

One Day
National Seminar



on

Relevance of the Ideas of Guru Jambheshwar in the Present Context

organized by

Madan Mohan Malviya Centre for Value Education

Maharaja Ganga Singh University, Bikaner

&

Jhambhvani Sahitya Academy, Bikaner

Date : 4th August 2018

Venue: Academic Block-II (Maharishi Vashistha Bhawan)

Maharaja Ganga Singh University, Bikaner

Thematic Note

The Bishnoi, a small Vaishnavite community most densely located in Rajasthan, follow the teachings and rules of their 15th Century Guru Jambheshwar. Guru Jambheshwar was born in 1451 to a Rajput family in Peepasar village in Western Rajasthan. He is regarded by his followers the 10th incarnation of Vishnu. He is often compared to other saints of the Bhakti era, such as Guru Nanak and Kabir because he was an iconoclast who rejected the caste system and much common ritual practice, emphasising rather inclusivity, devotion and the formless omnipresence of God.

Jambhoji's specific teachings emerged while he lived through a severe 10 year drought in Rajasthan. He saw the land and animals being destroyed and stripped of resources during the drought. During this time he had a vision which prompted him to establish the 29 rules, which were meant to encourage a better relationship between humans and their environment, their God and each other, in order to allow them to live harmoniously and prosperously in the harsh desert climate. The Bishnoi continue to live by Jambhoji's 29 principles; these rules are central to their self-conception as a

community. Seven of these principles provide guidelines for good social behaviour. For example, the rules state that one must remain content, modest and patient and must not steal, lie, condemn or criticize. Ten of these rules address personal hygiene and health practices, for example the requirements to bathe daily in the morning, filter water and not to smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs. Four rules relate to worship including daily prayer of sunrise and sunset, and monthly fasting. Finally, eight rules are related to conserving and protecting animals and trees. In addition to his 29 principles, Jambhoji wrote a set of 120 *Sabd*s (i.e statements). His *Sabd*s demonstrate that many of his teachings emerged from a strong rejection of other religion traditions. His *Sabd*s, thus, are the powerful reminiscents of the writings of Kabir and Nanak.

The objective of the Seminar, however, is not merely to provide a textual or historical analysis of the Bishnoi community, but rather to focus primarily on the lived traditions regarding relationship with the nonhuman.

Besides, the One Day Seminar intends to discuss and deliberate as to how the physical composition of Bishnoi Community and orans reflect their entanglements with the nonhuman. Secondly, the willingness to sacrifice is central to Bishnoi Dharma and emerges from a strict rejection of animal sacrifice in other Indian traditions. Like Arjuna they are called to fight and eradicate evil; they are soldiers of God and it is their Dharma to uphold the 29 rules and maintain harmony by whatever means necessary. Thirdly, how purity is both an embodied experience and a moral state ; how it provides the underlying ontological structures through which all aspects of natural world are understood, and many more,

Important dates

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| I. <i>Last date for the submission of Abstract</i> | - | <i>20 July, 2018</i> |
| II. <i>Last date for the submission of the full paper</i> | - | <i>1 August, 2018</i> |

Registration Fee 200/-

The Abstract and full Paper may be sent to email id. eternalvalues2017@gmail.com

Seminar Director