finally proceed to deal with the question of whether Rāmdās also influenced Ṭīlak's advaitic philosophy.

G) Similarities among Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Rāmdās' Theology, and the Gītārahasya:

(1) Similarities between Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Rāmdās' Theology-

116

Jñ. iv. 89.

117

GR. p. 238 (M); p. 365 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

118

Ibid., p. 236 (M); p. 362 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.



According to Śaṅkarācārya, Brahman is the only reality. the world is unreal or illusory, and ātman and Brahman are identical. Rāmdās seems to develop his theology in conformity with Śaṅkara and differs from Jñāneśvar's theology, when he says:

Evolution (sr̥ṣṭi) is of the following kind. The architecture of a gateway of a temple (gopūr) might be beautiful, but the architect should not be confused with the architecture; similarly, he who created the world is different from the world. Some (people) foolishly say that the world is (identical with) the Lord of the world (jagadīś). The creation of the world is his marvellous deed (kalā). He is in all, but He is different from all. Therefore, the inner Self (ātmārāmu) is different from matter (kardamu, lit. mud) from which all beings were born. This appears to be the case (satya) because of the illusion (bhrama) of māyā and Ignorance (avidyā). The manifestation of the world (jagaḍāmba), caused by māyā, is true. This is a strange idea and is not found anywhere. Therefore, the world is false (mīthyā) and the Self is true (sāc); the Supreme Self transcends all; the inner Self pervades both internally and externally. He is called God (dev) and all else is false (vāy). This is the inner meaning of the Vedānta.

119

The aforesaid summary of Rāmdās' theological system seems to be in general accord with Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta. Rāmdās, like Śaṅkara, explains the existence of the world by māyāvāda.

According to Rāmdās, māyā is instrumental (upādhi) in creating the diversity of names and forms in the world. Rāmdās's theory of creation goes as follows:

The Self is qualityless and pure as the sky...

119

Dās. 8.i. 39-45.

120

Ibid., 6.v. 2.

Qualityless Brahman is imperishable; and whatever perishes is the qualityful māyā / in other words, māyā which is full of qualities is perishable and Brahman which is without qualities is imperishable. ... In such / a qualityless / Ātman, / qualityful / māyā was born even as waves of wind (zūluk) appear in the (still) sky. Light was born from wind, and water from light. And from water, earth (bhūmaṇḍal) was formed. Innumerable beings were born of the earth. However, Brahman remains / untouched / at the beginning and at the end. Whatever was born has perished but Brahman remains as it was. Sky existed before the earthen pot; it appears in the earthen pot; and the sky is not destroyed when the earthen pot is destroyed. Similarly, the Parabrahman is unchangeable (aḍhal); and the world of immovable and movable appears and disappears in between / evolution and involution /.

121

This quotation is an evidence that Rāmdās accommodates, like Śaṅkara, the Sāṅkhyan theory of evolution and involution in his ādvaita theology.

Rāmdās develops the māyāvāda along the lines of Śaṅkara's vivartavāda, according to which the world appears to be real because of the dual functions of māyā, namely, (i) hiding the real nature of Brahman (āvaraṇa) and (ii) projecting something which does not exist (vikṣepaṇa). The vivartavāda of

122

121

Dās. 6.iii. 1-7.

122

vikṣepaśakti rajasah kriyātmikā / yatah pravrttiḥ prasrtā purāṇi / esa vrttirnama tamo guṇasyā / śaktiryayā vastvavabhasate nyathā / Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, ed. Swami Madhavananda, (8th ed., Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1970), 111, 113.

Rāmdās is stated in these verses:

We have thus explained how Brahman is eternal and māyā is false appearance (mithyā bhān) even though it appears to be real (vivartarūpa).

123

Again,

When one is giddy (bhovaṇḍi) he sees that the earth is moving around. When he has jaundice, he sees everything yellowish. When he is affected by violent fever with delirium and syncope (sannipāt), he sees many scenes. Māyā does such things. When an object is affected (pādārthavikār) by something, it appears illusory (bhāsamātra); it appears different from what it is. Māyā is like that.

124

Rāmdās repeats the vivartavāda in another work:

Do not get suddenly perplexed; look at the root. Nothing has happened at the root. How can we say that nothing has happened at the root when it seems obvious and when moving and immoving be true? Can beams of the sun sink into darkness? When we awaken our dreams become false (mithyā). When we sleep our dreams appear to be true. Truth appears to be false and falsehood, true; this is the effect (kṛtya) of Ignorance (avidyā).

125

From what has been said so far, we can conclude that Rāmdās closely followed Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta. Ṭīlak's observation that the Marāṭhā saints support advaita and māyāvāda is true in the case of Rāmdās, but as we have seen it

123

Dās. 8.ii. 2.

124

Ibid., 14.x. 20-21.

125,

Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg 437. 8-13.

is misleading in the case of the Vārkarī saints, because the Vārkarī saints uphold the purna advaita which is different from the kevala advaita of Śaṅkarācārya.

(2) Indebtedness of the Gītārahasya to the Theology of Rāmdās-

While Ṭīlak has learned the combination of the advaita and the Sāṅkhyan theory of evolution and involution from Śaṅkara,<sup>126</sup> he specifically says that he expresses it in the language of Rāmdās, when he says:

This activity (vyāpār) of the Prakṛti is called the 'construction and destruction of the universe' (viśvācī ubhāraṇī vesaṁhāraṇī). Because, according to the Sāṅkhya system, this entire world (jag) or creation (srṣṭi) is created by the Prakṛti for the benefit of innumerable spirits. The Samartha (Rāmdās) has given, in two or three places in the Dāsboḍh, a beautiful description of how the entire universe (brahmāṇḍa) is created from Prakṛti; and I have taken the phrase 'viśvācī ubhāraṇī vesaṁhāraṇī' [i.e. the construction and destruction of the universe] from that description alone (varṇanātūnac).<sup>126</sup>

The letter 'c' of the word 'varṇanātūnac' (i.e. from the description alone) is a suffix which is used in Marāṭhī for expressing emphasis, distinctiveness, uniqueness, and exclusiveness. In the foregoing quotation, 'c' is used to express the exclusiveness of the source. From this emphasis of Ṭīlak, we can conclude that Rāmdās provided a model, which combines the advaita system and the Sāṅkhyan theory of the

construction and destruction of the cosmos, for Ṭīlak.

Secondly, Ṭīlak's proposition "That which remains eternally after all beings are destroyed" (Gī. viii. 20) , "That alone is really true, It has pervaded all the material bodies (piṇḍa) and the cosmos (brahmāṇḍa) (Gī. xiii.31)"<sup>127</sup>, seems to have been influenced by Rāmdās' advaitic theology for Rāmdās holds:

Whatever is seen with the eyes and thought (bhāse) by the mind is destroyed with the lapse of time. Therefore, the Supreme Brahman (Parabrahman) is beyond vision. The Supreme Brahman is eternal but māyā is perishable. This specific meaning (niścītārtha) is asserted in various scriptures.

128

Thirdly, Ṭīlak affirms his advaitic position against the Sāṅkhyan dualism and the Nyāya paramāṇuvāda (viz. atoms are responsible for the creation of the world and there are many atoms) by referring to Rāmdās, when he argues:

To this the reply of the Sāṅkhya philosophers is... that the root of all of them... must nevertheless be in existence in a subtle form (Sām. Kā. 8); and the Vedānta philosophers have accepted the same line of argument for proving the existence of the Brahman (see the Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Kathā 6.12, 13). When you once in this way acknowledged prakṛti to be extremely subtle and imperceptible, the atomic theory of the Nyāya school naturally falls to the ground.... Therefore, the doctrine of the Sāṅkhya philosophy is, that in prakṛti there are no different parts

127

vide, p. 262.

128

Dās. 6.viii. 47-48.

in the shape of atoms, that it is consistent and homogeneous or unbroken in any part, and it perpetually pervades everything in a form which is avyakta (...) and inorganic. In describing the Paratman Śrī Samartha Rāmdās Svāmi says in the Dāsbodhā (Dā. 20.2.3):-

"In whichever direction you see, it is endless; there is no end or limit anywhere; there is one independent homogeneous substance; there is nothing else".

The same description applies to the prakṛti of the Sāṃkhya philosophy.

129

The quotation is evidence that Ṭīḷak was dependent on Rāmdās in resolving philosophical questions connected with the advaita philosophy and that he thought of his advaitic position as in conformity with that of Rāmdās.

We have shown how Ṭīḷak explicitly admitted that he adopted the terms 'viśvācī ubhāraṇi v saṃhāraṇi' (i.e. the construction and destruction of the cosmos) from the accounts of the Dāsbodh. It was also been pointed out that Rāmdās' advaitic theology which accommodates the pariṇāmavāda provided a model of philosophy to Ṭīḷak. It was also pointed out that Ṭīḷak's idea of the imperishability of Brahman has a parallel in the theology of Rāmdās. And finally, it was shown that Ṭīḷak defined his advaitic stand on the philosophical option in the context of Rāmdās. These evidences lead us to conclude that Ṭīḷak was dependent on Rāmdās to a considerable extent.

Having shown Ṭiḷak's dependence on Rāmdās' theology we proceed next to examine the problem of whether Ṭiḷak is dependent on Rāmdās as far as Ṭiḷak's distinctive theory of ātmaupamyā (i.e. identification of an individual self with the world and the beings in the world, particularly human beings) is concerned.

Rāmdās, who closely followed Śāṅkara's kevala advaita, did not accept the principle of the identity between Brahman and the world and the beings in the world, a doctrine which the Vārkarī saints propagated on the basis of purṇa advaita; but he did accommodate the ethics of ātmaupamyā in his advaitic theology when he said:

The great and small people are ready to do their duties; [so this great person (mahāpuruṣ) ] does benevolent deeds (paropkār) from the bottom of his heart. His disposition (vāsanā) is as follows: he becomes unhappy with the unhappiness of others and happy with the happiness of others; he feels that all should be happy.

130

Again,

Toil in doing benevolent deeds; be useful to many people; and nobody should want of anything. Know who are in difficulty and in distress (jāksale); help them according to your power. Say good words to everybody. Be unhappy with the unhappiness of others and be happy with the delight of others (parasantoṣ); and make people yours by sweet words

(baravyāsabde).

131

Ṭīlak seems to be influenced by these ethical teachings of Rāmdās when he compares a saying of Christ with Hindu ethics and especially refers to Rāmdās:

'So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them' (Mt. 7:12; Lk. 6.31).

132

this is the exhortation (upadeś) of Christ, which is only a part of the sutra (i.e. aphorism) of ātmaupamyā (i.e. Self-identification)... But this principle was enunciated in our country, long before Confucius, in the Upaniṣads (Īśa. 6; Kena. 13); and later on in the Bhārat / i.e. Mahābhārata / and the Gītā; and it is also expressed in the words of Marāṭhā saints as 'one should consider others as one considers oneself' (atmavat parave te / mānit jāve) (Dās. 12.x.22).

133

#### H) Conclusion:

In this chapter, we have discussed the similarities and differences between Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta and Ṭīlak's advaitic philosophy. We have also discussed the similarities and differences between Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta and the advaitic theology of Jñāneśvar and Tukārām. The similarities which Ṭīlak has with the advaita system of Śaṅkara are ones which also agree with the advaitic theology of the Vārkarī

131

Dās. 12.x. 5-7; cf. 14.vi. 22-23.

132

The Holy Bible, (revised standard version, London: Toronto: New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1962)

133

GR. p. 352 (M); pp. 542f (E).



saints. Ṭīlak's advaitic system is different from Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta in that Ṭīlak holds purṇa advaita and the principle of ātmaupamya (i.e. identification). These crucial differences can only be accounted for in the context of the theology of the Vārkarī saints and therefore they explicitly show Ṭīlak's dependence on the saints. We also discussed the advaitic theology of Rāmdās who defined his advaitic position more within Śaṅkara's tradition. It was pointed out that though Rāmdās closely followed Śaṅkara, he accommodated the ethics of ātmaupamya in his advaitic theology. Ṭīlak specifically acknowledged his indebtedness to Rāmdās' thought. Therefore, we can conclude that the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra influenced Ṭīlak in clarifying his philosophical position and that in most respects he interpreted advaita (i.e. non-dualism) in accord with the patterns he had learned from the teachings of the Marāṭhā saints.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PROBLEM OF SAINTLY ACTION

In the last chapter, we dealt with the problem of Ṭīḷak arguing for one specific form of Vedānta (ekāc prakāracā Vedānta) in the Gītā. According to Ṭīḷak, the Gītā utilizes advaita Vedānta, therefore, he considered the Gītābhāṣya (i.e. commentary on the Gītā) of Śaṅkarācārya preferable to other bhāṣyas (i.e. commentaries). Nevertheless as Ṭīḷak developed his advaitic philosophy of the Gītā we were able to demonstrate that the salient features of his advaitic philosophy were derived from the advaitic theology of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra and thus to indicate the influence of that movement on Ṭīḷak.

In the beginning of the last chapter, we alluded to the fact that Ṭīḷak believes that there is a definite meaning or purport (niścitārtha) and a definite doctrine (ṭhām mat) in the Gītā. According to Ṭīḷak, the Gītā prescribes Karmayoga (i.e. activism) to a liberated person (jīvanmukta or sthitaprajña) and not karmasannyāsa (i.e. renunciation of action or duties). Ṭīḷak did not approve of the traditional bhāṣyas (i.e. commentaries) because they interpreted the Gītā as favouring renunciation of actions or duties after a person gets liberation. This issue constitutes the heart of Ṭīḷak's position about the ācāra (i.e. conduct or code of behaviour)

of a jīvanmukta or a saintly person. In this chapter, this ethical position of Tilak will be discussed with reference to the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra.

A) Sources of the Problem of Saintly Action:

(1) The Śāṅkarabhāṣya-

Tilak, in the Gītārahasya, argues that the major problem or concern (mukhya praśna) of the Gītā is whether the jñāni (i.e. knower) who has realized in what the welfare (kalyān) of his self lies, should do his prescribed worldly actions or duties (svadharmakṛta saṁsārik karme), such as fighting and others, till death.<sup>1</sup>

The sources of his problem were the commentaries written by the ācāryas, which were responsible for teaching saṁnyāsa (i.e. renouncing society and the world) and paramārtha (i.e. other-worldliness) alone. Tilak described the source of his problem in his speech delivered at Umaravati in 1917, as follows:

When I was a boy, I was often told by my elders that strictly religious and really philosophical life was incompatible with the hum-drum life of every day. If one was ambitious enough to try to attain Mokṣa, the highest goal a person could attain, then he must divest himself of all earthly desires and renounce this world. One could not serve two masters, the world and God. I understand this to mean that, if one could lead a life which was the life worth living, according to the religion in which I was born, then the sooner the world was given up the better. This set me thinking. The question that I formulated for

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1

GR. pp. 275, 740 (M); pp. 423, 1133 (E).

myself to be solved was: Does my religion want me to give up this world and renounce it before I attempt to, or in order to be able to, attain the perfection of mankind.

2

This ~~assertion~~ of Tīlak's elders was in keeping with the tradition followed by them and many devout Hindus of taking saṁnyāsa (i.e. physical renouncing of the world) and showing indifference to the social, domestic, and political aspects of life. The question cited above states the general trend of Hinduism, but does not mention the bhāṣyas of the ācāryas and the Marāṭhā writers. In other places Tīlak accounts for this trend towards renunciation (saṁnyāsa) in terms of the saṁnyāsa school (saṁnyāsanīṣṭā) of Śaṁkarācārya and both the older and modern Marāṭhā commentators of the Gītā, e. g. Hanumān Paṇḍit and K. Telang, who followed Śaṁkara's bhāṣya (commentary) on the Gītā.<sup>3</sup> Thus the source of his problem was the general trend of Hinduism as well as the commentaries interpreting the Gītā as favouring renunciation (nivṛtti). In order to clarify his view, let us examine Tīlak's evaluation of the major commentaries.

It seems that Tīlak critically studied the commentary of Śaṁkara on the Gītā. Among the existing commentaries, the Śaṁkarabhāṣya is the oldest. It was written, on the one

2

Venkatesvarulu, All About Lok. Tīlak, p. 666.

3

GR. pp. 13-14 (M); p. 21 (E).

hand, in order to establish the religious validity of the advaita school, which stood for the principle that liberation (mokṣa) can come about only by means of jñānamārga (i.e. the way of mystical knowledge) accompanied with saṁnyāsa (i.e. renunciation of actions or rituals), and, on the other hand, to refute the view of some commentators who held the doctrine that self-knowledge should be conjoined with works, which is technically called karmajñānasamuccaya.<sup>4</sup> Tīlak brings this latter fact to the notice of his readers, when he argues:

Nevertheless, it is obvious from the reference to the opinions of the ancient critics (prācīn tikākārs) in the Śaṁkarabhāṣya (Gī. Śaṁ. Bhā. chs. 2 and 3 introduction) that the critics, who were prior to Śaṁkarācārya, had interpreted the Gītā to be activististic (pravṛttipara), as the writer of the Mahābhārata did, in terms of a synthesis between knowledge and action (karmajñānasamuccaya), that is to say, that a jñāni should discharge his prescribed action (or duty) (svadharmokta karma) till death, accompanied by knowledge.

5

Tīlak adds to his argument by pointing out that the sole intention of Śaṁkarācārya was to refute the view-point of jñānakarmasamuccaya<sup>6</sup> and to establish his cultic view of

4

The Bhagavad-Gītā with the Commentary of Śri Śaṁkarācārya, tr. A. Mahadeva Sastri, pp. 22f.

5

GR. p. 10 (M); pp. 15f (E).

6

Ibid., pp. 10f (M); p. 16 (E).

<sup>7</sup>  
nivṛttipara vaidik saṁnyāsadharmā (i.e. renunciatory Vedic  
 Dharma) or <sup>8</sup>  
karmasaṁnyāsadharmā (i.e. religion of renunciation  
 of action). Tīlak criticizes Śaṅkara for being the first to  
 deprive the Gītā of its activist form and to make it a  
 renunciatory treatise. <sup>9</sup> He also criticizes Śaṅkara for either  
 belittling the statements in the Gītā supporting the Karmayoga  
 (i.e. activism after liberation) or considering those  
 statements to be merely laudatory (praśamsāpara or  
<sup>10</sup>  
arthavādapara). Tīlak adds in his criticism that Śaṅkara  
 favoured the saṁnyāsa path and looked upon all other paths as  
 based on ignorance (ajñānamūlaka). <sup>11</sup>

Tīlak points out the role for Karmayoga which was  
 assigned by Śaṅkara in the Gītābhāṣya, when he observes:

Having raised the question whether liberation (mokṣa)  
 is obtained by knowledge or by the synthesis (samuccaya)  
 of knowledge and action (jñāna v karma), Śri  
 Śaṅkarācārya, in his bhāṣya (i.e. commentary) first  
 gave the purport of the Gītā (gītārtha) that by  
 knowledge alone all actions are burnt and one gets

<sup>7</sup>  
GR. p. 12 (M); p. 18 (E).

<sup>8</sup>  
Ibid., p. 331 (M); p. 511 (E).

<sup>9</sup>  
Ibid., p. 13 (M); p. 21 (E).

<sup>10</sup>  
Ibid., p. 331 (M); p. 551 (E).

<sup>11</sup>  
Ibid., p. 309 (M); p. 477 (E).

liberation, and there is no necessity of action for attaining liberation. On the basis of this [presupposition], he inferred that, since actions are not required for liberation they become meaningless (nirarthak) after purification of mind (cit), according to the Gītā. And as actions are naturally (svabhāvataḥ) binding viz. against knowledge; this is the doctrine (mat) which is agreeable to the Lord in the Gītā.

12

Ṭīlak clearly states that Śaṅkara had given an inferior position (gaunatva) to karmamārga (i.e. way of action).<sup>13</sup> Śaṅkara

considered karmamārga or karmakāṇḍa (i.e. Vedic rituals and sacrifices) as the means of purifying the mind and preparing it (the mind) to attain self-realization, states Ṭīlak.<sup>14</sup>

Śaṅkara thus made karmamārga subordinate to jñānamārga (i.e. way of knowledge) and implied that karmamārga as a way of liberation does not exist independently. Śaṅkara also

considered not only the karmamārga as preparatory but also as inferior when he said, "wherefore works are enjoined on the ignorant, not on the wise".<sup>15</sup> Ṭīlak has pointed out this fact

in his criticism of the Śaṅkarabhāṣya.<sup>16</sup>

12

GR. p. 278 (M); pp. 427f (E).

13

Ibid., p. 449 (M); p. 703 (E).

14

The Bhagavad-Gītā with the Commentary of Śri Śaṅkarāchārya, tr. A. Mahadeva Sastri, pp. 162f.

15

Ibid., p. 78.

16

vide, pp. 235, 246-248.

Ṭīlak again points out the relation between jñāna and karma in the Śaṅkarabhāṣya, as follows:

There is another proposition of the Samkara doctrine relating to the mode of life, that, although it is necessary to perform the Action pertaining to the state of a householder in order to acquire the capacity of realizing the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman by the purification of mind, yet it will be impossible to attain Release unless one discontinues those actions later on and ultimately gives them up and take up saṁnyāsa (ascetism); because in as much as Action (karma) and Knowledge (jñāna) are mutually antagonistic like light and darkness, the knowledge of the Brahman does not become perfect unless a man has entirely conquered all root tendencies (vāsanā) and given up all Actions.

17

Herein Ṭīlak points out that the jñāni of the Śaṅkarabhāṣya is ultimately a karmasaṁnyāsi who must discontinue acting after he has obtained mystical knowledge because the jñānamārga is the only way of liberation. Ṭīlak does not accept this interpretation of Śaṅkara and of the others who follow Śaṅkara. He suggests another interpretation:

It is true that the saṁpradāya of Śaṅkara gives the opinion that one must renounce actions (karma) having taken saṁnyāsa after acquiring knowledge. But because of that it does not follow that the same is the teaching (tātparyā) of the Gītā, or that one has to interpret the Gītā in a manner consistent with the the doctrine (dharma) of Śaṅkara or others as if it were the only doctrine (dharma). It is the established doctrine (kāyam siddhānta) of the Gītā that it is better (uttam pakṣa) to follow karmayoga rather than to follow

17

GR. p. 279 (M); pp. 428f (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.



saṁnyāsamārga, even after the acquisition of the knowledge.<sup>18</sup>

The quotation clearly states that Ṭīlak differs from Śaṁkara in interpreting the teaching of the Gītā.

From the foregoing discussion and criticism of Ṭīlak concerning the Śaṁkarabhāṣya, it should be understood that Ṭīlak took the Śaṁkarabhāṣya seriously because it posed the problem of how to interpret saintly action for him. Ṭīlak also studied the bhāṣyas of the ācāryas and the criticisms of some scholars in his attempt to understand the purport of the Gītā, as he says in his autobiographical note in the Gītārahasya.<sup>19</sup>

(2) The Rāmānujabhāṣya-

Tīlak studied the Rāmānujabhāṣya critically. Rāmānuja was dissatisfied with the advaitic teachings of the Yādava Prakāśa and turned to the teachings of the Ālvārs or the Tamil Saints.<sup>20</sup> In him we can find a combination of a particular philosophical doctrine with a particular religious creed.<sup>21</sup> His school is

<sup>18</sup>GR. p. 279 (M); pp. 428 f (E).

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 11 (M); p. xvii (E).

<sup>20</sup>C. V. Vaidya, Madhyayugin Bhārat, athavā Hīndu Rajyānca Udbhav, Utkarṣa āni Ucched, III, 607.

<sup>21</sup>C. Sharma, op. ci., p. 366.

known as the Viśiṣṭadvaita school which is different, to some extent, from the advaita school of Śaṅkara. These differences are quite apparent in their commentaries on the Gītā.

As the Viśiṣṭadvaita school differs from the advaita school in its view about reality it consequently differs in its views about ways of liberation. The Rāmānujabhāṣya states that mystical knowledge is obtained by various means- karma, jñāna, and bhaktimārga (Gītā ii.10). It considers that karmayoga is more important than jñānayoga, on the following grounds: (i) a person has to be active in doing sacrifices and the like, for sustaining one's body; (ii) karmayoga does not make a person negligent of his duties. <sup>22</sup> The Rāmānujabhāṣya gives us its idea about the final phase of the way of liberation when it says concisely:

Knowledge of the ātman combined with karmayoga leads to jñānayoga, through jñānayoga one arrives at the true contemplation of the realizing ātman. This contemplation again is propaedeutic to bhaktiyoga; through bhakti alone one is capable of attaining God.

23

This quotation states clearly that these three ways are not separate roads but successive stages of the same way, culminating in the attainment of God. This is the fundamental

22

J. A. B. van Buitenen, Rāmānuja on the Bhagavadgītā, (2nd ed., reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1974), p. 68.

23

Ibid., pp. 65f.

24

teaching of the Rāmānujabhāṣya. But according to the Śāṅkarabhāṣya, karmamārga and bhaktimārga only lead to jñānayoga, which alone is the means of liberation.

It was said that the jñāni of the Śāṅkarabhāṣya has to give up action ultimately. Has the bhakta of the Rāmānujabhāṣya to give up action after liberation? The Rāmānujabhāṣya says that the duties of varṇāśrama (i.e. orders and life-stages) are means of contemplation and these means serve to make a person turn away from non-spiritual things; it holds that the released one contemplates the ātman and turns away from non-spiritual things of his own accord. He does not need these means viz. karmayoga and jñānayoga, therefore, he need not perform his duties after release. Moreover, the Rāmānujabhāṣya conceives of bhaktimārga alone as the means of liberation and considers devotion as an end in itself (niṣṭhā). It exempts its fully liberated devotee from all duties; its devotee need not perform his duties after liberation. Thus the bhakta of the Rāmānujabhāṣya is the same as the jñāni of the Śāṅkarabhāṣya as far as both are exempted from duties.

Tilak has criticized the Śāṅkarabhāṣya, for this reason; he similarly criticizes the Rāmānujabhāṣya:

24

J. A. B. van Buitenen, op.cit., p. 24.

25

Rāmānuja's Śribhāṣya, ed. V. Abhankar, (Bombay: Nirnayasagara Press, 1915), iii. 17-18.

But although Rāmānujācārya had effected a change in the cult of Śaṅkara by substituting the Qualified-Monism for Non-Duality and Devotion for Renunciation, yet if Devotion is looked upon as the highest duty of man from the point of view of mode of life, then the lifelong performance of the worldly duties pertaining to one's particular status becomes an inferior mode of life, and on that account the interpretation put on the Gītā by Rāmānujācārya must be looked upon as in a way in favour of Renunciation of Action.

26

Ṭīlak also criticizes Rāmānuja's treatment of karmayoga, saying that Rāmānuja assigned karmayoga to an inferior position and treated the praise of karmayoga as mere arthavāda (abiter dicta) (Gī. Rā. Bhā. 5.1 ).

Ṭīlak says about the jñāni of the Śaṅkarabhāṣya and the bhakta of the Rāmānujabhāṣya that both are renunciatory from the point of view of action (karma). These two bhāṣyas together constituted the source of the problem of saintly action for Ṭīlak.

### (3) The Madhvabhāṣya-

Ṭīlak also critically studied the bhāṣyas of Madhva, Vallabha, Nimbārka, and others. We need not go into much detail on Ṭīlak's criticism of the later bhāṣyas because his criticism of the bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva are

26

GR. p. 14 (M); p. 22 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar

27

Ibid., p. 449 (M); p. 703 (E).

28

Ibid., p. 278 (M); p. 427 (E).

applicable to other bhāṣyas for those schools stand between advaita (non-dualism) and dvaita (dualism) in that they too emphasize (bhaktimārga) as the way of liberation. Ṭīḷak's criticism of the Madhvabhāṣya, however, is important because Madhva represents the dvaita philosophy which is different from both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. Secondly, it is important because we should know how Ṭīḷak evaluated Madhva's niṣkāmakarma (i.e. disinterested performance of action or duties) philosophy, an issue which is at the heart of Ṭīḷak's own position.

The Madhva school, like the Rāmānuja school, regards bhaktimārga as the only means of liberation. It emphasizes the necessity and efficacy of bhakti on the ~~basis~~ that in the absence of bhakti neither upāsanā (i.e. devotion) nor knowledge of God would be possible.<sup>29</sup> It ascribes supremacy to bhakti saying that bondage (or avidyā i.e. mystical Ignorance) cannot be destroyed by knowledge automatically, but bondage is removed only through the Benediction (Īśvaraprasāda)<sup>30</sup> or the grace of God.<sup>31</sup> It describes bhakti

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<sup>29</sup> K. Narain, An Outline of Madhva Philosophy, (Allahabad: Udayana Publication, 1962), p. 175.

<sup>30</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, A Critique of Madhva Refutation of the Samkara School of Vedanta, (Allahabad: Udayana Publication, 1964), pp. 4-5, 322, 332.

<sup>31</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, An Outline of Madhva Philosophy, pp. 164, 165, 170, 172, 305.

in three stages, namely, (i) that which precedes parokṣajñāna (i.e. indirect knowledge), (ii) that which follows parokṣajñāna, and (iii) that which comes after the aparokṣajñāna (i.e. direct realization) and wins the atyartha prasāda (i.e. absolute grace) of God.<sup>32</sup> According to the Madhvabhāṣya, in the third and the final stage of the bhakti, mukta jīvas (i.e. liberated selves) worship God without selfish motive and only for the sake of worship. This kind of worship is called 'disinterested worship'.

The disinterested worship of the Madhva school has some influence on Ṭīlak's doctrine of niṣkāmakarmamārga (i.e. disinterested activism). Madhva recognizes the necessity of discharging duties before the achievement of liberation and the utility of discharging duties after liberation. He considers karma as the means to the direct realization which grants liberation (ato pararokṣa jñānadeva mokṣaḥ karma tu tatsādha-<sup>33</sup>meva), and holds that disinterested action purifies the heart and it is by that purification that one gets redemptive knowledge (akāmakarmabhirantahkaraṇasuddhivārā jñānamokṣo

32

B. N. Sharma, Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya, (Bombay: Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan, 1962), p. 296.

33

Madhvabhāṣya iii.20, quoted by B.N. K. Sharma, op. cit., p. 286.

34  
jāyate). In these verses, Madhya recognizes the necessity of action. A liberated devotee of the Madhva school continues discharging his duties disinterestedly because the school holds that bondage lies not in action itself but in the motive of action. It also defines true niṣṛttimārga (i. e. way of renunciation ) not as the abandonment of action but as the active performance of duties in the spirit of devotion and dispassion: niṣkāmaṁ jñānapūrvam tu niṣṛttimihacocyate.<sup>35</sup>  
 Madhva does not consider karmamārga as a stumbling block in the life of the liberated but he considers it blissful and productive as he says: jñānottaramanusthitena niṣṛttakarmaṇā pradannah paramātmā muktau jñānānabhivvyaktamapi sukham<sup>36</sup>  
vyaktīkaroti.

Ṭīlak evaluates the karmayoga of the Madhva school in these words:

He says that although Desireless Action has been extolled in the Gītā, yet Desireless Action is only a means and Devotion is the true and ultimate cult, and that when one has become perfect by following the Path of Devotion, whether one thereafter performs or

34

Madhva, Gītābhāṣya Ṭīkā, p. 200, quoted by B.N.K. Sharma, op. cit., p. 286.

35

, Vyāsa Smṛti, quoted by B. N. K. Sharma, op. cit., p. 284.

36

, Gītābhāṣya Ṭīkā, p. 104, quoted by B. N. K. Sharma, op. cit., p. 286.

does not perform Action is just the same.

37

Ṭīlak also points out, as he has done in the case of the other schools, that Madhva belittles the importance of karmayoga in the Gītā when he argued that no one cares for a well when he can get pure water from a river or a large lake.<sup>38</sup> This means that Ṭīlak thinks that karmayoga in the school of Madhva is treated as preparatory for bhaktimārga and that karmayoga is not thought of as mandatory in the case of the liberated. Ṭīlak also rejects Madhva's dvaita (i.e. dualism) philosophy for he holds to the advaita (i.e. non-dualistic) philosophy firmly.

In brief, Ṭīlak's main criticisms against the bhāṣyas of Śāṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva and others are as follows:

(i) They do not recognize karmayoga as an independent way of liberation; the Śāṅkarabhāṣya considers it preliminary to the jñānamārga, and the bhāṣyas of Rāmānuja and Madhva, preliminary to bhaktimārga. (ii) Their liberated person is ultimately renunciatory; a jñāni of the Śāṅkarabhāṣya and a devotee of the Rāmānujabhāṣya are clearly renunciatory, and a devotee of the Madhvabhāṣya is only optionally karmayogi.

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37

GR. p. 15 (M); p. 23 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

38

Ibid., p. 574 (M); p. 892 (E).



In other words, they do not continue to act for the sake of lokasaṅgraha (i.e. universal or public welfare).

B) Differences of the Gītārahasya from Other Bhasyas:

Having studied the bhāṣyas of the ācāryas and the other criticisms on the Gītā, Tīlak said in his autobiographical note:

I was then faced by the doubt as to why the Gītā, which was expounded in order to induce to fight that Arjuna, who was dejected by the idea that it was sin to war with one's own relatives, should contain an exposition of the manner in which release could be obtained by knowledge (brahmajñāna) or by devotion (Bhakti), that is to say, only the 'mokṣamārga'; and that doubt gradually gained ground because I could not find a satisfactory answer to the question in any commentary on the Gītā. ... When a person is engulfed in commentaries he cannot find a different solution, though he feel that the solution given in the commentary is not satisfactory. I, therefore, put aside all criticisms and commentaries, and independently and thoughtfully read the Gītā over several times. I then got out of the clutches of the commentaries, and was convinced that the original Gītā did not preach the Philosophy of Renunciation (nivṛtti) but of Energism (Karma-Yoga); and that possibly the single word 'yoga' used in the Gītā has been used to mean Karma-Yoga.

39

The autobiographical note suggests that Tīlak rejected the traditional commentaries (bhāṣyas) of the ācāryas and other commentaries of modern interpreters because each of them prescribes either jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the only way of liberation and set aside the major question. Tīlak

re-states his argument in these words:

That the Gītā supports the Path of Devotion, or only the Path of Knowledge, or only the Path of Yoga are opinions, which are fathered on the Gītā by the supporters of those respective doctrines. The doctrine really established by the Gītā is something quite different. Whether, after a person has acquired the Knowledge of the Parameśvara- whatever the means he may have employed for the purpose- he should or should not continue the various Actions of worldly life, for universal welfare, is the chief question in the Gītā; and the reply to that question... is that the Karma-Yoga is the most superior.

40

Thus Ṭīlak differs from other commentators as he argues that the Gītā teaches 'Karma-Yoga'<sup>41</sup> or 'Pravṛtti-Mārga'<sup>42</sup> and not the nivṛttimārga of the schools which emphasizes jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the only way of liberation.

Secondly, Ṭīlak differs from the ācāryas and other commentators in their treatment of Karmayoga and other mārgas of liberation mentioned in the Gītā, when he argues:

Jñāna-Yoga there is, yes. Bhakti-Yoga there is, yes. Who says not? But they are both subservient to the Karma-Yoga prescribed in the Gītā. If the Gītā was preached to desponding / despondent / Arjuna to make him ready for the fight- for the action- how can it be said that the ultimate lesson of the great book is bhakti or jñāna alone? In fact, there is a blending

40

GR. p. 740 (M); pp. 1132f (E), tr. B. Sukthankar.

41

Ibid., p. 53 (M); p. 80 (E).

42

Ibid., p. 54 (M); p. 81 (E).

of all three Yogas in the Gītā; and as the air is not oxygen or hydrogen, or any other element alone, but a composition of all, there is a certain proportion, so in the Gītā all these Yogas are blended into one.

43

The quotation implies that Ṭīlak's Karmayoga includes knowledge (jñāna) and devotion (bhakti); and he sees no conflict between knowledge and action, as it is maintained in the school of Sāṅkara, or between devotion and action, as it is maintained by some schools of devotionism. Ṭīlak's Karmayoga is a synthesis of devotion, knowledge, and action. This proposition becomes clearly established as he argues:

The main object (mukhya viṣay) expounded in the Gītā is to harmonize spiritual knowledge (brahmavidyā) with devotion (bhakti) and through the combination justify (samarthan karāṇe) karmayoga.

44

Again,

Only one way (niṣṭhā) is told in the Gītā, that is Karmayoga grounded in knowledge (jñānamūlak) and in which devotion is predominant (bhaktipradhān).

45

This means that there is harmony among jñāna, bhakti, and karma, an interpretation which is technically called karmajñānabhakti-samuccaya.

43

quoted by N. C. Jog, op. cit., p. 198.

44

GR. p. 423 (M); p. 662 (E).

45

Ibid., p. 413 (M); p. 645 (E); cf. pp. 664, 1206 (E).

Thirdly, Tīlak differs from other commentators in the way he handles the main problem of the Gītā namely, whether a liberated person has to act after achieving liberation. Tīlak asserts the distinctiveness of his interpretation of the Gītā as compared with the interpretation of others, in these words:

I differ from almost all the commentators when I say that the Gītā enjoins Action after the perfection in jñāna and bhakti is attained and the Deity is reached through these media. Now, there is a fundamental unity underlying the Logos (Ishvara), man, and the world. The world is in existence because [..] the Logos has willed it so. It is His will that holds it together. Man strives to gain union with God; and when this union is achieved, the individual will merges in the mighty Universal Will. When this is achieved, will the individual say: I shall do no action, and I shall not keep the world- the world which is, because of the will with which he has sought union has it so, be so? It does not stand to reason. It is not I who say so; the Gītā says so.

46

Thus Tīlak argues that the liberated person of the Gītā, called variously as sthitaprajña (i.e. steady-in-mind) (Gī. ii.55-75), bhaktimān (i.e. devotee) (Gī. xii. 13-20) <sup>47</sup>, jñānin (i.e. possessed of knowledge) and karmayogi <sup>48</sup> continues to act disinterestedly and for the universal welfare (lokasaṅgraha). <sup>49</sup>

46

quoted by N. C. Jog, op. cit., pp. 198f.

47

GR. p. 224 (M); p. 344 (E).

48

Ibid., p. 296 (M); pp. 454f (E).

49

Ibid., p. 599 (M); pp. 930f (E).

Tilak depicts the jñāni of the Gītā in contrast with the jñāni of the Śamkarabhāṣya, as follows:

In brief, according to the Gītā, the idea 'it is not for me' (malā nako) should not be a reason for giving up action (karma). As action (karma) is unavoidable (aparihārya), (we) can infer from this idea that one has to do his unavoidable action, which is prescribed by the scriptures, with a mind of self-denial. ... This is a big difference between karmasaṁnyāsa and karmayoga: 'It is not for you, therefore you should do nothing' according to the people advocating saṁnyāsa; and 'It is not for you, therefore, whatever you have to do do it with a disinterested frame of mind', the Gītā is arguing so.

50

Tilak argues that the doctrine of the Gītā has come into being only in order to explain why a wise man (jñāni) must act, and this explanation of the Gītā makes the Gītā most distinctive. <sup>51</sup>

He adds that the ultimate doctrine of the Gītā is that the union between action (karma) and spiritual knowledge (jñāna) <sup>52</sup> is best and mere action or spiritual knowledge is onesided.

Tilak argues that the jñāni of the Gītā has to act for the sake of duty, as follows:

But, just as when one is asked to remove a colour (...) from a piece of cloth, it does not mean that he should destroy the piece of cloth. Similarly, when it is said that one should not entertain selfish desire (kāma), attachment (saṅga) or love (rāga) in action,

50

GR. p. 292 (M); pp. 448f (E).

51

Ibid., p. 272 (M); p. 417 (E).

52

Ibid., p. 323 (M); p. 499 (E).

it does not mean that actions themselves should be given up... one can act with detachment (vairāgya) and nobody can give up action. Therefore, actions, which ignorant people do expecting results, should be performed by a jñāni even after having obtained the knowledge (jñānottarāhi), considering advantages and disadvantages, happiness and unhappiness as equal (Gī. ii. 38), with courage and enthusiasm, with a pure mind, that is, being detached (virakta) or indifferent (udāsina) to the results (Gī. xviii. 26), with a peaceful mind, according to one's own privileges (adhikār), and only as a duty (Gī. vi. 3). This is the true principle of leading one's life in view of ethics (nītidrṣṭyā) and of liberation (mokṣadrṣṭyā).

53

Ṭīlak adds that there is no conflict between karma and jñāna in the Gītā and the jñāni must do all duties for the sake of the duties and also for universal wellbeing

54

(lokasaṅgraha). Thus the jñāni of the Gītā is the karmayogi of the Gītārahasya.

Similarly, Ṭīlak depicts the devotee (bhaktimān) of the Gītā in contrast with the devotee of the ācārya-bhāṣyas. In his comment on the Gītā viii. 7-8, Ṭīlak asks those who maintain that the Gītā teaches the renunciation of the world and following the way of devotion, to pay attention to the proposition laid down in the seventh stanza, when he argues:

One gets liberation by his devotion to God, which is united with knowledge (jñānayukta bhakti)... It is not the proposition (abhiprāy) of the Gītā that one has to give up action in order to attain liberation.

53

GR. pp. 295f (M); pp. 454f (E).

54

Ibid., pp. 440f (M); p. 689 (E).

On the contrary, it is the proposition (siddhānta) of the Gītā-science that even the devotee of the Blessed Lord must do his duties prescribed by his dharma with the desireless frame of mind; and the same proposition is conveyed by the words 'always meditate on Me, and fight'.

55

Ṭīlak argues the same point in his comment on the Gītā ix. 27-28, as follows:

From this it becomes quite clear, that even the Devotee of the Blessed Lord [the bhagavad-bhakta] has to perform all Actions with the idea of dedicating them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and that he cannot give up Action.

56

Ṭīlak argues that the devotee of the Gītā is a karmayogi:

The bhaktimārga of the Gītā is predominantly activistic (karmapradhān); and the Parameśvara is worshipped not only by flowers or speeches (vācane) but also by desireless actions (niṣkāma karma) prescribed by one's dharma (svadharmokta); and everybody must do such worship; this is the main principle of devotion cum action (karmamaya bhakti) is not found anywhere except in the Gītā, this must be considered the specific characteristic (viśeṣ lakṣaṇa) of the bhaktimārga of the Gītā.

57

Ṭīlak repeats the idea in another place when he says that in the path of devotion, actions are not given up but their fruit

55

GR. p. 651 (M); p. 1035 (E).

56

Ibid., p. 686 (M); p. 1057 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar; cf. Ṭīlak's commentary on the Gītā xi. 55.

57

Ibid., p. 395 (M); p. 613 (E).

is dedicated to the Parameśvara (Gī. xii. 7-8).<sup>58</sup> Thus the bhakta of the Gītā is understood as a karmayogi in the Gītārahasya.

It was argued before that the jñāni of the Gītā is understood as a karmayogi in the Gītārahasya, and now that the bhakta of the Gītā is understood as a karmayogi in the Gītārahasya. Thus both the bhakta and the jñāni of the Gītā are karmayogis in the Gītārahasya.

In brief, it was argued that Tīlak rejected all the interpretations of the ācāryas and other commentators because they prescribe either jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the final way of liberation and they ultimately support saṁnyāsa (i.e. renunciation of social life and duties). Their bhakta or jñāni is ultimately a saṁnyāsi. Tīlak differs from them when he says that the Gītā preaches the Karmayoga which includes bhakti and jñāna; his Karmayoga is a synthesis of karma, jñāna, and bhakti. Tīlak also differs from other commentators when he says that the sthītaprajña, who is jñāni and bhakta, is the karmayogi who continues to act even after being liberated and acts disinterestedly and for the sake of universal wellbeing (lokasaṅgraha).



C) Sources of the Solution to the Problem of SaintlyAction:

It should be clear that the bhāṣyas and other comentaries constituted a problem in arriving at a proper interpretation of saintly action for Ṭīlak. In other words, the solution to the problem that a liberated person should continue to act disinterestedly and for universal wellbeing did not come from them. What were Ṭīlak's sources in working out his own solution? We have already shown in the introduction of the thesis that Ṭīlak often cites the Marāṭhā saints in support of his arguments. Is it then possible to suppose that the Marāṭhā religious tradition provided the basis for Ṭīlak's solution? If the Marāṭhā tradition contributed to solving the problem, what was the form of its contribution? A need to examine this possibility leads us to ask several questions concerning the Marāṭhā religious tradition: Is there a teaching about action (karmayoga) in the Marāṭhā tradition? How does the tradition treat jñānamārga and karmamārga? Is its devotionalism mainly activist (karmapradhān)? Does it ask its saint, the released person, to renounce the world or to remain in the world and to discharge his social duties disinterestedly for the sake of social wellbeing (lokasaṅgraha)? Is its bhakta or jñāni a karmayogi?

(1) Theology of the Varkari Saints-

The questions stated above are to be addressed to the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra. Let us begin with the teaching of the Vārkarī saints and particularly with the teaching of Jñāneśvar, as we have done in the previous chapters. Before we start discussing Jñāneśvar's theology, it should be said at the outset that although the Marāṭhā saints tend to stress bhaktimārga as the principal way of liberation, they have interwoven karmayoga or disinterested performance of duties into their bhaktimārga in such a way that Tīlak can legitimately find in them an ally for his activistic interpretation of the Gītā. This is the proposition we will try to prove as we go on discussing the theology of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra.

Jñāneśvar heightens the importance of bhaktimārga over other means to liberation when he comments on the Gītā ix. 48, as follows:

The Vedas reached their limit (soy) and became silent; the sacrifices returned from heaven (i.e. they did not reach God). Those who sought (God) through yoga saw a great barrier (āyās) and left off the practice of yoga. The effort (saūra) to study the scriptures proved not useful; the most righteous deeds led into self-deception and only reached satyalok with great difficulty. Those who practise austerity (tap) saw (my) glory only from a distance (apārāntare) and immediately abandoned their austerity. The cosmic form which you saw without difficulty is not seen by anyone (kavaṇā) in the world of men.

59

In these verses, Jñāneśvar talks of the limitations of knowing God by means of studying the Vedas and other sacred books and of practising austerities and doing righteous deeds, and concludes that the cosmic vision of God is seen by a devotee very easily.

Jñāneśvar says that the fruit of yoga (austerity) is also obtained by bhaktimārga, as follows:

Your devotees (sevak, lit. servants) enjoy the bliss of yoga, by your love (snehāle) alone.

60

Jñāneśvar also holds that the mystical knowledge of identity between Brahman and ātman is obtained by bhaktimārga:

You gratify the loving want (lale pālisī) of knowledge "so'hamsiddhi" (i.e. doctrine that you are that),  
[ of your devotees ].

61

Again,

He who worships me with purity (cokhauḷī) in the discharge of his duties attains the way of knowledge (jñānanisṭhā) by my grace (prasāde). When the way of knowledge is in the hands of the karmayogi, he becomes delighted (ullhāse) with my devotion. He becomes identical (samaras) with me by devotion and therefore attains bliss.

62

60

Jñ. xii. 4.

61

Ibid., xii. 4.

62

Ibid., xviii. 1247-1248.

In this quotation, Jñāneśvar states that there is devotion after jñānamārga. This type of devotion is called devotion transcending jñāna (jñānottarabhakti).<sup>63</sup> In other words, the bhaktimārga of Jñāneśvar is jñānamaya (i.e. permeated by mystical knowledge).

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, considers bhaktimārga as the best means of liberation because it is the easiest means and also yields the fruit of all the other means. He emphasizes reciting the name of God, a characteristic of bhaktimārga:

When we recite the name we obtain the merits of the morning and evening ritual (saṅdhyā), of various rites (karma), of meditation (dhyaṅ), of muttering vedic mantras (jap), of austerity (tap), and of religious observance (anuṣṭhān). We do not have to pay a price for the name and we are not required to make a big effort (sāyās). Then why do you want to be lazy / in reciting the name /? This is the essence. Why do you not take that which is given freely? Are you paying a price for it?

64

Tukārām says that the essence of all religious means is in reciting the name of God which is a part of bhaktimārga:

Your name is my austerity, my gift, and my religious observance. Your name is my pilgrimage, my rite, and my truth. Your name is my actions (karma), my religious duty (dharma), and my discipline (nīṭyanem). Your name is my family-practice (kulācār), my family-religion (kuladharmā) and my discipline. Your name is my practice (ācār), my principle (vicār), and my

63

S. D. Pendase, Jñāneśvar āṇi Nāmdev, (2nd ed., Pune: Continental Prakāśan, 1972), p. 32; L. R. Pangarkar, Śri Tukārām Caritra, p. 174.

64

Śri Tukārām Mahārājāñce Abhaṅg 1745. 1-2.

certainty (nirdhār).  
65

Tukārām follows Jñāneśvar in saying that bhaktimārga yields the fruit of jñānamārga namely, the mystical experience of identity, when he says:

Know this, the devout have no store of merit; they have reached the state where all is God, immanent and transcendent... Tukā says, 'There is no such distinction as 'God and His worshippers'.

66

From the evidences cited above, we can conclude that the Vārkarī saints hold bhaktimārga as the best means of liberation, one which yields the fruits of all the religious means of liberation. The bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints holds that the mystical knowledge of identity between Brahman and ātman is also obtained by bhaktimārga. It means that there is no conflict between jñāna and bhakti and bhaktimārga is grounded in knowledge (jñānamūlaka). The emphasis of the Vārkarī saints on reciting the name of God as a means of liberation implies that mystical knowledge is obtained easily in bhaktimārga.

The next very important and crucial problem is whether the bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints is karmasannyāsāpara

65

2214, 3135. Śri Tukārām Mahārājāñce Abhañg . 2915.1-6, cf. 1239,

66

The Poems of Tukarama 182, cf. 1671, 1673, 1802, 1880, tr. N. Fraser and K. B. Marathe.

(i.e. oriented towards renunciation of action) or nivṛttipara (i.e. renunciatory), or karmapradhāna (i.e. predominantly activist) or pravṛttipara (i.e. oriented towards action).

It seems that Jñāneśvar is not in favour of the renunciatory mode (of a saṁnyāsi) of life which prefers renouncing social life to remaining in society. He understands saṁnyāsa in terms of the renunciation of selfish desires rather than withdrawal from the society, when he says:

When the mind has become detached (niḥsaṅga) in nature, we need not give up the domestic life and other things. It is like picking up the ashes with cotton balls, once the fire is extinguished. Similarly, he who has no desire (saṅkalpa) is free from the bondage of action even though his organs are functioning. Therefore, when desire (kalpanā) is given up, one becomes a saṁnyāsi. For this reason, saṁnyāsamārga and karmamārga are equal [as far as their final reward is concerned].

67

Jñāneśvar criticizes the saṁnyāsi life, and emphasizes saṁnyāsa of desire (saṅkalpa), when he says:

He has become a saṁnyāsi by saying so, but he still greedily runs after enjoyment. He does not know Brahman (brahmarasu), and his efforts (kāśāvisu) are in vain... He defiles the body and holds a stick in his hand and wanders; he is dissatisfied and crazy (vivhaḷ) about sense-objects, so what is the use of the stick? Householders wonder about this saṁnyāsi. If you are a liberated soul (siddha), why do you defile your body? Know that you are not saṁnyāsi at

all.

68

Jñāneśvar defines saṁnyāsa in terms of mental discipline and asks people not to give up social duties, as follows:

He who remains in his āśrama (i.e. householdership) and renounces desire is a renouncer (vairāgi); he only is a saṁnyāsi who has (true) detachment (asaṅgatā) towards sense-objects (saṅga); the nature (of Brahman) is with him.

69

Again,

Why do you bid good-bye to householdership (grhāśrama)?  
why do you give up religious obligations (kriyākarma)?  
Why do you give up your family duties (dharma)?  
The secret lies elsewhere.

70

On the basis of what Jñāneśvar has said, we can conclude that Jñāneśvar was critical of the external mode of the saṁnyāsi life, and that he thought of saṁnyāsa in terms of the renunciation of desires or selfish motives (saṅkalpa). He did not ask the people to renounce the world and social life, but rather to renounce wrong motives and selfish attitudes towards life while continuing to discharge a householder's duties.

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68 Śri Jñāneśvarāñce Abhaṅg 460-461.

69 Ibid., 461.3.

70 Ibid., 466.1, cf. 462, 465.

71 Svāmi Śivatattvānānda, Śri Jñāneśvar: Tattvadarśi āṅi Kavi, (Nāgpur: Śri Rāmākṛṣṇa Āśram, 1968), p. 15.

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, criticizes the saṁnyāsa cult, as follows:

Becoming saṁnyāsis, they wear safron dress but they have not given up the desire for enjoyment (viṣay). They despise tasteless food (kaḍāṇna) and desire delicious food (devāṇna). Tukārām says, "How the Lord will meet such people of hypocritical devotion (dāmbhik bhajan)?" / viz. saṁnyāsis are expected to eat whatever is given to them, as a proof of controlling their tongue ] .

72

In a few poems, Tukārām criticizes the saṁnyāsi mode of the Kānphāti Saiva sect, Mahānubhāva, and of the Śvetāmbar sect of Jainism, all of which valued renunciation of society.

73

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, defines saṁnyāsa in terms of the renunciation of desire (saṅkalpasamnyāsa):

Have you taken the saṁnyāsa which destroys selfish desire (saṅkalpa)? If you have, it does not matter whether you stay in society, or in a forest, or (sleep) on a cot or on the bare ground (bhoi). When you have broken the bud of consciousness (jāñiv), you have a different attitude.

74

Again,

Even though a hermit (saṁyogi) lives in the forest (vānaprastha), he must still have detachment because saṁnyāsa means the renunciation of selfish desire

72,

Sri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhang 3071.

73

Ibid., 3073-3078.

74

Ibid., 1263.1-3.



(sañkalpa).  
75

From the foregoing discussion, we can conclude that the Vārkarī saints were critical of the sañnyāsa cult; they attacked the hypocritical tendency of the sañnyāsa cult and emphasized the renunciation of selfish motives (sañkalpa), and of doing duties irrespective of whether a person leaves society and stays in a forest or remains in society. In brief, the Vārkarī saints emphasized sañkalpasañnyāsa (i.e. renunciation of social duties).

While discussing the theology of Jñāneśvar about sañnyāsa it was made clear that Jñāneśvar did not ask householders to give up their social duties and take sañnyāsa (i.e. physical withdrawal from society) for the sake of religious life or for attaining liberation (mokṣa), because he defined sañnyāsa in terms of the abandonment of selfish motives (sañkalpa) and asked the householders to continue to discharge their duties. He clearly asked the householders not to take sañnyāsa but to continue doing their duties.

The burden of householder's duties is already on his shoulders. Why should it be increased more by asking him to take a sañnyāsa? / viz. burdening him with the duties of a sañnyāsi /. Therefore, we should not

give up doing sacrifices (agnisevā), and should not cross the threshold of duty, for we naturally have the bliss of yoga within ourselves.

76

Jñāneśvar has repeated the idea in another place in the

Jñāneśvari.<sup>77</sup> In the quotation cited above, Jñāneśvar has said that the bliss of liberation lies within one's self, implying that a householder can have it without taking saṁnyāsa.

Tukārām, like Jñāneśvar, speaks highly of a householder and says that the householder attains the results of saṁnyāsa, which implies that he need not be a saṁnyāsi, as follows:

He serves others and heeds no censure, he looks on other men's wives as sisters. He is compassionate to all creatures, a protector of cows, he supplies them with water when they are thirsty in the wilderness. He is an image of peace, he treats no man harshly, he enlarges the glory of the householder's state; he attains the highest state and has all the strength that renunciation gives.

78

From what has been said above, we can conclude that the Vārkarī saints clearly emphasized the duties of householder-ship (gṛhasthāśrama) and did not encourage people to renounce householdership in the interest of the religious life or in the interest of attaining liberation. They held that the

76

Jñ. vi. 50-51.

77

Ibid., iii. 80; ix. 304.

78

The Poems of Tukarama 2313, tr. N. Fraser and K. B. Marathe.

spiritual fruit which is obtained by being a samnyāsi can better be obtained in householdership. This position implies that there is no conflict between bhakti and karma, or doing social duties and leading the ideal spiritual life. In other words, the Vārkarī saints were trying to harmonize prapañca (i.e. social and domestic life) and paramārtha (i.e. spiritual or religious life).

The idea of harmony between prapañca and paramārtha is emphasized by Tukārām, when he says:

Vain is the renunciation which consists in leaving one's country. Lust and fear grow up through desire; we must quit idle prattle of renunciation... A precious life is one spent in the service of others, we shall repent if we do not break through the snares of the world.

79

The Vārkarī saints were thus against the practice of the samnyāsa cult which called for abandoning social duties in the interest of spiritual pursuit. They taught that one should do prapañca (i.e. domestic and social duties) within the framework of paramārtha (i.e. ideal religious or spiritual life). This means that the bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints was karmapradhāna (i.e. dominated by activism) and not karma-samnyāsapradhāna (i.e. dominated by renunciation of actions). In other words, there is karmayoga in the bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints.

Having shown that there is karmayoga in the bhakti-mārga of the Vārkarī saints, we should next proceed to examine the prominent features of the karmayoga of the Vārkarī saints.

First, a devotee (bhakta) of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya is a karmayogi, that is, he continues to do his social and domestic duties even after being liberated; he is an active jīvanmukta (i.e. a saintly person who is liberated in the embodied state). Jñāneśvar calls the jīvanmukta 'mahātmā' (i.e. great soul) and describes the mahātmā as a person actively engaged in the wellbeing of others, as follows:

Thus by extolling (my) name, they remove the pains of the world. [ Because of their doing so ] the whole world is filled with the highest bliss (mahāsukhe). They enable others to see without the light of dawn; they enliven others with nectar; they show liberation (kaivalya) to others even though the others have not practised yoga... Someone rarely goes to heaven (Vaikuntha) but they have made the universe (viśva) heaven; they have purified the universe by the glory of praising my name.

80

81

Jñāneśvar adds that saints are the embodiment of compassion; they show their compassion to anyone irrespective of his social status; they identify with the suffering and happiness of

80

Jñ. ix. 200-203.

81

Ibid., ix. 205; xvi. 162.

82

Ibid., xvi. 154ff.

83

others; their work is 'to bring relief to those who are worn  
 out by travelling or afflicted by distress; or,

84

As the sun sets out to encircle the earth, it dispells the world's darkness and opens the temples of prosperity (śriyā). Similarly, they set free those who are in bondage; they rescue the drowning, and remove the afflictions of the distressed. In short, they work night and day for increasing the happiness of others (pudhil) and in so doing they attain their goal.

85

Tukārām follows Jñāneśvar in describing the work and attitude of a saintly person, as follows:

He makes friendship with those people who are oppressed. Know him to be a saint and God dwells in him..He takes to his heart those who are helpless (āpaṅgītā). He shows compassion to his son as well as to his servants. Tukārām says, "I have told you often that he is the very image (mūrti) of the Blessed Lord.

86

Again,

Manifestations (vibhūti) of saints are for the wellbeing of the world; they wear themselves out doing benevolent deeds for others. Showing compassion to beings is the stock (bhāṇḍaval) of the saints; they do not love their own bodies. Tukārām says, "They become happy by the happiness of others and the nectar flows out of

83

Jñ. xvi. 159-162.

84

Ibid., xvii. 206, cf. xvi. 200f.

85

Ibid., xvi. 200=202.

86

Śri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg 204.

their mouths.

87

From what has been said above, we can conclude that the Vārkarī saints taught that a devotee (bhakta) or a person who has obtained spiritual knowledge (jñāni) or a saint or a jīvanmukta has to continue doing his duties for the sake of universal wellbeing (lokasaṅgraha) or the wellbeing of society.

Another feature of the karmayoga of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya has to do with the spirit in which actions are performed. It was shown before that the Vārkarī saints have emphasized doing duties while renouncing selfish motives (saṅkalpasamnyāsa), that is, acting disinterestedly. In addition to the principle of saṅkalpasamnyāsa, there is the principle of the dedication of action and the fruit thereof to the deity, in the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya. Jñāneśvar calls the principle 'brahmasamarpaṇa' and defines it as follows:

They say that these actions and their fruit are identical with Brahman (brahmarupa), therefore, there is nothing left for our enjoyment. Thus having dedicated their action to Brahman, they shake off the responsibility saying 'it is not mine'. Now, actions are respectfully dedicated to the syllable Om which is the form of Brahman; and in this way, the actions become identical with Brahman (brahmatva).

88

87 ,

Sri Tukārām Mahārājānce Abhaṅg ; 1014.3-5.

88

Jñ. xvii. 371-373.

Again,

As seeds which are put in the fire are destroyed of germination, actions dedicated to me do not yield good or bad results.

89

Tukārām follows Jñāneśvar when he says:

Every action should be offered to God; this is the only worship that reaches him. Every action is perfected by this rule of conduct, that the worshippers are members of God. This is the one secret; this is the message of religion. Tukā say, 'It is true, it is true; three times I say it is true'.

90

Now, we can summarize what we have learned about the bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints. (i) The bhaktimārga is the easiest way of liberation because its emphasis on reciting the name of God. (ii) The bhaktimārga yields the fruit of jñānamārga and other means of liberation. As it yields mystical knowledge it is characterized as grounded in knowledge (jñānamūlaka). (iii) The bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints is critical of the saṁnyāsa cult and does not advocate karmasaṁnyāsa, that is renunciation of social life and its duties. It defines saṁnyāsa in terms of the renunciation of selfish motives (saṅkalpa). It asks householders to do their duties and asks its devotees and saints to continue doing their social and domestic duties. (iv) The bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī

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89

Jñ. ix. 402, cf. xviii. 590, 1386.

90

The Poems of Tukarama 1126, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe.

saints asks its saints to continue to discharge their duties after attaining enlightenment. This is done for the wellbeing of others (viz. poor and ignorant) and is carried out in the spirit of disinterestedness (niṣkāma) and is a dedication of both the deeds and fruit thereof to the deity. Thus it is karmapradhāna (i.e. predominantly activistic).

(2) Theology of Rāmdās-

Having dealt with the theology of the Vārkarī saints, we should proceed to examine the theology of Rāmdās, bearing in mind the questions we put to the Vārkarī saints.

Rāmdās also teaches that bhaktimārga is the way of liberation, when he says:

The name of the book is the Dāsbodh; herein is a dialogue (saṁvād) between a preceptor and his disciples; bhaktimārga is explained in it. Ninefold devotion, knowledge, the characteristics of renunciation (vairāgya), and explanation of spiritual knowledge (adhyātma) are explained in it. The import (abhiprāv) of this book is that man can surely attain God by devotion.

91

Ramdas' bhaktimārga emphasizes the easiness of the way or reciting the name of God, when he says:

One cannot express in words the greatness of the name of God; many people were uplifted by the name. Saṁkara himself was saved from the halāhal poison (by reciting the name). Four varṇas have the right of reciting the name; the name does not discriminate between the great and the small. Both lazy (jaḍ) and foolish (mūḍha) people have made it across the



shore (pailpār) by the means of the name.

92

Rāmdās establishes the self-sufficiency of reciting the name of God or the bhaktimārga over other means of liberation, as follows:

Rāmdās says, "If you have faith in the name of God, you are not required to do rites (karma), religious duties (dharmā), yogic practices; (you are not required) to eat specific food (bhoga) or to renounce (something) (tyāga) or (to follow) the order or mandate (sāng) (of someone). You should meditate on the name of Rāma at dawn."

93

Mahipati, a biographer of the Marāṭhā saints, notes this emphasis in Rāmdās' theology on the name of God and quotes Rāmdās:

In the repeating of God's name there is the equivalent of all other forms of religious acts and austerities. One who repeats God's name is unharmed by hindrances...

94

Rāmdās also holds that the bhaktimārga yields the mystical knowledge of identity between the Paramātman and ātman (or a devotee), when he says:

When one tries to know God, he becomes identical (tadrupatā) with God (because) there is (then) no separation (vibhaktatā) between God and His devotee

92

Dās. 4.iii. 23-24.

93

Śri Manāce Ślok 76.

94

Mahipati, Santavijaya-Rāmdās, vii.22, tr. J. E. Abbot.

at all. As he is not separate (vibhakta) (from God) he is called a devotee (bhakta). As he is not in bondage, he is free (mukta). An argument, supported by the scriptures, is appropriate (yukta) and not inappropriate. When one looks at the origin of God and the devotee, the differences between God and the devotee seem to be eradicated. There is only one Supreme Self (the Paramātma) beyond all that is visible.. After dedicating oneself to God (ātmanivedan) one attains to the unified devotion (abheda bhākti) which is truly called sāyojyamukti (i.e. liberation in terms of being united with the Deity). He who submits himself to saints learns about non-dualism (advaita). After that, if one tries to make himself separate from God, he cannot be separated... (for) God and the devotee are one at the origin; he who realizes this wisdom (vivek) is the saint who is able to give one liberation (mokṣadāyak).

95

Rāmdās repeats in another work that bhaktimārga yields the mystical knowledge of identity. Rāmdās makes his bhaktimārga based on knowledge or wisdom (vivek) and criticizes naive devotion (bhoḷā bhāv), when he says:

If one has naive devotion (bhoḷā bhāv), he has a correspondingly ignorant nature. How can one attain the God of gods by ignorance?

97

Again,

Let the simple faith lead to liberation; this is a means (upāy) of liberation (udhār, lit. uplift).

95

Dās. 8.viii. 15-23.

96

Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg 284.50.

97

Dās. 20.ix.11.

But we should know liberation by wisdom (vivek);  
this is the clear (rokaḍā) intent (abhiprāv).

98

In brief, the bhaktimārga of Rāmdās is jñānamūlaka (i.e. grounded in knowledge).

As the bhaktimārga yields mystical knowledge, Rāmdās maintains harmony between devotion and knowledge, as is seen in some of his sayings:

The way of knowledge and the way of devotion (upāsanā) are identical (ekaci); (but) people are liberated / ultimately / by devotion.

99

Or, 'There is no liberation by knowledge without devotion'<sup>100</sup>  
and 'Knowledge without devotion is called ignorance'.<sup>101</sup>

Thus Rāmdās' bhaktimārga harmonizes jñāna and bhakti.

Rāmdās not only harmonizes jñāna and bhakti but also harmonizes knowledge and action (karma), when he says:

Bookish knowledge (śabdajñāna) without action is like the detestable vomit of a dog. Good people never pay attention to it.

102

98

Dās. 9.vii. 49.

99

Ibid., 13.ii. 8, cf. Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg 38.

100

Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg 377.

101

Ibid., 378.

102

Dās. 12.x.30.

Or, :

Pure knowledge without corresponding action, is like a mime. Or it is like the perfectly beautiful wife in the dramatic play, who bears no children.

103

From the evidences cited above, we can conclude that the bhaktimārga of Rāmdās is a synthesis of bhakti, jñāna, and karma (bhaktikarmajñānasamuccaya).

The next important question is whether the bhaktimārga of Rāmdās is nivṛttipara (i.e. advocating renunciation of social and domestic duties) or pravṛttipara (i.e. advocating performance of social and domestic duties).

It was discussed in the earlier chapter how Rāmdās asked the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas to discharge their duties. The remainder of the problem is whether Rāmdās recognizes the importance of gṛhasthāśrama (i.e. householdership) or asks people to renounce it in the interest of religious pursuit, that is, mokṣa. Rāmdās praises the gṛhasthāśrama in these verses:

There are different dresses and life-stages (āśramas); but the householdership (gṛhasthāśrama) is the root of all. Beings of the three worlds (trailokavāsi)- gods, seers, sages, yogis, tāpasi, recluse, manes and others, and guests (abhyāgat)- are supported by it. They were born in householdership; they renounced their

householdership but they again go to householders after achieving their goal (kirtirupe). Householdership is the best of all the life-stages, for this reason. However, discharging one's duties (svadharna) must be practised in householdership. Six duties are discharged, prescribed and performed, and pleasing words are spoken to all creatures, in this life-stage.

104

Rāmdās does not ask people to renounce social and domestic life (prapañca) but rather asks the people to lead the social and domestic life and the spiritual or religious life (paramārtha) together, when he says:

First the domestic life (prapañca) must be led successfully and then one should think of the religious life (paramārtha). O thoughtful people, do not be lazy about it. If you relinquish domestic life in order to be successful in the religious life, you will be unhappy. You will be considered thoughtful if you do both domestic and religious duties. If you do religious duties and give up your domestic duties, you will not get food to eat. How, then, will such a hapless person (karāṅṭā) attain the religious goal (paramārtha)? If you give up religious duties and do only your domestic duties, you will suffer pain in hell and you will be most distressed (kaṣṭī) while experiencing pain in hell.

105

Rāmdās adds that when both prapañca and the paramārtha are done with discretion (vivek), people in both worlds (i.e.

106

here and hereafter) are pleased. Thus Rāmdās harmonizes

104

Dās. 14. vii. 1-5.

105

Ibid., 12.i.1-4.

106

Ibid., 11.iii.2.

the social and spiritual aspects of life, which is the  
 outstanding feature of Ramdas' bhaktimārga.<sup>107</sup> From the  
 foregoing discussion, we can conclude that the bhaktimārga of  
 Rāmdās is prayrttipara (i.e. advocating performance of social  
 and domestic duties).

The next very important problem is whether Rāmdās' ideal person or saint or devotee or sthitaprajña continues to act after attaining spiritual knowledge or enlightenment (jñānottarakarma). Rāmdās describes characteristics of the saint in these verses:

They do actions (karma) with fondness and they have no desire for rewards, Peace, forgiveness, and compassion are their friends. (Therefore), give up selfish desires and achieve what is eternal.

108

Or,

They have saved themselves (and) they have become useful to the people. Having heard their fame, the undevout (abhakta) become devoted (bhāvārthī).

109

110

Rāmdās adds that the saints enlighten people; they

107

V. G. Apte, Dāsbodh-Saṅdeś, (Pune: Svādhyāy Mahāvidyā-lay Prakāśan, 1964), p. 1.

108

Śri Rāmdās Svāmice Abhaṅg 145. 5-10; cf. Dās. 8.ix.31-46, Sri Manace 'Slok 134.

109

Dās. 3.x. 22.

110

Ibid., l.v. 22-26.

always engage themselves in conferring obligation (paropkār)  
 111  
 on others; they become unhappy with the unhappiness of others,  
 112  
 and happy with others' happiness; they desire all to be happy.

Thus the saints of the theology of Rāmdās work for the wellbeing  
 (lokasaṅgraha) of all people with disinterestedness.

Another feature of the karmamārga of Rāmdās' theology  
 has to do with the spirit in which actions are performed. It  
 was pointed out that the saint of Rāmdās' theology works  
 disinterestedly or unselfishly or with saṅkalpasamnyāsa. In  
 addition there is another principle of doing actions, that is,  
 the spirit of self-dedication to the deity (ātmanivedana or  
ātmasamarpaṇa). The principle of ātmanivedana is not only  
 dedication of deeds and the fruit thereof to the deity but it  
 is also the dedication of one's self to the deity. It seems  
 to be a spiritual experience of identity in the context of  
 devotion. Rāmdās defines ātmanivedana, as follows:

Listen to the characteristic of dedication (nivedan);  
 you will know (the characteristic of dedication) when  
 you dedicate yourself to God or when you try to explain  
 reality (tattva). Therefore, we should meditate on  
 and recognize who is God and we should search in our  
 hearts who we are. When we examine (tattvazāḍā) in  
 order to decide who are we, we shall come to know  
 that we are nothing. When we exercise our wisdom  
 (vivek), we would know that all are the forms of  
 reality (tattvarupa); and when Prakṛti vanishes the

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111  
Dās. 19.iv. 10-11.

112  
Ibid., 19.iv. 23.

Self remains and not us... We are false (mithyā) and God is true (sāc) and there is an identical relationship (ananyabhāṅ) between God and the devotee. The significance (abhiprāv) of this saying (vacan) is realized by those who experience (anubhavi) reality. This is called self-dedication (ātmanivedana)... Ātmanivedana is a ninth kind of devotion; without attaining it, nobody can avoid birth and death. This is an authoritative saying, and not a false saying. Having performed the ninefold devotion, one gets sāyujyamukti (i.e. being united with the deity). There is no change (calaṅ) in the condition of sāyujyamukti, at any time (kalpa).

113

This quotation brings out the significance of the ātmanivedana as a means to achieve liberation and also a means to serve God and society. In the principle of ātmanivedana an individual forgets his doership and ascribes it to God; this idea is upheld by Rāmdās, when he says:

If you say that you are a doer (kartā) you will be miserable (kaṣṭī) but if you say that Rāma is the doer, you will get success, fame, and valour.

114

Now, we can summarize what we have learned about the bhaktimārga of Rāmdās. (i) The bhaktimārga of Rāmdās seems to be the easiest way of liberation because of its emphasis on reciting the name of God. (ii) The bhaktimārga yields the fruit of other means of liberation and also yields the mystical knowledge therefore it is jñānamūlaka. (iii) It does not advocate karmasannyāsa but rather advocates sāṅkalpasannyāsa;

113

Dās. 4.ix.3-26.

114

Ibid., 6.vii.36.



it recognizes the importance of householdership and does not ask its devotees to renounce householdership. It thus harmonizes prapañca and paramārtha. (iv) The bhaktimārga of Rāmdās asks its bhaktas or saints to discharge their duties, after achieving liberation, for the wellbeing of others, in the spirit of disinterestedness and self-dedication to the deity. Thus the bhaktimārga of Rāmdās is karmapradhāna.

We have studied the theology of the Vārkarī saints and of Rāmdās with reference to their theology of action. Therefore, we can make some general observations about the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra. The Vārkarī saints and Rāmdās harmonize bhakti, jñāna, and karma. Therefore the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra is karmajñānabhaktisamuccayapara (i.e. harmonizing action, devotion, and knowledge). Both schools harmonize prapañca and paramārtha and emphasize the importance of householdership. They do not encourage the saṁnyāsa cult and the abandonment of social and domestic duties, but they teach saṁnyāsa in terms of giving up selfish motives (saṅkalpa). Both schools ask their saints or bhaktas to continue discharging their duties for the sake of the wellbeing of others (lokasaṅgraha) in the spirit of disinterestedness (niṣkāmvṛtti) and in the spirit of dedicating their deeds and fruit thereof, and also themselves, to the deity (ātmanivedana or brahmasamarpaṇa), after achieving liberation. Thus the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra is activistic (pravṛttipara).

(3) Ācāra (Code of Behaviour) of the Marāṭhā Saints-

Having summarized the theology of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra, let us briefly examine the ācāra (i.e. life-style) of the saints of Mahārāṣṭra. Although Jñāneśvar was a yogi, he did not advocate the saṁnyāsa cult but remained in society and strengthened the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya.<sup>115</sup> It was his desire to enlighten the world with his teaching so that the world might enjoy a great feast of spiritual experience.<sup>116</sup> That this was Jñāneśvar's determination has been pointed out by scholars such as R. D. Ranade,<sup>117</sup> S. G. Tulpule,<sup>118</sup> Svāmi Śivatattvānaṇḍa,<sup>119</sup> and others.

Tukārām was a householder.<sup>120</sup> He carried forward the mission of the spiritual elevation of Mahārāṣṭra through his kirtans (i.e. preaching).<sup>121</sup> Thus the Vārkarī saints were

<sup>115</sup>Jñānshvari: Bhāvārthadīpikā, tr. V. G. Pradhan, ed. H. M. Lambert, p. 20

<sup>116</sup>Jñ. xiii. 1159-1163; Amt. x.24, 25, 31.

<sup>117</sup>R. D. Ranade, op. cit., p. 140.

<sup>118</sup>S. G. Tulpule, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>119</sup>Svāmi Sivatatvānaṇḍa, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>120</sup>The Poems of Tukarama, tr. N. Fraser & K. Marathe, I, 4.

<sup>121</sup>R. D. Ranade, op. cit., p. 273.

activistic and continued to do their social and domestic duties.

Rāmdās, on the other hand, was not a householder.

He fled from the marriage hall in A. D. 1620 in order to  
 122  
 dedicate himself to a religious mission. He travelled far  
 and wide through India for about twelve years (A. D. 1632-1644)  
 and studied the socio-political situation of the country before  
 returning to Mahārāṣṭra in A. D. 1644 and establishing his  
 123  
 Saṁpradāya. Rāmdās, however, is supposed to have been the  
 preceptor of Śivāji Mahārāj (A. D. 1630-1680), the founder of  
 the Marāṭhā kingdom. S. G. Tulpule argues that there was a  
 teacher-student relationship between Rāmdās and Śivāji as  
 evidenced by references in the writings of Rāmdās, such as  
 'Rāmavaradāyīṇi', 'Ānaṇḍavanabhavan' as well as in the Dāsbodh,  
 124  
 e.g. 'Uttamapurusalakṣana' (Dās. 18.vi). H. V. Date, S. S.  
 Dev, and R. D. Rānaḍe agree that there was a relationship  
 between Rāmdās and Śivāji. It is generally held that Rāmdās  
 inspired Śivāji to establish the Marāṭhā kingdom. Rāmdās'  
 interest in political matters is evident in his advice to  
 Saṁbhāji, Śivāji's son, "Unite all the Marāṭhās and spread

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122

V. H. Date, op. cit., p. 2.

123

S. G. Tulpule, op. cit., pp. 389f.

124

Ibid., pp. 397f, 450.

everywhere Mahārāṣṭra-Dharma. If you do not exert yourself for accomplishing this, your ancestors will look upon you with derision".<sup>125</sup> Rāmdās is given credit for introducing the phrase 'the Mahārāṣṭra-Dharma'.<sup>126</sup> Rāmdās' Mahārāṣṭra-Dharma is understood as 'patriotism' by M. G. Ranade.<sup>127</sup> J. F.

Edwards observed:

Ramdas was Shivaji's guru. Himself a bachelor to the end of life, this Brahmin saint and poet was full of the spirit of nationalism, so much so that he was led to give a patriotic turn to the religious consciousness of his people, making it much more national than devotional.

128

In short, all the Marāṭhā saints were activistic (pravṛttipara).

D) Indebtedness of the Gītārahasya to the Marāṭhā

Saints:

Marāṭhā leaders, during the period of the British Raj, emphasized the contribution of the Marāṭhā saints towards social and political life. In this context, M. G. Ranade put forth the following thesis:

The Rise of the Marāṭhā power was due to the first

125

Mahipati, Bhaktavijay, tr. J. E. Abbot & N. R. Godbole, (Poona: The Poet-Saints of Mahārāshtra series, 1944) II, xix.

126

Mahārāṣṭriy Jñānakos', ed. S. V. Ketkar & Y. G. Godbole, R, p. 91.

127

M. G. Ranade, Rise of the Marāṭhā Power and Other Essays, p. 23.

128

J. F. Edwards, Dnyaneshwar: the Outcaste Brāhman, p.24

beginnings of what one may well call the process of nation-making. It was not the outcome of the successful enterprise of any individual adventure. It was the upheaval of the whole population, strongly bound together by the common affinities of language, race, religion, and literature, and seeking further solidarity by a common independent political existence.

129

And,

By the influence of Rāmdās and Tukārām the national sentiment was kept up at a higher level of spirituality and devotion of public affairs than it would otherwise have attained. In token of the work of liberation being carried on, not for personal aggrandisement but for higher purposes of service of God and man...

130

But this thesis of M. G. Ranade was not acceptable to V. K. Rājvāde, a Marāṭhā historian, who said:

When one takes into consideration that the name "Samartha" [i.e. able person] came into being because of the rejection of emasculation (pañgutva) caused by the saints (sañtāle) [of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya], one would know that significance of Tukārām's teaching had and how inferior his sect was. Mr. Justice Ranade tells us that Mahārāṣṭra became vigorous because of the teaching of the saints; but this is not true; this miracle took place because of the Rāmdāsi Pañtha newly established by the Samartha. Can a saint who was oriented towards renunciation (nivṛtti) do such activist work (pravṛttipara kṛtya)?

131

Rājvāde then stated his thesis about the Vārkarī saints,

129

M. G. Ranade, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

130

Ibid., p. 44.

131

quoted by P. B. Kavade, op. cit., p. 142.

as follows:

A saint is an incarnation (mūrtimaṅta putalāc) of emasculation (paṅgutva). He does not want to eat, to drink, to dress; he needs nothing. When he has obtained Viṭhobā, he has got all things. This world does not belong to saints. A saint is not concerned with 'who is king?' or 'who does collect taxes?' As such saints were directing people, Mahārāṣṭra became emasculated for three centuries....

132

Ṭīlak once gave a lecture on the Bhāgavat Dharma during the Gaṇeś festival; he said that the view taken by historian Rājvāde that saints emasculated the people of Mahārāṣṭra was not correct. On another occasion when a learned person criticized the Bhāgavat Dharma and the practices of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, Ṭīlak said:

See, you are wrong (in criticizing thus). Rāṇaḍe has pointed out how the propagation of the Bhāgavat Dharma was useful to the society. The saints had created an inclination of sacrificing one's interest in the interest of serving the society.

134

Ṭīlak, in his lecture on the Bhāgavat Dharma, has referred to Tukārām saying that devotees of Viṣṇu are strong enough to break even steel and added that the saints aroused in people devotion to religion and duty because of their teaching

132

quoted by P. B. Kavade, op. cit., p. 141

133

D. Keer, Lokamānya Ṭīlak, Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, p. 211.

134

S. V. Bapat, op. cit., II, 251.

135

of disinterestedness, selflessness, and compassion. Ṭīlak has thus rejected Rājvāḍe's interpretation of the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya and accepted Rānaḍe's interpretation that the saints were activistic.

We have pointed out that the bhaktimārga of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra is a synthesis of karma (action), jñāna (knowledge), and bhakti (devotion) and its ideal person or saint continues to act after the release (jñānottara karma). We have similarly pointed out that the Karmayoga of the Gītārahasya is a synthesis of karma, jñāna, and bhakti and that its ideal person or the sṭhitaprajña continues to act after liberation (jñānottara karma). These similarities suggest the possibility that Ṭīlak's Gītārahasya was indebted to and thus influenced by the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra. However, it remains to be shown that this was the case and to what extent Ṭīlak depends on the saints to support his position.

It has been argued that the Vārkarī saints criticized the external mode of saṁnyāsi life and encouraged the discharge of social duties. Ṭīlak adopts these ideas from Tukārām's poems, as follows:

He has nowhere stated that there is no more anything / rather nothing / left for him to do, as it is said by those who follow the Path of Saṁnyāsa; in the same way, the opinion of the saint Tukārāma on this matter becomes quite clear from the following other abhaṅg stanza, namely,

Taking up the begger's bowl / fie on such disgraceful life! /  
such persons will by Nārāyaṇa / be always abandoned //  
(Gā. 2595)

Or,

The Real-worshipper (satyavādi) perform all the  
activities of the worldly life / in the same way as  
the lotus remains in the water / untouched by the  
water / He who is philanthropical, he who is kindly  
towards all created beings / he is in the state of  
being merged in the Ātman // (Gā. 3780. 2,3).

136

Tilak also argues a similar idea on the basis of the Dāsbodh,  
an important work of Rāmdās, as follows:

Even Śri Samartha Rāmādāsa Svāmi says in the Dāsbodha  
after having referred to the Knowledge of the Brahman,  
that:

'If one tries to reach the highest goal / pāramārtha /,  
giving up the activities of life / prapañca / / one  
will not get even food to eat / (Dā. 12.i.3).

137

Secondly, with reference to saṁnyāsa, it was argued  
that the Marāṭhā saints defined the saṁnyāsa not in terms of  
giving up social duties and withdrawal from the society and  
the world but rather in terms of giving up selfish motives  
(saṅkalpa) or wrong attitude, which is called true saṁnyāsa.  
Tilak's idea of true saṁnyāsa is similar to that of the Marāṭhā  
saints, when he argues:

The true saṁnyāsa consists in giving up a Desireful  
Reason, or the Hope of Fruit. Samnyāsa consists in

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136

GR. p. 394 (M); p. 611 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

137

Ibid., pp. 288f (M); p. 443 (E), tr. B. Sukthankar.



the frame of the Mind, and not in the external act of giving up the maintenance of the sacrificial fire, or ritual. Therefore, that man alone, who gives up the Hope of Fruit, or the saṁkalpa, and thus performs his duties, can be called the true Samnyāsin.

138

Thirdly, it was argued that the Marāṭhā saints discouraged the inclination to take saṁnyāsa by emphasizing performance of domestic and social duties (prapañca) and especially emphasizing the importance of householdership (grhasthāśrama). Tīlak similarly understands the import of the religion of the Gītā (Gītādharma), when he argues:

Considered those as BHAGAVATA, who believed that all the Actions appropriate to the state of a householder should be performed desirelessly till death, according to the advice of the Blessed Lord, simultaneously with the acquisition of Knowledge and with the possession of a passionate devotion to the Blessed Lord....

139

Tīlak argues further that a householder can be a true saṁnyāsi, in these words:

Nay, that man who has started performing all Actions desirelessly and with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, must be said to be an 'eternal ascetic (nitya-saṁnyāsi)', though he may be a householder (Gi. 5.3). This is the principal doctrine of the Bhāgavata religion....

140

138

GR. p. 635 (M); p. 983 (E), tr. B. S. Sukthankar.

139

Ibid., p. 309 (M); pp. 475f (E), tr. B. Sukthankar.

140

Ibid., p. 314 (M); p. 485 (E), tr. B.S. Sukthankar.

This quotation suggests that Ṭīlak is in favour of harmony between prapañca and paramārtha. It has already been shown that the Marāṭhā saints emphasized harmony between prapañca and paramārtha. It seems that Ṭīlak depends on Rāmdās for arguing the idea of harmony between prapañca and paramārtha, when he argues:

'Samnyāsa' means 'giving up' and if a man has not successfully led his worldly life with the help of 'dharma' what has he to give up? Or, in other words, how can that 'hapless fellow' (karāṇṭā) who cannot properly attend to his worldly life (prapañca), attend to the highest benefit (paramārtha) properly? (Dās. 12.i. 1-10 and 12.viii. 21-31).

141

Ṭīlak argues a similar point in his lecture on the work of Rāmdās, 'Śri Samarthānci Kāmagiri' in Sholapur in A. D. 1908:

'Śri Samartha' [Rāmdās] was a great yogi. Mahārāṣṭra was lifted up by that yoga only. The previous saints only taught a yoga of dharma. Their yoga was not practical. When the time of combining dharma and practical life (vyavahār) came, Rāmdās did so and taught such a yoga. Rāmdās taught how to combine dharma and vyavahār (i.e. practical life).

142

From these evidences, it becomes clear that Ṭīlak understood that the bhaktimārga of the Marāṭhā saints is pravṛttipara (i.e. activistic) and not nivṛttipara or karma-samnyāsapara (i.e. renunciatory). He often refers to the karmamārga of the Marāṭhā saints and its actual results

141

GR. p. 420 (M); p. 658 (E); cf. pp. 288 (M); p. 443(E).

142

Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 957.

arguing that Tukārām taught Śivāji Mahārāj the doctrine of karmayoga.<sup>143</sup> This reference indicates that Ṭīlak was dependent on the teaching of the karmayoga of Tukārām to some extent but he relied more clearly on Rāmdās than on Tukārām, as he argues:

But, although the saint Tukārām was a householder, his inclination was towards abandonment of action (karmatyāga) a little. Therefore, if someone wants a complete explanation of the doctrine (siddhānta) of the Gītā or activistic (pravṛttipara) characteristic of the Bhāgavat Dharma namely, intense devotion (utkaṭ bhakti) accompanied by desireless action, performed with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, till death, he must go to the Dāsboḍh, written by Śri Samartha Rāmdās Svāmi, to whom Tukārām himself directed Śivāji Mahārāj surrender (himself) to the venerable preceptor.

144

Ṭīlak forcefully reiterates the exceptional importance of the work of Rāmdās in the concluding chapter of the Gītārahasya, when he says:

However, as this modern revival (punarujjīvan) of the Bhāgavat Dharma took place during the Muslim rule, it was mostly devotional, that is, one-sided (ekadeśiy); and the karmayoga of the original (mūl) Bhāgavat Dharma, which had once lost its independent importance (svatantra mahatva) did not restore it; and saints, learned people, and the ācāryas of the Bhāgavat Dharma at this time began to say that the karmayoga was a part of or a means of the Samnyāsamārga. I think that the work of Śri Samartha Rāmdās is the only exception to the then prevalent trend (parcalit samajut); and anyone who desires to see (or examine) the true (khare) importance (mahatva) of the karmayoga in a pure and dignified (prāsādik) Marāṭhī, he must study

143

GR. p. 346 (M); pp. 533f (E).

144

Ibid., p. 394 (M); p. 611 (E).

the Dāsboḍh of the Samartha (Rāmdās), and especially the latter part (uttarārdha) of it. Śivāji Mahārāj had instructed (upadeś) from Śri Samartha(Rāmdās).

145

Thus, in brief, Ṭīlak was indebted to the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra in formulating his ideas of Karmayoga as far as these three ideas, as argued above, are concerned.

The next most important issue is whether the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra contributed to and thereby influenced Ṭīlak in formulating the concept of the jīvanmukta or jñāni who continues to act after the release (jñānottara karma) obtained either by jñānamārga or bhaktimārga. This is a most important issue because Ṭīlak claims that his solution to the problem of saintly action is unique and different from the other bhāṣyas.<sup>146</sup> It was argued that the saint of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra continues to act disinterestedly and for the wellbeing of others (lokasaṅgraha).<sup>147</sup> As the saint or devotee (bhakta) of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra and the sthitaprajña of the Gītārahasya continues to act after release (jñānottara karma), there is a definite conceptual similarity between the teaching of the Marāṭhā saints and the philosophy of the Gītārahasya. This similarity suggests

145

GR. p. 451 (M); p. 706 (E).

146

vide, pp. 293-299.

147

vide, pp. 323-326.

the possibility of Ṭīlak's indebtedness to the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra in formulating this unique idea. But are there evidences to prove the hypothesis and to determine the extent of such an influence on Ṭīlak? We shall address the problem in the following pages.

Tīlak quotes the Jñāneśvari in order to argue that the bhakta of the Jñāneśvari is the same as the sthitaprajña of the Gītā, as follows:

Oh, Partha, that man in whom / there is no trace of differentiation / who, both friend and foe / looks as alike // Lighting his own house / and leaving the house of another in darkness is a thing which he does not do, O Parth / he is like a light // To the one who deals blows to cut / and to the one who planted it / It (the tree) gives both shelter / he is like the tree // (Jñā. 12. 197-99). ...

Supporting the best / rejecting the worst / Is a thing which he does not do / he is like the earth // Activating the body of a king / and refusing to activate the body of a poor man / Is a thing which the Prāṇa (Vital Force) does not do / so he is; he is kind // Slaking the thirst of a cow / and becoming a poison to kill a tiger / Is a thing which water does not do / he is like water // Towards all created beings he is friendly, looking upon all as one / He is kind to all / With a sense of equability // He does not know the word 'I' / he does not say of anything that is 'mine' / Experience of pain and happiness / for him there is none // (Jñā. 12. 145=149)

And Jñāneśvara has thus, by giving numerous illustrations, and in very sweet attractive language, described in Marāṭhī the equability of the Brahmified man; and we may safely say, that this description contains a summary of the description of the Brahmi state given in four different places in the Gītā. This is what is to be ultimately acquired by Spiritual Knowledge.

148

Tilak's aforesaid conclusion implies that the idea of the devotee of the Jñānesvari is in reality the correct view about the Gītā's sthitaprajña, which means that Tilak looks at the Jñānesvari in order to formulate his idea of the sthitaprajña.

Tilak argues that the sthitaprajña of the Gītā continues to act after release (jannottara karma) for the sake of universal welfare. It seems that Tilak also develops this idea on the basis of the poems of Tukārām, when he argues:

It is not possible that there can be more jñāni, more disinterested (niṣkāma) or more yoḡin than the Lord. But the Lord himself takes incarnations from time to time, 'to protect saints, to destroy the wicked, and to establish Dharma', which are the functions of the wellbeing (lokasaṅgraha) (Gī. iv.8); it is totally improper for a jñānin to give up doing lokasaṅgraha and continue to say, 'the Parameśvara who created all the world (lok), will maintain and sustain (dhāraṇapoṣaṇa), as He pleases, and it is not my duty to look at it'. Because, after knowledge, there remains no difference between the Parameśvara, me, and the world; and if such a difference remains, the person is not jñāni, but he must be called a hypocrite. If a jñānin becomes uniform with the Parameśvara by knowledge, how a jñānin can escape the necessity of doing the work which the Parameśvara does and in the spirit of desirelessness as the Parameśvara does (Gī. iii. 22, iv. 14, 15)? Besides, whatever the Parameśvara has to do, He does it in the form of a jñānin or through the jñānin. Therefore, a person who has direct knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara, that is, 'one Self in all beings' will be filled with the noble sentiment, such as compassion on all beings, etc., and his natural inclination will be towards wellbeing of all (lokasaṅgraha). With this import (abhiprāy), Tukārām has described saints, viz. the great souls who have fully realized the Parameśvara by devotion, as follows:

Recognize him alone a saint who embraces the unhappy and the distressed as his own (relatives). God is in the saint (Gā. 960. 1-2).

Or,

He who spends his power in benevolent deeds has realized the condition (or state) of the Self (Gā.4562).

Having described the characteristics of saints, Tukārām says:

The incarnations (vibhuti) of saints are for the wellbeing (kalyāṇ) of the world; they labour their bodied for benevolence (Gā. 929).

149

Ṭīlak's dependence on Jñāneśvar and Tukārām becomes very clear when he defends the idea of jñānottara karma in the Gītārahasya, on the basis of the Jñāneśvari and with reference to Tukārām's general theology. Ṭīlak, in his reply to a critic of the Gītārahasya, said:

Mr. Kolhāṭkar took quotations from the Amṛtānubhav and tried to prove, on that basis, that a jñāni has no duty (karma) after acquiring knowledge (jñānottara). But Jñāneśvar himself, in his commentary on the Gītā iii.20, has said, 'When they have obtained the (final) goal they become disinterested. Even for them, there is the obligatory duty (kartavya) in this world'. Mr. Kolhāṭkar did not pay attention to this clear statement. Tukārām holds a similar opinion [that of Jñāneśvar].

150

Ṭīlak also depends on Rāmdās for developing the idea of the sthitaprajña of the Gītā, acting after acquiring knowledge (jñānottara karma), when Ṭīlak argues:

'Carati' (behaves) of this section [BG. ii.64-71] is interpreted by the exponents of the saṁnyāsamārga

<sup>149</sup>GR. pp. 299f (M); pp. 460f (E).

<sup>150</sup>'Kesari', 15 Sept. 1915; Samagra Lokamānya Ṭīlak, VI, 865.

as 'he goes on begging food'. But this is not right. The meaning of 'caran' and 'carata' in the slok 64 and 67, must be taken herein also. The Gītā nowhere tells that the sthitaprajña should ask alms. On the contrary, in the 64th slok, it is clearly said that he, having controlled senses, 'should remain in (the world) of senses'. Therefore, 'carati' must be interpreted as 'behaves' (and) 'does worldly things (vyāpār)'. Śrī Samartha (Rāmdās) has, in the latter part of the Dāsbodh, well described how the 'disinterested' (nihspr̥ha) wise person (sthitaprajña) behaves in daily activities (vyavahār); and the same (toc) is the subject-matter (viṣay) of the fourteenth chapter of the Gītārahasya.

151

A reader of this quotation get the immediate impression that Tīlak developed one chapter on the basis of Rāmdās' concept of the sthitaprajña. But we can find more far-reaching significance to the quotation when we take into consideration the subject-matter of the chapter. Tīlak briefly summarizes the subject-matter of the chapter, as follows:

In short, whatever means of attaining liberation are prescribed by the Vedic religion are occasionally and somewhat extensively mentioned in the Bhagavadgītā in order to explain the karmayoga elaborately. If all these descriptions (varṇaṇe) are treated (or told) independently, there arises inconsistencies and (thereby) it appears that the doctrines (siddhānta) of the Gītā are mutually contradictory; and this false impression (bhāsa) is fortified by the sectarian commentaries. But if someone holds the proposition (siddhānta), as I mentioned before, that the main doctrine (pratipādyā viṣay) of the Gītā is to harmonize brahmajñāna with bhakti and to explain karmayoga on that basis, all these inconsistencies (will) disappear ... The Gītā does not support the saṁnyāsamārga, or any other nivṛttipara sect, but on the other hand, the Gītā is ready to answer logically the question why one should not do karmasaṁnyāsa even after the acquisition of knowledge (jñānottara) from the point of view of



the brahmajñāna.

152

This summary statement is not only the summary statement of the fourteenth chapter of the Gītārahasya but it is the summary statement of the entire Gītārahasya because it is the thesis of the Gītārahasya. The summary statement explains why Tīlak rejected all sectarian commentaries and how his interpretation is different from other commentators. It also suggests that other commentators failed to get hold of the principal doctrine of the Gītā because the Gītā has mentioned all the means of liberation and unless one knows the central idea of the Gītā, namely, the concept of the sthitaprajña, one cannot correctly understand the purport of the Gītā. Tīlak grasped the central idea of the Gītā because he was helped by the work of Rāmdās.

Tīlak argues that the sthitaprajña continues to do his duties, even though he is not required to do so, for the sake of lokasaṅgraha. Tīlak defines the lokasaṅgraha as a jñani setting an example for ordinary people, with reference to Rāmdās, when Tīlak argues:

The saints, not being angry with selfish people, or not letting their equability of mind to change on account of the greed (lobhabuddhi) of the people, on the contrary, perform their duties, for the welfare of such people, for the sake of their duty, and with renunciation. Having borne this principle in mind, Śrī Samartha Rāmdās Svāmi, in the first part of the Dāśbodh told first what the brahmajñāna is, and then started to describe in the eleventh chapter (daśak)

how the sthitaprajña or the best person does his duty disinterestedly and for the sake of lokasaṅgraha, in order to make people wise (Dās. 11.x; 12. viii-x; 15.ii), and later on in the eighteenth chapter said that all people should learn ... the stories, stratagem, devices, ... cleverness, diplomacy, forbearance, ... generosity, adhyātmajñāna, devotion ... equability.. and other numerous qualities of jñānins (Dās. 18.ii).

153

Again,

He (Rāmdās) has said, that ordinary people should learn to perform their own Actions, by seeing how the Siddhas, who have become perfect by realising the pure form of the Parameśvara, keep performing their own Actions, desirelessly, according to their own qualifications, and in order to 'make many people wise' (Dāsa.19.10.14); and after repeating several times that 'unless a man does nothing, nothing happens' (Dāsa.19.10.25; 12.9.6; 18.7. 3), he has said as follows in the last dixaine [daśak], in order to establish a complete harmony between the power of Karma and the redeeming power of Devotion:

Strength lies in activity / the strength will be his  
who is active / But in such a man there must be /  
the seat of the Blessed Lord // (Dāsa. 20.4.26).

154

Tīlak repeats the idea in another place and brings out an important conclusion, as follows:

'jasā vartato lokakalyānakāri / jagi vartati sarvahi tyā prakāri // (i.e. as a public benefactor acts, so also all act in the similar manner, in the world), is the stanza (śloka) of the Samartha (Rāmdās) in Marathi, which is the translation of this stanza [namely, Gī. iii. 21]. The person of the Samartha (Rāmdās), who does public benevolent deeds (lokakalyānakāri puruṣ) is the 'supreme' (śreṣṭha) karmayogi of the Gītā.

153

GR. p. 340 (M); p. 523 (E).

154

Ibid., pp. 394f (M); pp. 611f (E), tr. B. Sukthankar.

'Sreṣṭha' does not mean 'samnyāsi with self-realization (ātmañāni)' (Gī. v. 2). When a Self-realized person (ātmañāni puruṣ) has abandoned selfish mind (svārtha-buddhi) he cannot be excused from actions of public wellbeing (lokakalyāṇāci kārme)....

155

Tilak also understands lokasaṅgraha in terms of maintaining social order through the punishment of the wicked by saintly persons (sṭhitaprajña). Again he relies on Rāmdās when he argues:

But the evil deeds of the wicked cannot be prevented by such saintly actions, or if the wicked do not comply with gentle measures (sāmopacār) or mediation (śiṣṭāi), then according to the principle (nyāyāne) 'kaṇṭakenaiva kantaḥ' (i.e. taking thorn out by another thorn) it becomes necessary to take out the thorn, which cannot come out by an application of potash, by simple thorn or by an iron thorn, that is needle (Dās. 19.ix.12-31). Because, it is ethically the first duty of a saintly person to punish (nigraha) the wicked in the interest of wellbeing of the people (lokasaṅgraha), as the Blessed Lord does.

156

Tilak considers this principle of social behaviour very important and elsewhere repeats it with added emphasis, as follows:

But as a disinterested (niḥsprha) person has to live among greedy people, the Samartha (Rāmdās) has given the ultimate advice:

It is required (agatya kari) that we meet boldness with boldness and to meet impertinence with impertinence

155

GR. p. 598 (M); p. 928 (E).

156

Ibid., p. 359 (M); p. 554 (E).

and villaincy (khatnat) with villaincy (Dās. 19.ix.30). 157

It has been shown that Ṭīlak developed the concept of sthitaprajña on the basis of the teaching of Tukārām and Rāmdās, in the sense of disinterestedly doing benevolent deeds as an expression of one's identification with the interests of others. Now, we have to examine whether Ṭīlak's idea of sthitaprajña is similar to that of the Marāṭhā saints, as far the spirit of dedicating one's actions and their fruit to the deity is concerned. Ṭīlak argues in several places that the sthitaprajña worships Brahman by dedicating his actions and fruit of actions to Brahman.<sup>158</sup> In this context, Ṭīlak defines the Bhāgavat Dharma, as follows:

Continually performing all worldly actions (karma) as pure duties (kartavya) and consciously dedicating them to the Parameśvara (Parameśvarāpaṇ buddhi) and thereby making sacrifices to, or doing devotion of, the Parameśvara, such is the jñānayukta (i.e. grounded or accompanied by knowledge) pravṛttimārga (i.e. . . . activistic way) of Karmayoga of the Gītā, this alone (yāsac) is called 'Bhāgavat Dharma'.

159

It was argued that Marāṭhā spirituality is characterized by the principle of ātmasamarpana or ātmanivedana to God. Ṭīlak argues for the idea of dedicating one's actions and

157

GR. p. 340 (M); p. 524 (E).

158

Ibid., pp. 153, 891, 1057, 1093, 1178 (E).

159

Ibid., p. 447 (M); p. 700 (E).

their fruit to Brahman by reference to Tukārām, as follows:

As there is no conflict (virodh) between knowledge and desireless action (niškāma karme) so also there cannot arise a conflict between devotion (bhakti) and actions done in the spirit of dedicating them to Kṛṣṇa (Kṛsnārpan-buddhi). Saint Tukārām, top-most (śiromaṇi) saint among devotees of the Blessed Lord, in Mahārāṣṭra, has explained his identity (tādātmya) with the Parameśvara's form (achieved) by devotion...

Tukārām is less minute than an atom and as big as the sky. I have swallowed (giluṇi) and vomitted out (sāndile)... the form of the cosmic illusion (bhavabhrama). I have transcended the threefold (triputi)/ Prakṛti /; a light is lighted in the body (ghaṭi), Tukārām says, "Now, I am living only for philanthropy.

Tukārām has thus said clearly that he was living only for philanthropy. ... He has not said that he has nothing to do as the followers of saṁnyāsamārga would say (Gā. 3587).

160

In this quotation, Tīlak has argued not only the principle of jñānottara karma of the sthitaprajña but also the principle of ātmanivedana, on the basis of Tukārām's poems.

#### E) Conclusion:

In this chapter, we have discussed how Tīlak rejected all bhāṣyas and commentaries because they prescribe either jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the final way of liberation and they ultimately support saṁnyāsa and their jñāni or bhakta is a saṁnyāsi. Tīlak differs from them all because he holds Karmayoga as a synthesis of jñāna, bhakti, and karma and holds

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160

GR. p. 394 (M); p. 610 (E).

that the sthitaprajña continues to act after the release (jñānottara karma). We have discussed how the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra holds that its bhaktimārga is a synthesis of jñāna, bhakti, and karma, and its devotee or saint continues to act after the release (jñānottata karma). We have thus demonstrated the basic similarity between the ethical theology of the Marāṭhā Bhāgavat Dharma and the ethical philosophy of the Gītārahasya. We have argued, on the basis of the evidence in the Gītārahasya, that Ṭīlak was critical of the saṁnyāsi mode of life as the Marāṭhā saints were; Ṭīlak defined true saṁnyāsa in terms of renunciation of selfish motive (saṅkalpa), as the saints have done; Ṭīlak favoured a harmony between prapañca and paramārtha, as the saints have done; and Ṭīlak developed the idea of the sthitaprajña who continues to act after the release (mokṣa), for the sake of the wellbeing of others and in the spirit of dedicating his deeds and fruit thereof to the deity, in direct dependence on Tukārām and Rāmdās. From these arguments we can conclude that Ṭīlak was dependent in a major way on the Marāṭhā saints in working out his solution to the problem of saintly action. In other words, the Marāṭhā spirituality was a major source among other sources which contributed to and in this sense influenced the thesis of Ṭīlak in the Gītārahasya.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

This dissertation is an investigation of the hypothesis that the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical ideas of the prominent Marāṭhā saints namely, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām, and Rāmdās, influenced Ṭīlak's Gītārahasya. Jñāneśvar and Tukārām belong to the Vārkarī Saṁpradāya, and Rāmdās to the Rāmdāsi Saṁpradāya. These two Saṁpradāyas have many ideas in common but they differ on other issues. These two Saṁpradāyas together constitute the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra.

This thesis shows how Jñāneśvar and Tukārām on the one hand and Rāmdās on the other hand responded to the claims of Hindu orthodoxy and a strict hierarchical social order. It also shows how they formed their philosophical and ethical ideas. The thesis then shows how Ṭīlak defined his position on those issues in dependence on the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra.

We first examine the socio-religious ideas of the saints. The Marāṭhā saints responded to the five facets of Hindu orthodoxy- Vedasāpekṣatā, Brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā, Āryasāpekṣatā, Yajñasāpekṣatā, and Saṁskṛtasāpekṣatā- in the following way. They upheld the final authority of the Vedas in principle, but they, and especially Jñāneśvar, turned more to the Gītā than would the orthodox teachers. In practice they took their

position on socio-religious issues in the context of the Gītā. Unlike Rāmdās, Jñāneśvar and Tukārām did not uphold all the rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas. They distinguished between Vedic knowledge and salvific knowledge, and held that Vedic knowledge was not a pre-requisite for liberation. They praised the Gītā for not maintaining distinctions such as varṇa and caste, male and female, in granting of liberation. They imparted religious knowledge to all irrespective of their caste and sex. All saints, including Rāmdās, held the view that salvific knowledge is the fruit of bhaktimārga. Jñāneśvar and Rāmdās held that a jñāni should do the rituals (yajñasāpekṣatā) in a disinterested frame of mind. All saints justified the use of Marāṭhī, the vernacular of the masses, for religious discourses and writings.

Ṭīlak took his position on orthodoxy in accord with that of the Bhāgavat Dharma of Mahārāṣṭra. He defended the traditional authority of the Vedas, but he did not fight exclusively for the rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas (brāhmaṇasāpekṣatā) and his struggle transcended caste distinctions. He also held the view that salvific knowledge is a fruit of bhaktimārga. He stood for the equal rights of all in pursuit of the religious goal. He favoured the vernaculars as the chief means of mass education and national awakening.

Jñāneśvar and Tukārām made a distinction between varṇa vyavasthā and the caste system. They justified varṇa vyavasthā



in terms of the guṇa-karma theory. They criticized the shortcomings of the caste system. They attempted to unify Hindu society on the basis of dharma. They emphasized bhāv (devotion) as a criterion of judging the spiritual value of an individual, rather than birth and heredity. They taught the performance of one's religious and social duties (dharma) with a disinterested frame of mind.

Ṭīlak developed his position on the social order in agreement with the saints in most cases. He also justified the varṇa vyavasthā in terms of the guṇa-karma theory. He criticized the shortcomings of the caste system and wished to remove them. He tried to unify Hindu society on the broad basis of dharma. He considered bhāv (devotion) rather than birth the criterion by which to judge the spiritual worth of an individual. He emphasized the performance of one's socio-religious duties (svadharmā) with a disinterested frame of mind.

Having thus summarized how the socio-religious ideas of the Marāṭhā saints influenced Ṭīlak's socio-religious thoughts let us proceed to summarize how the advaitic theology and activist ethics of the saints influenced the Gītārahasya.

Rāmdās developed his advaitic theology in full agreement with Śaṅkara's advaita Vedānta. Jñāneśvar and Tukārām, however, were not in full agreement with Śaṅkara's system. Their advaitic theology has some points of similarity with Śaṅkara's system, but their theological system differs from Śaṅkara's system on

crucial issues. Because of these differences, Śaṅkara's system is called kevala advaita ( pure or abstract non-dualism), and Jñāneśvar's and Tukārām's system is called purṇa advaita (perfect or complete non-dualism). The crucial difference between these two systems is that in the purṇa advaita system, the three-fold identity among Brahman (the Absolute), ātman (an individual self) and jagat (world) is taken seriously, while in the kevala advaita system the identity between Brahman and ātman is taken seriously but the identity between ātman and jagat (ātmaupamya) is left out. Even though Rāmdās fully agreed with Śaṅkara's system he accommodated a system of ethics arising out of the principle of ātmaupamaya in his theology. Tīlak adopts the principle of purṇa advaita and ātmaupamya in his system and agrees with the theological system of the Marāṭhā saints.

The bhaktimārga of the Vārkarī saints and Rāmdās is characterized by two features. The bhaktimārga accommodates jñāna (knowledge) and karma (action); it is pravṛttipara (activistic) and karmapradhāna (i.e. in which action is predominant). The devotee (bhakta) continues to discharge his socio-religious duties (svadharmā) even after release (mokṣa). The bhaktimārga of the Marāṭhā saints does not approve of the saṁnyāsi mode of life (i.e. physical withdrawal from society), and it interprets saṁnyāsa in terms of renunciation of selfish motives (saṅkalpa). It harmonizes prapañca (i.e. domestic life)

and paramārtha (i.e. religious life). It encourages its devotees to discharge their socio-religious duties even after release, for the sake of welfare of others and in the spirit of dedicating their actions and the fruit thereof to the deity.

Ṭīlak followed the teaching of the Marāṭhā saints very closely. According to the Gītārahasya, Karmayoga is a synthesis of bhakti (devotion), jñāna (knowledge), and karma (action). Ṭīlak rejected the bhāṣyas (commentaries on the Gītā) written by the ācāryas and others, because they prescribe either jñānamārga or bhaktimārga as the final way of liberation and they ultimately support saṁnyāsa and their jñāni or bhakta is a saṁnyāsi. The Gītārahasya does not approve of the saṁnyāsi mode of life, but it interprets saṁnyāsa in terms of the renunciation of selfish motives. It harmonizes prapañca and paramārtha and its jñāni or sthitaprajña continues to act even after release (mokṣa), for the sake of welfare of others and in the spirit of dedicating his deeds and the fruit thereof to the deity.

From all these facts, we can conclude that the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical ideas of the prominent saints of Mahārāṣṭra namely, Jñāneśvar, Tukārām and Rāmdās, contributed much to the religious, social, philosophical, and ethical thoughts of the Gītārahasya.

## APPENDIX

### Sayings of the Marāṭhā Saints

Note: These sayings are referred to in the body of the thesis. The first figure denotes the page number and the second figure denotes the quotation number.

विभाग पहिला

प्रकरण २ रे

31.29

पुत्रं वेदाचे मूळसूत्र । सर्वधिकारैक्यवित्र ।  
 श्रीकृष्णो गीताशास्त्र । प्रकट केले ॥  
 येथ गीता मूळ वेदां । कैसे केवी पां आले बोधा ।  
 हे म्हणाल तरी प्रसिध्दा । उपपत्ति सागी ॥  
 तरी जयाचां निश्वासी । जन्म झालें वेदराशी ।  
 तो सत्यप्रतिपत्ति फेसिं । बोलिला स्वमुद्दे ॥  
 म्हणोनि वेदां मूळभूत । गीता म्हणा हे होय उचित ।  
 आणिकही एकी येथ । उपपत्ति असे ॥  
 तरी कांडत्रयात्मक । शब्दराशा अशोरक ।  
 गीतेमाजीं असे रस । बीजी जैसा ॥  
 म्हणोनि वेदाचे बीज । श्रीगीता होथे हे मज ।  
 गमे आणि सहज । दिसतही आहे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१४२६-१४३२

82.32

ये-हवीं तरा पांडुसुता । आंत शुध्द नस्तां ।  
 बाहेरी कर्म तो तत्वतां । विष्टं गा ॥  
 मृत जैसा शृंगारिला । गाढव तीर्थी न्हाणिला ।  
 कडु दुधिया माखिला । गुळे जैसा ॥  
 वीस गृहीं तोरण दांधिलें । कां उपवासी अन्नें लंपिले ।  
 कंक्रम सेंदुर केलें । कांत ही नेने ।  
 कळस ढिमाचे पोकळ । जळो वरील ते झाळाळा ।

काय करनं चित्राव फळ । आंत शौण ॥  
 तैसे कर्मविरिक्तें कडां । न सरे धोर मोलें वुडा ।  
 नव्हे मदिरेचा धडा । पवित्र शगे ॥  
 म्हणोनि अंतरी ज्ञान व्हावें । मग बाह्य लाभे स्वभावे ।  
 वरी ज्ञानकर्मे संभवे । ऐसें के जोडे ॥  
 यालागी बाह्य भाग । कर्म धुतला वांग ।  
 ज्ञाने फिटला वांग । अंतरीचा ॥  
 येथ अंतर बाह्य गेले । निर्मळत्व एक जाहलें ॥  
 किंवाहना उरले । शुचित्वचि ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १२.४६८-४७५

84.34

स्मृतींची चर्चा । दंशु जाणो गारुडियाचा ।  
 निघडुं प्रतेचा । पाईका करा ॥  
 पै व्याकरणाचीं चोखडा । तकीं अतिगाढा  
 परी एक आत्मज्ञानी फुडा । जात्यंघ जो ॥  
 मोराळंगी अशोणे । पिसे अस्तीं डोळसे ।  
 परी एकली दृष्टी नसे । तैसे हें गा ॥  
 तैसे शास्त्रज्ञात जाण । आध्वेंचि अप्रमाण ।  
 वार्था अध्यात्मज्ञानेविण । एकलेनी ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १२.८३२-८३९

85.35

नव्व अहंकाराची गोठी । विशेष न लो अज्ञानासाठी ।  
 सज्ञानाचें झेंबावे कंठी । नाना संकटी नाचवी ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १२.८२

85.36

किंहुना ऐसी दशा । तें ब्रह्मत्व गा सुदंशा ।  
 हें तो पावे जो ऐसा । मातें भजे ॥  
 पुढतीं इहीं लिंगीं । भक्त जो माझा जगीं ।  
 हे ब्रह्मता त्यालागीं । पतिव्रता ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १४.३९८-३९९

85.37

पुत्रं सकळसांख्यसिंधु । श्रीभावदीता प्रबुधु ।  
 हा औदार्ये आगळा वेदु । मूर्त जाण ॥  
 वेदु संपन्न होय ठाई । परी कृपणु ऐसा अनु नाही ।  
 जे कानी लागला तिही । वणाचांचि ॥  
 येरा भव्यथा ठेलियां । स्त्रीशूद्रादिकां प्राणियां ।  
 अन्नसरु मांडूनियां । राहिला आहे ॥  
 तरी मज पाहतां तें मागील उणे । फेडाक्या मी तापणे ।  
 वेदु ठेला भ्रवणें । सेव्य होआक्या ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१४५६-१४५९

87.39

ये म-हाठियेचिया नगरीं । ब्रह्मविद्येचा सुकाळ करीं  
 धेणें देणें सुताचिवरी । हों देई या जगा

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१६

35.41 माझा म-हाठाचि बोल कोतुके । परी अमृतार्ते ही पैजा जिके ।  
पेसी अक्षरें रसिके । मेळ्वीन ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ६.१४

15.42 जिये सागरां जळ्वरें । संवरती मंदराकारें ।  
तेथ देखोनि शफरे येरें । पाहोन लाहती ॥  
अरुण अंगाजवळिके । म्हणोनि स्यातें देखे ।  
मा भूतळीची न देखे । मुंगी काई ॥  
या लागीं आम्हां प्राकृतां । देशिकारें बंधे गीता ।  
म्हणणो हे अनुचिता । कारणे नोहे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१७१८-१७२०

9.47 शास्त्राचे जें सार वेदांची जो मूर्ति । तो आम्हां सांगती  
प्राणसत्ता ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अंभंग ३३३४.१

9.48 वेद जया गाती । आम्हां त्याची संगती ।  
नाम धरियेले कंठी । अवघा सांठविला पोटी ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अंभंग १९९४.१-२

9.49 जाऊनियां तीर्थां काय तुवां केले । चर्म प्रक्षाळिले वरी वरी  
अंतरीचे शुध्द कायसाने जाले । भूषाण तो केले आपणया ॥  
वृंदावन फळ घोळिले साकरा । भीतरील धारा मोठे चिना



तुका म्हणे नाही शांति कामा दया । तोबरी कास्या फुंदा तुम्ही

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग १७५०

90.50

काय सर्व खातो अन्न । काय ध्यान बगाचे ।  
अंतरांची बुद्धि खोटी । भरलें पोटी वाईट ॥  
काय छंदिर नाही धावीं । राख न लावी गाढव ।  
तुका म्हणे सुसर जळीं । काठळीं कां न न्हाती ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग १९७१

90.51

तीर्थे केलीं कोटीवरी । नाहीं देखिली फंदरी ।  
जळो त्याचे ज्यालेपण । न देखेचि समचरण ॥  
योग याग अंभंत केले । नाहीं समचरण देखिले ॥  
तुका म्हणे विठ्ठलायायीं । अंभंत तीर्थे धडली नाही

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग २२४

91.54

थोर ते गढाली पाहिजे अहंता । उपदेश घेतां सुख वाटे ।  
व्यर्थ भरोवरी केले फांतर । जोवरी अंतर शुध्द नाहीं ॥  
घोडे काय थोडे वागविते आज्ञे । भावेविण तैसे पाठांतर  
तुका म्हणे धरा निष्ठावंत भाव । जरी फंदरीराव पाहिजे तसे ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग ११२४

omitted

नव्हे ऋमत्तान बोलतां हे सिध्द । जव हा आत्मबोध ना हीं चित्ती ।  
 काय करिसी वायां लटिकाचि पालहाळ । भ्रम तो केवळ जाणिवेचा  
 मचि देव ऐसै सांगसी या लोकां । विषयांच्या सुखा टाकोनियां ॥  
 अमृताची गोडी पुढिलां सांगसी । आपण उपवासी मरोनिया ।

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्भंग १८.१२०१-४

92.56

वेदाचा तो अर्थ आम्हासीच ठावा । येरांनीं वाहावा भार मार्थां ।  
 खादल्याची गोडी देखिल्यासी नाही । भार धन वाही म्जुरीचे ॥  
 तुका म्हणो आम्हां सांपडले मूळ । आपणचि फळ आले हाता ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्भंग २१८०

95.65

वेद आम्हावरी रुसोनिया गेला । आम्ही त्याच्या बाला  
 धरिले कंठी ॥

आम्ही वैकुंठवासी । आलों याचि कारणासी  
 बोलिले जे ऋषी । साच मावे कर्तव्या ॥  
 झाडूं संतांचे मारण । आडराने मले जग ।  
 उच्छिष्टांचा भाग । शोषा उला तो सेवूं  
 अर्थ लोपली पुरणो नाश केला शब्दताम ।  
 विषायलोभी मन । साधन हे बडकिले  
 पिंटु भक्तीचा डांगीरा । कळीकाळासी दरारा  
 तुका म्हणो करा । जयजयकार आर्भंग ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्भंग २३६

- 96.66 वेदाभांगी सामर्थ्य नसे । तरी या वेदास कोण पुसे ।  
 म्हणोनि वेदीं सामर्थ्य असे । जन उद्धराव्या ॥  
 वेदाक्षर घडे ज्यासी । तो बोळिजे पुण्यरासी ।  
 म्हणोनि वेदीं सामर्थ्यासी । काय उणे ॥

दासबोध ७-६-२९-३०

- 96.67 वेदें प्रकाशिलें सर्वही । वेद विरहित सर्व काही ।  
 तो वेद कोणासही दाखजं शकेना । तेचि वस्तु संतसंगे ।  
 स्वानुभवे कळों लागे । त्याचा महिमा कवनी सांगे ।  
 पेशा क्वणु ॥  
 विवित्र कळा ये मायेची । परी बोळवी न संगवे वस्तुची ।  
 मायातीता अंताची । संत सोय सांगती ॥

दासबोध १.५.१२-१४

- 97.68 स्नानसंध्या सांडू नये । कृष्णवार खंडू नये ।  
 अनावार मोडू नये । चक्रपणे ।  
 हरिकथा सांडू नये । निरुपण तोडू नये ।  
 परमार्थास मोडू नये । प्रपंचवळे म्हा

दासबोध २.२.२४-२५

- 97.72 स्नान संध्या जप ध्यान । तीर्थयात्रा भावदुभजन ।  
 नित्यनेम पवित्रपण । अंतरशाध्द असावे ॥

दासबोध २-९-२०

98.73

येथे प्रकृत हे प्रमाण । न लो शास्त्राचा अनुमान ।  
 अथवा शास्त्रीं तरी पाहोन । प्रत्ययो आणावा ॥  
 प्रकृतीवीण नें दोळणें । ते अवघेचि कंटाळ्याणे  
 तोंड पसरून जैसैं सुजों । रडोन गेले ।  
 तें काय हो ऐकावे । आणि काय शोधून पाहावे ॥  
 जेथे प्रत्ययाच्या नावे । शून्याकार ॥

दासबोध १.९.१४-१६

98.74

प्रकृतिविण नें ज्ञान । तो आवधाचि अनुमान ।  
 तें केचि परत्रसाधन । प्राणियांसी ॥  
 या कारणें मुख्य प्रत्यय । प्रकृतिवीण कामा नये ।  
 उपायासारिखा अपाय । शाहाणे जाणती ॥

दासबोध १४.७.१८-१९

99.75

बहुशास्त्र धंडाळिणं वाड आहे । ज्या निश्चयो येक तो ही  
 न साहे ॥ मती भांडती शास्त्रबोधे विरोधे  
 गती झुंटी ज्ञानबोधे प्रबोधे  
 श्रुती न्याय मीनांसके तर्कशास्त्रे । स्मृती वेदवेदांत वाक्ये  
 विवित्रे ॥ स्वयें शोष मीनाकला स्थिर पाहे ।  
 मना सर्व जाणिव सांडून राहे ।

मनाचे श्लोक १५७-१५८

99.76 प्रचीतीविण औषाध घेणे । प्रचीत नसतां पश्य करणे ।  
प्रचीतीविण ज्ञान सांगणे । या नाव भ्रम

दासबोध १०-६-३२

99.77 जेणे मक्षिका मक्षिली जाणिवेची । त्या भोजनाची रुची  
प्राप्त केवी ॥ अहंभाव ज्या मानसीचा विटेना  
त्या ज्ञान हे अन्न पोटी जिरेंना ॥

मनाचे श्लोक १५९

100.78 बहुभ्रत आणि व्युत्पन्न । प्रगंड बोलें ब्रह्मज्ञान  
दुराशा आणि अभिमान । धरी तो येक पढतमूर्ख ॥

दासबोध २-१०-३

100.79 भक्तिचे न्योर्गे देव । निश्चये पावती मानव  
ऐसा आहे अभिप्राव । इये ग्रंथी ॥

दासबोध १३१.४

100.80 नव्हे कर्म, ना धर्म, ना योग काही । नव्हे योग,  
ना त्याग, ना सांगे वाही ॥

100.81 म्हणे दास विश्वास नामीं धरावा । प्रभाते मनीं राम  
घिंतीत जावा ॥

मनाचे श्लोक ७६

जयाचेनि नामे महादोषा जाती । जयाचेनि नामे गती  
पावित्तेती ॥

मनाचे श्लोक ७१

101.82

नीच प्राणी गुरुत्व पावला । तेथे आचारीच व्हाला  
वेदशास्त्रब्राह्मणाला । कोण पुसे ॥  
ब्रह्मज्ञानाचा विचार । त्याचा ब्राह्मणासीच अधिकार ।  
'वर्णानां ब्राह्मणे गुरुः' ऐसे वक्त ॥  
ब्राह्मण वृद्धीपासून वेकले । आचारापासून भ्रष्टले  
गुरुत्व सांडून जाले । शिष्य शिष्याचे ॥  
गुरुत्व आले बीच्याती । काहीयेक वाढली म्हंती ।  
शास्त्र आचार म्हवित्ती । ब्राह्मणांचा ॥  
हे ब्राह्मणास कळेना । त्यांची वृत्तिच वळेना ।  
मिथ्या अभिमान गळेना । मूर्खपणाचा ॥

दासबोध १४.७.२९-३५

102.83

नीच यातीचा गुरू । तोही कानकोडा विचार ।  
 ब्रह्मसभेसी जैसा चोर । तैसा दड ।  
 ब्रह्मसभे देखतां त्याचे तीर्थ नये धेतां ।  
 अथवा प्रसाद सेवितां । प्रायश्चित पडे ॥  
 तीर्थप्रसादाची सांडी केली । तेथे नीचता दिसान आली ।  
 गुरूभक्ती ते सटवली । येकाचेकी ॥  
 गुरूची मर्यादा राखता । ब्राह्मण दाोभ्ती तत्कता  
 तेथे ब्राह्मण्य रक्षू जातां । गुरूदाोभ घडे ।  
 पेसीं सांडी दोहीकडे । तेथे प्रस्तावा घडे ।  
 नीचयातीस गुरूत्व न घडे । या कारणे ॥

दासबोध ५.२.५८.६२

102.86

गुरू तो सक्कांसी ब्राह्मण । जरी तो जाला क्रियाहीन ।  
 तरी त्यासीच शरण । अनन्यभावे असावे ।

दासबोध ५.१.६

103.89

सकळ रक्षान ज्ञान सांगे । जेणे वेदाज्ञान भगे ।  
 उत्तम सन्मार्ग लागे । प्राणिमात्रांसी ॥

दासबोध ४.२.२५

104.91 ग्रंथं मात्र महाष्ट । त्याहून संस्कृत श्रेष्ठ  
त्या संस्कृतामध्ये स्पष्ट । थोर तो वेदांत

दासबोध ५.६.३६

104.92 जे ग्रंथी बोलिले अर्थात् । तो म्हणों नये प्राकृत ।  
सत्य जाणावा वेदांत । अर्थ विषाई ॥  
प्राकृते वेदांत कळे । सकळ शास्त्री पाहतां मिळे  
आणि समाधान निवळे । अंतर्गामी ॥  
ते प्राकृत म्हणों नये । जेथे ज्ञानाचे उपाये ।  
मूर्खांस हे कळे काय । मूर्खा नारिकेल जैसे ॥  
आतां असो हे बोलणे । अधिकारपरत्वे घेणे ।  
शिंपीमधील मुक्त उणे । म्हणोवि नये ॥

दासबोध ७.१०.४६-४९

105.93 भाषापालटे काही । अर्थ वाया जात नाही  
कार्त्तिसिद्धी ते सर्वही । अर्थाचपासीं ॥  
तथापि प्राकृताकरिता संस्कृताची सार्थक्ता ।  
ये-हवी त्या गुस्तार्थी कौण जाणे ।  
आतां असो हे बोलणे । भाषा त्यागूनि अर्थ घेणे  
उत्तम धेऊन त्याग करणे । सालीखरफलांचा ॥

दासबोध ७.१.४१-४२



प्रकरण तिसरे

166.72

तेचि वारी वण् । पुसुती जरी कोण कोण ।  
 तरी जयां मुख्य ब्राहमण । धुरेचे कां ॥  
 येर हात्रिय वैश्य दोन्ही । तेही ब्राहमणाचांचि मानिजे मानी ।  
 जे ते वैदिकविधानीं । योग्य म्हणानी ॥  
 चौथा शूद्र धर्मजया । वेदीं लाग कीर नाहीं त्या ।  
 तरी वत्ति वण्त्रया - । अधीन त्याची ॥  
 तिये वृत्तीच्या जवळिहा । वण्त्रयां ब्राहमणांदिकां ।  
 अहो शूद्र ही कीं देखा । चौथा जाला ॥  
 जेसा फुलाचेनि सांगाते । तांतु तूंकिजे श्रीमते ।  
 तैसे विद्वजसंगे शूद्राते । स्वीकारी भ्रुति ॥  
 ऐसैसी गा वार्था । हे चतुर्वर्ण व्यवस्था ।  
 कस आतां कर्मपथा । यांचिया रूप ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.८१८-८२३

168.73

जिये आत्मप्रकृतीचे इंहीं । गुणी सत्त्वादिकीं तिहीं ।  
 कर्म वीथा चहू गई । वांटिली वणार् ।।  
 जैसे बापे जोडिले लेकां । वांटिले सूर्ये मार्ग पांथिका ।  
 नाना व्यापार सेवकां । स्वामीने जैसे ।  
 तैसी प्रकृतीच्या गुणी । जया कर्माची वेष्टावणी ।  
 केली आहे वणार् । चहू इंहीं ।  
 तेथ सत्त्वे आपला अंगी । समीननिमीनभागी ।  
 दोधे केले नियोगी । ब्राह्मण क्षात्रिय  
 आणि राज परी सात्त्विक । तेथ ठेविले वैश्य लोक ।  
 राजचि तमभेसक । तेथ शूद्र ते गा ।।  
 ऐसा एकाचि प्राणिवृंदा । भेद चतुर्वर्णाधा ।  
 गुणांचि इंही पुरुधदा । केदा जाण ।।

ज्ञानेश्वर १८.८२५-८३०

- 169.75 आतां याचिपरी जाण । हे चा-ही वर्ण  
 सृजिले म्यां गुण न । कर्मविभागे ।  
 जे प्रकृतीचे नि आधारे । गुणाचेनि व्याभिचारे ।  
 कर्म तदनुसारे । विवंचिले ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ४.७७-७८

- 170.77 जैसे त्वंचि वहाळ वोहळ । जव न पवती गंगाजळ  
 मग होऊनि ठाकती केवळ । गंगारूप ॥  
 कां खेर घंदन काष्टे । हे विवंचना त्वंचि धटे ।  
 जव न धापती पुक्वटे । अम्हीमाजी ॥  
 तसे हात्रिय वैश्य स्त्रिया । कां शूद्र अंत्यजादि इया ।  
 जाती हंचि वेगळालिया । जव न पवती माते ॥  
 मय जाती व्यक्ति पडे विंदुले । जेव्हां भाव होती मज मनिळे ।  
 जैसे लवणकण धातले । सागरामाजी ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ९.४५८-४६१

171.78

न सोडीं रे भावो टाकीं रे सदे हो ।  
 रामकृष्णो टाहो नित्य फोडी । जात वित्त गौत कूढ  
 शील मात । भजे कां त्वरित्व भावनायुक्त ॥  
 ज्ञानदेवा ध्यानी रामकृष्ण मनी । वैकुण्ठभक्ती धर क्लै

हरिपाठ २४.२-४

171.79

अगा कूढाधिया चोखटपणा नलाग । अभिजात्य झाणी  
 श्लाघा । व्युत्पत्तीचा वाडगा । सोसु कां वाहावा ॥  
 कां रूपे व्यसा माजा । आथिलपणे कां गाजा ।  
 एक भाव नाहीं माझा । तरी पालहाळ ते ॥ ...  
 ते पापयोगी मूढ । मूर्ख जैसे कां दगड  
 परी माझ्या ठायी दड । सर्वभावे ॥  
 ते पापयोगीही होतु कां । ते श्रुताधीतही न होतु कां ।  
 परी मजसीं तुकितां तुका । तूटी नाहीं म  
 ये-हवी दैत्यकूढ साचोकारे । परी इंद्रही सरी न लादे उरि ।  
 म्हणोनी भक्ती गा येथ सरे । जाति अप्रमाण ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १.४२१-४२२

172.80

म्हणोनि कळ जाति वर्णा । हे आध्वेचि गा अकारण ।  
येथ अर्जना माझोपण । सार्थक एक ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १.४५६

176.85

जिये आत्मप्रकृतीचे इंही । गुणीं सत्वादिनीं तिही ।  
कर्में बौथा चहुं ठायी । वांटिलीं वर्णा ।  
जैसे बापे जोडिले लेका । वांटिले सूर्ये मार्ग पांथिका ।  
नाना व्यापार सेवकां । स्वामीमें जैसे ।  
तैसी प्रकृतीच्या गुणीं । जया कर्माची वेल्हावणी  
केली आहे वर्णा । चहुं इंही ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.८२५-८२७

177.86

नातरी जळदच्युता । पाणिया उचित सरिता ।  
सरितेची पांडुसुता । सिंधु उचित ॥  
तैसे वर्णांम्वर्णों । जे करणीय आलें असे ।  
गारेखा अंगा जैसे । गारेपण ॥  
त्या स्वभावविहिता कर्मा । शास्त्राचेनि मुखें वीरोत्तमा ।  
प्रवर्ताक्यालागीं प्रमा । अढळ कीजे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.८८६-८८८

तुम्हा वर्णविशेषावर्ण । आम्ही हा स्वधर्म विहिला असे ।  
 यार्हे उपासा मग आपैसे । फुटती काम ॥  
 तुम्ही व्रत नियम न करावे । शरीराते न पीडावे  
 दूरीं कहीं न वचावे । तीर्थांसि गा ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ३.८८-८९

179.90

वेदविहित तुम्ही आइका हो कर्म । बोलतो तीं वर्म सतांपुढे  
 चारी वर्ण जाले पकाचिये अंगी । पापपुण्य भागीं विभागिले  
 प्रथम पाउली पावकिला पंथ । आदि मध्य अंत भेद नाही ॥  
 आंबे बोरी वड बाभुळा चंदन । गुणागुण भिन्न अग्नि एक ।  
 तुका म्हणो मन उन्मन जो होय । तोंवरि हे सोय विधि पाळीं

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अंभंग १७०

179.91

देव आड आला । तो मी भोगितो आला अवघा निवरिला ।  
 शीण शुभशुभाचा । जीवशिवांचे मातुके । केले कृडाया  
 कौतुके । केवी येथे लोके । हा आभास अनित्य ॥  
 विष्णुम्य खरे जग । येथे लागतसे लाग । वाटिले विभाग ।  
 वर्णधर्म हा खेळ । अवधीं पकाचीच वीण । तेथे केवे  
 भिन्नाभिन्न वेदपुस्तका नारायण तेणें केला निवाडा ॥  
 प्रसादाचा रस । तुका लाधला सौरस पायापाशी वास  
 निकट नव्हे निराळा ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अंभंग २१०

182.95

ब्राह्मण तो नव्हे ऐसी ज्याची वृद्धि । पाहा श्रुती मधी विचारना  
 ज्यासी नावडे हरिनाम कीर्तन । आणीक नर्तन वैष्णवाचे ।  
 सत्य त्याचे वेळे घडला व्याभिचार । मातेसी वेव्हार अंत्यजाचा ॥  
 ब्राह्मण तो याती अंत्यज अस्ता । मानावा तत्कर्ता निश्चयेसी ।  
 रामकृष्णनामे ऊवारी सरळे । आठवी सावळे रुप मनी ।  
 शांति कामा दया अकार अंगी । अंगा प्रसंगी धर्यवत ।  
 तुका म्हणे गेल्या षडूर्मी अंग । सांडूनिया मग ब्राह्मणतो ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अभाग ८४८-८४९

183.96

ज्यासी आवडी हरिनामाची । तोचि एक बहु शुचि ।  
 जपे हरिनाम बीज । तोची वर्णामाजी वृद्धि ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अभाग १०६२-१-२

183.97

अभक्त ब्राह्मणा जवो त्याचे लोंढे । काय त्यासी रांडे प्रसक्ती ।  
 वैष्णव चांभार धन्य त्याची माता । शुद्ध अमयता कळ  
 याती । ऐसा हा निवाडा जालासे पुराणी । नव्हे  
 माझी वाणी पदरींची । तुका म्हणे आगी लागे  
 थोरपणा । दृष्टि त्या दुर्जना न पडे माझी ।

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अभाग ७५५

184.98

षण्णावांची याती वाणी जो आपण । भोगी तो फतन कृष्णपाकी ।  
 ऐशी वेदभ्रती वोलती पुराणे । नाही ती दूषाणे हरिभक्ता ।  
 उंच नीच वर्ण न म्हणावा कोणी । जे कां नारायणी  
 प्रिय झाले । चहूं वर्णासीही असे अधिकार । करिता  
 नमस्कार दोषा नाही । जैसा शालिग्राम न म्हणावा  
 पाषाण । होय पूज्यमान सर्वनांसी ॥ ..... नामीं  
 जे रंगले । स्वये तेचि झाले देवरूप ॥

तुकाराम म्हाराजाचे अभंग ३३५४

184.99

सकळ शास्त्रांचे सार हे वेदांचे गव्हर । पाहातां विचार  
 हाचि करिती पुराणे ॥ ब्राह्मणा क्षत्रिय वैश्य शूद्र चांडाळी  
 अधिकार । बाळे नारीनर आदिक्रोनि वैश्याही । तुका  
 म्हणे अनुभवे आम्ही पाडियले ठावे । आणीकही देवे  
 सुख घेती भाविके ।

तुकाराम म्हाराजाचे अभंग ८०८-४-६



185.100

बैठ मांडियेला वाळवंटी । घाई नाचती वैष्णव भाई रे ।  
 क्रोध अभिमान बेला पावटणी । एक एक लागतील पायी  
 रे । ..... लुधळी नादी लागली समाधि । मूढ जन नर  
 नारी लोकां रे । पंडित ज्ञानी योगी महानुभाव । एकचि  
 सिध्दसाधकां रे । वणाभिमान विसरली याति । एककां  
 लोटांषणी जाती रे ॥ .... तुका म्हणे सोपी केली पायवाट  
 तराक्या म्हासागर रे ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अभंग १७०७

185.101

विसरल्या आम्ही कोणी ये जातीच्या । वणाही व्हंच्या  
 एक झाल्या ॥ एक झाल्या तेव्हा कृष्णाविया सुत्रे ।  
 निःशंक मातुं खेळतील ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अभंग १८२४-३०

186.104

उंच नीच कांही नेणे भगवंत । तिष्ठे भावभक्त देखोनिया ॥  
 दासीपुत्र कण्या विदुराच्या मक्षी । दैत्या धरि रक्षी प्रल्हादासी  
 कर्म रंगु लागे रोहिदासासणे । कबिराचे मागे झोले विणी ।  
 सजन कसाया विकु लागे मांस । माळ्या सावल्यास खरपु  
 लागे । नरहरि सोनारा धडं फुकु लागे । चोळ्यामेळ्यासणे  
 ठेरे जोढी ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अभंग ११२५-१-५

186.105 जे दोषा घडले न फिटे करिता काही । सरते तुझ्या पायी  
जाले तसे ॥ माझा कां हो कसं नये क्षीकार । जाळती  
निष्ठुर पांडुरंगा ॥ या तिहीन नये ऐको ज्या वेद । त्या  
दिले पदं वैकुंठीचे ॥ तुका म्हणे का रे पुकाचा आभार  
घेसी माथां भार वाहोनियां ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग १८४९

187.107 माझो साच काय केलें मृगजळे । वर्ण याती कृ अभिमान  
कुमारी भातुळे कसेळती क्वतुके । काय त्याचे साचपण ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग १७७६-१-२

188.108 पंडित वैदिक अथवा दशाग्रंथी । परि सरी न पवती तुकायाची ॥  
शास्त्रही पुराणें गीता निव्य नेम । वाचिताती वर्म न कळे  
त्यांसी ॥ कर्म अभिमाने वर्ण अभिमाने । नाडले ब्राह्मण  
कलियुगी ॥ तैसा नव्हे वाणी व्यवसाई । भाव त्याचा पायी  
विठोवाचे ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अंभंग २२५२-१-४

188.111

काय तो विवाद असे भेदाभेद । साधा परमानंद एकभावे ॥  
 निघोन आयुष्य जाते हातोहात । विवारी पां हित लव्हाही ॥  
 तुका म्हणे भावभक्ति हे कारण । नागवी दूषाण दंभ तोची ॥

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अंभंग २४७४.१-२

189.112

आसुरी स्वभाव निर्दय अंतर । मानसीं निष्ठुर अतिवादी ॥  
 याति कृढ येथे असे अप्रमाण । गुणाचे कारण असे अंगी ॥

तुकाराम महाराजा चे अंभंग १९५-१-२

189.114

कास्या पाषाण पूजितसां पितळ । अष्ट धातु खळ भावेविण ॥  
 भावचि कारण F भावचि कारण । मोक्षाचे साधन बोलियेले  
 काय करिल जपमाळा कंठमाळा । करिशी वेढोवेळीं विषायजप ।  
 काय करिशील पंडित हे वाणी । अक्षराभिमानी थोर होय ।  
 काय करिशील कुशल गायन । अंतरी मळीण क्लृष्टिद ते ।  
 तुका म्हणे भाव नाहीं करिसी सेवा । तेणें काय देवा योग्य होसी ।

तुकाराम महाराजाचे अंभंग ११४२

190.115 विष्णुमय जग वैष्णवांचा धर्म । भेदाभेदप्रम अमंगळा ।  
 आइका जी तुम्ही भक्त भागवत । कराल हें हित सत्य करा ॥  
 कोणाही जीवाचा न घडावा मत्सर । वरें सर्वेश्वर पूजनाचे  
 तुका म्हणो एका देहाचे अव्यय । सुखदुःख जीव भोग पावे ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अभंग २१

190.116 पैसा ज्याचा अनुभव । विश्व देव सत्यत्वे ।  
 देव त्या जवळी असे । पाप नासे दशाने ।  
 कामक्रोध नाही चाली । भूतीं जाली समता ।  
 तुका म्हणो भेदाभेद । गेला वाद खडानि ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अभंग १०२८

193.120 येकलाचि उदंड जाला । उदंडचि येकला पडिला ।  
 आपणासि आपला गळला । सोसवेना ॥  
 येक असेान फुटी जाली । फुटी असेान स्थिती येकली ।  
 विचित्र कळा पैसावली । प्राणिमात्री ॥

दासबोध १५-५-८-९

193.121 निर्गुणस्वरूपी मूढमाया जाली । तिच्या पोटी आली गुणमाया ।  
 गुणमायेपोटी जाला सत्त्वगुण । सत्त्वी रजोगुण उद्भवला ।  
 उद्भवला रजोगुणी तमोगुण । तमोगुणी जाण व्योम जालें ।  
 व्योमापोटी वायु वायुपोटी तेज । तेजी ते सहज आप आले ।  
 आपापासुनियां भुडंड होणे । शास्त्रीची वचने दास म्हणे ॥

रामदास स्वामीचे अंभंग ४३१

193.122 सकळ करणे ईश्वराला । म्हणांनी भेद निर्माण केला ।  
 उर्ध्वमुख होता भेदाला । ठाव केवा ॥  
 सृष्टिकरणी आगत्य भेद । संहारे सहजची अभेद ।  
 भेद अभेद हा संवाद । मायागुणे ॥

दासबोध २०-८-१६-१७

194.123 राव संक ब्रह्मादिक । सकळां मध्ये वर्तें येक ।  
 नाना शरीरे दाळक । इंद्रियव्दारे  
 त्यास परमात्मा बोलती । सकळ कर्ता ऐसे जाणती ।  
 परी तो नासेल प्रचीती = विके पाहावी ।  
 लोक नाना देह देखती । विके देहांत पाहाती ।  
 पंडित समझनि धेती । येणे प्रकारे ।

दासबोध ११-१-२१-२४

194.124

नाना वर्णं नाना भेद । जीवमाकांसं अभेद  
 अभेद आग्नि परम शुद्ध । ब्रह्मादिकमंसी  
 अग्नीकरिता सृष्टी चाते । अग्नीकरिता लोक धाले ।  
 अग्नीकरिता सकळ ज्याले । लहानथोर  
 अत्यंजगृहीचा अग्नी आणिला । त्यासदोषा नाही वोलिला ।  
 सकळां गृही पवित्र जाला वैश्वानस ॥

दासबोध १६.५.३.१२

194.125

नरदेही नाना भेदे । अमंत भेदाची श्वापदे  
 क्वचरे जळचरे आन्दे । त्रिडा करिती  
 त्या समस्तांमध्ये वायु खेळे । खेचरकळ अवधे चळे  
 छती वन्हीचे उवाळे । वायोकरिता

दासबोध १६-६-७-८

.95.126

देहद्वीचे थोरपण । परब्रह्मी न चले जाण ।  
 तेथे होतसे निर्वाण । अहंभावासी ।  
 उंच नीच नाही० परी । राया रंका येकचि सरी ।  
 जाला पुसुटा अथवा नारी । येकचि यद ॥  
 ब्राह्मणाचे ब्रह्म ते सोवळे । शूद्राचे ब्रह्म ते वोवळे  
 ऐसे वेगळे आगळे । तेथ असेचिना  
 उंच ब्रह्म ते रायासी । नीच ब्रह्म ते परिवारासी ॥  
 ऐसा भेद त्यापासी । मुळिच नाही ॥  
 सकळांसी मिळोन ब्रह्म एक । तेथे नाही हे अनेक  
 रंक अथवा ब्रह्मादिक । तेथेची जाती ।  
 स्वर्ग मृत्यु आणि पाताळ । तिही लोकीचे ज्ञाते सकळ  
 सकळांसी मिळोन येकचि स्थळ । विभ्रांतीचे ॥

दासबोध ७-२-२३-२८

196.127

ईश्वरे नाना भेद केले । भेदें सकळ सृष्टी चाले

दासबोध १७(१०.२०

196.128

सृष्टिमध्ये सकळ जीव । सकळांस केचे वैभ्र  
 याकारणे ठायठाव । निर्मिला देवे ।

दासबोध १७-६-२२

197.130

रायापासून रंक्वरी । अवय्या मनुष्यांचिया दारी ।  
 सगळ समान सरी केंसी करावी ॥  
 देव दानव मानव । नीच यांनी हीन जीव ।  
 पाप सुकृति अभिप्राव । बुदंड आहे ॥  
 यंकांसं जग चालं । परी सामर्थ्य वंगळालं ।  
 यंकासंगं मुक्त केलं । यंकासंगं रवरव ॥  
 साकर माती पृथ्वी होय । परी ते माती सातानये ।  
 गरळ आप नव्हे काय । परी ते सोंटे ॥  
 पुण्यात्मा आणि पापात्मा । दोहीकडे अंतरात्मा ॥  
 साधु मोटु सीमा । सांडूच नये ॥  
 अंतर येक तो खरे । परी सांगाते घेवू न येती माहारं ।  
 पंडित आणि चाटे पारं । येक केंसी ॥

दासबाघ १३.१०.८-६३

198.131

असे कें रं मज्ज । करितात मूर्ख ज्ञ । ।  
 गधडयासि नमन केलं । तंभं धांबाड फांडिलं ॥  
 सुंच नीच सारिखंबी । दास म्हणं हातं छी छी ॥

रामदास स्वामीचें अर्भग ६९.१-३.



198.132 ब्राह्मण पाहे मेदाभेद । मक्षिका सर्वासि अभेद ।  
परी तीस जाला ज्ञानबोध । हे तो न घडे की ॥

दासबाध १.१०.६

199.133 नाना सुक्ताचे फळ । तो हा नरदेह केवळ ।  
त्याहीमध्ये 'माग्य सफळ । तरीच सन्मार्ग लागे ॥  
नरदेही 'विशेष ब्राह्मण । त्याहीवरी संध्यास्नान ।  
सव्दासना भगवदभजन । घडे पूर्वपुण्ये' ॥

दासबाध २.४.१-२ .

गुरु तां 'सक्कांसी ब्राह्मण । जरी तां जाला ब्रियाहीन ।  
 तरी त्यासीच शरण अनन्यमावें असावें' ॥  
 अहो या ब्राह्मणाकारणे' । अक्तार घेतला नारायणे' ।  
 विष्णूने 'श्रीवत्स मिरविणे' । तेथे अितर ते क्ती ॥  
 ब्राह्मणवचने 'प्रमाण । होती शुद्रांचे ब्राह्मण ।  
 घातुपा षणि देवपण । ब्राह्मणांचेनि मंत्रे ॥  
 मुजीळ्यनारविरहित । तां शुद्राचि निप्रांत ।  
 विदजन्मी म्हणांन संतत । विदज असं नाम त्यांचे ॥  
 सक्कांसी पूज्य ब्राह्मण । हे मुख्य वेदाज्ञा प्रमाण ।  
 वेदविरहित ते अप्रमाण । अप्रिय मगवंता ॥  
 ब्राह्मणी योग याग - व्रते -दाने' । ब्राह्मणी' सक्क तीथार्थणे' ।  
 कर्मार्ग ब्राह्मणाविणे ( हांणार नाही ) ॥  
 ब्राह्मण वेद मूर्तिमंत । ब्राह्मण तोचि मगवंत ।  
 पूर्ण होती मनोरथ । विप्र वाक्ये करनि ॥  
 ब्राह्मणतीपूजने शुध्द वृती । हांवन जडं मगवंती ।  
 ब्राह्मणतीर्थे शुत्तम गती .। वाक्ती प्राणी ॥  
 लक्ष्मणेजनी 'पूज्य ब्राह्मण । आन यातिसि कोण पुसे ।-----  
 असो ब्राह्मण सुरवंट वैदितो तेथे मानव बापुडे 'क्ती ।  
 जरी ब्राह्मण मूढमती .। तरी तो जगवृद्ध ॥

201.135 यज्ञ आणि याज्ञ । अध्ययन आणि अध्यापन ।  
स्वयं करी दानपुण्य । तां सत्वगुण ॥

दासबांध २.७.१२ .

201.136 त्या दंष्टामध्यं नर दे हां । त्या नरदेदांत ब्राह्मण दे हां ।  
त्या ब्राह्मण देहास पाहो । अधिकार वेदी ॥

दासबांध १०.२.१७ .

202.138 ज्यास जिवाचें वाटे म्ये । त्याने क्षात्रधर्म करुनं नये ।  
कांही तरी करुनि सुपाये । पांढ मरावे ॥  
विन्मुख मरणी नकं होती । वाचून येतां मांठी फज्जिती ।  
अहलांक परलांक जाती । पहाना कां ॥  
मारितां मारितां मरावे । तेंपें गतीस पावावे ।

203.142

फिरानं यंतां भांगावे । महदभाग्य ॥ -----  
 मदै तक्वा सांडूं नये । म्हणजे प्राप्त होतो ज्य ।  
 कार्ये प्रसंग समय । ओळखावा । ।  
 समर्थाची कविता ' सात्रधर्म ' ।  
 रायांनी करावे राजधर्म । सत्री ' करावे सात्रधर्म ।  
 ब्राह्मणी करावे स्वधर्म । नाना प्रकारे ॥  
 समर्थाची कविता ' राजधर्म ' ।  
 परमात्मा सर्वास व्यापक । परमात्मा अनेकी ' येक ।  
 परमात्म्याचा विवेक । अतर्क्य आहे ॥  
 अंसी परमात्म्याची स्थिती । बोलताती वेदश्रुती ।  
 परमात्मा पाविजे मक्ति । येथे ' संस्य नाही ।

दासबांध ८.८.४-५

204.145

चहुं वर्णा नामाधिकार । नामी ' नाही लहानथोर ।  
 जड मूढ पंलपार । पाक्ती नसते ॥

दासबांध ४.३.२४ .

205.150

स्वधर्म कर्म बुडवण । या नांव परमार्थ बुडवण ।  
 म्हणांनि स्वधर्म करण । अगत्य आधी ॥  
 कर्म करी यथाक्वि । अंतर पडता नुपजे खंद ।  
 तरी सांने आणि सुगंध । निश्चयेसी ॥  
 आघारे 'कर्म टाकणं । हे काम आगुले मन नेणे ।  
 ज्याचा जो स्वधर्म तेणे' । त्यागू नये सर्वथ ॥  
 अक्वीस समासी अर्थात जुना दासबांध २०.१८-२० .

विभाग दुसरा  
प्रकरण चौथे

256.68 तेसा व्यासाचा मागोवा घेतु । माध्य कारांते वाट सुस्तु ।  
अयोग्य ही मी न फक्तु । के जाकीन ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१७२२

258.72 कीं मूस बीज ओकळट । सुपणितां राहे घनवट ।  
तेथ गुडे ते फलकट । जाणो आले ॥  
तेसे विचारितां निरसले । ते प्रपंचु सहजे सांडवले ।  
मग तत्वता तत्व गुरले । ज्ञानियांसि

ज्ञानेश्वरी २.१२०-१२१

258.73 जेसी जळीची प्रतिमा । जळनाशीं बिंबा ।  
येतां गामागोमा । कांही आहे ॥  
पे फक्तु अंबरा । कां अलोलु सागरा ।  
मिळतां आडवारा । कोणाचा गा ॥  
म्हणोनि तूं आणि आम्ही । हे दिसताहे देहघर्मी ।  
मग ययाच्या विरामी । मीचि होसी ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१२६५-१२६७

258.74 कां खळाळु मोटका शेपे । आणि चंद्रिका ते सरशीच  
प्रज्ञे । तेसा सुपाधिनाशी न दिसे ओपाधिकु ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १५.४९९

259.75 हे नादाची टांक्षाळ । हे चमत्काराचे वेळागुळ ।  
 किंहुना सकळ । खेळ मियेचा ॥  
 जे भुत्पत्ति प्रलय होत । ते मियेचे सायंप्रात ।  
 हे असो अद्भुत । मोहन हे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ११.९९५-९९६.

260.77 पिंढे पिंढाचा ग्रासु । तो हा नाथसंक्तीचा दंडु ।  
 परी दावूनि गेला सुदेसु । श्री महाविष्णु ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ६.२९१

262.80 त्सेक्वारिता निरसले । ते प्रसु सहजे सांडवले ।  
 मग तत्त्वज्ञा तत्व शुरले । ज्ञानियांसि ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी २.१३१

266.88 माझे मा विस्तारलेपणाचेहि नांवे हे जगीच नोहे आघवे ।  
 जेसे दूध मुराले स्वभावे । तरी तेचि दही ॥  
 कां बोजीच जाहले तरु । अथवा मरुंगारीच अलंकारु ।  
 तोसा मज अंकाचा विस्तारु । ते हे जग ॥  
 हे अव्यक्तपणे थिजले । तेचि मग विश्वकारे बोधिजले ।  
 त्से अमूर्त मूर्तिमय विस्तारले । त्रैलोक्य जाणे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ९.६४-६६

66.89 म्हणोनि हा मूताकार । जेथुनि तेचि त्या आधार ।  
कळोळ सागर । जिझापरी

ज्ञानेश्वरी १३.९३१

67.93 म्हणोनि वन्हि आणि ज्वाळा । दोन्ही वन्हीचि केवळ ।  
तेवीं मी गा सकळ । संबंध वावे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १४.१२३

68.95 म्हणोनि जग पराते । सारनि पाहिजे माते ।  
तेसा तो हे भुक्ते । आघवे मीची ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १४.१२८

68.96 म्हणोनि विश्वपण जावे । मग ते माते घेयावे ।  
तेसा नव्हे आघवे । सकटीच मी ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १४.३८१

69.97 अविधानिमित्ते । दृश्य द्रष्टृत्व कर्ते ।  
ते मी नेणे , हे आयिते । असेचि असे ॥  
जेवि नाम मात्र लुणडे । ये-हवी सूतचि ते भुघडे ।  
कां माती मृन्दांडे । जेया परी ॥

चांगदेव पासष्टी ८-९

71.105 म्हणोनि आपण पां विश्व देखिजे । आणि आपण विश्व होमीजे ।



म्हणोनि आपणपां विस्व देखिजे । आणि आपण विस्व होखीजे ।  
 ऐसें साम्यचि अक सुपसिजे । पांडवा गा ॥  
 हे तूते व्हुतीं प्रसंगीं । आम्ही म्हणो याचिलागी ।  
 जे साम्यापरोति जगीं । प्राप्त नाहीं ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ६.४०९ - ४१०

73.106

जग अघवे देव । मुख्य सुपदेशाची ठेव ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अमंग ७७१.१

273.107

विश्वी विस्वमर । बोले वेदांताचे सार ॥  
 जगीं जगदीश । शास्त्रे वदती सावकाश ॥  
 व्यापिले हे नारायणे । ऐसी गर्जेती पुराणे ॥  
 ज्ञानी ज्ञार्दन । संत बोलती वचन ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अमंग २९०७.१-४

279.116

तरी कर्म म्हणजे स्वभावे । जेणे विश्वाकारु संभवे ।  
ते सम्यक आधी जाणावे । लागे अथ ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ४.८९

280.119

सृष्टि असेचि स्वभावे । गोपूर निर्मिले बरवे ।  
परी तो गोपूरकर्ता नव्हे । निश्चयेसी ॥  
तेसे जग निर्मिले जेणे । तो वेगळा पूर्णपणे ।  
येक म्हणती मूर्खपणे । जग तोचि जगदीश ॥  
अवें जगदीश तो वेगळा । जगनिर्माण त्याची कळा ॥  
तो सर्वांमध्ये परी निराळा । असोने सर्वा ॥  
म्हणोनि मूर्खांवा कर्तुं । यासी अलिप्त आत्मारामु ।  
अविद्यागुणे मायाभ्रमु । सत्यचि वाटे ॥  
मायोपाधी जगडंबर । आहे सर्वहि साचार ।  
असा हा विपरीत विचार । कोठेचि नाही ॥  
म्हणोनि जग मिथ्या साच आत्मा । सर्वापर जो परमात्मा ।  
अंतर्बाह्य अंतरात्मा । व्यापूनि असे ॥  
त्यास म्हणावे देव । येर हे अवघेचि वाव ।  
असा आहे अंतर्भाव वेदांतोचा ॥

दासबोध ८.१.३९-४९

81.121 निर्गुण आत्मा तो निर्मळ । जैसे आकाश अंतराळ । ...  
 अविनाश ते ब्रम्ह निर्गुण । नासे ते माया सगुण । ---  
 ऐसी आत्मस्थिति संचली । तेथ माया क्सेली जाली ।  
 जैसी आकाशी वाहिली । युद्धक वायूची ॥  
 वायूपासुनि जाले । तेजापासुनि आप निपजले ।  
 आपापासुनि आकारले । मूर्मळ ॥  
 मूर्मळपासुनि गुत्पती । जीव जाले नेणो क्स्ती ।  
 परंतु ब्रह्म आदिशंती व्यापुनि असे ॥  
 जे जे कांही निर्माण जाले । ते ते अवघोच नासले ।  
 परी मुळी ब्रह्म ते संचले । जसे तैसे ॥  
 घटापूर्वी आकाश असे । घटामध्ये आकाश भासे ।  
 घट फुटता न नासे । आकाश जसे ॥  
 तैसे परब्रह्म केवळ । अचळ बाणी अढळ ।  
 मध्ये होत जात सकळ । सचराचर ॥

दासबोध ६.२.१-१७.

282.123 याचे असे शक्तिवदन । ब्रह्म जे कां सनात्म ।  
 तेथे माया मिथ्या मान । विवर्तनप भासे ॥

दासबोध ८.२.२

82.124

मोर्वंडीने 'पृथ्वी क्लथली । कामीणीने 'पिवळी जाली ।  
 सन्नपातस्था' अनुभवली । तैसी माया ॥  
 कोणीयेक पदार्थविकार । अुगाचि दिसे मासमात्र ।  
 अनन्याचा अन्य प्रकार । तैसी माया ॥

दासबोध १४.१०.२०-२१ .

82.125

मांवाक्सी काय मूढाकडे पाही '। मूढी 'तेथे' कांही जाले' नाही ॥  
 नाही कां म्हणतां प्रत्यक्ष दिसते'। सत्यत्वे 'भासते चराचर ॥  
 चराचर सत्य हे 'केवि घडेल । अंधारी बुडेल रविबिंब ॥  
 मिथ्या होय स्वप्न जागृती आल्या । तेचि निजल्या ॥  
 सत्य वाटे ॥

सत्य वाटे मिथ्या मिथ्या वाटे सत्य ।  
 असे आहे कृत्य अविद्येचे ॥

रामदास स्वामीचे अमंग ४३७.८-१३

84.128 इष्टीस दिसे मनास भासे । तितुके काळांतरी नासे ।  
 म्हणोनि दृश्यातील असे । परब्रह्म ते ॥  
 परब्रह्म ते ज्ञास्वत । माया तेचि अज्ञास्वत ।  
 असा बोलिला निम्बितार्थ । नाना ज्ञास्त्री ॥

दासबोध ६.८.४७-४८

86.130 आपल्या कार्यास तत्पर । लोक असती लहानथोर ।  
 तेसाचि करी परोपकार । मनापासुनि ॥  
 दुस-याच्या दुःखे दुखवे । दुस-याच्या सुखे सुखावे ।  
 अवघेचि सुखी असावे । असी वासना ॥

दासबोध १९.४.२२-२३

87.131

शरीर परांपकारीं लावावे । बहुतांच्या कार्यास यावे ।  
 गुणे पडो नेदावे । कोणियेकाचे ॥  
 आडले जाक्सले जाणावे । यथानशक्ति कामास यावे ।  
 मृदक्कने बोलत जावे । कोणीये कासी ॥  
 दुस-याच्या दुःखे दुखावे । परसंतोषे सुखी व्हावे ।  
 प्राणिमात्रांस मेळवून ध्यावे । बरव्या शब्दे ॥

दासबोध १२.१०.५-७

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प्र क र ण      पा च वै .  
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313.59

याची साये पातले । आणि वेदी 'मौनवि घेतले' ।  
 यज्ञ कीर माघोते अशले । स्वर्गा निर्यां ॥  
 साधकी 'देखिला आयास । म्हणोनि वाळिला योगाभ्यास ।  
 आणि अध्ययनीं सौरस । नाही अथ ॥  
 सीगेची 'सत्कत्रे धा'विन्नली स्वसंभ्रमे' ।  
 तिही 'बहुतेकी' भ्रमे' । सत्यलोक ठाकिला ॥  
 तपी 'अस्वर्ग' देखिले' । आणि भुम्यांचि भुप्रपण सांडिले' ।  
 अथ तपसाधना जे ठेले' । अपारांतरे ॥  
 ते 'हे' तुवा' अनायासे' । विश्वरूप देखिले' जेसे' ।  
 अथे मनुष्यलोकी 'तैसे' । न फावेची क्वणा ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ११.६१७- ६२१ .

314.60

योगसुखाचे साहळे । सेवकां तुजेनि स्नेहाळे ।

ज्ञानेश्वरी १२.४

314.61

सो हं सिध्दीचे लळे । पाळ्सी तू' ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १२.४

314.62

स्वकर्माचा चोखोळी । मज पूजा करनि मली ।  
तेणे प्रसादे आकळी । ज्ञाननिष्ठेते ॥  
ते आननिष्ठा जेथ हातवसे । तेथ मक्ति माझी गुल्लासे ।  
त्या मज्जी समरसे । सुखिया होये ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १८.१२४७-१२४८ .

315.64

संध्या कर्मध्यान जपतप अनुष्ठान । अवघे जोडे नाम गुचवारितां ।  
न वेचे मोल कांही ' न लगती सायास .। तरी कां आळस  
करिसी झणी ॥  
असे हे सार कां ने घेसी फुकाचे । काय तुझे वेचे मोल त्या ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अमंग १७४५.१-२



316.65

हेचि माझे तप हेचि माझे दान । हेचि अनुष्ठान नाम तुझे ॥  
 हेचि माझे तीर्थ हेचि माझे व्रत । सत्य हे सुक्त नाम तुझे ॥  
 हेचि माझे कर्म हाचि माझा धर्म । हाचि नित्यनेम नाम तुझे ॥  
 हाचि माझा याग हाचि माझा यज्ञ । हेचि तपध्यान नाम तुझे ॥  
 हाचि कुळाचार हाचि कुळधर्म । हाचि नित्यनेम नाम तुझे ॥  
 हा माझा आचार हा माझा क्वार । हा माझा निर्धार नाम तुझे ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अमंग २९१५.१-६

317.67

आतां गृहादिक आधवे । ते कांही न लगे त्यजावे ।  
 जे घेते जाहले स्वभावे । निःसंग म्हणुनि ॥  
 देखे अग्नि विष्णोनि जायं । मग जे राखेलि केवळु होयें ।  
 तें तें कापुसं गिक्सुं धें । जियापरी ॥  
 तेंसा असतेनि उपाधी । नाकळजे तो कर्मळी ।  
 ज्याचिये बुद्धि । संकल्प नाही ॥  
 म्हणोनि कल्पना जें सांडे । तेंचि गा संन्यासु घडे ।  
 अिये कारणे दांती सांगडे । संन्यासुयांगु ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ५.२२-२५ .

318.68 तांडे जाले संन्यासु । मांगावरी घावे हव्यासु ॥  
 ते नेणती ब्रह्मरसु . वायां होती कासाक्सु ॥  
 विटंबुनि काया दंड धरी करी । हिंडे घराचारि नवल पाहे ।  
 असमाधानी विषयी विव्हाळ . तरी दंडु केवळ काजा काजी ॥  
 सिध्दचि असतां कां गा विटंबुनी । नव्हेंच संन्यासी तू जाण केसा ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरांचे अमंग ४६०-४६१.

318.69 निजाभ्रमीच वास संकल्यासी त्यागी । सर्वस्वे वेरागी ।  
 तांचि तो संन्यासी । संगी असंगता तांचे जाण संन्यासी ।  
 स्वस्तप त्यापाशी ज्वळी आहे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरांचे अमंग ४६१.३

318.70

कां सांडिसी गृहाश्रम । कां सांडिसी क्रियाकर्मा ।  
कासया सांडिसी कुळीचे घर्म । आहे ते' वर्म वेगळेची ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरांचे अर्भग ४६६.१

319.72

हांवूनि संन्यासी मगवी लुगडीं । वासना न सांडी विषयांची ॥  
निदिती कदान्ना जिच्छती दंवान्न । पाहाताती मान आदराचा ॥  
तुका म्हणें अंसं दांभिक मज्ज । त्या जनार्दन भेटे क्वी' ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्भग ३०७१.

319.74

असा घेळी कां रे संन्यास .। क्री' संकल्पाचा नास ॥  
मग तू'राहे'मल्ले ठायी' । ज्नी' क्वी' साटे मांजी ॥  
तांडी' जाणिवेची कळा । हांजी वृत्तीसी वेगळा ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्भग १२६३. १-३

320.75 वानप्रस्थ तरी संयोगीं वियांग । संन्यास तां त्याग संकल्पाचा ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्धशतक १८१.२

321.76 गृहस्थाश्रमाचे 'वाञ्छे' । क्पाळी आधीचि आहे सहजे ।  
की 'तेचि संन्यासे' वाढविजे । सरिसं 'पुढती ॥  
म्हणांनि अग्निसेवा न सांडिता । कर्माचि रेखा नोलांडिता ।  
आहे योगसुख स्वमाक्तां । आपणपांचि ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी ६.५० - ५१

323.80 असे 'माझेनि नामघोषे' । नाहीचि करिती विश्वाची 'दुःखे' ।  
अवघे जगचि महासुखे' । दुमटुमित मरलं ॥  
तं पहांटंविण पाहावित । अमृतंविण जीववित ।  
योगेविण दावित । क्वल्य डोळ ॥ ----  
कंही 'अेकाघेनि वेंकुंठा जावे' । तिही वेंकुंठचि केले 'आघवे' ।  
असे 'नाम घोष गोरवे' । धवळले' विश्व ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १.२००-२०३ .

324.83

कां जगाचे आंध्य फेडितु। श्रियंची राजुळं गुघडितु ।  
 निघं जेसा मास्वतु । प्रदक्षिणं ॥  
 तेंसी बांधली सांडीत । वुडाली काढीत ।  
 सांक्डी फेडीत । आतांचिया ॥  
 किंहुना दिक्कराती । पुढिलांचे सुख मुन्नती ।  
 आणीत आणीत स्वार्थी । प्रवेशिजे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १६.२००-२०२.

324.86

जे कां रंजलं गांजले । त्यासि म्हणे जो आपुले ॥  
 तोचि साधु ओळखावा । देव तेथेचि जाणावा ॥ ----  
 ज्यासि आपणगिता नाही । त्यासि घरो जो हृदयी ॥  
 दया करणे जे पुत्रासी । तेचि दासा आणि दासी ।  
 तुका म्हणे सांगू किती । त्याचि भगवंताच्या मूती ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अमंग २०४ .

325.87

जगाच्या कल्याणा संतांच्या विभूति । देह कष्टविती परजुपकारे ॥  
 मृताची दया हे मांडवल संता । आपुली ममता नाही देही ॥  
 तुका म्हणे सुख पराविया सुखे । अमृतं हे सुखे भ्रवत्सं ॥

तुकाराम महाराजांचे अर्धग १०१४.३-५ .

325.88

म्हणती तद्रूपा ब्रम्हा त्या । फळेसी क्रिया अिया ।  
 कांघि होतु आम्हा मोगाक्या । कांहीचि नुराे ॥  
 असेनि तदात्मके ब्रह्म । तेथ अुगाणूनि क्त्रे ।  
 अंग प्राडिती न ममै । येणे बोले ॥  
 आतां आकारं आदरिलं । तत्कारं समर्पिलं ।  
 अिया रीती ज्या आलं । ब्रह्मत्व कर्मा ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १७.३७१-३७३.

326.89 मग अग्निकुंडी वीजे घातली । तिथे अंकुरदसे जेवी मुक्ली ।  
वेवी न फळतीचि मज अपीली । शुभाशुभे ॥

ज्ञानेश्वरी १.४०२.

327.91 ग्रंथा नाम दासबांध । गुस्तशिष्यांचा संवाद ।  
येथ बांलिला विशद । मक्तिमार्ग ॥  
नवविद्या मक्ति आणि ज्ञान । बांलिले वंराग्याचे लक्षण ।  
बहुधा अध्यात्मनिरांपण । निरोपिले ॥  
मक्तिवेनयांगे देव । निश्चये पावती मानव ।  
असा आहे अभिप्राव । अिये ग्रंथी ॥

दासबांध १.१.२-४

328.92 अगाध महिमा न कचे वदला .। नामे कृत जन गुधदरला ।  
हळहळापासून सुटला । प्रत्यक्ष चंद्रमोळी ॥  
चहू वर्णा नामधिकार । नामी नाही ल्हानथोर ।  
जड मूढ पेलपार । पावती नामे ॥

दासबांध ४.३-२३-२४ .

328.93 नव्हें कर्म , ना धर्म , ना यांग कांही ।  
 नव्हें भांग , ना त्याग , ना सांग पाही ।।  
 म्हणें दास विश्वास नामी ' घराव ।  
 प्रभातें मनी ' राम विंतीत जावा ।।

मनाचे श्लोक ७६.

329.95 देवास वोळखां जाता । तेंथें जाली तद्गुपता ।  
 देवमक्तविमक्ता । मुळीच नाही ।।  
 विमक्त नाही म्हणोन मक्त । ब्रह्म नाही म्हणोन मुक्त ।  
 अमुक्त नाही बोलणें युक्त । शास्त्राधारे ।  
 देवामक्तांचे पाहतां मूळ । होय मेदाचे निर्मूळ ।  
 येक परमात्मा सकळ । दृश्यावेगळा ।। -----  
 आत्मनिवेदनाचे अंती । जे कां घडली अमेद मक्ति ।  
 तथे नांव सायोज्यमुक्ती । सत्य जाणावी ।।  
 जो संतांसी शरण गेला । अष्टदंतनिरूपण बाधला ।  
 मग जरी तां वेगळा केला । तरी होणार नाही ।। ---  
 देव भक्त मुळी येक । ज्यासी कळला हा विवेक ।  
 साधुज्जी मोक्षदायक । तोचि येक ।।

दासबाधे ८.८.१५-२३ .



329.97 म्हणांनि जितुका भोळाभाव .। तितुका अज्ञानाचा स्वभाव ।  
अज्ञाने तरी देवधिदेव । पाविजे कैवा ॥

दासबाधे २०.९.११ .

330.98 भोळा भाव सिध्दी जाव । हा अधाराचा अुपाव ।  
रोकडा मोक्षाचा अमिप्राव । विवेके जाणावा ॥

दासबाधे ९.७.४९.

330.99 ज्ञान आणि अुपासना । दोनी येकचि पाहाना ।  
अुपासनेकरिता ज्ञा । जगदुधदार ॥

दास १३.२.८

330.102 क्रियेविण शब्दज्ञान । तेचि स्वानाचे वसन ।  
मले तेथे अवलोकन । कदापि न करिती ॥

दासबाधे १२.१०.३० .

32.104

नाना वेष नाना आश्रम । सर्वांचे मूळ गृहस्थाश्रम ।  
 जेथे पावती विश्राम । त्रैलोक्यवासी ॥  
 देव त्र५षी मुनी योगी । नाना तापसी वीतरागी ।  
 पितृआदिकरतन विभागी . अतीत अभ्यागत ॥  
 गृहस्थाश्रमी निर्माण आले । आपला आश्रम टाकून गेले ।  
 परंतु गृहस्थगृही 'हिंडां' लागले । कीर्तिरूपे ॥  
 या कारणे 'गृहस्थाश्रम' । सक्ळांमध्यें अुत्तमोत्तम ।  
 परंतु पाहिजे स्वधर्म । आणि मृतदया ।  
 जेथे षट्कर्म चालती । वियुक्त क्रिया आचारती ।

दासबांधे १४.७.१-५

32.105

वाग्माधुर्य बांलती । प्राणिमात्रांसी ॥  
 आधी प्रपंच करावा नंटाका । मग ध्यावे 'परमार्थविवेका' ।  
 येथे 'आळस' करन नका । विवेकाहो ॥  
 प्रपंच सांडून परमार्थ कराल । तेणे 'तुम्ही' कष्टी व्हाल ।  
 प्रपंच परमार्थ चालवाल । तटी तुम्ही विवेकी ॥  
 प्रपंच सांडून परमार्थ केला । तरी अन्न मिळेना खायाला ।  
 मग त्या करंटयाला । परमार्थ केवा ॥  
 परमार्थ सांडून प्रपंच करिसी । तरी तू यमयात्ना मोगिसी ।  
 अंती परम कष्टी होसी । यमयात्ना मोगितां ।

दासबांधे १२.१.१-४

333.108

कर्म करीती आवडी । फळासाठी नाही गांडी ॥  
 शांती क्षमा आणि दया । सर्व सख्यमानी ज्या ॥ ---  
 स्वार्थ सांडुनिया देणे । नित्य तेवें संपादणे ॥

रामदास स्वामीचे अर्भग १४५.५-१०.

333.109

आपण स्वये तटले । ज्ञासहि अुपेगा आले ।  
 कीर्तिश्रवणे जाले । अमक्त भावार्थी ॥

दासबाघ ३.१०.२२ .

325.113

अंका निवेदनाचं लक्षण देवासि वाहावे आपण ।  
 करावे तत्त्वविवरण । म्हणजे कळे ॥ ----  
 तस्मात् विचार करावा । देव कोण तो वाळवावा ।  
 आपला आपण शोध घ्यावा । अंत्यमी ॥  
 मी कोण असा निवाडा । पाहो 'जाता' तत्त्ववाडा ।  
 विचार पाहातां बुधडा । आपण नाही ।  
 तत्त्वस्वरूप सकळ मासे । विवेक पाहतां निरसे ।  
 प्रकृतिनिरासे आत्मा असे । आपण कैवा ॥ ---  
 आपण मिथ्या साच देव । देव भक्त अनन्यभाव ।  
 या कवनाचा अभिप्राव । अनुभवी जाणती ॥  
 या नांव आत्मनिवेदन । ----  
 नवमी भक्ति आत्मनिवेदन । न होतां न चुके जन्ममरण ।  
 हे कवन सत्य प्रमाण । अन्यथा नव्हे ॥  
 अंसी हे नवविद्या भक्ति । केल्या पाविजे सायुज्यमुक्ती ।  
 सायुज्यमुक्तीस कल्यांती । चळण नाही ।

दासबाधे ४.९.-२६ .

325.114

मी कर्ता असे म्हणशी । तेणे तू तू कष्टी होशी ।  
 राम कर्ता म्हणतां पावशी । यज्ञ कीर्ति प्रताप ॥

दासबाधे ६.७.३६ .

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