

CONCEPT OF PERSON IN JAINISM AND NYĀYA- VAIŚEŚIKA : A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Dr. Bishnu Borah

Abstract

Phenomenologically person is conceived as combination of physical and mental states. The relation of matter, life, mind and spirit is an important problem for modern philosophy. To solve this problem completely and satisfactorily is a challenge to modern science. As a result the study of man becomes not only the noblest of studies but also one of the basic for philosophy. Jainism and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika both schools admit that person is a combination of physical body which is constituted by atoms and self. Nyāya maintains that consciousness is the adventitious quality of self, but for Jainism consciousness is both essence and the quality of self. In this paper an attempt has been made to investigate the basic concept of person in Jainism and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy in the physical and epistemological senses. My chief interest would be a critical study of differences between two schools on the notion of person. This is my initial development of the concept on the basis of Dravya Sangraha and Nyāya Sūtra that opens the door for further research.

Keywords : consciousness, person, physical and mental states, self.

Introduction

Varied descriptions are found in different philosophies on the person. Are all men being conceived as person? What constitute a person? Is person only a psycho-physical organism? Is self equal to person? Without self can there be person? Regarding these questions answers are given differently by different schools and

philosophers. Both in Indian and Western philosophies person occupies the important place which is different from the 'subject'. Subject is epistemological concept while person is a practical concept. Subject is "who of knowledge" and "person is who of action."

Person is a concrete, corporal entity, bodily-psycho unity which is unitarily self conscious. Its existence is not against the world, but with other, not solitary from the society and other person. He has to act in the world and has to enjoy all suffering and pleasure. So in Indian philosophy person is characterized by *kartṛtva* (agent) and *bhokṛtva* (enjoyer), it is concerned, caring, willing and acting with the world. The knowledge of the person enters in the structure through the participation which is determined by the life of interest. As an individual being the desire, action, success-failure, and pleasure-pain are centred around the concept of person. And as the social being a complex nexus of duties and obligations are taken to bind the individual person to other persons, to god and the nature.

Indian attempt to comprehend person is a compound of two heterogenous principles, *cit* and *acit* consciousness and body. The major systems have fully objective concept of body, body is *acit*, *jaḍa*. It is distinct from the self which is most important truth to know and experience. And remove body from the world of things and assigns to it a decisive and positive role in the cultivation of subjective attitude and knowledge.

Concept of person in Jainism

Jainism accepts basically two categories, '*jīva*' or spirit or soul and '*a-jīva*' or matter. *Ātman* or soul is the *jīva* in its pure states and *jīva* is the *jīva* in its impure states. The *jīva* bound by karma constitute man. So, man is the *jīva* bound by matter and assuming the gross physical body. Performing both good and evil action, the *jīva* goes from birth to birth, assuming various forms limiting itself

to the bodies of those forms. P. T. Raju remarked, "according to Jainism the five causes, false knowledge (*mithyādarśana*), incontinence (*avirati*) man. He is the *jīva* full of karmic matter. He has a mind, the five senses, and organs of action."¹

Dravya Sangraha describes the concept of *jīva* from two aspects-*Vevahāra Naya* and *Niścaya Naya*. The *Vevahāra Naya* is the ordinary or common sense point of view and *Niścaya Naya* is the realistic point of view. From the realistic point of view *jīva* is characterized by 'upayoga', the pure *jṣāna* and *darśana*. In its pure state *jīva* is formless, not agent and enjoyer. It enjoys only the bliss resulting from the pure consciousness. But when it attached with *pudgala*, the *jīva* enjoys the happiness and misery and the fruits of material karma (DS-9). With the attachment with *jīva* takes the form or body, which makes him bondage (DS-7). "*Jīva*in naturally invisible, but when the soul is attacked by the passions...it takes on the *pudgala* (material) particles fit for the bondage of the *karmas*, just as a heated iron-ball takes up water-particles in which it is immersed. This is the bondage of the karma."²

According to Jainism physical body is composed of matter or *pudgala*. *Pudgala* has two states, *pramāṇu* or atom and *skandha* or aggregates of atoms (DS-26). *Pramāṇus* are discrete or uncombined reality, while *skandhas* are composite reality of similar nature of atoms. *Skandhas* are perceptible and *pramāṇus* are transcended sense experience. From the general point of view (*vevahāranaya*) *jīva*, the physical body possessed four *Prāṇas* viz. *Indriyas* (the senses), *Bal* (force), *Āyu* (life) and *Ana-prāna*(respiration) (DS-3). It also characterized by eight kinds of *jṣāna* and four kinds of *darśana*. Physical body has two forms-subtle and gross. Gross body is formed by the gross material, which is perceptible by ordinary people. It is constituted of nourished by matter and destroyed at the time of death. The subtle body formed by the *karmapudgala*, which is called *karma śarira*, is imperceptible by ordinary people. It exists with the self even after death and forms a new gross body in the next birth. When the self attain liberation the subtle body is

destroyed. Jainism accept five kinds of bodies (1) *audārika*-the material body, (2) *vaikriyika*-the fluid body, (3) *āhāraka*- the body composed of *śuddha* or pure *pudgala* (4) *tajas*-the body composed of subtle *pudgala* endowed with the quality of heat and (5) *karmaṇa*-the subtle body made of five karmic matter.³

Jainism holds that self is real, which is pure, free, perfect and divine and is endowed with four infinite qualities- infinite faith, infinite happiness, infinite knowledge and infinite power. But this natural characteristics of a soul enveloped by four *ghātiya* (destroying) karmas viz. *jṣānavarāniya*, *darśanavarāniya*, *mohāniya* and *antarāya* (DS-50). Thus, the real nature of self is obscured and enveloped by the karmic *pramāṇus* or atoms, which are attracted by self own karmas and are absorbed into its body. It makes the self impure and its four infinite attributes become finite. This is the state of *jīva* in bondage, because of ignorance. Again when the self through proper spiritual practice and right conduct, stop to entrance the fresh *karma* atoms (*samvara*) (DS-34) and wash out the karma particles already absorbed into its body (*nirjarā*) (DS-36), it understand its infinite qualities. This is the stage of liberation. The person who detached from karmic particles and practiced *Virya* (power), *Charitra* (conduct) and *Tapa* (penance) in the light of pure faith and knowledge of *Acharya* (preceptor) becomes liberated (DS-52).

According to Jainism consciousness is both essence and the quality of self (DS-3). Self and consciousness is both identical and difference from each other. If the self is not of nature of consciousness, as held by *Naiyāyikas*, knowledge could not arise. In all *jīvas* the consciousness exist, but in lower organism this consciousness is latent or implicit, while in man it is generally explicit.⁴ Consciousness revealed as *jṣāna* or knowledge and *darśana* or vision, which are jointly called *upayoga*. *Upayoga* is essentially exists in all selves and does not exist in other category. Because of *upayoga* we differentiate self from other categories.

In the act and progress of the *jīva* or self is free and self-guided. Jainism does not postulate any God or *Īśvara* to control the activity of self. In their view, a living being goes on by itself, and in this journey of life, the guiding principle is the law of *karma*. It is the self's own *karma*, that determines its life and lead to bondage and liberation. When the self inter mixes its part with the *karmic* particles by its *karma*, it becomes bondage. And when these *karma* particles stopped to enter into the self (*samvara*), and destroy that have already entered the self (*nirjarā*), by its right *karma* and practices, it becomes liberated. Thus, K.P. Sinha rightly remarked that "the performance of *karma*, the relation between the self and fruits of *karma*, liberation from the effect of *karma*- all these are to be explained only with reference to the nature and activities of the self".⁵

Jainas maintain that consciousness is both essence and quality of self. Self can get knowledge in two ways-knowledge having form (*sākara-jṣāna*) and knowledge without having form (*nirākara-jṣāna*). First one is called '*jṣāna*' and second one is called '*darśana*'. *Darśana* is the indefinite cognition, the cognition in which details are not perceived. *Darśana* is of four kinds-*Caksu*, *Acaksu*, *Avadhi* and *Kevala* (DS-4). But *Jṣāna* is the detail cognition of something. *Jṣāna* has eight verities-*Mati*, *Sruta*, *Avadhi*, *Manahparyāya*, *Kevala*, *Kumati*, *Kusruta*, and *Vibhangavadhi* (DS-5). In *jṣāna* the consciousness takes the form of object and in *darśana* consciousness does not take any form. Knowledge of external object is *jṣāna* and self's internal action or self consciousness to know external object is *darśana*. *Darśana* is like what Naiyāyikas called *nirvikalpa-jṣāna* and *jṣāna* is like *savikalpa-jṣāna*.

Accordingly Jainas accept two kinds of knowledge, immediate knowledge and mediate knowledge. Immediate knowledge is direct knowledge, which is obtained directly by the consciousness of the *ātman*. It is three in kinds, namely *avadhi*, *manahparyāya* and *kevala*. *Avadhi* is directly derived by the self, without the instrumentality of the mind and sense organs. *Manahparyāya* is the

clear and definite knowledge of the thought past, present and future of another mind, which is produced by the removal of all obstruction of knowledge by right discipline and conduct. *Kevala-jñāna* is the highest kind of knowledge and can have no error. It is the direct, pure, unalloyed and unlimited knowledge of all the objects of the world with all their modifications. It is only possessed by those who have reached the highest point of elevation. When a person is succeeded in getting rid of all action and its impurities through practice of right conduct, he becomes *Kevalin* and his knowledge is called *Kevala-jñāna*. Mediate knowledge is obtained through the medium of senses and mind. It has two varieties-*mati* and *śruta*. *Mati* is sensual and mental knowledge, which is obtained through the five sense organs and through the mind. It has four sub-divisions- *avagraha* (sensation), *iha* (desire to know or attention), *avaya* (determination) and *dhāraṇa* (retention). *Śruta-jñana* is acquired either from the words of an *āpta* or seer of truth, or acquired from the scriptures written by the most perfect and omniscient person.

Concept of Person in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Philosophy

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika admits that person is a combination of physical body, soul and mind. According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika the self is permanent (*sthira*), substance (*dravya*) and immaterial. Consciousness is its quality, but not essential and inseparable quality; it is only accidental and adventitious quality (NS-III.2.21). The existence of *ātman* is self-evident, it exist without consciousness and contact with mind. Nyāya Sutra says that soul is the abode of desire, aversion, volition, pleasure and pain. Intellect is its quality (NS-I.1.10). "Knowledge is a quality which inheres in a substance. This substance is neither the body nor the sense nor the mind. It must therefore be the soul."⁶

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika holds that without *ātman's* desire, aversion, volition, knowledge, ethical responsibility, etc. cannot be explained.

In contrast to Cārvāka they are of the opinion that it is not the body, sense, mind, and the stream of consciousness that can know, desire and enjoy.⁷ It is the *ātman* that controlled and guide the mind, senses and the process of consciousness. God is the Supreme *Ātman* (*pramātmāna*) and consciousness is its inseparable quality.

Physical body is a group of atoms brought together by the latent *karma*. It is unconscious (*acetana*), so is not the enjoyer (*bhoktā*). In the Nyāya view body is the receptacle (*āyatana*) of worldly enjoyment (*bhoga*). 'Body is the site of gesture, senses and sentiments' (NS-I.1.11). The senses work on the basis of body. The circumstance which is desirable or hateful can be selected through the body and body can experience the sentiment of pain and pleasure. The self is substratum of consciousness and the enjoyer. For enjoyment the self must be associated with body. To alive the body, the self must be associated with it. Without self body become dead and without body, the self is unconscious and devoid of all enjoyment. The self and body must be together in order to have a living body in the ordinary sense.⁸ The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika holds that a living body is a necessary condition for the origin of conscious state. Although the self is a spiritual substance, it can exist devoid of all consciousness.

In the process of knowledge the object of the knowledge is very important. According to P.T. Raju Gotama divided it into twelve kinds as, *ātman*, body, senses, object of senses, consciousness (*budhi*), mind (*manas*), action (*karma*), impurity (*doṣa*), rebirth, the fruits of action (*phala*), pain (*dukha*) and liberation.⁹ Unlike Sankhya-Yoga and Vedānta, Nyāya- Vaiśeṣika does not conceive *buddhi* as reason, it is only an adventitious consciousness that arise like spark of light, that mind come into contact with *ātman*. Through senses mind obtain impression of the object and with the contact of *ātman* produced consciousness.

Perception is the direct knowledge, which arises from the contact of senses with objects. Goutama defines "Perception is that

knowledge which arises from the contact of a sense with its objects and which is determinate, unnameable and non-erratic" (NS-I.1.4). But only contact of the senses with the object cannot produce knowledge. For it conjunction of soul with mind is necessary (NS-II.1.21). "A sense coming in contact with its object produces knowledge in our soul only the sense is conjoined with the mind. Hence the conjunction of soul with the mind should be mentioned as a necessary element in the definition of perception."¹⁰

Nyāya holds in perception the object is always of the form of 'That is a pot'. In the process of perception mind synthesized all sense perceptions. 'The eye sees the shape and colour; touch informs us about the hardness of the pot; the ear tells us of its sound. The mind collects all these impressions and carries them to the *ātman*. As soon as mind comes into contact with the *ātman*, consciousness arises in the *ātman*, and the object is known as 'That is a pot' or that is an object characterized by the universal potness.¹¹ Mind is atomic in size, so it has infinite speed to synthesize all the impressions together, then we able to grasp the object as a single unitary entity. The consciousness is produced in *ātman* after its contact with mind. So consciousness is adventitious quality of *ātman*.

Two stages of perception are accepted by Naiyāyikas-indeterminate and determinate. "The knowledge of a thing without any attribute is known as indeterminate apprehension; such as this is something. Attributed knowledge is determinate apprehension" (TS IV 32) such as 'That is a pot'. In determinate perception the distinction and relation between a qualificand (*viśeṣya*) and a qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*) is cognized and something is cognized as a something. Here knowledge identifies the qualities in the substance, e.g. cognized a rose as a red rose. When cognition is without any qualifier (*nisapakāraka*), it is indeterminate. Here the relation between the qualificand and the qualifier is not cognized and no definite knowledge is produced. It is mere acquaintance with something with which there is sensory connection. Since it is

devoid of any qualifier, it cannot be false or doubtful. This opens up the possibility that there are other cases of cognition to that are not false or doubtful (NS-II.1.13).¹²

Nyāya analyses two kinds of perception; ordinary (*laukika*) and extra ordinary (*alaukika*). In ordinary perception the senses directly contact with object, then with mind and *ātman*. It is two folds- *bāhya* (external) and *mānas* (internal). As sixth organ, like other organs mind also have special objects like desire (*icchā*), aversion (*dveṣa*), effort (*prayatna*), pleasure (*śukha*), pain (*duhkha*) etc. Mind directly contacts with these objects and produced consciousness to *ātman*. Without usual sense contact with object, Nyāya recognized three kinds of extra ordinary perception, with peculiar kind of contact. The first one is *Sāmānyalakṣaṇa* (universal) perception. When we perceive a pot, we perceive universal potness there, that mind come into contact with that universal. It is because, according to Nyāya, universal is connected with all individuals. Thus, though we cannot perceive all pots, we perceive the universal 'potness' in that particular pot.

The second kind is *Jñānalakṣaṇa* perception, it is complicative perception. Looking a piece of ice, we say 'it is cold', even without touching it. But, how can be coolness seen? This kind of cognition is due to association of perceptions in our mind. Here the object is not directly presented to a sense organ, but is revive in memory through the past cognition of it, and is perceived through representation. The third kind of extra ordinary perception is *Yogaja* perception. It is an intuitive and immediate perception, without the limits of time, distance and size. It is acquired by Yogins through the power of meditation. It is self knowledge.

Conclusion

Jainism and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika both schools maintain that body is combination of atoms and admit the existence of self in a person. Nyāya maintains that consciousness is the adventitious quality.

The *ātman* controls and guides the mind, senses and the process of consciousness. Through senses mind obtain impression of the object, synthesises them and with the contact of *ātman* produced consciousness. But for Jainism consciousness is both essence and the quality of self. If the self is not of nature of consciousness, as held by Naiyāyikas, knowledge could not arise. In all *jīvas* the consciousness exists, but in lower organism this consciousness is latent or implicit, while in man it is generally explicit. To know external objects consciousness takes the form of object. Consciousness reveals itself and the object in all its acts of cognition. But it has the original power to reveal the objects directly without the help of mind and senses.

Jainism accepts knowledge without having direct contact with sense organs, the immediate knowledge. In *avadhi*, *manahparyāya* and *kevaljñāna* there is no direct contact with senses and mind with object. In all three kinds of knowledge self directly knows object, Jainism importance in purity of self for these kinds of knowledge. Even perception is considered as indirect knowledge, as in perception the self get knowledge through the medium of senses and mind.

Both Jainism and Nyāya conceive physical body as unconscious (*acetana*). Nyāya maintains that body is not enjoyer, it is only receptacle (*āyatana*), self is the enjoyer. But Jainism holds that *jīvais* the enjoyer, self by its nature pure and free. But this real nature of self is obscured and enveloped by the *karmic pramāṇus* or atoms, which are attracted by self's own karmas and are absorbed into its body. It makes the self impure and its four infinite attributes become finite. By its right karma and practices, when the karma particles stopped to enter into the self (*samvara*), and destroy that have already entered the self (*nirjarā*), it becomes liberated and understands its infinite qualities.

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Abbreviations

DS	-	Dravya-Sangraha
NS	-	Nyāya-Sūtra
TS	-	Tarka Samgraha