

## Original Article

### Sant Tukaram : A Social Reformer

Dr. Swati Venkatrao Patil

Dept. of Sociology, Bahirji Smarak Mahavidyalaya Vasmat, Dist. Hingoli

Email: [swatipawar19744@gmail.com](mailto:swatipawar19744@gmail.com)

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*Sant tukaram was a praminant poet and saint during the Bhakti movement in India. He was born in 1608 in Dehu, a small village near Pune. His father Bholaba More was a rich farmer and a staunch devotee of God vitthala. He was influenced by the saint like Namdev, Dnyaneshwar, Kabir and Eknath. All Saints have enlightened and awakened society through mediums like abhangas, kirtans and pravachnas. There is a strong relationship between saints and society.*

*Sant tukaram established the unbroken tradition of warkari sect. In the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Tukaram is regarded as a refermer sant who laid the foredation for social awarkening. During this period, Maharashtra was in turnail. Through his abhangas ( devotional verses ), he guided society on the right path. Sant Tukaram was a realistic, fearless and at time, a saint who foldly attacked the bypocrisy in society with straingh forward words. He is best known for his abhangas. Abhang is a type of poetry that is sung as a form of praise to the hindu god vitthala. His abhangas are marked by their direchness and simplicity. They lack the elaborate imagety and symbolism. Instead, they use plain language to convey the poet's heartfelt dewotin to vitthala. These abhangas reflect the prevailing religious ideas of the time period in which they were written. They emphasize the importance of devotion, the power of god's grace, and the inter connectedness of all beings. Tukaram's Personal life was quite remarkable he lost his parents when he was only 17 years old. His the has emerged radiant from the furnace of adversity and sorrow. He has expressed his personal life through many of his abhang as as*

बरे जाले देवा निघाले दिवाळे

वरी या दुष्काळे पीडा केली

बरा कुणबी केलो नाही तरि दंभेची असतो मेलो

भले केले देवरायां नाचे तुका लागे पाया

**Keywords:** Sant Tukaram, Abhangas, Bhakti Movement, Social Reform, Marathi Literature, Devotion, Spiritual Poetry, Religious, nlightenment, Warkari Sect, Faith and Rationality

#### Introduction:

Sant Tukaram, a prominent figure of the Bhakti movement in 17th-century Maharashtra, is revered not only as a poet-saint but also as a profound social reformer. Born in 1608 in Dehu, near Pune, he emerged from a background of devotion and hardship. Through his abhangas—devotional verses sung in praise of Lord Vitthala—Tukaram influenced generations by challenging societal norms and exposing the hypocrisy entrenched in religious practices. His work laid the foundation for social awakening and helped shape the spiritual and cultural ethos of Maharashtra. This paper aims to explore Tukaram's poetic legacy, the social message in his work, and his role in fostering religious and social consciousness.



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#### Address for correspondence:

Dr. Swati Venkatrao Patil, Dept. of Sociology, Bahirji Smarak Mahavidyalaya Vasmat, Dist. Hingoli

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His nature, emotional life, struggles, and aspirations are expressed with such transparency that his poetry becomes his autobiography. William Wordsworth's quote "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity" perfectly suits Tukaram's poetry. The blessed journey of his life becomes poetic through his verses. In a way it can be said that his life and his poetry were not separate; rather, writing poetry was an integral part of his living process. Therefore, the essential principle of poetry. That the language should reflect the emotional state comes naturally to him. Sometimes, his poetry reflects sarcasm and irony, while at other times, it shows bluntness. Sometimes, it bears witness to a soft and gentle heart, and occasionally, a distinct and unique humor emerges. In essence the life they lived at that particular moment becomes the poetry of that time. The saying अंतरीचे धावे स्वभावे बाहेरी (what runs inside comes outside by nature) carries the same meaning. According to Vasudev Balwant "there is a subtle admixture of intellectual and emotional rhythm in his poetic work. Reason and feeling work hand in hand and the amalgam has a rare sweetness ..... he has the romance of a Bhakta or devoted servant of God, the passion of a lyricist, sympathetic imagination of a poet, the clear sightedness of a philosopher and the ardour of a reformer, all combined in his".

Many scholars have studied Tukaram's Abhang as (devotional poetry) form various perspectives to reveal their beauty. His "Gatha" (Collection of Abhangs) remains on the lips of common people as an eternal hymn. Presenting the important place of Tukaram's verse tradition, W.B. said.

"His poetry therefore has made a shrine in every heart of Maharashtra. Of Brahmins and Sudas alike. His verse is so familiar that I need not quote illustrative passages from his work. Suffice it to say that no other poet has contributed as many familiar quotations to the common speech of Maharashtra as Tukaram. He is more on the lips of the people than other poets."

Sant Tukaram's poetry holds a very valuable place in the tradition of Marathi literature. A poet who can clearly express themselves is also able to reveal the emotional life of their contemporaries. That is why many of Tukaram's poetic lines have taken on the form of aphorisms. Tukaram effortlessly conveys a universal experience of life, which is why we still use Tukaram's language today. In the true sense, Tukaram was a people saint of his time. He made efforts to eliminate the chaos in religious practices and the naive superstitions associated with faith. By dispelling the grip of blind faith on society's minds, Tukaram gave people a new religion and a new language. His work in religious reform and social enlightenment continues to guide society even today. His Abhangs have been a blessing to human life. In worldly terms, Saint Tukaram was a hero of the eighth generation.

## Conclusion:

Sant Tukaram's contribution to Indian spirituality and social reform is unparalleled. His poetry, rich in devotion and simplicity, continues to inspire millions. Through heartfelt abhangs, he expressed his personal struggles, spiritual convictions, and reformist ideas with clarity and courage. His verses transcend caste and class, reflecting universal values of love, truth, and equality. As a saint, philosopher, and social reformer, Tukaram gave voice to the common man and offered a new vision for society—one rooted in faith, rationality, and moral responsibility. His legacy endures as a guiding light in the journey of spiritual and societal progress.

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