PREFACE

*Bhagavadgītā* is a part of *Mahābhārata* which is the foremost among the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* which were written as the explanatory texts of *Vedās*. *Gītā* comes as the 18 chapters from the 25th to 42nd in the *Bhīsmaparvan* of *Mahābhārata*. It is the abstract of the principles of the *Vedās* delivered as the message of the Lord to Arjuna, compiled and written by Vedavyāsa in 700 ślokās.

*Bhagavadgītā* is a classic, wonderful and miraculous piece of work in world literature. It is the sum and substance of *Upaniṣādic* wisdom. It is only such a work that can show the way that lead to perfection, which can claim universal value. The main factor which gives *Bhagavadgītā* the sublime position among philosophical texts is that it aims at the perfect blossoming of one’s life. The numerous translations and commentaries that have come up on *Gītā* is ample proof for its influence among philosophers and thinkers. Among them, Śaṅkarā’s commentary is regarded as the most authentic. Ācārya has said in his commentary that he has attempted it to settle the discrepancies that have crept in the proper understanding of the spiritual text.

This universal spiritual text surges ahead demolishing all barriers of caste, language and religion. Thus *Jñāneśvari* of Jñāneśvara is a commentary that originated in Marāthi language. Commentaries that
have originated from experience as in the case of Jñāneśvari are very rare. Jñāneśvara is foremost among the great men of Marātha. This work by Jñāneśvara is suffused in bhakti.

The commentaries that happen from erudition and that which originate from experience bound to have differences. Such a comparison is included in this study. Ācārya has offered his commentary from the 11\textsuperscript{th} śloka of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} chapter of Gītā. But Jñāneśvara has offered his commentary for the entire ślokās. It is only a few ślokās that are selected from each chapter from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} to the 18\textsuperscript{th} for my study. This approach was chosen as it will be very difficult to attempt a comparative study on all the 700 ślokās of Gītā in a thesis. Attempting a chapter summary of each commentary followed by a comparative study of a few selected ślokās from each chapter and wound up with a conclusion, is the style of presentation chosen.