PART III

CHAPTER XII

ETHICS

"dando damayatām asmi, nītirasmi Jīgīṣatām"

(Bhagavadgītā X: 38)

of those who chastise I am the rod (of chastisement)"

nanesvara comments on it as thus:

"I am that state craft amongst arts that deceive good
and evil in conduct by the righteous standard of sacred
religion".

Ethics In the Bhāratīya-Darsāna

Ethics has donated religion (Dharma), economics (Artha),
esire (Kāma) and salvation (Mokṣa). Therefore it is obliging
Upakāraka) and disciplinary (Maryādā-pālaka) for the whole
world.
The word 'Ethics' is derived from the Greek adjective 'ethics' which comes from the substantive 'Ethos' means customs, usages or habits. Ethics is also called 'Moral Philosophy'. The word 'moral' is derived from the Latin substantive 'mores' which also means customs or habits.

Ethics is considered to be an important branch of philosophy. There are as many definitions as philosophers hence it cannot be defined properly, but can be described.

According to Professor C.D. Broad, "Ethics may be described as the theoretical treatment of moral phenomena."  

Fortunately Bharata is rich with the great expositions on Ethics as Cāṇakya-Nīti, Śukra-Nīti, Kāṛamadakīya-Nīti, Bhrtrhāra-Nīti etc. The Mahābhārata, the Bhagavadgītā, the Manusmṛti and Keuṭīlya's Arthasastra form the valuable treasury of Ethics.

II The Modern Indian Commentators on Ethics:

The credit of expounding Indian Ethics along with the modern schools of the western philosophies, goes to "Gitārāhasya" by Lokmānyā B.G. Tilōka. His comparison and criticism of the western philosophy with the Indian philosophy specially Mahābhārata is unique. Professor G.W. Keśishwar has also devoted two separate Chapters- "Utilitarianism of J. Bentham and J.S. Mills" and Immanuel Kant's code of Ethics,
which is uninfluenced, detached or indifferent from the environments and has refuted their theories. Mahātmā Gāndhi has also contributed greatly to Ethics, specially expounding new conceptions of Āhīṃsā, Satya, Aparigraha, Brahmacarya.

Vinobājī Bhāve's great contribution of the doctrine of Sarvodayavāda to Ethics is a great landmark in the Science-culture of humanity. Prof. G.W. Kavīshvar has also written a book on the "Indian Ethics"—"Gītā-Tatva-Darsāna".

This book has made a valuable contribution to Indian Ethics. To know the essence of ethics expounded in the Bhagavadgītā, it is absolutely necessary to analyse the psychologically complex condition of Arjunā's mind before the war is on. Prof. Kavīshvar has devoted one complete section of his book i.e. Purva Khanda of two hundred and twenty five pages under the title of "Arjuna-mānasamanthana" to critical analysis of the psychology of Arjuna. In these ten chapters—from third to twelfth—he has analysed 'Arjuna-viṣāda' and 'Sannyasavāda'; 'Kama and Moha'; 'Kārpaṇya and Anukampa'; 'Pāpa-kalpanā and Āptamamata' etc. In these chapters he has logically criticised the viewpoints of Śaṅkara & Rāmānuja (page 189-190) Jñānesvara (page 190), Lokānāya Tilak (page 191) Vinobājī Bhāve (page 164 to 172); Yogī Arvinda Bābu and Dr. S. Rādhākrishnan (pages 35 to 38 and 174); J.S. Karandikar and Ācarya-bhakta V. W. Bāpat śastrī (page 34 to 35) regarding the psychology of Arjuna. Svāmī Chinmayānanda has not understood this psychology of Arjuna and has done injustice to Arjuna by describing him as a victim of "War disease".
Prof. Kavishvara has stressed the importance of ethics in the Mahābhārata.

Western philosophy treats Religion separately from Ethics, but Indian philosophy considers it to be inseparable from Religion. Ethics is the foundation of not only Religion, Metaphysics, Spiritualism but of Politics, Economics, Trade, War in fact, of all fields of human life.

III WHAT IS ETHICS?

Ethics converts moral faith into a rational insight. It is the science of reflective morality. It investigates into nature and validity of right as well as wrong human conduct with reference to the ideal of the Highest Good. According to Prof. P. H. Nowell Smith, "Traditionally moral philosophy has always been regarded as a practical Science, a 'science' because it was a systematic inquiry the goal of which was knowledge, and 'practical' because the goal was practical knowledge, knowledge of what to do rather than knowledge of what is the case."

Literarily Ethics means the Science of the customs or habits of men. It is the science of the habitual conduct of men. Habits are the expression of settled disposition of the will or character. Character is the permanent habit of welding the inner bent of mind, which is expressed in habitual conduct. Character is the inner counterpart of conduct, which is its outer expression. Thus Ethics is the science of character and
It is the science of human character as expressed in right or wrong conduct. But the words 'right' and 'wrong' refer to the Good which is the ideal of human life. Thus Ethics is the science of the Highest Good. It is the science of morality.

Ethics is concerned with judgement upon conduct, its rightness or otherwise. Ethics is not concerned with human conduct as it is, but thinks of what it ought to be. It passes judgement of value upon human actions with reference to the moral ideal. It is not concerned with judgement of fact but with judgement of value. Judgements of value are judgements of what ought to be. They are called critical or appreciative judgements. In the Jñānānanda we find factual judgements along with critical or appreciative judgements, because Ethics is a formative science. Kabīra's poetry is full of such references to critical judgements.

IV THE PLACE OF ETHICS IN PRACTICAL LIFE

Moral insight into duties make their performance possible. Theory is inevitably acts on practice. Theoretical Ethics is the secure foundation of practical or applied Ethics. The concrete duties of life should be determined with reference to the moral ideal. Knowledge is a condition of virtue. In the Jñānānanda we see the link of Jñāna-knowledge with virtues and Ajñāna-ignorance with vices throughout. The same link is found in the expositions of Kabīra.
Ethics indirectly exerts a paramount influence on all departments of our practical life. The right solution of the vital problems of religion, politics, economics, legislature education etc. depends upon the correct notions of right and wrong, 'Kartavya- akartavya'. The Mahābhārata is called the science of Ethics for the same reason. The Bhagavadgītā is nothing but a great commentary on Ethics. In the Jñānesvarī, we find the principles or criticism of Ethics not in every chapter but practically on every page, because it is closely connected with religion. Religion must have its foundation in Ethics. Divorced from morality, it degenerates into superstitious belief, in blind superhuman power; black magic, and the like. Jñānesvara has severely attacked these non-religious notions, which are miles and miles away from "Sattvaguna" and the Ultimate Reality. Kabīra has virtually whipped the 'Sāktas' with stingy words for the same thing.

Pāramārtha (Spiritualism) and 'Dharma' (Religion) have got the highest place in the Jñānesvarī. Jñānesvara has called Kurusetra as "Dhamālaya" (1-86). According to Jñānesvara the Bhagavadgītā is for expounding Pāramārtha (1-273). At the end of the Jñānesvarī he says, "Now Dharma Kīrtanā is over (XVIII:1792).

V THE ETHICS IN THE UPANISHADS

Dr. R. D. Ranade observes,

"At a time when moral reflection in other lands had hardly reached even the gnomic stage it is interesting to note
that in the Upaniṣads we have fairly good discussion of all the more important ethical problems; which in certain cases at least, the solution reached might be contemplated upon with great profit even by present-day moralists, because the solution which the Upaniṣads attempt is a solution which is based upon the eternal truths of Ātmic-experience. What is desirable, pleasant or good?

As there is a variety of metaphysical theories in the Upaniṣadic literature, similarly there is a variety of theories about the nature of the Moral Ideal. We have an entirely anti-hedonistic theory advocated by the author of the Kaṭhopaniṣad. We are told there that, "there are two different paths, the path of the good and the path of the pleasant, and that these two diverse paths try to vie with each other in seducing man. Of these, he who follows the path of the good is ultimately rewarded by the fulfilment of his aim, while he who follows the path of the pleasant loses the goal which he is pursuing. When the good and the pleasant present themselves before a man, he looks about him, if he be wise, and decides which of them to choose. The wise man chooses the good before the pleasant, while the fool chooses the pleasant before the good." 10

In these two verses from the Kaṭhopaniṣad we have a classical expression of the conflict between the good and the pleasant as experienced even in the Upaniṣadic days. As with Hercules in Xenophon, so with Nāciketa the problem of choosing pleasure or virtue arose. Even though the God Death
(Yama) tries to seduce Naciketa by the offer of a life of pleasure and glory, he refuses to be imprisoned in the chains which Yama has forged for him.

VI THE IMPORTANCE OF 'SVADHARMA' IN SPIRITUALISM AND WORLDLY LIFE:

In the very first chapter of the Bhagavadgītā we see seeds of Ethics. Arjuna raises the questions of morality, conduct, duty religion etc. all relating to Ethics thus:

"Thereupon, all consideration of right and wrong, the correct performance of duties, all the precepts of conduct and prohibition are ignored. As a man is in danger of falling when his lamp is extinguished and he walks in the darkness, even though he may walk straight, so if a family is destroyed, its immemorial traditions will be lost and nothing will remain. When self-control fails the senses run amok and the women of the family commit adultery. The noblest consort with the meanest castes are mingled and all the family traditions are destroyed."

In the very first chapter we come across with the fundamentals of Ethics. Arjuna is on the horns of a dilemma. He is in a fix. He does not see the proper way out. He is not able to distinguish between "Dharma and Adharma" "Kartavya and Akartavya", "Papa and Puṇya" "right and wrong", "Hit and Ṭhit". The Bhagavadgītā discusses all these problems and thus stands on the sound foundation of Ethics.
In the Jñānesvarī "Svadharma" or "Nija-dharma" is the watchword. The costly fabric of Karma-yoga is woven with the help of the sound and durable-warp threads of Svadharma-Ātmadharma. Jñānesvara says, "Why dost thou not now consider? What is that thou art thinking? Thou hast forgotten thine own duty by which alone thou canst obtain salvation. Should any calamity befall the Kauravas, should any mishap overtake thee, or were the great age to come to an end now, even then one's own sacred duty must never be abandoned; canst thou then save thyself by compassion?".

"Behold! by fulfilling one's duty, present sin is destroyed; what is this confusion in thy mind about sin? Do we drown in a boat, or stumble on the high road? Calamity may befall one who knows not how to walk. One can even die from taking nectar, if poison is taken with it; so sin can arise from duty performed, if the motive is (wrong)."

Jñānesvara's emphasis on 'Svadharma' may be seen further:

"O Beloved! know that a man's duty is his daily sacrifice and acting therein he can incur no sin. When such individual duty is relinquished and there arises a liking for wrongful action, then bondage to earthly life follows. Therefore the performance of one's own duty is ceaseless sacrifice. He who performs it creates no bonds for himself."
After giving these clear instructions regarding 'Svadharma' i.e. duties and religion Jñāṇeśvara solemnly assures:

"Perform them with a disinterested mind, as a chaste woman (is devoted) to her husband. The ordained sacrifice is the only one which you need to perform so said the Lord of the highest heaven. So if you will practice your own duty, it will be to you as the cow who satisfies all desires. O my people, it will never forsake you".\(^{16}\)

The Blessed Lord has clearly warned the people through Arjuna:

"O Beloved! it is best to perform one's own duty, however difficult it may be. The duty of another may seem more attractive, but nevertheless, one should carry out one's own".\(^{17}\).

While preaching 'Svadharma', Jñāṇeśvara points out some 'Social-Ethics' which is generally neglected.

"Is it wise to destroy one's own straw hut because one sees the attractive mansions of others? As one's own wife, however uncomely, is well appreciated when one lives with her, so will our own duty, however arduous and difficult in practice, lead us to the happiness of heaven".\(^{18}\).

VII THE ETHICS OF HOUSEHOLDERS:

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad is evidently the most hortatory
of all the Upaniṣads. It adopts a deliberately didactic tone, and tries to emphasise a number of virtues to be observed, the study and teaching of the sacred scriptures forming the burden of the discourse. We are asked to respect Law, to tell the Truth, to practice Penance, Self-Control and Tranquility, to offer ceremonial as well as daily oblations to the fire, to receive guests with hospitality, to practice humanity, and to increase and multiply.

Jñānāesvara has warned those, who neglect the ethics of householders and the disciples, who do not respect their teachers thus:

"Or if he does not worship the highest God, according to the requirements of his caste, with the wealth given to him by the gods who are pleased with his sacrifice, if he were not to offer oblations of fire, worship the gods, or on suitable occasions give food to brāhmaṇa, if he were to turn away from devotion to his guru, or if he were not to offer hospitality to guests, or give satisfaction to his caste fellows, if failing in those things that pertain to his duty, and being vain in his prosperity, if he were to be solely engrossed in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures, great harm will befall him, all that he possesses will be lost, and he will not even be able to enjoy his present pleasures."

Who gets punishment?

Jñānāesvara explains, "Death will punish him who abandons
his duty and, calling him a thief, will take away everything from him. Then as ghosts surround a graveyard at night so will all kinds of sins encompass him. All the affections of the three worlds and every kind of sin and misery will be with him.  

VIII PRACTICAL SIDE OF ETHICS:

The theories of the Moral Standard and Moral Ideal, which have been advanced in the Upaniṣads have prominent place in the Jñānesvarī. This is only natural. In the Upaniṣads a consideration of the practical side of Ethics, namely, the enumeration and inculcation of certain virtues is seen. In Brhadāranyakopaniṣad, the emphasis is given on three cardinal virtues, namely Self-control, Charity and Compassion.

In the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad we meet with a different list of virtues in the consideration between Gūḍa Āṅgīrāsa and Kṛṣna, the son of Devakī. We are told that the chief virtues of man are austerity, charity, straightforwardness, harmlessness and truthfulness; these according to Gūḍa Āṅgīrāsa constitute the chief virtues of man.

Truth seems to find particular favour with the Upaniṣadic Seers. Illustrations of this virtue are scattered in the various upaniṣads. Kabīra was the great Truth-seeker like Naciketa. His exposition is full of references to the preaching of the Truth.

Sanatkumāra gives a more positive interpretation of it when he says that Ultimate-Truth is to be found only in the
attainment of Reality, what people call truth is really no Truth at all. It is Truth only by sufferance.

Ethics has a practical role in our life to be performed. Jñānesvara has distinctly shown it with apt illustrations:

"Why grievest thou without reason? Attend to thy duty; if thou wilt follow it, no evil will at any time befall thee. If one keeps to the road one encounters no mishap; if one carries a lamp one does not stumble. So, O Pārtha, by the observance of One's duty all desires are easily fulfilled. Thou shouldst know, therefore, that nothing is more worthy of a Kṣatriya than fighting. Free thy mind of deception, and fight blow for blow; but what need is there to speak to thee of what is obvious?" 25

Will not this passage serve as a stimulation to all, on all fronts of life? Professor P.H.Nowell-Smith to his book 'Ethics' observes thus:

"If we turn to the great religious systems of the world we find the same emphasis on the practical nature of moral questions, the same assumption that life has a goal, be it the Christian or the Muslim Paradise or the Buddhist Nirvāṇa, and the same assumption that the rules we are enjoined to live by are rules for achieving this state." 26
The Mahābhārata may be considered as an Ocean or an Encyclopaedia of the problems in Ethics. Mahārṣi Vyāsa has discussed innumerable problems of 'Kartavya' and 'Akartavya' facing the king as well as commoners in life. Jñānesvara gives his frank verdict on "Vihita Karma" and "Anucita Karma".

"We should not therefore practise what is proper for another and not for ourselves, if we seek our own welfare. Even if we spend our life in the performance of our own duty, it will be well with us both here and hereafter." 27

In the eighteenth chapter also he emphatically says,

"Such an act is one which is performed in accordance with man's status and duty, as proper to him as the embrace of a faithfull wife to a beloved husband. A man's wrath is enhanced by daily duties as sandalwood paste improves upon a dark complexion or black pigment enhances the beauty of the eyes of young woman. Such daily duty, supported by periodic rites, is good and is like fragrance added to gold." 28

"When the intellect, bringing together the tendencies of all the senses, meets the Self, as a wife meets her husband in a quiet place, this control is called tranquillity and it is the essential virtue of the beginning of all actions." 29

Whenever high morality or high virtue is to be stressed, Jñānesvara like Kabīra gives illustration of a chaste and
loyal wife. This is a striking similarity amongst these two saints.

WHAT ARE THE MERITS AND DEMERITS OF ACTIONS?

Jñānesvara has expounded his conceptions of Ethics of action and its agent in chapter Eighteen, while discussing Knowledge (Jñāna), Action (Karma) and Agent (Kartā) according to Sattva-Rajat-Tama gunas in the ovis 526 to 687.

Our right actions have merit, our wrong actions have demerit. Ethics enquiries into the criterion of merit and demerit. It tries to find out what makes an action meritorious.Merit and demerit are called deserts. They are investigated by Ethics.

Ethics is sometimes said to be the Science of character. Ethics must enquire into the nature of the springs of actions, motives, intentions, voluntary actions, and non-voluntary actions and so on. Thus Ethics must be founded on a psychological basis. In the Jñānesvarī we find that all the conceptions of Ethics are based on the sound foundation of psychology. He seems to be a great psychologist while analysing the actions and characters of persons having different gunas as Sattva, Rajas or Tamas respectively.

While describing "Sāttvika Kartā" Jñānesvara has laid down some important principles of Ethics for the leaders of society, religion and nation.
"In order to perform all duties worthy of being offered to the Supreme, he looks for an appropriate time, a proper place and determines all his actions in the light of scriptural teaching. He brings the mental tendencies and the sense organs under control, refrains from any thought of the fruit of action and accepts the bonds imposed by the scriptures. In order to carry out this discipline he bears within himself alertness and steady courage. Moreover, from devotion to the Spirit, he renounces all physical pleasure while he is carrying out his duties. The more he deprives himself of sleep endures hunger and denies himself physical pleasures, the more ardent he becomes, as gold loses weight but increases in value the more it is heated in the crucible.\(^30\)

Jñānesvara expounds a great quality of Karma-yogi thus:

"If an action which he has undertaken is accomplished without fault, he does not parade his success. O Son of Pāṇḍu, the doer in whom these traits can be seen while he is engaged in action, may be truly said to have the quality of goodness.\(^31\)"

The things, which are against ethics on the path way of Self-Realization, and are worth condemning vehemently, Jñānesvara describes them under the heading of Tāmāśa, Karma-kartā-jñāna-dāna etc.

While performing such actions he cares little what effect these may have, as a stormy wind blows at random. O winner of wealth, there is no relation between the doer and his actions and he is more deranged than any madman. He
sustains his life on everything that sensual pleasures can provide, as a louse attaches itself to the hind quarters of a bullock, and he acts on the impulse of the moment, as a child laughs and cries regardless of the occasion. Controlled by his own nature, he is unable to discriminate between proper and improper actions and swells with satisfaction at whatever he does as a dunghill is built up of refuse.\(^{32}\)

Professor Kavīśhvar has devoted practically the entire \(\text{Uttar}^6\text{-khaṇḍa}\) from page 249 to 429 to "Karmākarma- mīmāṃsā" i.e., critical survey of action and inaction. He has very ably shown the fallacies in the theories of "Nīskāma- Karmayoga" and "Ānāsakti-yoga" propounded by Lokāmāya Tilak and Mahātmā Gāndhī respectively. He has proved the importance of the effects of the actions by analysing 'Nīskāmatā' and 'Kāryatā'. He has made a great contribution not only to the Indian Ethics but to the Doctrine of Karmayoga also by writing this second part specially the chapters viz. "Vivecaka- buddhīcā-kārya" "Gītokta- aṇāraśa-karma" and "Gītākāraṇcā-buddhiyoga". The concluding words in his chapter "Gītēṭīla- aṇāraśa- Karmakalpaṇā" are worth considering.\(^{33}\)

XI THE IMPETUOUS SENSES:

Jñānesvara and Kabīra have repeatedly warned the aspirants to keep themselves quite aloof from the powerful mighty, uncontrollable or impetuous senses thus:

"They whose actions follow the bidding of the senses, do not cross over the ocean of earthly life, though they may seem to do
so, As when a boat has arrived at the shore a tempest may arise, and the boat will be overtaken by the disaster from which it had recently escaped, so even if a man who has attained to this state indulges in his senses for pleasure, he is overcome by the pain of worldly life. 

The challenge of the impetuous senses is described by Jñānesvara thus:

"Even they also are fermented, so great is the power of the senses that even a knower of incantations may be deceived by an evil spirit. Of such a nature are the objects of sense, which appear in the disguise of psychic powers, and in contact with the senses ensnare (the mind). At such a time the mind goes astray and practice of control is crippled. Such is the strength of the senses.

Jñānesvara has warned against feeding the senses with enjoyment even out of sport.

He has beautifully drawn a pen-picture of 'Kāma' and 'Krodha' i.e. passion and wrath from ṛvīs 235 to 254 and 261 to 263 in the third chapter of the Jñānesvari, which is worth reading in the original. ṛvīs 108 to 114 and 119 to 125 in Chapter V may also be seen. In these ṛvīs Jñānesvara has described the horrible consequences of the people who hanker after sexual pleasures.

Jñānesvara sarcastically asks those who believe and propagate sensual pleasures as the goal in life,
"O Son of Pāṇḍu, can the commodity of happy living be bought there? Can a lamp be lit by blowing a heap of ashes? Or can the juice pressed out of poisonous roots, thought it may be called nectar, make a man immortal? Objects in the mortal world are of as much use as if the head were cut off and bound on to a wound in the leg. Who could ever hear the report of any true happiness in this mortal world? How would it be possible to sleep at ease on a bed of live embers?"36.

This reminds one of Kabīra's sarcastic way of treating "Kāmī" i.e. a person who is a slave of desires.

Jñānesvarā draws a pen picture of sexually haunted persons which have got great resemblance with Kabīra's expositions.37

Jñānesvarā has drawn a pen-picture of a womaniser who is entirely engrossed in sensual-sexual pleasures from ovids 335 to 345 of the same sixteenth chapter. This is a picture of a society, culture or religion in which woman is taken to be only a "Bhoga-dāsī" or an instrument of sexual enjoyment. In Kabīra's poetry many references are seen to this effect. From the history of his period it is proved that the Emperor, various kings, Nabābs and rich people were totally engrossed in sexual enjoyment, hence Kabīra has to take the whip of stingy and sarcastic words to bring them to the senses.

In "Kāmī-nara-kṣaṅga" Kabīra has slashed at sexually minded people like anything. He has bitterly attacked persons,
who are keeping illicit relations with other women (Para-Nārī). Sakhīs, 3, 4, 5, 6 are self-eloquent. But Kabīra has abused the female sex, woman in general as the obstacle on the path way to Self-Realization.

"Kāmanī kāla nāganī, tinu loka mazarī " i.e. woman is poisonous like a female serpent in all the worlds. "Kāmanī mini shani kī, je cheḍō tou Khāī" i.e. Woman is like a bee, she will bite him whoever approaches her.

"nara-nārī saba naraka hai, jaba laga deha sākana" i.e. till body is used as the means of sexual pleasure, all men and women are nothing but hell itself.

"nārī-nasāvāi tīni sukha, ja nara pasāi hoi " i.e. the companionship of a woman deprives a man from three kinds of happiness.

" nārī kūṇḍa naraka kā " i.e. the companionship of a woman is as miserable as hell.

"sundarī thai sulī bhālī " i.e. death is preferable to a woman.

Kabīra has condemned Kanaka & Kāmini i.e. gold and woman at many places.

This is a striking difference between jñānesvara and Kabīra. Jñānesvara has not used abusing language against the tender sex, like Kabīra or Ekānātha and other Indian saints. Still however Kabīra's tirade must not be taken against
womanhood but against the sex intoxicated in general. This wrath has come out of saintly compassion and not hatred against womanhood.

Jñānesvara has sarcastically described the ethics of a passionate-person (kāmī) in which he has shown his perverted mind in looking at all things in the world, in the Jñānesvarī.  

Jñānesvara excels in teaching fundamental principles of Ethics to the common people with the help of apt similes or illustrations. Some examples will bring out the truth of this remark.

"As a fool who cannot speak a good word to his mother or father may treat all the rest of the world with respect, or a man who will not sprinkle water on the sacred Tulā plant even from a distance may pour milk on the roots of a vine."

"So he will perform properly all those prescribed rites which will bring pleasurable results. He boasts in public of having performed such rites and renders them valueless by constantly speaking of them. Thus is he filled with pride about them and pays no respect to his father and his preceptor as the typhus fever yields to no medicine. Therefore whatever is done reverentially by a man, yet through egotism and the desire for the fruit of action...

Dr. R.D. Rānade says,

"We must remember from the outset that Jñānesvara has as
much distrust of the senses as any other mystical philosopher.”

The seductive power of the senses is described by Jñānesvara at many places. How the Hatha yogis are harassed by this is aptly described from ovis 310 to 314 of the second chapter of the second chapter of the Jñānesvari.

Jñānesvara has called 'Viṣayas' the objects of senses as poisonous snakes. "The fact that a man's limbs do not get stiffened after being bitten by the poisonous snake in the form of objects of senses and that the poison has no effect on him, is all due to your grace.”

Shri Bābā Mahārāj Joshi has thrown light on the word "Viṣayavyāle" in his renowned commentary-exposition of the twelfth chapter of the Jñānesvari known as "Divyāmrta-Dhāra" and proved that, the objects of senses themselves are not poisonous snake in original or in reality but due to perverted sexual mind they are misused and hence turn to be poisonous. He says, "In short, the objects of senses- 'Viṣaya' - are not snakes, but when they are reflected into impure mind, they turn to be snakes, but if they are sponsored in pure mind, they prove to be ornaments of the devotion of God.”

Saints like Jñānesvara, who expounded the doctrine of "Cidvilāsvāda", will not condemn the objects of senses, as they are useful in the devotion of God. Tukārāma promises,
"In the objects of senses the devotees get inspiration of the Brahman." In challenging words Jñānesvara says,

"Though the devotees of God are enveloped and engrossed in the objects of senses, they are not even touched by them, then why talk of being spoiled by them."47

The objects of senses are harmful, dangerous or poisonous to those, who forget the real nature of Atman and get themselves lost into carnal pleasures. Jñānesvara has disliking for the perverted, sexual mentality of the materialists but not for the objects of senses. This is a great difference between Jñānesvara and Kabīra, who has totally condemned the objects of the senses.

XII THE DOCTRINE OF HEDONISM: SUKHĀVĀDA:

According to Hedonism, pleasure or pleasure is the ultimate standard of morality. It is the highest good. It is the supreme end of life. It is based on two assumptions- a metaphysical one and another a psychological one.

(a) Metaphysical Assumption:

Hedonism is based upon the metaphysical assumption, that the Self is purely sensuous in nature. It is a series of sensations, feelings, appetites and instincts according to this Hedonism.

(b) Psychological Hedonism and Ethical Hedonism:

Hedonism is based on the psychological assumption, that
man naturally seeks pleasure and avoids pain. Many Hedonists e.g. Bentham, J.S. Mill and others assume that we naturally seek pleasure and avoid pain. Desire is primarily directed towards pleasure. We desire everything else as a means to pleasure.

Psychological Hedonism holds that pleasure is the natural and normal object of desire, that we always seek pleasure and avoid pain. Ethical Hedonism holds that pleasure is the proper object of desire that we do not always seek pleasure, but ought to seek pleasure. According to the former, we do seek pleasure. One is a statement of an actual fact while the other is a statement of an ideal or an end.

(c) Egoistic Hedonism, Altruistic Hedonism and Empirical Hedonism

Ethical Hedonism is divided into two parts Egoistic and Altruistic. According to Egoistic Hedonism, the pleasure of the individual is the moral standard. According to Altruistic Hedonism, the greatest happiness is the moral standard. Egoistic hedonism, again may be of two types, gross and refined. Altruistic Hedonism is also of two types, Gross or Quantitative Altruistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism (J.S. Mill).

The Hedonism of Bentham and J.S. Mill is called Empirical Hedonism. The Hedonism of Herbert Spencer, Leslie Stephen and Alexander is called Evolutionary Hedonism. Hedonism and Utilitarianism have some resemblance with "Duḥkha-vāda" and Duḥkhanirodhamārga" of Buddhism.
Ilokamānya B. G. Tīlak has devoted one complete chapter of 'Gītā-Rāhasya' for discussing, criticising and refuting the various theories of the Western philosophers of Hedonism. Their Hedonism have neglected the higher cultural interest; have put insufficient emphasis on the intellectual, authentic and religious values; the intrinsic worth of character, love, friendship, service and the like goods. Economic goods, material and bodily comforts have occupied too much of their thought and attention. They identified happiness with material happiness only. Mahātmā Gāndhī and Vinobā Bhāve have vehemently refuted Hedonism.

Kabīra has denounced Hedonism vehemently in "Citāvanī-kō-āṅga", "Cānaka-kō-āṅga", "Māyā-kō-āṅga, "Kāla kō-āṅga" and "Jīvaṁ mṛtaka kō-āṅga". He has tried to show the futility of all worldly pleasures based on wealth-richess and (sexual) sensual luxuries.

In many 'Padas' also he has repeatedly pointed out that the world is false or myth and it must not be relied upon. He has cautioned the people against the momentary and painful world and to take the path of devotion at an earliest.

XIII THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF HEDONISM EXPOUNDED IN

THE Jñānesvarā:

Jñānesvarā has severely criticised this doctrine of Hedonism in the sixteenth chapter of the Jñānesvarā, in which he has exposed this materialistic Hedonism. He has painted
pen-pictures of it from different angles, which are simply unparallelled in Marathi as well as Hindi literature.

(a) The Hedonism of Cārvāka:

He has expounded Cārvāka doctrine from Ovīs 295 to 312 which is the materialistic conception of happiness. From Ovīs 337 to 347 he has painted a picture of a person (Jīva) who is entirely engrossed in sensual pleasures (Viṣaya-Bhogī).

(b) The Hedonism of the Capitalistic Society:

In the times of Jñānesvāra, the concept of the Capitalism was not born, but still however he has drawn a very realistic picture of Hedonism in Capitalistic society in our times from Ovīs 348 to 351 of the sixteenth chapter of the Jñānesvārī.

(c) The Hedonism of Asuryāda-Māovāca:

The ideology of Mao of China is not new to the world. The seeds of "Asuryāda" may be seen in the Vedas, the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata. It appears that Jñānesvāra had visualised 'Mao-vāda' eight hundred years ago. While painting "Ajñāni" he has correctly expounded Hedonism of Asuras which is the theory of 'Mao-vāda' (From Ovīs 352 to 355).

(d) The Hedonism of the Indian Princes:

We have seen or heard the stories of some luxurious Heads of Princes of the Old States in India. Their luxurious lives were not new to Jñānesvāra as the life of Ramadevrao of
Devagiri was before him to whom he has aptly called 'Vilāsu' i.e. luxurious king, and has painted the luxurious life from ovis 357 to 363.

It can be very easily proved that while describing "Kṣatra-dharma" in the chapter XXVII.41, Jñānesvara wanted to warn Rāmadevrao against leading merely a luxurious life and stimulate his 'Kṣatra-guṇa'.

Jñānesvara seems to be very diligent, alert or watchful while observing society. Neither good nor bad seems to have missed his vigilant eyes. Generally the Saints pretend to be ignorant but they know each and every corner of human psychology. Jñānesvara has painted a realistic picture of the hypocrites who loot and rob the innocent people.

The seeds of Hedonism are found in Cāndogya-Upaniṣad (VII.22.1) and Mahābhārata (Śāntiparva:139-69). The Ethics in the Bhagavadgītā and that of Jñānesvara and Kṛṣṇa is anti-hedonistic and anti-utilitarian like that of Kant.

XIV THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ETHICS, RELIGION, METAPHYSICS AND EPistemology:

In this way Jñānesvara has thrown light on his conceptions of Ethics, which go hand in hand with Metaphysics. There are no two watertight compartments but just they are interdependent. There is or ought to be perfect harmony in Ethics, Religion, Metaphysics and Epistemology. They cannot be really divorced from each other.
Dr. A. G. Javadekar has correctly shown the place of Ethics in Epistemology as under:

"Ethical epistemology, thus concerns itself with the problem of the right practical method of arriving at truth. It defines the qualifications of a person who wishes to know the truth, and lays down the method by which he can acquire those qualifications. In this, unlike the previous epistemologies, ethical epistemology is dynamic in its conception, for it is not content with knowing the limits of human knowledge, but so far as possible, it also suggests a method of overcoming them."

Dr. Rādhākrṣṇan says, "To attempt to understand one's age is an understanding full of difficulties, but we cannot help asking what modern life in all its intense activity and rapid change signifies, for the noblest of all investigations is the study of what man should be and what he should pursue."

Whenever Jñānāśvāra wanted to point out the vices, demerits, defects in a person, he has described them under the heading of Tamoguṇa and warned the aspirants to keep themselves aloof from them. While describing virtues, merits or good things, which are helpful in the path way to Self-Realization, Jñānāśvāra has taken the help of verses on Sattvaguṇa in the Gītā. Thus the fundamentals of Ethics are discussed under the headings of Sattvaguṇa, Rajoguṇa and Tamoguṇa throughout the Jñānāśvārī, specially in chapters Thirteen, Fourteen, Sixteen, Seventeen and Eighteen.
Jñānesvara has painted three pictures of these three gunās very distinctly, so as to enable the reader or aspirant to see his face clearly in the mirror of these three gunās in chapter fourteen of the Jñānesvarī.

This treatment of the subject on the part of Jñānesvara is similar to that of the Aristotelian than that of Platonic kind. Aristotle believed that the aim of moral philosophy was to make men good, but he did not think that he could make them good by lecturing on Ethics or by writing a handbook. He thought that the help that moral philosophy can give was of a more indirect and subtle kind. Kabīra believed in directly lecturing or giving sermons.

XV ETHICS OF THE GĪTĀ, KANT, JÑĀNESVARA & KABĪRA :

(a) There is some resemblance in the Ethics of the Bhagavadgītā and that of Kant. Duties ought to be performed for the sake of duty. The Gītā emphasizes the performance of duties relating to one's castes and roll in society without any desire for fruits and without attachment and aversion and other selfish and bias emotions. The ethics of the Gītā, the Jñānesvarī and Kabīra resembles that of Kant on this point.

(B) But it differs from Kant's Rationalism in some essential points. The Gītā regards the Self-Realization or the Attainment of God as the highest good. Duties ought to be done for the Attainment of God. Kant does not recognize it as the supreme good. The Gītā enjoins the performance of duties for the
welfare or solidarity of humanity. Duties ought to be performed for the good of all the creatures. The highest personal good is the highest common or social good. It is helpful in the attainment of God. In the Jñānesvari we find Jñānesvara has not forgotten the society, religion, mankind or the whole universe for a moment while praying to God or preaching Ethics.

(c) Kant conceives the highest good as virtue or good will. It is the good of the individual. We find this in Kabīra. Kant's ethics is jural or legal. He does not recognise 'good' as superior to 'right'. The Ethics of the Gītā is teleological. Jñānesvara has often called God as 'Viśvesa', 'Viśvātama-Deva', 'Viśvātma' etc., because the Ethics of Gītā is Universalistic, while Kant's ethics is individualistic like that of Kabīra.

(d) Kant's ethics is ascetic like Kabīra, while the Gītā does not advocate asceticism. Like Kant, Kabīra has denounced Karmayoga, while like Gītā, Jñānesvara has strongly preached it.

(e) Kant's ethics is divorced from religion, while ethics of the Gītā, Jñānesvara and Kabīra has completely merged in religion. Kant does not speak of knowledge, devotion and religion while these three are immensely important from the point of view of Jñānesvara and Kabīra.

Dr. R. D. Rānade has correctly valued the exposition of the 'Catalogue of virtues' in the Thirteenth chapter of the Jñānesvari as follows:—
"Jñānesvara's great originality consists in making a very acute and accurate analysis of the various moral virtues. The thirteenth chapter of the Bhagavadgītā has supplied him with a text where all the necessary virtues of a truly spiritual life have been enumerated. Jñānesvara draws upon that text and gives us a very full analysis of all the virtues mentioned in that chapter. He employs so many images in order to bring home to the mind of the reader the particular significance of the virtue under consideration, that we may easily regard Jñānesvara as almost the greatest moral philosopher who has employed the figurative method for the description of virtues. Moral philosophy would be dry in the absence of this attractive and hence interesting side of exposition, and we shall note pleasantly the great wealth of material that has been employed by Jñanesvara for the description of the virtues.

Jñānesvara has expounded his own viewpoints on Humility (Ovīś 195 to 202), Unpretentiousness (Ovīś 203 to 215), Nonviolence (Ovīś 241 to 312); Forbearance (Ovīś 340 to 353); Purity (Ovīś 462 to 484); Steadfastness (Ovīś 485 to 501); Self control (Ovīś 502 to 509); Dispassion (Ovīś 513 to 524) and Absence of Ego (Ovīś 526 to 530).

XVI AHIMŚA, NONVIOLENCE OR HARMLESSNESS:

We shall emphasise only one point (virtue) expounded by him with a view to appreciate his original, independent and all pervading method of exposition:
While commenting on the seventh verse of the thirteenth chapter of the Bṛhamadātī, Jñānesvāra has devoted Ovīs from 185 to 512 i.e. more than three hundred, to the virtues, out of which Harmlessness (Ahimsā) is described from 241 to 312. In this commentary he has criticised the conception of Harmlessness of Jainaism and shown their false notions or misconceptions of the spirit in the word 'Ahimsā'. At the first instance he has criticised 'Ahimsā' of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. He has shown the harm caused to roots shrubs or trees, and to the living beings by taking out bile from them on the authority of the medical science i.e. Āyurveda. In this chapter Jñānesvāra seems to be in a different mood altogether. As the mother gets annoyed towards her naughty son and scolds him only to improve him, Jñānesvāra displays anger towards the person who becomes a victim of the objects of senses.

Only to give correct guidance to the aspirants on the path way to God, he has shown and described the virtues in details, and emphasised, what an aspirant should be. At the end of every discussion of a virtue, he concludes, "With such symptoms appearing in him in full measure, he should be taken to have acquired full knowledge. "He has shown the signs of an incarnation of knowledge at many places in the Jñānesvarī and specially in this thirteenth chapter. He has used very sarcastic language, while showing the defects or misconceptions of the Ajñāni-Jīva. While commenting on non-violence or saving the lives of maladies by Āyurveda, he says, "They cut several trees,
stip others of their bark and slowly bake others, laden with
the fruit putting them in an air-tight receptacle. The innocent
trees which bear no enmity to any one are stabbed all over
rendering them lifeless and dry. They insert their hands into
the bowels of living beings and taking out bile from them, they
save other lives suffering from meladies "(Ovîs 227 to 229).

On this process of killing some living beings just to save
some from sufferings Jñâneśvara comments very sarcastically,

"Happy homes are pulled down and temples are constructed
from the debris; or money lenders are robbed and with their
money are opened free kitchens; covering only the head, the
remaining parts of the body are kept entirely naked; or pulling
down the house, and covering only court-yard with a pandal;
burning all the garments and making a fire for warming or
bathing an elephant; all these acts are useless; to sell the
bullock and with the money construct a stable; or exchange
parrot and do they not excite our laughter ?"(Ovîs 230 to 233).

Regarding non-violence in Jainism he criticises," Some use
water after straining it through a piece of cloth according
to the injunction of scriptures, but do not see how many little
lives are lost in the process of twisting the cloth dry. Some
do not cook or roast the grain for fear of causing Hiṃsā and
thereby put life to torture which act in itself amounts to
Hiṃsā. In this way they commit violence and consider their
actions to be non-violent "(Ovîs 234 to 256).
Jñānesvara has described non-violence of various kinds. It may consist of non-injuriousness either of any organs of the body or of speech or of mind. The ideal sage, according to him, does not even cross a stream for fear of breaking its serenity, he moves as a crane moves slowly on the surface of water; or as a bee moves slowly on a lotus, for fear of disturbing its pollen—The road on which he walks is itself a road of compassion; the direction, in which he walks, is a direction of love. He spreads his life, as it were, below the feet of other beings; The ideal sage is harmless even in speech; his love moves first, and then the words. Is it possible that the words coming from such a man may do injury to any one? He is as kind to his hearers as the father and mother; his words sing the mystic sound incarnate— True and soft, measured and sweet, his words are as it were the waves of nectar. They have once for all taken leave of opposition, argument, force, injury to beings, ridicule, persecution, touch to the quick-greed, doubt and deceit" (Gvūs 241 to 2).

In short Jñānesvara wants the aspirants to lead a 'Sāttvika-Jīvanā' in all the respects. 'Sāttvikatē' i.e. in which sacredness, purity, simplicity, honesty, sincerity etc. are included, is the watchword of not only Jñānesvara or Kabīra, but of all the saints in the world! Kabīra's Ethics is based on Satya, Āhimsā, Aparigraha, Purity and Simplicity in food and life in general, Humility, Self-control- Un-pretentiousness, Forbearance, Absence of Egoism etc. which are essential for a
saintly life and to attain the Self-Realization.

His viewpoint towards Truth (satya) is manifested in "Sāca-kaśaṅga" and "Bhesa-kaśaṅga". Like Jñānesvara, he has emphasised on "Sat-saṅga" in his expositions "Saṅgati-kaśaṅga", "Sādha-kaśaṅga" "Sādha-mahimā-kaśaṅga". His stress on humility, confidence is seen "Vinati-kaśaṅga" and "Bīsāsa-kaśaṅga".

In short Kabīra believes in "Sāttvikopāsanā" and "Sāttvika-jīvendā".

XVII CONCLUSION:

Kabīra was born under such circumstances and was brought up in such environments that denied all scholarly pursuits. Though he was a great Philosopher (Dārsanika) he could not express his theories in a systematic or scholarly way like Pandits of the type of Jñānesvara. As Kabīra wanted to awaken the Common illiterate masses and save them from the fetters of ignorance he has used the direct method of preaching, giving sermons or scolding them for the defects and deficiencies. This is similar to the Platonic method. Jñānesvara has used indirect and subtle method. He has expounded his conceptions of Ethics by showing and praising 'Sātvika' karma and condemning 'Tamas' Karma. In the Jñānesvarī we will find many pen-pictures of 'Sātvika' karma, Kartā and Kriyā or 'Jñāni-puruṣa', 'Utthan-puruṣa', 'Ādārśa-yogī', 'Ādārśa-Bhakta' etc. in which his conception of Ethics have become fully manifested.
Kabir's conceptions of Ethics are very limited. They are restricted to vices, demerits like "Para-dāra-gamana", "Mādyā-pāna", "Mānsa-bhaksana". He has severely criticised those who are after gold and woman (kanaka-kāntā). He has condemned the objects of the senses and association with the tender-sex while Jñānesvara criticised only the perverted, sexual mentality of the womanised persons, and not the objects of senses, which are ornaments of the devotion of God.

Jñānesvara and Kabir both have condemned the Doctrine of Hedonism i.e. 'Sukhavāda' of Ārāmkṣa and the materialists.

Jñānesvara has expressed his view points on 'good and pleasant', 'karma and akarma', 'hitā and amahita', 'sukha and dukkha', 'grāhya and niṣidācha' etc. The modern conceptions of Ethics such as 'Right' and 'Ought', 'Duty' and 'Obligation', 'Duty' and 'Purpose' etc. are also seen in the Jñānesvarī which are expressed indirectly through the mediums of similes metaphors and comparisons etc.

I have no hesitation in confirming that the Jñānesvarī is a complete science of Ethics in the ancient Indian sense of 'Nīti-sastra' as well as the modern sense of 'Moral Philosophy'.

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<td>B.G. XI: 32; Jāh: 297</td>
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<td>8</td>
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