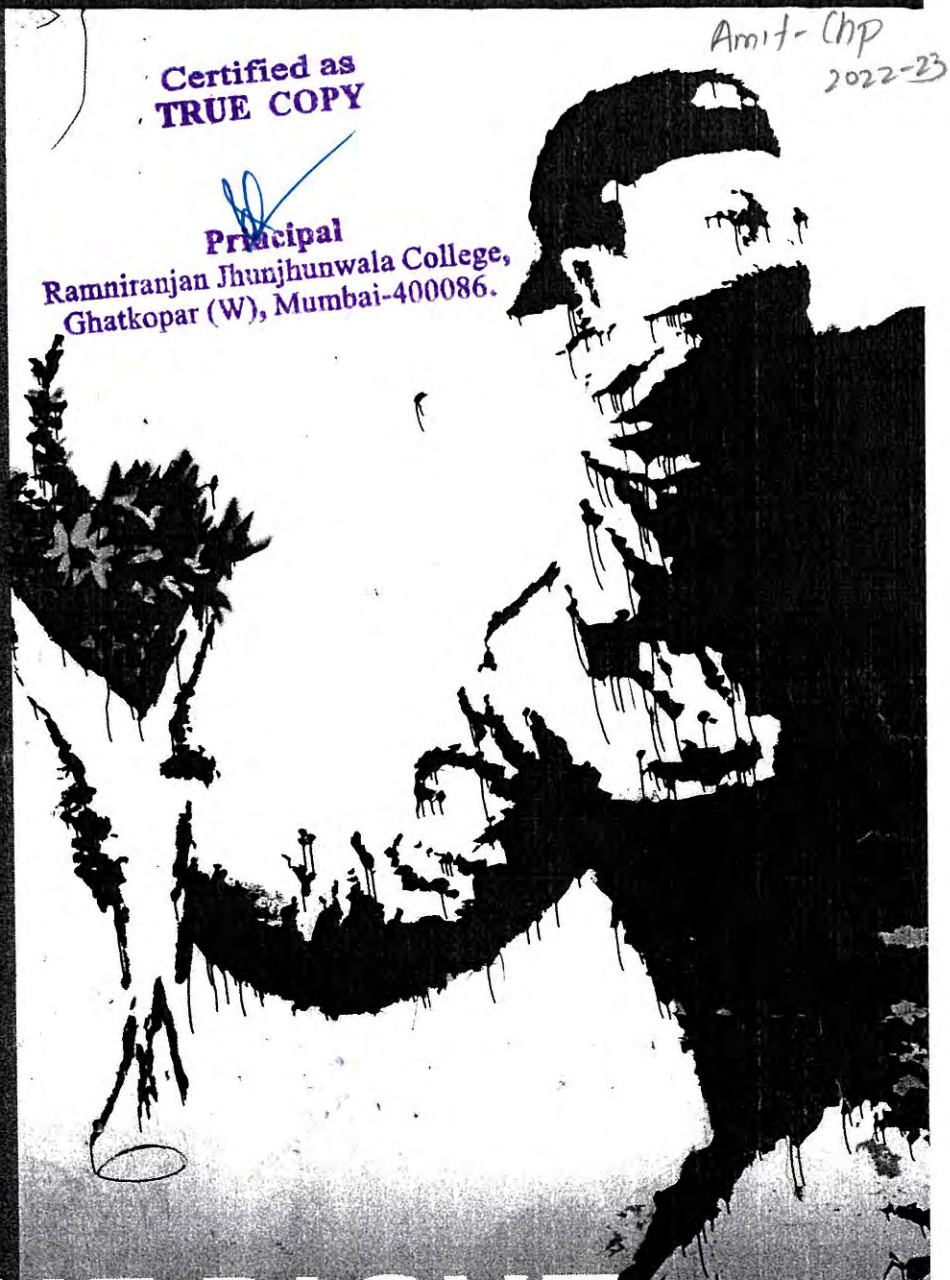

THE RIGHT TO RESIST

Philosophies of Dissent

EDITED BY
THOMAS BYRNE & MARIO WENNING

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Resistance in the Mysticism of Kabir and Jaspers

Amita Valmiki

The concept of resistance is understood in different ways in relation to its use in different circumstances. Generally speaking, the concept has a dual aspect: first, it refers to the rebel taking action against an atrocious regime; and second, it refers to the regime's resistance against the rebels. Obviously, action against the atrocious regime is affirmative, in the sense of pursuing justice and establishing a just society, while the regime's resistance may lack this affirmative dimension. This text concentrates on social resistance by comparing the writings of Kabir (*c.* 1440–1518), the mystic-saint from North India, and Karl Jaspers (1883–1969), a German philosopher in the existentialist tradition.

Throughout the centuries, history has proven that resistance has been part of human beings´ ingrained "virtue" (if I am allowed to use the term). Thus, it is a truism to say that resistance is the action taken by individuals and groups when they perceive an existing phenomenon to pose a threat, a sort of intimidation to the existing scenario; and the perception of such threat elicits resistance. M. K. Gandhi, B. R. Ambedkar, and Karl Marx all resisted the existing morphology of their times by either using the weapon of non-violent resistance (*satyagraha*/ holding on to truth/soul force or truth force) or by adopting a different religion—in their cases, Neo-Buddhism or revolution respectively.

Andrew Reeve believed that political philosophy focuses on two sides of the same coin: one is what we ought to do; and the other what we *actually* do. It is a shibboleth that philosophy is positioned and swayed by political activity. Though philosophy stands on a progressive pedestal, it is often contaminated by the power-politics of a particular perspective. Marx was not against theoretical philosophy, but asked for a suitable philosophical doctrine.[3] This is quite similar to Ambedkar's reasoning. In connection to the political aspect of resistance, its social aspect needs to be discussed since these two domains overlap and share

many traits. Hobbes' philosophy is crucial at this juncture. His political philosophy stands in contrast to many other political thinkers, including some who lived after his time. Thus, Hobbes' philosophy could be considered as rebellious not only against Plato and Aristotle, but also against Locke, Rousseau, Kant, and even Rawls. Instead of resisting "the absolute sovereign," Hobbes' "social contract theory" asks for submission to the sovereign authority. For Hobbes, resistance should be understood in a social context, and thus to resist man's "real nature" is selfish. Therefore, to avoid a war-like situation, surrendering oneself to authority seems to be the best possible solution as it curbs the natural instincts and avoids unnecessary bloodshed. Though criticized severely, Hobbes' understanding of resistance is very different to that of his predecessors or successors. As noted in the book *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*,

> J. W. N. Watkins argued that Hobbes's laws of nature are not moral but prudential, and resemble a doctor's orders to a patient rather than moral rules.[4]

In the social domain, over the years resistance has been manifested in many of the realms of social life; for example, between rigid orthodox patriarchs and social reformers, between conventionalists and liberals, or between religious orthodoxies and revolutionary saints and mystics (those who rebelled against prevailing fundamentalism and fanaticism to create space for religious freedom and community, thereby leading to harmony). Groups of philosophers are no exception to this form of social resistance. For instance, the empiricist John Locke spoke firmly about the rights of citizens against their oppressive dictators. He argued that rulers who violates the human rights of their citizens in fact violate the bond of trust authorized to them. Thus, one has the right to revoke a tyrant's commands. Jean-Jacques Rousseau maintained that humanity had in fact become enslaved by political, cultural, legal, and economic customs and institutions. Therefore, resistance to this kind of tyrannical and oppressive regime is necessary for any civilization. According to him, therefore, both individualist and republican conceptions in politics and in the social sphere should join forces to secure for the democratic rights of every citizen.

Revisiting Gandhi, his socio-political resistance towards the imperial rule of the British was *satyagraha* (as noted earlier), a "non-violent resistance" or "civil resistance." He brought about the amalgamation of socio-political action and spirituality, once thought to be an impossible activity, but manifested successfully by Gandhi. His resistance movement would be customized and deployed all over the world; later it was adopted by Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela. It commanded respect from philosophers and reformers globally. He questioned and

broke the traditional mold of religious formalism to ascend towards spiritualism. Leo Strauss, a German Jew, can be compared to Gandhi as he too was critical of existing dogma and adopted Socratic political philosophy. His views created bitter opposition in academia and intellectual circles during his lifetime. The abiding theme of Strauss' mature philosophic thinking was what he called the "theologico-political problem"; one that is quite similar to a problem formulated by Spinoza. This position is also very similar to Kabir's and Jaspers', as we shall see later.

The revolutionary activity of mystics who resisted superstitions in Indian society led to a "reformation" that heralded positive change.[5] For example, the Northern Indian bhakti movement (the path of devotion) was championed by Kabir, Guru Nanak (founder of Sikhism), and others: these mystics/saints spoke the language of the masses, breaking the shackles of high-caste Brahmins' authority over worshipping God in highly Sanskritized language.[6]

Kabir, a great mystic from Benares (Uttar Pradesh, Northern India), talked about the ecstatic experience of the "Real," the "Truth," or the "God."[7] For him, the rituals and practices of different religions had no use "if the purpose of mental one-pointed concentration on God was forgotten." Although little is known about Kabir's personal history, it is thought that he was born to a family of Muslim weavers (or brought up in one). If this is the case, his family was most probably recent converts from the prevalent faith of the common people of the time, in which Gorakhanath was held in great reverence. Therefore, they worshipped both Allah (the God of Muslims) and Ram (the God of Hindus).[8] Kabir disliked the bigotry and superstitions of all formal religions, as he influenced by both the *bhakti* (devotion) of Vaisnavism and Islamic *Sufism*. His writing was completely devotional, and he named his Lord as "*Allah-Ram*." As a result, however, he was persecuted by both Hindus and Muslims. S. N. Dasgupta remarks:

> With him (Kabir) and his followers, such as Ruidas and Dadu, we find a religion which shook off all the traditional limitations of formal religions, with their belief in revealed books and their acceptance of mythological stories, and dogmas and creeds that often obscure the purity of the religious light. . . . . When Kabir's parents found that they could not subdue his Hindu tendencies they wanted to circumcise him, and at this he said:
>
> > Whence have come the Hindus and Mussulmans? Who hath put them in their different ways?
>
> Having thought and reflected in thy heart, answer this—who shall obtain Heaven and who Hell.
>
> *Bijak*[9]

The subjective inwardness in relation to God that was upheld by Kabir's predecessors was popularized by Kabir himself. We find in him an open challenge to the existing socio-philosophical ideologies that existed at that time. The resistance to orthodoxies and dogmatic conventions is very obvious in Kabir's writings and had been initiated by Kabir's so-called teachers. As P. D. Barthwal notes:

> These precursors of Kabir represent an intermediate position between *Saguna* (qualified) and the *Nirgunas* (unqualified) schools.....The tendency to break the bond of caste in the sphere of religion, Monism, the all-absorbing Love of God and a quietistic and resigned life, is all there. These teachers can, thus be said to have prepared a path.....for Kabir, who carried these tendencies to the extreme.[10]

Kabir says:

> I searched for God for years and years and I could not find him. Then I dropped the whole idea and I became still and loving.....Now I know the way..... it is not in formalities, but in an informal friendliness with the existence.[11]

So, Kabir in fact recommended *bhakti marga* (the path of devotion) as he felt that only the path of devotion exalts man, and elevates him from a mundane level to spiritual heights while (existentially speaking) still remaining very much grounded to this world. (This view coincides with the "theistic existentialism" of Søren Kierkegaard and Karl Jaspers.) Kabir's resistance has been truly reformatory, however. His writings seem to show the same rebellious zeal of the *Lokayat* (the *Charvaka* philosophy of materialism in Indian philosophy), although of course we must not forget the core difference between these two philosophical approaches.[12] His resistance to rigid conventions, and his demonstration of the path for salvation, are revealed in various collections of Kabir's songs:

1. *Bijak* (of *Kabir panth* [sect]);
2. Songs in *Adi Guru Granth;* and
3. The *Kabir Granthavali* (questionable authenticity)—compiled by Dadu Panthis, followers of the sixteenth-century saint, Dadu.

His reformatory writings show us his theistic existential character. Kabir denounced vigorously religious practices followed by Hindus at that time,[14] resisting the organized religion that did not allow an individual to take flight and transcend the boundaries created by the authoritarians. Therefore, his poems are more about a socio-political struggle that later settles in a realm of spirituality that is accessible to all, especially the marginalized and the subalterns. Kabir

believed in "dialogical communication," and therefore he recited his poems (to his disciples, who wrote them down later) in the vernacular language with which most people were familiar. Jaspers adopted a similar approach when he acquainted his readers with the concept of symbols and ciphers. These would transcend the objectification of religious language to reinstate the universal code of communication, which is an ongoing process. The ciphers would accentuate a much-needed dialogue between various thought systems in order to create a level playing field on which all could live in harmony leading to a balanced and fair society. In Kabir's time, many dialects and languages were spoken in Northern India. This enhanced the poetic language and simultaneously brought people together; another aspect shared with Jaspers and his take on religious philosophy.

Like Kabir, Jaspers resisted the formalistic religion that promised to make spiritual experience accessible to all, but failed to do so. For Jaspers, formalized religion is based on objectified truths that do not accept the diverse ways in which truth is verbalized. Like Jaspers, Kabir believed in complete "unity" as a concept that one cannot arrive at by arguments. Like Kierkegaard and Jaspers, Kabir also believed in the "inwardness" of subjective consciousness where God-realization can occur. The mystics believed that they sang these songs because "Truth requires to be sung." St. Dyaneshwar (from Maharashtra, Western India) said: "There is no bondage or liberation, there is nothing to accomplish. There is only the joy of expounding." Therefore, there are no rational arguments. Both the mystics' and the existentialists' approach belittled the importance of reason, and both also emphasize that everyone has the choice to "become." Saints of the medieval period in India believed that becoming is realizing the Truth that is One, while existentialists concentrated on the universal concept of becoming. Though the joy of becoming is immense for the mystics, the existentialists may say that joy may or may not follow in the process of becoming. Again, both emphasize the concept of "hope" that exists for all to become. But the "essence" of becoming for Kabir (or for any mystic) is "God," while the existentialists "denied the essence." While the two perspectives may differ, both are characterized by an open approach that emphasizes freedom. Whether freedom causes joy or dread is inconsequential. Kabir says in *Bijak*:

> You and I are of one blood; one life exists in us both. From one mother the world is born, what then is this sense of separateness? We have all come from the same country; we all drink from the same fountain; yet the ignorant divide us into innumerable sects.[15]

Karl Jaspers began his career as a psychologist, but by the early 1920s he turned to philosophy. He exerted influence on three major branches of philosophy, namely, epistemology, the philosophy of religion, and political theory. It was not philosophy, but his writings on governmental conditions in Germany and his ideas on reorienting moral-democratic education that would later influence the Federal Republic of Germany. Jaspers' contribution to German politics is noteworthy. His approach, dealing with pragmatic field of politics, was more like that of a mystic's since he did not back any single faith. This is suggestive of his predilection for both North German Protestantism and the religious philosophy of Kant and Kierkegaard. His philosophical contributions had already been indicated in his books on psychology, especially his book *Psychology of World Views* (1919). Though not well documented, the existential viewpoint is reflected in this book, which he developed in his typical "Jaspers-style". He resisted punctilious philosophy, instead examining and deliberating on anthropological and experiential questions in philosophy. For this he was reprimanded by Rickert and Husserl as they thought he vitiated the philosophical realm by treating the subject as he had other disciplines. Jaspers restored Kantian philosophy though he disagreed with Neo-Kantians. His emphasis was not on Kant's deontological approach in a categorically imperative and formalist doctrine of self-legislation; instead, Jaspers brought Kant's metaphysical experience, Kant's spontaneously decisive freedom, and Kant's views on an authentic inner life (in analogy to the mystic Kabir's disagreement with similar positions) to the forefront of his thought. It is therefore very conspicuous that Jaspers shared the mystics' approach. Since Jaspers was married to a Jewish woman, he felt quite threatened by Heidegger's support for the National Socialists in 1933. Jaspers' works in the 1930s thus carefully avoided political theories, and he concentrated more on the inner religious aspects of his philosophy. Again, it is quite apparent that he was dazzled more by Nietzsche's psychological approach than his philosophical perspective, believing that philosophical claims need no formal verification but should instead be understood as expressions of "underlying mental dispositions." So, like Nietzsche, he believed in resisting both rationalistic Puritanism and the idea of realizing the absolute truth or absolute knowledge. Like Heidegger and Nietzsche, he could not accept that human existential issues should be tackled externally and indifferently; but they need to be viewed literally, i.e., "existentially." There was one element of Nietzsche's philosophy that Jaspers could not align himself with, namely Nietzsche's "naturalistic vitalism." Thus, he emphasized "subjectivity" as a locus of truthful transcendence like Kierkegaard, a theme which is not found in Nietzsche's work. Schelling also exerted some influence on

Jaspers. Like Schelling, Jaspers believed in re-invoking the truth of revelation, that which goes against the rational evidence of epistemology. This again reveals a similarity to Kabir's mystical philosophy of resisting formal epistemological approach towards existential issues.[16]

Though influenced by these philosophers, he was very much averse to the idea of "progress" and "transcending the past" in order to move toward true philosophy. He was really interested in the quest for eternal truth and the great traditions offered by China, India, and the West. The fact that these philosophical traditions offered relative truths about the ultimate of which they had revelations was specific to their state of mind and condition. These are different paths leading to the Eternal Truth. According to Jaspers, the claim made by philosophers in the past to offer "true doctrinal philosophy" was inadmissible; for him, they offered only relative truths. This made Jaspers distinct as a mystic who refutes doctrinal and theoretical graduation——that is, where one tends to become fanatic and where "real communication" is impossible. This reminds us of mystics singing and narrating stories in the vernacular. In his book *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, Jaspers says: "Philosophy proper must reject the idea of progress, which is sound for sciences."[17]

The concentration on "being" where existential problems can be addressed created a link between Jaspers and the mystics (especially Kabir, Guru Nanak, and others) who spoke of "*Ek Nirankara*" (the only unqualified One). He believed that the sciences in recent times have inclined to become communal (as they have drawn boundaries among themselves). Stumpf, in his book *Socrates to Sartre*, points out that Jaspers (like the mystics) wanted to have a unified, secular, and single science of Being. He writes:

> It would seem that a universal science could be formulated by bringing together in some form of unity of all the particular sciences. Could not the unified sciences constitute a single science of being, of total reality?[18]

According to Jaspers, though science has expanded its reach by ways of discoveries and inventions, sciences are succored by a constrained boundary-line formula that withhold them to accept the Being as Being; [this is to say that its objectivity seems to be a hurdle where it does not allow "to think beyond".] Sciences objectify the Being (name it be called God, or Ultimate, or Absolute) and structure "the Being" which applies more generally to all beings. This makes the Being too local. It is thus obvious that Jaspers resisted natural sciences. Therefore, at this juncture, it has to be noted that Jaspers believed that philosophy has to revisit its own field and reconstruct itself. Unlike the mystical approach,

"Science, he argues, is sub-philosophic because it does not deal with the unique inner experiences of concrete individual human beings."[19] As an existential philosopher, Jaspers believed that "Existence is something that can never become a mere object; it is the 'Source' whence springs my thinking and acting." At one point he could connect with Hegel, who raised philosophy to the level of science. This is because Jaspers could objectify truth as he insisted (again like the mystics) that "truth is subjectivity";

> ...that philosophizing means communicating not about objects or objective knowledge but about the content of personal awareness produced by the individual's inner constitution. Existential thinking, says Jaspers, is "the philosophic practice of life.[20]

Thus, Jaspers arrives at the conception of "genuine communication." Existence does not mean hoarding knowledge, ego-centrism, and their consequence in solipsism; but it involves a dialogue between individuals to further the genuine communication of "becoming real."

Jaspers' theistic existentialism accentuates "interpersonal communication studies" through the inner self that does not claim any finalizability where there are restraints on the thought process. Instead, he encourages the embrace of the manifold and variegated expressions on the same subject, viz. God. Therefore, one has to enlarge and widen the horizons of our "disciplinary thinking." As a result, there is a constant need to encourage communication and thereby build up the solidarity that leads to humanity. Like Kabir, who believed in humane values—which evolve through ongoing communication—a complimentary echo can be found in Jaspers' "dialogical possibilities of Existenz-with-Existenz communication."[21] Jaspers was of the opinion that the philosopher should be concerned with devising and construing an environment where universal dialogical communication between human beings is possible. He notes that the channel of the possibility of universal communication is bifurcated in dual spheres; one is "philosophical logic," which is inevitably ingrained in every discourse; the second is that as human beings we are subject to a common historical backgr[illegible]l that built a common platform for all to live together. This commonplace pre-historical to historical journey in the sphere of philosophy lays the groundwork for universal communication. Therefore, the basic concern of philosophy is to evolve plausibility and credibility to increase the expanse of communication to the widest possible extent.[22] At this very juncture, a person reaches a state of illumination; a radiance where s/he is introduced to oneself and to others in a fundamental way. In the process, one recognizes oneself in relation to others.

Jaspers distinguished orthodox and dogmatic religious ideas among the multiple symbols and myths found in different religions and religious sub-sects that allow one to search in his/her own way to the Ultimate that is God. He believed that the authentic revelation of true faith would neither encroach on nor remove human freedom. Thus, one has to keep a positive view of religion and God. Views on both can be expressed in a variety of ways, on many levels, and in many languages. Because of these views, though Jaspers personally never appreciated being described as "existentialist," his entry into existentialism cannot be underestimated. He took the human situation into consideration. The human angle is always reflected in his philosophy (this may be because he was psychiatrist and lectured on psychology.) A human being can be considered an empirical entity, living in this world of experience. Through observation, Jaspers discovered the unique character of human consciousness, which he called *Bewusstein*, "and most importantly and distinctively how finite incompleteness of human being points to a transcendent 'beyond'; name 'it' God." The personal intuitive aspect is very important for realization of the truth. His book *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy* (pg. 19f) mentions following points:

1. His dissatisfaction with his empirical achievements.
2. His submission to the absolute (the unconditional moral imperative).
3. His urge for unity—pressing beyond all empirical diversity to its basic source.
4. His indefinable memory of pre-creation, pre-world existence (comparable to Platonic reminiscence).
5. His consciousness of immortality (i.e., his writing even now above time while living in time.).[23]

To conclude, it seems that both Kabir and Jaspers have one very important thing in common, and that is they are both "existential mystics." Their main interest was not theoretical but practical. "Karl Jaspers was a Christian much as he was a German. This is because he never chose to be either. He applied both the terms to himself descriptively rather than eulogistically." So, one can even call them both spiritual or existential pragmatists.

Both Jaspers and Kabir emphasize the will rather than either intellect or intuition. I think the same parallel can be drawn among all theistic mystics, as well as theistic existentialists like Jaspers and Kierkegaard. Like Kabir, Jaspers writing is mystical, and there is unavoidable paradox and a "Necessary Paradox," which is beyond logic-proper and is over-simplistic. Both have a mystic's approach;[25] that do not try to prove the "object" of the "subjective experience" but feel strongly that the

intuitive "real truth" demands boundless communication. For Jaspers, it is a rational demand that one has to transgress the boundaries for communication. The resistance that is revealed in Jaspers and Kabir is quite explicit in their need and demand for ongoing communication that is been thwarted by authoritarian religions of the world. In Jaspers' case, the orthodox Christian faith, and in Kabir's case, the caste system in Hinduism and Hindu-Muslim dichotomy, restricts communication as one cannot transcend the paradigm set by religious scriptures; where "the others" are not included. By means of communication, this boundary is transcended. In the course of this transcendence (term it "becoming" in an existential sense), the benefits are twofold for an individual: first, the self-realization of the infinite power of dialogue that lies within the individual; and second, through dialogical communication the realization of "existential universal camaraderie," that feeling of common cause that leads to solidarity.[26] The echo of this can be heard in Kabir, who (as noted) communicated to his disciples via innumerable poems in regional languages so that through dialogical communication he could establish "unity in diversity" (as emphasized by Jaspers.).

The resistance to a formal pattern of thinking, or conventional means of practice in religion, or in the social sphere where religion plays a pivotal role, is characteristic of both Jaspers and Kabir. By communicating, this mentality can be overcome.

The existential love affair that they both built up in their writings is a clear resistance to the traditional way of seeking "the truth." Jaspers is averse to the concept of (so-called) "progress" and one finds the same in Kabir.

Both Jaspers and Kabir resisted ghettoization—along with the "clash of civilizations"—and the resultant consequence of their resistance is an acceptance of pluralistic cultures as highly beneficial and enticing. They rebelled against the conservative attitude of preserving individual identity and belittling "the others," be they religious, ethnic, racial, caste-based, or gender-related. Organized belief systems typically deprecates the subalterns, those who are always left behind and persecuted. Tagore described this kind of organized religious sect as "an artificial average."[29] This runs parallel to Jaspers' ideology. Like Kabir, Jaspers believed in fellowship and cooperation, which binds the populace in a loving and patient bond.[30] For harmony and peace in society, it is vital to live with differences and to celebrate diversity is very important. In fact, the first lecture delivered by Jaspers was entitled "Illumination of Existence," and he preferred that title to "Existential Philosophy" because he resisted the idea of a "formal school of thought" that might impose barriers on people, confining their thought to the four "walls" of the school. Kabir was similar inasmuch as he was also against "the

six schools of Indian philosophy."[31] Both believed that "existence" is always an actuality with open-ended possibilities. This kind of actual existence transcends the way of projecting oneself beyond the objective self and empirical world; but this can be achieved in actual empirical existence. Jaspers believed that one can accept different traditions, as all strive to achieve transcendental truth. Therefore, philosophical faith and religious faith *can* come together without betraying each other. Kabir also chose an interiorized view of religion, where the *sahaja* ("easy," "spontaneous," or "with oneself") state was ultimate aim of devotion. One experiences this state through freedom, which Jaspers advocated.

To sum up the ideas of Jaspers in Kabir's words:

> ... The *Puran* (Hindu Holy Scriptures) and *Koran* are mere words; lifting up the curtain I have seen...[32]

Kabir articulated what he experienced; and he knew that all other things are not true (the scriptural arguments put forward by the upper-caste Brahmins), a fact which Jaspers would probably not deny. Like Socrates and Kierkegaard, Jaspers and Kabir brought high philosophy down to the earth and sowed the seeds of mutual love, understanding, concord, and peace among in their respective countries.

The two quotes at the beginning of the article are very relevant in the context of Jaspers and Kabir. For Jaspers, mere existence has no meaning in itself; it is meaningful in affinity with "freedom," however. Similarly, power has the potential to curb freedom, rendering existence meaningless. Power needs supportive means of communication, the dialogue that restores unity. Therefore, one has to decipher the ciphers and symbols used in many religions to make the hidden meaning more vocal and bring forth unification.[33] Kabir shares those sentiments. As noted above, Kabir recited his poems in a variety of Northern Indian spoken dialects, which helped him encourage the social metamorphosis needed during his lifetime (and which is equally relevant today). For him, these dialects deliver the nuances of virtues that have absolute existential value. Therefore, the second quote (at the chapter's beginning) by Gandhi reveals the close links between Jaspers and Kabir: adaptability cannot be taken for granted as mere imitation, but matures to generate the potential to resist something that shuns the freedom of dialogue-based communication and champions the cause of unification and solidarity. Kabir and Jaspers agree on the concept of "encompassing", which permeates everything and from which existential issues are comprehended and transcended; ultimately, both nod to *Existenz* (as the *Dasein* or *Geist* that has transcended the objectivized world while being grounded in the empirical world).[34] In both Kabir[35] and Jaspers, as an existential individual "I" am introduced

to myself; but knowing exists only in relation to "others". Therefore, *Dasein* is known in its bona fide form as *Existenz*, as being among other beings in the world. At any case, and at any cost, resistance to canonical version transcends to evolve a better human culture.

Notes

1 Wayne Gabardi, *Negotiating Postmodernism* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 76.
2 N. B. Sen, *Wit and Wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi* (New Delhi: New Book Society of India, 1960), 26.
3 Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* [Third Edition] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
4 Perez Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 108.
5 This feature of resistance is very typical to mystic/saints as mentioned by R. D. Ranade in his book *Mysticism in Maharashtra* (1933); Ranade mentions very empathetically that there are two types of mystics, one, quietist and the other, activist. But without moral concern a mystic is not a mystic.
6 *Sanskrit*—a language spoken only by upper-caste Brahmins, scholars, teachers and kings, overall, the elite group.
7 The words Real, Truth, and God are usually capitalized, as these words in the *Vedanta* philosophy of Hinduism believe that the world is unreal, fleeting, and that the only "real" part of it is God, called Brahman.
8 Though there is difference of opinion among scholars regarding the historical data.
9 Surendranath N. Dasgupta, *Hindu Mysticism* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1926), 157–8.
10 Pitambar D. Barthwal, *Traditions of Indian Mysticism* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1978), 250.
11 *Sacred Space: Breaking Conventions.* Agencies. Times of India (April 11, 2000).
12 As the *Charvakas* belong to atheistic non-Vedic materialist school of Indian philosophy, while Kabir embraces the concept of God though absolutely in an unconventional manner.
13 Max Arthur Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion: It's Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors,* vol. 6. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 145.
14 Swami Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism: The Unchanging Testament* (Olympia, WA: Atma Books, 2012.), 33.
15 Jaspers' resistance to formal religion is palpable in the quote, ". . .he (Jaspers) argues that religion is essentially justified by its ability to speak about human qualities, which

cannot be reduced to formal motives or attributes. It forfeits this justification, however, not where it spiritualizes material human interests, but where it objectivizes the possibilities of human transcendence by incarcerating these in doctrines, dogma or laws." See Chris Thornhill, *Karl Jaspers: Politics and Metaphysics* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 209. The same rebellious demeanor is found in Kabir while confronting formal religion. Kabir too overtly resisted the ceremonial religion with fixated dogmas. As noted by Evelyn Underhill, "...the whole approach of piety, Hindu and Moslem alike—the temple and mosque, idol and holy water, scriptures and priests—were denounced by this inconveniently clear-sighted poet (Kabir) as mere substitute for reality, dead things intervening between the soul and its love— ..." See Rabindranath Tagore, *Songs of Kabir* (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2010), 14.

16 Karl Jaspers, *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, trans. by R. Manheim (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), 166–7.

17 Samuel Enoch, Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 461–2.

18 Ibid, 462.

19 Ibid, 463.

20 Ronald D, Gordon, "Karl Jaspers: Existential Philosopher of Dialogical Communication." *South Communication Journal* vol. 65, no. 2–3 (2000), 105–18.

21 Jaspers, Ashton (trans.) *Philosophy and the World; Selected Essays by Karl Jaspers* (Washington, DC: A Gateway Edition, 1989), 296–7.

22 Jaspers, *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*.

23 Vinay Dharwadkar, Kabir, *The Weaver's Song*, trans. Vinay Dharwadkar (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2003), 202.

24 "The Greek word *mysterion* is rooted in the other Greek words such as *mystos* which means 'keeping silence' and *myein* which means 'closed lips.'" Michael Hickey, *Get Real: Reality and Mystery* (Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 2011), 37.

25 Jaspers notes, "The demand for boundless communication testifies to the solidarity of all men in potential understanding." See Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976), 247.

26 Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism: The Unchanging Testament* (Bijak, Sabda 43), 333.

27 Tagore notes that Kabir did not accept the absolute claim of theism nor of monism; in fact, he cannot be quoted as a founder of any sect. Therefore, Kabir could affirm of a pluralistic society with difference of opinion. He was a poet who spoke like a Sufi that appealed to inter-caste and inter-religious congregation. See Manjulika Ghosh and Raghunath Ghosh, *Language and Interpretation: Hermeneutics from East–West Perspective* (New Delhi: North Book Centre, 2007), 220.

28 Huber comments, "Hannah Arendt as well as Karl Jaspers unfolded the insight that moral responsibility transcends the realm of individually accountable actions." See Wolfgang Huber, *Christian Responsibility and Communicative Freedom: A Challenge*

for the Pluralistic Societies, Collected Essays, ed. Willem Fourie (LIT Verlag, 2012),

11. Arendt and Jaspers resonates to Kabir's literature where they were against Germany's anti-Semitic approach; whereas Kabir was against the dominance of upper-caste Brahmins and the ill feeling between Hindus and Muslims.

29 The six schools of Indian philosophy are: *Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva Mimamsa,* and *Uttar Mimamsa* (also known as *Vedanta* or *Upanishads*); these are orthodox, *Vedic,* and theistic schools based on formalistic philosophy.

30 Vinay Dharwadkar Kabir, trans. Tagore, *Songs of Kabir* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2003), 14–15.

31 It is "illustrated via Jaspers that ciphers or symbols illuminate each representative universe of discourse." See Robert Allen Evans, *Responsible Talk about God* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 155.

32 William Desmond notes, "We humans are not the encompassing of Encompassing. Still there is a sense in which for Jaspers we humans are the Encompassing; we are not determinate things but as *Existenz* participants in the truth in this more ultimate sense." See Claire Elise Katz and Lara Trout, *Emmanuel Levinas: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers* (London : Routledge, 2005), 96.

33 Evelyn Underhill records, "That Supreme Spirit whom he (Kabir) knew and adored, and to whose joyous friendship he sought to induct the souls of other men, transcended all metaphysical categories and all creedal definitions. See O'Neill, *Unstruck Music: Spiritual Poetry of Kabir* (J. P. O'Neill, 2008), 12.

34 NOTE TEXT MISSING

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