

Chapter-8

Mīmāṃsā concept of *Samavāya*:

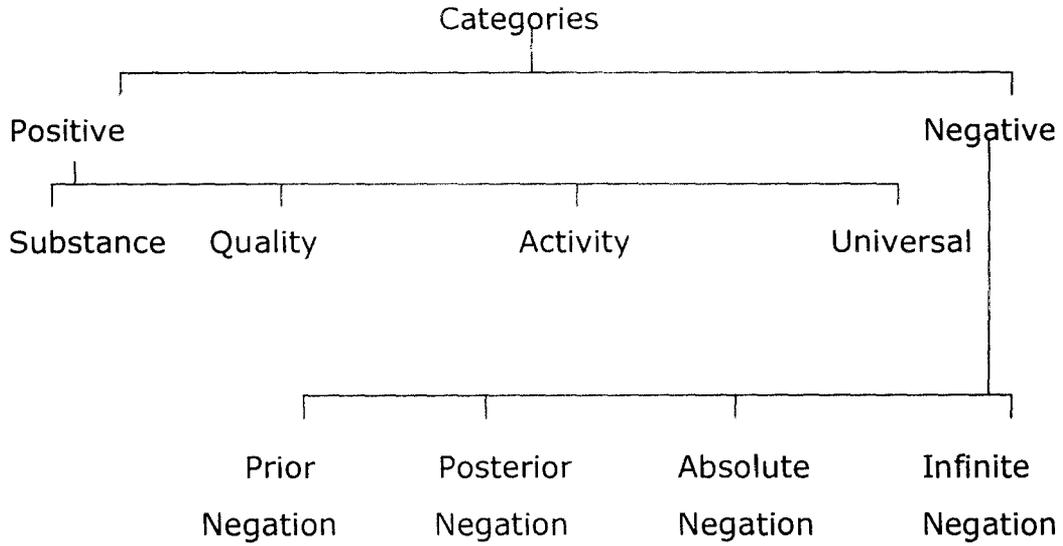
I. *Samavāya*: the category of *Samavāya*.

The great names that popularized and developed the Mīmāṃsā philosophy are those of Kumārīla and Prabhākara. It is thought that Prabhākara was an older contemporary of Kumārīla, who was himself an older contemporary of Śaṅkara, the great Advaitin. All the three belonged to an age of orthodox revival and of the weakening of Buddhism and Jainism. Prabhākara is the author of the great commentary called *Bṛhatī* and Kumārīla of *Ślokavārtika* and *Tantravārtika*. Murārī Miśra is said to be the third great thinker of the school. The three do not always agree with one another.

Mīmāṃsā accepts the reality of the world and of the individual and his actions, and it builds up an epistemology for supporting its realism. Its contributions to epistemology are important and are accepted even by followers of Śaṅkara so far as this world goes.

Mīmāṃsā metaphysics is essentially the metaphysics of ethical action. It is, therefore, both qualitatively and quantitatively pluralistic, and has to accept almost everything that a pluralistic philosophy has to accept. In categorizing the world, Kumārīla and Prabhākara differ from each other. According to Kumārīla, the categories are first divided into two kinds, the positive and the negative. The positive categories are four: substance, quality, activity and generality (*jāti*, *sāmānya*, universal). The negative categories are also four: prior negation (*prāgabhāva*), posterior negation (*pradhvaṃsābhāva*), infinite or absolute negation

(*atyantābhāva*), and mutual negation (*anonyābhāva*). We thus get the following chart:



It may be noticed that *samavāya* does not occur in the chart. The point is that Prabhākara does not accept the categorization of reality as given by Kumārīla. Prabhākara gives eight positive categories: substance, quality, action, universal, inherence, force, similarity, and number. Kumārīla holds that *samavāya* is not a distinct category, since it is the same as the entities in which it exists. For instance, quality and action are found in substances and universals are found in substances, qualities and actions. This kind of being present in something else is called inherence which is really nothing different from the entities in relation. But Prabhākara says that *samavāya* is the relation of dependence (*paratantratā*). The universal is dependent on the individual, and quality and action are dependent on substance. This dependence is not the same as the object in which it is found. Our experience of it has a distinct character of its own. We have, therefore, to accept it as a distinct category. However, Prabhākara does not accept the Nyāya concept of *samavāya* as an eternal relation. For if the relation between the individual and universal is eternal then neither can perish. But we

see many individuals and universals coming to an end. Many species of animals have become extinct and many individuals are dying every moment, even their universal is extinct.

In the categorization of reality, Kumārīla and Prabhākara seem to have adopted that of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika to their own needs. In fact, we find its influence on all pluralistic cosmologies. But it is hard to prove that the adoption or adaptation is always intentional.

Before we undertake delineating the differences between Kumārīla and Prabhākara on the category of *samavāya*, we may do well in reminding ourselves what had been the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view of it.

Kaṇāda explains *samavāya* as the cause of the notion that something is "here" in a locus, and connects its function to causality. He also conceives that there is only one *samavāya* since there is no indication that different *samavāya* relations connect different pairs of things related by it. The theory of a single *samavāya* carries on until Navya- Nyāya times.

Vāstsyāna says that *samavāya* relates two things when one cannot occur without the other. The definitive form of the account is provided by Praśastapāda, who defines *samavāya* as the relation between two inseparable or *ayutasiddha* things related as located to locus. He further explains that "inseparability" means different things for non-eternal entities than it does for eternal ones. Two entities, at least one of which is non-eternal, are inseparable if all loci of one are loci of other, while two eternal entities are inseparable if all motions that occur within one occur within the other.

Samavāya relates qualities, motions, universals and individuators (*avacchedaka*) to substances. It also relates universals to qualities and universals to motions. Finally, it relates composite individuals to the "parts" which are the composite individuals' cause.

Praśastapāda has a number of interesting things to say about *samavāya*. For one thing, he follows Kañāda in saying it is marked through our knowledge, i.e. that its presence is in some manner dependent on our attending to it. Does this mean that the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realistic epistemology is jeopardized? For another, *samavāya* has no universal inhering in it or any individuator individuating it. This is not surprising, since there is only one *samavāya*. But Praśastapāda is also aware of the possibility of infinite regress, were inherence to be related to a universal inferences by inherence. Which leads us to a basic question: what relates inherence to its relata? Praśastapāda's answer is that it is related to them by the relation of identity (*tādātmya*). Furthermore, what happens to inherence when its relata are destroyed or disappear? According to Praśastapāda, inherence is unaffected. It may be likened to glue which glues together whatever inseparable things happen to fall into it. If there are no such things, the glue exists in potency, ready to glue but not, at the moment, gluing! Uddyotakara argues that if it were not independent of its relata in this way it could not do its job.

Praśastapāda thinks that *samavāya* is not directly perceived, but is known through inference. This is consistent with his idea that it is somehow dependent on our knowing about it. But Uddyotakara and the Naiyāyikas generally hold that inherence is directly perceptible. Jayanta and Bhāsarvajña are equally explicit about it, although the latter characteristically differs in details, holding that *samavāya* is only sometimes perceptible. The commentators on

Praśastapāda mention the view that *samavāya* is perceptible as the view of "others", and scholars say that this is one of the few differences between the Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya systems. Vallabha is apparently trying to adjudicate this discrepancy when he argues that though *samavāya* is not perceived, it is inferred as closely involved in judgements of perception and so seems to be perceived because of this involvement.

The Vaiśeṣika theory of relations may be compared with the views of such philosophers as Sigwart and Windelband, who divide relations into three sorts: (1) reflective relations, produced to mental reflections, (2) constitutive relations, which are in the things themselves, and (3) modal relations, which relate our ideas and feelings and their contents. Vaiśeṣikas thought *samavāya* was a reflective relation, while Mīmāṃsākas took it as constitutive. It may be a mistake to attribute to Vaiśeṣikas the view that *samavāya* is mind-dependent in the sense that European logicians had in mind. There are various ways in which an entity may be mind-dependent, and not all of them are inconsistent with direct epistemological realism.

Our philosophers did hold that *samavāya* not only related objects known by us, but also entered into the relations between our knowing apparatus and its objects. Uddyotakara lists six different kinds of relations between the sense organs and their objects, one of which is *samavāya*, another being the qualifier-qualificand relation. The rest of six are direct contact and three indirect relations involving *samavāya* and contact (*samyoga*) in combination.

II Samavāya: Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara Views

In this section we propose to discuss the contending Mīmāṃsā views as presented by Kumārīla and Prabhākara. Kumārīla's view is known as the *Bhāṭṭa* view, while that of Prabhākara is said after his own name, i.e. *Prābhākara*.

First let us have the Bhāṭṭa view.

Samavāya is of the nature of a permanent relation intervening between two entities, either of which is incapable of separate existence apart from the other. It is defined variously by the Naiyāyikas. According to Kaṇāda, as we have already noted, it is the relation between cause and effect. Praśastapāda regards it as a relation of the container and the contained. The chair on the ground is not in inherent relation to the ground, because the chair is not inseparable from the ground or the locus where it rests. This inseparability is not identity, since the two entities are not one in reality. The fire which inheres in the red hot ball of iron is separate from the ball itself. The relationship of a substance to its qualities, a whole to its parts, a genus to its individuals (*vyakti*), and an effect to its causes are instances of *samavāya* relation.

It is also argued that *samavāya* is not *samyoga* or conjunctive relation, since the objects in conjunction, as in the case of the chair on the ground, has had or can have separate existence prior to the state of conjunction. Conjunction ends at the moment when the conjuncts or the member parts of the conjunction are separated, while in *samavāya* there is no disjunction, and consequently no termination of inherence.

Conjunction occurs between two independent substances, while in inherence the members stand in relation of the container and the contained. Two entities related to each other by inherence

cannot be separated without at least one of them being destroyed. *Samyoga* takes place between two entities of similar nature which remain separate in the beginning, and later on conjoin, whereas the fire that inherence in the ball of iron is of a totally different nature. Conjunction is external relation, while *samavāya* is internal relationship. In *samyoga* the member parts are joined together without forming a real whole, whereas in *samavāya* the parts form a coherent whole.

Now Kumārīla criticizes the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view stated above. He holds that no relation can subsist between any two objects that are not already known to be established entities. And if either member of the relation be accepted as being an established entity, prior to the assertion of the relation, then the alleged inseparability ceases. Only those objects which exist separately, like a book and a hand, can be related to which?

*na capyayutasiddhānām sambandhitvena kalpanā /
nāniṣpannasva sambandho niṣpattau yutasiddhatā.//*¹

So inseparableness and relationship cannot be reconciled. There being no inseparability, there is no any such relationship as inherence between the genus and individual. And there being no ground for relationship there could be any relationship among the categories:

*tathā ca sati sambandhe hetuḥ kaścinna vidyate /
ṣaṅgīnāmapi na sambandhaḥ padārthānām pratīyate.//*²

The Bhaṭṭas ask the question: Is *samavāya* itself to the objects among, whom it is said to subsist, or not? If it is not, then there can be no inherence with regard to the objects. And if it is, then this inherent relationship with the objects would stand in need of another relationship and so on and it leads to the defect of ad infinitum:

samavāyaviyogācca viśeṣaḥ syāt parasparam /

*tatvaluptānavasthā syāt tasya tasyānvuṣangataḥ.//*³

To get rid of the defect, the Naiyāyikas may declare that *samavāya* is a sort of absolute relationship which does not require any other relation for its own subsistence in the objects. But it cannot be acceptable by the Naiyāyikas, because on account of this identity, the inherence may become only a particular form of the qualification and the qualified (i.e. genus and individual), which is not acceptable to the Naiyāyikas. So the relationship between the qualification (*viśeṣaṇa*) and the qualified (*viśeṣya*) is not that of inherence, but is only that of identity-cum-difference (*tādātmya*):

atha tasyātmarūpatvānnānyasambandhakalpanā /

*abhedātsamavāyostu svarūpaṁ dharmadharminoḥ.//*⁴

Here the relation of identity-cum-difference is substituted for inferences. The reason is that inherence as a form of relation, subsisting between two naturally inseparable things, is rejected by the Bhaṭṭas.

Here arises a question as to why the Bhaṭṭas rejecting the *samavāya* relation, postulate a relation called *svarūpa dharmadharmī* or identity-cum-difference? The reason for the postulation may be stated as follows: The Bhaṭṭas wish to retain their basic claim as realists, and at the same time, they intend to avoid the difficulties like *ad infinitum*. Therefore, they deny absolute difference between the sets of objects and assert a natural relation. They are scared of accepting the absolute difference of objects, for that would lead them to an undesirable state of unrelated world of particulars as the Buddhists declare. On the other hand, they did not want to entertain absolute identity either, but it would land them in an unpleasant stage of identity to the pleasure of the Vedāntin.

We may now turn to considering the Prābhākara view of *samavāya*. Prabhākara, like the Naiyāyikas, admits *samavāya* as a distinct category. It is the relationship between two inseparable entities. Nyāya accepts the category as eternal on the ground that if it is accepted as non-eternal, it would necessarily be multiple and it would be an effect of positive nature, all the three causes will have to be assigned to it, and further there would arise many difficulties in the assumption of three causes. So the Naiyāyikas say that *samavāya* is timeless or eternal, and as eternal or *nitya*, it can only be one. Prabhākara criticizes the alleged eternality of the Nyāya concept of *samavāya*, and establishes inherence of two kinds, viz. eternal and non-eternal. The eternal *samavāya* is to be encountered amongst eternal substances, and the non-eternal one in the case of non-eternal substances. There is much inherence. Inherence is produced, when an effect is produced, which inheres in material cause.

The Naiyāyikas hold that inherence is perceptible, while the Prābhākaras and the Vaiśeṣikas oppose the said view. Generally an object can be perceived only if it comes in contact with a sense organ. Sense organs being substances can have contact in the mode of *samyoga* or conjunction or *sannikarṣa* only with other substances. In the case of the perception of non-substances, indirect contacts are established. In perceiving non-existence, the contact between the non-existence and sense organ is the contact of the qualifier and the qualified, *viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva*. Inherence is also an attribute of the object in which something resides by that relation, and that inherence also, like non-existence, is perceived by the contact of the qualifier and the qualified, *samavāye cābhāve ca viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*. The Prābhākaras denied the contact of the qualifier and the qualified. Further as the other contacts are unintelligible and are not admitted, the inherence cannot be perceived. However, inherence can be established through

inference. The knowledge that there is cowness in the cow is conditioned by the relation of the container and the contained, because of the knowledge of cowness (*gotva*) in this (*iha*) like the knowledge of rice in this jar. So inherence is inferable only.

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa composed his *Mānameyodaya*, following the principles of Kumārīla. In the chapter on *pratyakṣa*, he discusses the case of *samavāya*, and criticizes the six-fold classification of *sannikarṣa* offered by Nyāya. The first three of the Nyāya *sannikarṣas*, namely, *saṃyoga*, *saṃyukta samavāya* and *saṃyukta-samaveta-samavāya* are renamed by the Bhattas as *saṃyoga*, *saṃyukta tādātmya* and *saṃyukta-tādātmya-tādātmya* respectively. But since the Bhattas hold *śabda* as *vibhadravya*, no question of *samavāya* would arise in the perception of *śabda*, and *samaveta-samavāya* in the case of perceiving *śabdatva*. On the Bhaṭṭa view *samavāya* is like hare's horn: *śaśasṅgāyamāṇatvāt*. Prābhākara admits only *saṃyoga*, *saṃyukta samavāya* and *samavāya* modes of *sannikarṣa*. They too descry *viśeṣyaviśeṣaṇabhāva* as a mode of *sannikarṣa*, nor perceptuality of *samavāya* as a category. This mode of *sannikarṣa* is as illusory as the earlier one.

Addendum:

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa

In a valuable manual of the Bhatta School, *Mānameyodaya*, the doctrine of inherence laid by the Nyaya-Vaisesikas is criticized thoroughly. The book, *Mānameyodaya* consists of two parts: the first part is called *Māna* and the second part is called *Meya*. Among the Mīmāṃsakas, the Bhattas do not avow inherence. Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa is a spokesman of the Bhatta-school. He argues that inherence is real as a hare's horn. In the *Meya* part, he rejects

inherence as there is no proof of its reality. If so, either it is perception or inference.

The Naiyāyikas maintain that perception is the proof of inherence. But Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa rejects it. He says that in case of inherence, like 'a jar subsists in its colour'; here are two relata, such as a jar and its colour. We can perceive only a jar as a substratum and its colour as a superstatum; but we cannot perceive their relation of inherence. The Naiyāyikas argue that we can perceive the relation of inherence as a qualified object. But Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa raises a question: if inherence as a qualified object, it can be perceived but where does a qualified object exist? We can perceive only a jar and its colour and nothing more. So it is proved that perception cannot be the proof of inherence.⁵

Nārāyaṇa rejects the possibility of the inferential proof of inherence.⁶ If we say that 'a coloured jar' consists of two relata: one is a jar and another is its colour; then we cannot infer 'a coloured jar' as inherence. So it is proved that inference cannot be the proof of inherence.

Nārāyaṇa gives another objection against the doctrine of inherence whether it is identical with its relata or not.⁷ First; he says that inherence cannot be identical with its relata. For inherence cannot exist without its relata. Secondly, inherence cannot be different from its relata, because the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika holds that inherence exists in between its relata. So inherence can be neither identical nor different from its relata; because if it would be accepted either, it involves logical contradiction. For this, Nārāyaṇa does not admit inherence by any means. Rather he concludes that the relation of inherence is to be replaced as identity relation (*tādātmya*).

Notes and references

1. *Ślokovārttika*-Kumārīla Bhaṭṭa, Verse:146.
2. Ibid. Verse,147.
3. Ibid. Verse,148.
4. Ibid. Verse,149.
5. "*samavāyarūpasyaiva vipratipannatvādetesām pratyayānām samavāyaviśayatvāsiddheḥ*".-Nārāyaṇa, p.294.
6. "*nāpi prābhākarānumatamanumanam pramāṇarī*".-Ibid.
7. "*apica samavāyaḥ samavāyibhyāmatyantābhinno vā na vā*".-Ibid.