

Synopsis of the points made and discussed in

CHAPTER IV

A critical evaluation of the criticism to be given earlier
and establishing the Buddhist point of view.

In the previous chapters, we have seen how the Naiyāyikas have refuted the Buddhist theory of knowledge, viz. their views of perception and inference by means of which svalakṣaṇas and sāmānyalakṣaṇas are comprehended. For the Naiyāyikas it is not the case that only the discrete particulars, point instants (the svalakṣaṇas) are presented to us in our perceptual knowledge but that these discrete svalakṣaṇas are also synthesized by means of determinate perception or savikalpaka pratyakṣa. The view is totally opposed to the Buddhist theory of knowledge. For the Naiyāyikas the kalpanā i.e. the thought construction or the universal is also present within the definition of pratyakṣa. Their definition of pratyakṣa is - indriyārtha sannikarṣotpannam jñānam, avyabhicāri, avyapadeśyam, vyavasāyātmakam ca. This definition includes within itself the savikalpaka pratyakṣa also.

From Buddhist standpoint it is not justified and our main aim is to establish the Buddhist standpoint in this respect. The definition of pratyakṣa as given by the Buddhists in their Nyayabindutikā by Dharmakīrti and in the Pramanasamuccaya by Dinnāga is that pratyakṣa is kalpanāpodham and abhrāntam. From this definition of pratyakṣa it is quite obvious how the Buddhists differ from the views of the Naiyāyikas. Perception for the Buddhists, is that which gives us the knowledge of only

the particulars, the bare particulars the svalakṣaṇas, the point instants which exists for a moment only and which are also the ultimate reals. By the ultimate reals, the Buddhists mean that which has the pāramārthika-satyatā, the transcendental reality. It is that which is by definition should be free from kalpanā. As has been defined in the previous chapters that the kalpanā is that which makes our practical life possible, which has the samvrti satya. For the Buddhists the pramāṇas are of two types - pratyakṣa and anumāna. Through pratyakṣa the svalakṣaṇas are known and with the help of kalpanā the sāmānyalakṣaṇās are known in inference. Without inference our practical life is impossible. In order to lead our day to day life, to have public relations with others and to have any type of communication we need the help of language. We are all social beings, therefore in order to express our own views, to preach, we take recourse to language. Whenever we express anything by means of language i.e. when we have savikalpaka pratyakṣa, we take the help of kalpanā. Thus kalpanā does not mean the imagination in the ordinary sense of the term. It is not the imagination of something which does not exist.

For the Naiyāyikas and the Buddhist, inference is a source of knowledge. By means of any pramāṇa, some new information is obtained. For the Buddhists, inferential knowledge i.e. the vyāpti relation is found by means of

tādātmya and tadutpatti. When we say - Śimsāpatmaka Vrkṣa, it is an analytic judgement since the predicate is already contained in the subject. No analytic judgement can give us any new information. Thus how can tādātmya be regarded as one of the basis of any inferential knowledge?

The Buddhist have classified inference into three types. These are - anupalabdhi (non-cognition), svabhāva (identity), and kārya (causation). For the Naiyāyikas, anupalabdhi is the total absence of cognition, e.g. naṣṭi ghatah anupalabdheh i.e. there is no jar due to its non-cognition. It is not samyoga or samavāya relation because a relation always requires the existence of two entities and not the absence of any entity. But in this particular example of anupalabdhi, we find the absence of entities. Thus it is not any kind of relation. It is only the viśeṣaṇa viśeṣya bhāva, which can be established by means of tarka. It has a kind of sannikarṣa i.e. the contact of the sense organ with the object (may be with the absence of the object). Samyoga is also another kind of sannikarṣa. For the Naiyāyikas anupalabdhi is a kind of pratyakṣa, since the definition of pratyakṣa according to the Naiyāyikas, is that - indriyārtha sannikarṣotpannam jñānam pratyakṣam.

But for the Buddhist it is a kind of inference. When we say there is no ghatah, it means there is the

absence of ghatah, which is known by means of anumāna only. Here kalpanā is added on sāmānyalakṣana. If it is a kind of perception, then the object should be present. The absence of any object is known by means of inference. Buddha's theory of apoha also corresponds with this fact. Thus for them anumāna and anupalabdhi are not different. For them, anupalabdhi does not signify simply the total absence of cognition. It, in fact, signifies the cognition of something else, i.e. of an entity other than the absent one - but similar to it in a certain respect¹. Vinitadeva in his Nyāyabindutikā equates the non perception of a cognizable jar on the spot with the perception of a spot without a jar. For them anupalabdhi hetu means that there is agreement in absence between the cause and the effect.

Many objections may arise regarding the momentary existence of the svalakṣanas. Supposing that one were to distinguish one point instant from another point instant (kṣanas), without being aided by a Nyāya like category as Viśeṣa, the question would be - how would the Buddhist do it. The reply to the question would indeed be ontologically tricky because of the extremely evanescent nature of the phenomenon of kṣanas. So far as the givenness of a kṣana is concerned, there cannot be any presentation of two kṣanas simultaneously. Perhaps the concept of

simultaneity cannot even arise in this context, since the ksanas are time-atoms, which are referentially opaque, may be they are more opaque than the Leibnitzian monads. When, for example, we are required to distinguish a piece of chalk from a paper weight, presented to me at the same time (and this is a very important condition because no two objects presented at different times can be ontologically compared or distinguished), we may be required to have a category of 'distinguishment'. (The phrase is borrowed from the great Prof. Kalidas Bhattacharya, from his paper entitled 'Reflexion in Metaphysics') or Viśeṣa a la the Vaiśeṣikas. But the crux and the puzzle of the matter for the Buddhists would be that in respect of the Kṣanas no judgement concerning their numerical identity or diversity can at all be raised because they are atomic and do not constitute a series. They are temporal atoms and do not presuppose the antecedent time behind their appearance. Their atomic or non serial nature is the metaphysical spelling of ksaṇabhāṅgavāda. That is why we should say that there can be no sense in saying that a Buddhist cannot distinguish a ksaṇa from another. In the context of Buddhist Metaphysics the question should become rigorously irrelevant metaphysically. Two further considerations may be adduced from another cultural tradition. The point about distinguishing one thing from another was first raised by Aristotle in the Western tradition and for

that purpose he resorted to the notion of hylomorphism the presence of which in one thing marks it off from another. It is also true that this notion did not get the attention in post Aristotelean thought. Particularity, blind and closed or even windowless to borrow the phrase from Leibnitz, reign supreme from Aristotle to Strawson. To add one more supreme case of absolute particularity or atomicity, everybody knows that Hume's impressions are atomic and for that matter ontologically blind, referentially opaque. Furthermore, it is doubtful if the impressions can be said to form a series. It is only from a natural standpoint, as Husserl would say that they can be talked about as succeeding one after the other. The idea of 'afterness' cannot be employed since it is not built into the atomic structure of the impression. Hence the question of distinguishing one impression from other is rendered irrelevant in Hume's ontological scheme. They are cemented together by 'belief'. Similarly, it is not clear why a protagonist of the Buddhist point of view would not avail himself of the Hume like position and argument in respect of kṣaṇas.

It should not be an unknown matter that often a philosophy is a matter of moods and temper. A Buddhist in his characteristic moods and temperamentally inclined for the dissolution of the empirical in favour of the nirvāna

may choose a world made up of disparate time atoms. Motivationally he is away from the stable and secured world of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika just because he has renounced it. To put the matter by paraphrasing a verse from Dhammapada "Nirvāna depends on catching hold of the house maker, gahakarakam dittosi - I have cited the house builder. And once he is cited he can no longer play his tricks, his bricks and mortar fall away".

The main aim of the Buddhists is to eliminate the null classes. They have pointed out that if any object exists, then that can be denied also. If the object does not exist, the question of its denial does not arise. Negation is possible for an entity which really exists, prasaktapratishedha. For them the null class is a kind of absence, whose absentee is an absurd entity, i.e. alika pratiyoḡikaabhāva.

The main difference between the Naiyāyikas and the Buddhists regarding tattva or the ultimate reals is that the Naiyāyikas explain the reality from the epistemological point of view, whereas the Buddhists explain it by means of feeling, the personal feelings are given much more importance in the Buddhist philosophy. There is a gulf of difference between the Naiyāyikas and the Buddhists in their philosophical standpoint due to the difference in their motivation as is said earlier also. Bauddha

bhiksus believe in jīvan mukti, their 'self' is non-infatuated 'self'. In jīvanmukti, they do believe in the cessation of sufferings and the Naiyāyikas also believe in this, but the process for the attainment of this mukti is totally different in both the systems. Naiyāyikas explain everything in this connection by means of their sixteen categories. For them the apavarga is the cessations of sufferings.

The difference between the two systems regarding the concept of relation is that for the Naiyayikas, the relation is always between the two entities, dvivṛtha, having anuyogi and pratīyogi. And for them, the relation is always real. For the Buddhists, relation is not real, since the relation is known in inference with the help of kalpanā, which is not ultimately real.

For the Naiyāyikas, the universal is directly perceptible when residing in perceptible objects. The Buddhists emphatically oppose the theory of the direct perception of the universal. According to them, since svalakṣanas are only directly perceived by the senses, therefore the question of perceiving the sāmānyalakṣanas does not arise. But for the Naiyāyikas, by means of samavāya relation the universal is perceived as residing in the individual.

As has already been pointed out that both the systems are different because of their different motivation,

therefore it should not be proper to criticize the one system with that of the other. Every system has its own individualistic and particular standpoint and we should try to understand each system from their own perspective only and see whether that is systematic, consistent in itself. And if any inconsistency is found within the system itself, then only the system should be criticized, otherwise it will be a futile effort. Bauddha philosophy, as such is quite rational, systematic and methodical. Their notion on sāmānya is different from that of the Naiyāyikas, which is known as apohavāda. They give a deeper analysis of commonness (sāmānya). This is not a positive commonness residing in all the individual objects of a class, but a negative commonness which belong to all individual objects of a particular class. The universal 'cowness', e.g. according to the Buddhists, is not an external reality (as the Naiyāyikas maintain) but only a negation in the form of the exclusion of non-cows. It is called atadvyāvṛtti which means the exclusion of what a thing is not. The technical term used for it is apoha. In the perceptual judgement 'this is a cow', first, a false identity is established between two absolutely dissimilar entities, viz, the thought image and the external reality. And secondly, the absolutely different svalakṣaṇas of a class are considered, of course, falsely as similar and brought together under one concept as if

they belong to one class and had a common universal.

'The words i.e. the class names have their origin in the thought images and the latter have in the words. They are related to each other as cause and effect. The words never touch the reality'² (vikalpa yonayah sabdah, vikalpah sabda yonaya.

Words do not comprehend the reality. That does not mean that it comprehends the illusory. Error or illusion in ordinary life like 'snake in a rope' should be differentiated from the philosophical illusion. It is the anādi avidyā (beginningless nescience) which is the cause of the phenomenal life (similarity with the Advaita vedanta philosophy). It is actually destroyed when we know the paramārtha satya, but a philosopher can discern its erroneous nature by philosophical analysis even during his own phenomenal life. According to the Buddhists, impressions or samskāras of beginningless past lives (anādi vāsanā) are the cause of the generalized image (vikalpa, adhyavasāya). For the Buddhist, an unreal illusory, external reality (alika bāhya) is regarded as the object of our determinate perception and also of words. That is, the words cannot give us the knowledge of the reality. Describing the nature of apoha Santaraksita says that 'it is the externally reflected image (artha pratibimbaka) which appears in our determinate perception'.

Thus apoha is the significance of a class name.

The Naiyāyikas define reality as participation or inherence in universals existence (sattā sambandha or sattā samavāya). The Buddhists oppose this view. For them, inherence is only relation and like any other relations it is just unreal. Even if the definition of the Naiyāyikas is maintained, then also the Buddhists point out that universality (sāmānya), ultimate difference (viśeṣa) and inherence (samavāya) and so many other categories of the Naiyāyikas themselves would cease to be real or existent in as much as none of these categories participate or inhere in universal existence.

The categories of dravya, guna and karma of the Naiyāyikas also, according to the Buddhists, should be non-existent or unreal because these are either one with existence as such or distinct therefrom, and if one with existence then these have no separate existence and if distinct then these are just non-existent.

To the different schools of Buddhism, the term existence (sattā) or reality have different connotations. The sarvāstivādins and other schools of the Hinayāna define the term as having a character (dharmā svabhāva) and this has its root in the pluralistic view of the universe that these schools contributed to. To the Mādhyamikas, existence meant being non-relative (anapeksā) and their idea

of existence points to the monistic nature of the universe as held by them.

The Sautrāntikas, Yogācāras and the Buddhist Logicians who upheld the doctrine of transcendental realism had a different view of existence or reality. Existence, to them, meant causal efficacy (artha-kriyā-kāritva), and the ultimate reality, according to them is held to be represented by the point instants (kṣaṇas), the focus of such efficacy. Every existence, therefore, they argue, is only a discrete moment and an element of existence is only momentary or impermanent. The terms existence, momentariness, impermanent, change, efficiency and the like, therefore, are held by them to be bound up by the relation of existential identity (tādātmya) likely to be used in reference to one and the same reality without involving any contradiction.

REFERENCES

1. NBT, verse 10 of svārthānumāna.
2. Vikalpa yonayah sabdah, vikalpah sabda yonayah
Kārya kāranatā tesām nārtham sabdah sparsanti api
NVT.