



Philosophy Of Jnaneshwara Expounded In Amrutanubhava

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the Natha philosophy expounded in the Amrutanubhava. It also discusses the impact of Yogavasistha on Amrutanubhava. The purpose of this paper is to explore the philosophical views of Santa Jnaneshwara and the influence of the various ancient works like the Yogavasistha. Various books authored by eminent scholars are studied to find out the essence of the Amrutanubhava philosophy. Amrutanubhava is the first philosophical composition written in Marathi by Sant Jnaneshwara. He wrote Jnaneshwari which is a commentary on Bhagavadgita. Afterward, he wrote Amrutanubhava which is his independent work throwing light on his philosophical views. In Amrutanubhava, he expounded the philosophy of Natha Sampradaya. He accepted that Brahman is without birth, and eternal but he rejected the theory of Maya and said that Brahman and the world, both are real. The World is not a dream, an illusion. But it is the extension of Brahman. This novel theory is called Sphurtivada. (Chidvilasvada) They are eternally united but for their own enjoyment, they appeared to be separated. Shakti is incomplete without Shiva and Shiva is action less without Shakti. It is the eternal divine couple. He stated that the subject of this text is Samvid rahasya.(701). The Advayananda of Shiva-Shakti is Samvid rahasya. Santa Jnaneshwara was from the Natha tradition so he expounded the Natha philosophy, but as he was well versed with the vedas, Upanishads and many ancient Sanskrit texts, one can find the impact of these texts on his work. The name Anubhavamrut (popularly known as (Amrutanubhava) is also suggestive of the influence of Yogavasistha.

Keywords: Adwaita, Advayananda, Maya, Samvid rahasya, Sphurtivada, Chidvilasa.

Introduction:

Amrutanubhava is the first philosophical composition written in Marathi by Santa Jnaneshwara. He wrote Jnaneshwari which is a commentary on Bhagavad-Gita in Marathi. Afterwards he wrote Amrutanubhava which is his independent work throwing light on his philosophical views. Jnaneshwara took Sanjeevan Samadhi at a very young age but during this short life, he gave very precious gifts to the Marathi language in the field of spirituality, literature, and philosophy. He wrote all his works in the local Marathi language so that the spiritual knowledge hidden in the Sanskrit language which was the monopoly of a few people, will be available to the common people. He spread this valuable

knowledge to the masses. Amrutanubhava is a masterpiece in the field of philosophy and spirituality. It contains 10 chapters consisting of 807 verses.

Works of Santa Jnaneshwara

- 1) Jnaneshwari or Bhavarathadipika which is a commentary on Bhagavad-Gita.
- 2) Amrutanubhava is a purely philosophical work. The philosophical treat
- 3) Changdevprasashti which is a letter addressed to Changdeva. It is a sort of upadesha to Changadeva. It contains just 65 verses but it gives the basic doctrine and the essence of Jnaneshwara's philosophy in a nutshell.
- 4) Various abhangas
- 5) Haripath

Santa Jnaneshwaras philosophy as expounded in Amrutanubhava

Amrutanubhava is his independent work. It contains 807 verses in ten chapters. This book also proves that Jnaneshwara was not only a great philosopher but a great poet also. Amrutanubhava is a commentary on the experience of self-realization. It is a masterpiece in the field of spiritualism, philosophy, and poetry.

The word Amrutanubhava is a combination of two words. Amruta and anubhava. Amruta means immortality and Anubhava means experience. So Amrutanubhava means experience of immortality. It is an experience of self-realization.

The text starts with Mangalacharana (Auspicious prayer). Jnaneshwara offers his prayers to the ultimate reality in five Sanskrit verses. This is according to the old tradition to offer prayers to God and Guru and ask for blessings before starting any holy work. According to Natha sampradaya, the guru is the embodiment of Lord Shiva. So Jnaneshwara bows before his guru Nivruttinatha in the first stanza. Then he submits before the Shankari Vidya -the absolute knowledge. Then he prays to Shiva and Shakti. Shankarividya suggests the influence of Kashmiri Shaivism. At the end of Mangalacharana, he prays to Shiva the absolute brahman who is the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the world. Thus the five verses of Mangalacharana show that Jnaneshwara was from the Natha sampradaya which has its roots in the Shaiva tantras. These five verses give the essence of the Natha philosophy, The reference to Shiva sutras (160), the words like Shiva-shakti, (17) Poornahanta (785), etc. are from the Shaiva tradition which shows his love towards Shaiva tradition. In a verse (161) he referred to Bhagavad-Gita with great respect. This shows that he has achieved unity of Shaiva and Vaishnava sects. He stated that the subject of this text is Samvid rahasya.(701).The Advayananda of Shiva-Shakti is Samvid rahasya. In Amrutanubhava, guru Nivruttinatha has special importance. In the Amrutanubhava or in Jnaneshwari, there is no physical description of Nivruttinatha. Nivrutti is a principle (tattva).

He is described as 'aksharam', 'ajam', 'advaitam', 'atmatattvam', (1to4). In a verse (701) he is described as 'chid gagani uddaila chidadityu'. (*चिदगगनी उदेला चिदादित्यु*) In Jnaneshwari also he is described as 'chitsurya'.(Jnaneshwari 16-1)

Even though Nivrutti tattva is advaitam, ajam, avyayam, it is 'एक म्हणता भेदे तो हानानात्व नांदे' even though Nivrutti who is Avyaya, Advaita, he becomes two. he accepts dwaita. The reason Jnaneshwara gives for accepting dwaita is explained in the following verse.

Yekapana navhe susas| mhanouni shishyache karoni misa je pahanechi aapule vaas\ pahat ase||77|| (एकपण नव्हे सुसास। म्हणोनि शिष्याचे करोनि मिस।जे पाहणेची आपुली वास पाहत असे).

Nivruttinatha was not satisfied with the aloneness so he decided to become two and enjoy the swarupananda through Guru-shishya. The same thought is expressed in Jnaneshwari by Lord Shri Krishna.

(Jnaneshwari 6-113 to 119) The Lord Shri Krishna thought that if Arjuna reaches the state of ultimate reality, he will become one with me so he purposely kept a thin curtain between him and Arjuna so that there will be dwaita between the two and the Lord can enjoy this Swarupananda in this Adwaya state. Here Jnaneshwara is expounding a new philosophical thought. He is depicting the new thought of enjoying the Adwaita through dwaita. He is suggesting the Adwayananda of the Shiva-Shakti. Due to this new thought, the adjectives like 'Aksharam','ajam','Adwaitam' have become more comprehensive and meaningful.

Normally these adjectives are given to Brahman and so automatically the second object is decided as Maya. According to Vedanta, if the other object is sat, then it is not possible that Brahman will be Ajam, Aksharam, Avyayam. So naturally the second object has to be mithya. But Jnaneshwara has given a blow to this traditional thought. According to Jnaneshwara, the universe is also 'Sat'. He says, "jagachisevastuprabha." universe is the Prabha(tej) of that Sat. It cannot be separated from Sat.-from that Brahman. He gives the support of shruti for his statement. -'vibhati yasya bhasa sarvam idam'.(विभाती यस्य भासा सर्वमिदं)

In Amrutanubhava, Jnaneshwara gives this new thought of enjoying the sweetness of Adwaita through Dwaita. He suggests the adwayananda of Shiva- Shakti.

Dauni donipana |ekarasaache aarogana |Kareeta aahe mehun aanaadi je||1-20|| (दावोनि दोन्हीपण एकरसाची आरोगण। करिता आहे मेहुण अनादि जे।) Amrutanubhava

So, this Nivrutti tattva is the Aditattva. It is all-pervading. It is like looking in the mirror. While experiencing newer and newer experiences, this tattva remains avikrit. It is Avikarya, even if it is full of action, still it is without any action.

Jnaneshwari depicts this tattva as Purusha -Prakruti. In Amrutanubhava it is described as Shiva-shakti. Even though, Nivruttinath is Adwaitin, from this Adwaita, the 'Mithya' ie., Shiva- shakti are created. But here the word Mithya is taken in a different sense., The word, mithun-mehun, comes from the root mith. So Jnaneshwara suggests this new meaning to the word mithya. Jnaneshwara tells further how the Shivashakti is created. He says,

Swasankoche Priya rudhavili jene' स्वसंकोचे प्रिया रुढविली

जेणे//३२//Amrutanubhava

Nivrutti or the shivatattva shrinks itself, so the Shakti comes into play and there is the Mithun shiva-shakti. Shivashakti is a dwandva and not dvaita. The Advaita Atmanstattva is manifested as Advaya shiva-shakti. The Chaitanyaswarupa Shiva became crystallized so his Priya, the Shakti gets manifested.

The examples given by Jnaneshwara depict the Advaya Siddhanta and not the Adwaita. Jnaneshwara states the ekarupata and not ekatva. This ekarupata is like gold and its luster, pearl and its glow, Kasturi and its fragrance, or sun and his light (Surya Prabha), moon and her light (Chandra and Chandane). We cannot separate the luster from gold or we cannot separate pearl and its glow or luster. We cannot separate waves from the ocean or we cannot separate Kasturifrom its fragrance. We cannot take out the light from the Sun, nor can we take out the pleasing light from the Moon. It is not like the examples of snake and rope, mirage and water, which Shankaracharya gave to prove the theory of Adwaita. This new tattvavichara is stated in the very first chapter of Amrutanubhava –Shiva-Shakti-S Samaveshan.

Shiva-shakti both are on the same satta which is Nivrutti. They are living merrily as one eternity. Shakti gets poornatva (completeness) because of Shiva and shiva gets manifested because of shakti. Without shiva, Shakti has no existence, while without shakti, Shiva cannot do anything.

The shiva- shakti couple gave birth to the child- universe but still their duality remained undivided as it was before.It is not affected by the contact of the third one(universe).They both live in Brahman and they are illumined by His very light.eternally they are living merrily as one entity.They are life of each other . basically they are one and the same.

Jnaneshwara accepts the purush-prakruti dwandva (द्वंद्व). But from this step he goes beyond. The journey is from dwandva (द्वंद्व) to nirdwanva.(निर्द्वंद्व). The contemplation started with dwandva but it ends with advaya (अद्वय)

According to Adi Shankaracharya, this world is a dream or illusion or ignorance. Because of all these notions, there is no purpose to the creation of the world.

Jnaneshwara says that the 'Advayananda of Shiva-shakti' is the purpose of the creation of this world. This is not a dream.

Jnaneshwara accepts the two principles of Sankhya- Purusha, and Prakriti but he rejects the thought that only Purusha has consciousness and Prakriti is Jada means Prakriti has no consciousness. According to Jnaneshwara, both are conscious. Jnaneshwara accepts that Brahma is ajam -It has no birth. It is eternal. but he rejects that the world is not real. He rejects the idea that Jagat is an illusion. He gives a new theory of sphurtivada. The theory of Sphurtivada states that, the world is the extension of Brahman.

Jnaneshwara accepts the Sankhya philosophy. But the dwaita in Sankhya becomes the dvandva of Shiva-shakti and the journey is from dvandva to nirdvandva. ie., Shiva-shakti sammilanam.

Dr. Bahirat, B.P., a scholar on Amrutanubhava, in his book, “ Philosophy Of Jnanadeva” stated that Jnaneshwara depends upon his own spiritual experience and original philosophical insight to write Amrutanubhava, instead of relying on the Upanishads and the Vedas as the authority. He expounded the theory of sphurtivada in this text. He refutes the theory of Sankhya and the Buddhist nihilism and Shankaracharya’s mayavada. He reveals the concept of ‘akritrim bhakti’, which is very unique to Santa Jnaneshwara.

According to Dr. V.Y. Kulkarni, “Jnaneshwara has accepted the Mayavada but it is limited only up to the creation of the world. With the support of Mayavada, he leaves the gross (sthula) level, but he does not agree to make the world an illusion through the thought of Adwaita. Jnaneshwara accepts the parinamvada and the evolution of the world but rejects the dwaita between Brahma and the world. Thus he achieves a harmonious connection between mayavada, parinamvada, and chidvilasvada.”(p23) After explaining the Shiva-shakti sammilanam, he describes the significance of the guru. As a Natha Sampradayi, he says that the guru is Brahman himself.

Jnaneshwara reviews the nature of Brahman as described in the scriptures which are known as sat, chit and ananda. The Supreme being is pure knowledge. Jnaneshwara tells that the words cannot describe Him.

The shivasutras (Kashmir Shaivism)and Jnaneshwara

According to the philosophy of shivasutras, the ultimate Reality is Shiva which is self-illuminating. Shiva and Shakti are inseparable and universe is the manifestation of Shakti.

न शिवेन विना शक्तिः न शक्तिरहितः शिवः न शिवेन विना शक्तिः न शक्तिरहितः शिवः

--शैव सिद्धांत

Jnanadeva describes Shiva and Shakti in the similar way. Kashmir Shaivism assumes 36 Tatvas. Jnaneshwara does not give a detailed list but just mentions them as “From Shiva to Earth” and says that all these Tatvas are illuminated by the ultimate Reality. In the Shivasutra- Vimarshini, there is a simile of Moon and its light to show the relationship of Shiva and the universe. The same simile is used by Jnaneshwara in Amrutanubhava.

In Kashmir Shaivism, the Shakti is the power of shiva and she is Para Samvit.(Supreme Knowledge.) Jnaneshwara goes beyond this and says, for a jnani, it is Svasamvitti while Shaiva calls it Shakti(power) of Shiva but it is also Bhakti. So she is not only the power of Shiva but she is the Praneshwari (Beloved) and so Universe not just the manifestation of power of the Supreme Reality but it is the expression of Supreme Love.

Shankaracharya and Jnaneshwar

Shankaracharya expounds the Advaita theory. He says, ब्रह्म सत्यं जगत् मिथ्या। Jnaneshwara accepts that Brhma is satya but he states that Jagat is also satya and not mithya. Jnaneshwara rejects the Mayavada of Shankaracharya and depicts his theory of Sphurtivada. Jnaneshwara says that Universe is the Chidvilasa of Shiva-shakti. It is the play of the anadi Couple.

To prove his theory of advaita, Shankaracharya gives an example of Sarpa- Rajju. On the other hand, Jnaneshwara gives examples of water and waves, the moon and its light, gold, and Ornament. to prove his Sphurtivada.

Soundarya-Lahari of Shankaracharya is the fountainhead of Shakta sampradaya. In that text, the views of Acharya and jnaneshwar are similar. In the opening verse of Soundarya-Lahari, he says,

शिवः शक्त्यायुक्तो यदि भवति शक्तः प्रभवितुं। न चेदेवं देवो न खलु कुशलः स्पंदितुमपि ॥

Shiva becomes capable of creating the Universe, only when united with Shakthi (Thee), but otherwise (when not so joined with Thee), He is incapable of doing anything. (Tapasyananda 1987p 27)

Yogavasistha and amrutanubhav Dr S D Pendse 1941

Being a Nathayogi, his literature expounds the philosophy of Natha sampradaya and the texts related to Nathas like Sidhasidhantapadhati, etc but one can easily see the similarities between Yogavasistha and Anubhavamrut popularly known as Amrutanubhava. The name “Anubhavamruta” must have come into his mind from the following verse of Yogavasistha.

Anaratagaladрупam nityam cha anubhavamrutam |
Aham nisheshachakrani chidbrahmahamalepakam ||
Yogavasistha 6-10-71 || Pendse p6

While depicting the Advaita philosophy and the oneness of pure consciousness and the universe which is the manifestation of that consciousness, he uses similar metaphors which are used in the Yogavasistha.

जगन्नामना च चोत्पन्नं न च अस्ति न च दृश्यते |
हेम्नीव कटकादित्वम् किमेतन्मार्जने श्रमः || 3-7-40 ||

यथा वन्ध्यासुतो नास्ति यथा नास्ति मरौ जलम् |

यथा नास्ति नभो यक्षः तथा नास्ति जगद्भ्रमः || 3-7-43 || Pendse p320

Yogavasistha, gives so many examples like Gold and ornament, Miraj, vandhyaputra and sky to explain the Brahman is not separate from the universe. Maouli also uses the same metaphors to explain that Pure consciousness is the only real thing and all the forms are just the manifestations of the same Chaitanya, consciousness. The seer and the seen are not different but the difference is just imaginary.

The following verses prove the influence of Yogavasistha on Anubhavamruta.

दृश्य दृष्टा ऐसे । दोन्ही अकुमाळू दिसे ।

तेही परस्परानुप्रवेशे । काही ना कि ॥ ॥ अमृता ७ -174 ॥

तान्हेलेया मृगतृष्णा । न भेटलिया सिणु जेसणा ॥

मा भेटलिया कोणा । काय भेटले ॥ ॥ 7-210 ॥

जे दृश्य दृष्टाच आहे । मा दावणे का साहे ॥

न दाविजे तरी नोहे । तया तो काही ॥ 7-213 ॥

लेणे आणि भांगारे । भांगारचि येक स्फुरे ॥

का जेथें दुसरें । नाहीचि म्हणो नि ॥ 7-236 ॥

All these verses reflect the impact of yogavasistha on Amrutanubhava.

Western philosophers and Jnaneshwara Bahirat, p135 to 140

The philosophy of Jnaneshwara can be compared to some prominent philosophers in the West.

Spinoza and Jnaneshwara

Spinoza was a Dutch philosopher in the 16th century.. According to Spinoza, God is the one infinite, eternal, unchanging, indivisible substance that possesses an infinite number of attributes.

Both, Jnaneshwara and Spinoza are monists. Spinoza addresses the ultimate Reality "Substance" while Jnaneshwara calls the Ultimate Reality "vastu".

Spinoza's philosophy ends in "the intellectual love of God" And jnaneshwara's philosophy culminates in "Natural Devotion." He uses the word Akritrim Bhakti for the same.

These are the similarities between Spinoza and Jnaneshwara. But there are some important differences. Spinoza's method of exposing his theory is quite rigid and he uses a geometrical method while jnaneshwara is more flexible. According to Jnaneshwara, the world is rather a playful expression of the abundance in the Absolute and not a rigid necessity.

Plotinus and Jnaneshwara

Plotinus (204-269 AD) was a Greek philosopher and mystic. Jnaneshwara was also a mystic as well as a philosopher.

According to Plotinus, God is the ultimate source of all being and knowledge. Plotinus does not accept the idea of creation or evolution. He uses the word "Emanation". Emanation means something which originates from the source many traditions believe that every human soul emanates from God.

The idea of emanation is akin to jnanadeva's conception of Sphurtivada. According to Plotinus, 'happiness is not the attribute of God but happiness is nothing other than God. In the same way, Jnaneshwara tells us that the Ultimate Reality is "Sat Chit Ananda. And they are not three different parts. All these words denote the same ultimate Reality. To explain this, he gives various examples like gold, honey, etc. He says that", beauty,

hardness, and yellowness all these three combined express one thing ie gold". These cannot be separated from gold. Similarly, liquidity and sweetness indicate honey.

Plotinus is of the opinion that one should renounce worldly life to achieve ecstasy. This ecstasy is similar to meditation (dhyana). Jnaneshwara was a great Yogi and a great Bhakta as well. He had experienced both the states and he found that the loving devotion is more significant in front of Yogic Samadhi. While comparing both the states, he says that 'in the presence of spontaneous Divine Love, Yoga is like the Moon in a broad day light.

As Plotinus has the ideal of ecstasy, he is inclined towards renunciation of worldly life. On the other hand according to Jnaneshwara, this world is the expression of Divine love. So instead of giving up worldly life, he teaches us to experience God's presence everywhere. He says Bhakti is superior to Mukti. In the abode of Bhakti, the Bhakta and the object of the Bhakti are intermitten.

The Purna-Yoga of Jnaneshwara

In Amrutanubhava, jnaneshwara has defined yoga in a novel way. He says, "grasping of all the vishayas by all the organs at one and the same time is Yoga." (Amrutanubhava 579).

की आघवांची करणी। सर्व विषयांची घेणी।

करिता येके क्षणी। जे काही असे।।(579)

He suggests that the whole universe becomes the subject of jnana and if it is grasped by all the organs, then there will be a vision that is beyond time (kalatita) and then all the restlessness of the mind will be completely destroyed. Karma and yoga together will give the experience of gati and shanti at one and the same time will culminate in Purna Yoga.

In this purna yoga, vishayasevana competes with kaivalya, Swami(god), and sevak(devotee) to become one. There is Adweita of Bhakta and Bhagavanta. All the karmas become emersed in bhakti. Purnayoga is a spiritual level. On this level, jnana, bhakti, karma, and yoga all become one.

In Amrutanubhava, Bhakti is thought to be ultimate. Bhakti is the resting place of jnana and karma. The nature of this bhakti is of "advaya aswadana."

Here jnaneshwara differs from Shankaracharya. According to Shankaracharya, bhakti is the means of jnana while jnaneshwara thinks that it is the effect of jnana.

The experience of the shruti, *रसो वै सः।* will not be there in *द्वैत* or *अद्वैत* it will be experienced in *अद्वयानंद* only.

Conclusion:

In the concluding chapter, Santa Jnaneshwara himself says in a very humble way that his work is an appearance of the deepest silence. He narrates, that the text is rich in spiritual experience. He further says that this is nectar and he assures that whoever drinks it, will certainly be liberated.

His concept of liberation is different from the Upanishadic tradition. He says that liberation can be achieved in this very life. This is the state of Jeevanmukta. The goal of

life is not Moksha or liberation but the goal is Bhakti or the realization of Divine Love in this very life. There are no barriers of cast and creed or time and space that will hinder the way.

So one must admit that it is a treasure house of philosophy expounding the Natha philosophy giving references from the ancient books like Yogavasistha, Shivasutras, Upanishadas etc.

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