

Exposition of naya in Jaina philosophy

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Serious students of Indian philosophy are well aware of the brilliant part played by Jaina Logicians in their polemics with Hindu and Buddhist logicians in ancient and medieval India. There is no doubt about it, that Jaina logic is one of the most valuable and ancient logic of India. Specially the doctrines of nonabsolutism, the method of dialectical predication and the method of standpoints are the separate and peculiar dialectic development of Jaina logic. In the present paper I want to discuss the method of standpoints in broad outline, leaving out subtle details. Because the subject is obviously very wide in scope, it cannot be treated fully in a small dissertation like this.

My treatment of the topic falls under four sections. Viz, 1. naya and syadvada. 2. naya and pramana. 3. Naya and Niksepa and 4. Definitions and kinds of nayas.

1 Nayavada and syadvada

The method of standpoints (nayas) and the method of dialectical predication (Syadvada) are the two main wings of non-absolutism (Anekantavada). In the words of Siddhasena Divakara, Nayas offer the individual Jewels, which are strung together by means of syadvada, into a necklace. Logically, these are two complementary processes forming a natural and inevitable development of the relativistic presupposition of the Jaina metaphysics. They form a schema which is pre-eminently one of correlative methods rather than of theories of reality, although they both presuppose and explain the primordial notion that all reality is relativistic. Nayavada is principally an analytical method investigating a particular standpoint of a factual situation according to the purpose and level of the equipment of experience (jnatra). Making a further distinction between nayavada and syadvada (saptabhangti) it can be said that nayas refer to the parts of a thing, whereas the saptabhangti re-

fers of thing as a whole, nayas have relation to analysis, whereas saptabhangti relates to synthesis. Nayavada is the analytical method of knowledge while saptabhangti or syadvada as the synthetic method of knowing a thing. According to H. Jacobi. It would be more correct to say that syadvada is a logical development the a corollary of nayavada. Dr A.N. Upadhye observes that syadvada is a corollary of nayavada and that the latter is analytical and primarily conceptual and the former is synthetic and verbal. In this connection Dr. Padmarajah says. "Although not quite incorrect, this distinction is apt to the somewhat misunderstood if we are not aware of the background against which it is made. This is because the so-called 'primary conceptual method' is also verbal, in as much as it not merely requires the aid of word for the expression of its various standpoints but also has as many as three, among its seven, standpoints which are exclusively designated a saptabhangti. Further he says "Similarly, in contradiction to the verbal elements of the 'conceptual' nayavada, the 'mainly verbal' method of Syadvada is so much charged with the epistemological character that we might say that its verbal side is more instrumental than intrinsic in value. But under Syadvada no distinctions, such as the verbal modes of syadvada and non-verbal or the epistemological modes of syadvada can be made since all modes are both verbal and epistemological.

2. Naya and Pramana

Knowledge is attained by means of pramana and Naya. Here, Pramana is mentioned first as it is of superior excellence because it is the source or origin of Naya. The nayas are the division of Pramana. Jaina scriptures say, "Accepting knowledge derived from Pramana, ascertaining one particular state or mode of substance is naya. "Secondary, the range of Pramana comprises all

attributes. Similarly, it has been said that Pramana is a comprehensive view, whereas naya is a partial view. In other words, Pramana is called complete judgment (Sakaladesa) while Naya is called incomplete judgment (vikaladesa). Through complete judgment, it is not possible for us to describe the infinite characteristics of an object. To overcome this difficulty, we use only one word that describes one characteristic of that object and hold the remaining characteristics to the identical with it. By this method we can describe all characteristics of an object by the description of a particular aspect only. This type of preposition is called pramana, saptabhangi or complete judgment. The identity of all other aspects with a simple aspect is proved by the identity of time, quality, substratum, relation, association and word. In the case of incomplete judgment the order is reversed. Every judgment presupposes some difference in every aspect or quality. In regard to a complete judgment, time, quality etc. establish identity among various qualities, whereas with regard to an incomplete judgement time, quality, etc. prepare the ground for difference among various qualities. This kind of judgement is called Naya-Saptabhangi also.

In this connection, a question can be raised, how the partial truth conveyed by a naya is as valid as the full truth conveyed by pramana? The Jaina logicians attempt an answer to this by employing an analogical argument, in which they compare naya to a part of a sea which is pramana. "Now in so far as a part is identical with the whole itself, there is an essential non-difference between the two; a naya shares the validity, at any rate in some measure, of pramana. But, in so far as a naya is different from the whole, in some sense, it cannot be identical the whole and therefore the view of the naya as identical with the whole must be invalid. When it becomes invalid i.e. when its partial truth is taken to be the whole truth, It is called a Kunaya or Durnaya. According to Dr. Tatia, "the contingencies of 'Naya' and 'Durnaya' arise only when a knowledge situation is sought to be expressed in or understood through inadequate logical categories

and linguistic symbols, which fail to express the knowledge in its pristinetime comprehensiveness unless their significance is rightly analysed."

3. Naya and Niksepa

Etymologically, the term 'Niksepa' stands for 'putting together' or 'classifying'; but this meaning can hardly be recognised in the developed forms of the concept of niksepa. It is one such technique of exposition of words as well as interpretation of the nature of reality. Now, Naya may be distinguished from it. Naya is a point of view from which we make some statement about the thing, while Niksepa is an aspect of the thing itself. If we consider the statements merely as such, its point of view is naya; if we consider the fact which justifies the point of view it is niksepa.

4. Definition of Naya and its Kinds

The Jaina doctrine of modes or stand point corresponds to the Greek doctrine of tropes, modes and conditions. The Jaina epistemology elaborated this doctrine in order to show that several judgments or propositions may be true about the same object, but from different points or view. Here, it is interesting to note that each fact, however trivial it may appear, can be thoroughly understood in the context of the entire reality and only in the light of its interconnection with the rest of reality. A real is possessed of an infinite number of aspects and attributes which can be thoroughly comprehended only by a person who is directly acquainted with the whole order of the reality, in one word, who is omniscient. But this does not mean that the Jaina here offers a counsel of perfection which amounts to a counsel of despair for a person like us whose resources are limited. Though the full knowledge of all the possible characteristics even of a particle of dust can not be claimed by any one of us, the knowledge of one or the other attribute can be attained if we are dispassionate and free from bias for one angle of vision and prepared for approaching it from other standpoints. Therefore, we must recognise that there are different ways of approach

or expressing the same truth, and it is this that people may refer to when they speak of approaching the same truth from different stand points, this is the way in which the Jain non absolutism deals with opposed with opposed doctrines of the different schools. In this connection it can be said, "It is now not merely that all theories are on an equal footing, in the sense that we have no way of arguing for one against another, and hence the idea that one standpoint is superior to another must be left out."

If we look at an object from infinite number of view, we can say that there are infinite kinds of nayas because the object is composed of infinite number of characteristics and one naya knows only one characteristic. Therefore, there is difference of opinion among the Jains on nayavada on the question of the number of nayas. But looking at it from a specific point of view, it is maintained that maya is of two kinds.

(1) Dravyarthika (dealing with generality) and (2) Paryayarthika (dealing with particularity). Again, the first is called Arthanaya in as much as they deal with objects of knowledge, whereas the other are called 'Sabdanaya' in as much as they pertain to terms and its meanings.

Dravyarthika is the view of looking at the identity of things, while Paryayarthika is the view which looks at the difference of things. Man speaks of something either from the standpoint of identity or from that of difference. Statements of things from the former point of view are put under the head of dravyarthika. Propositions of objects from the standpoint of difference fall under the category of paryayarthika. Many minor classifications of things ranging between general (dravyarthika) and particular (paryayarthika) view points are also possible. But briefly speaking, there can be only two groups of statements. The view point of identity, upon which are founded the statements of generalisation, is called Dravyarthika Naya, while the view point of difference, upon which are founded the statements of particularisation is called paryayarthika Naya. The dravyarthikanaya is fur-

ther divided into three categories, viz., Naigama, Samgraha and Vyavahara. The subdivision of the paryayarthikanaya are four; Rjusutra, Sabda, Sambhirudha and Evamabhuta.

(1) Naigama : It seems to be somewhat obscure and is therefore differently interpreted by the scholars. According to Pujiyapada it relates to the purpose of intention of something which is not accomplished. For instance, a person who goes equipped with an axe is asked by any one for what purpose he is going. The person replies that he goes to fetch a wooden measure (prastha). But at that time the wooden measure is based on the mere intention to make it. Similarly, one is engaged in fetching fuel, water, pot etc. He is asked by another person what he does? The former replies that he cooks food (odana). But he is not actually cooking food. He is only engaged in activity which will ultimately result in cooking food. Thus, in each of the two examples food (odana) and measure (Prastha) there is a central purpose which gives meaning to a course of conduct of some duration. The course of conduct is represented by different modes of activity at different stages. In spite of this difference the whole series and also every individual item tend towards the idea aimed at.

Again, Naya-karnika says that it views an object as possessing both the general and particular properties, because no object is possessed of a general property unaccompanied with some particular property nor even of a specific property unaccompanied with the general one common to its class. Consider, for instance the statement. 'I am conscious'. Here, the property of being conscious is a general quality that exists in all living beings whereas 'I' indicates the speaker a person or an individual.

According to the true relations of the teleological and interpreting idea, this naigama is subdivided into three viz. vartamana, bhuta and bhavisyat or bhava. Vartamana naigama belongs to the past, yet transferred to present. When we say that today is the parinirvana day of Lord Mahavira,

we do not mean that the Lord Mahavira is to attain or attaining nirvana on the day we actually so spoke. The event took place many centuries ago on a corresponding day of that year. Because of this correspondence an event true of the day centuries ago is also associated with all such corresponding days of the subsequent years. In the Bhuta naigama instead of looking back to the past we may look forward to a remote future, instead of detecting in the concrete present the continuity of the past, we may discover in it something which is yet to be. As for example, when on perceiving would be king we say, 'Here comes His Royal Highness.' It means that he is not yet king now, but is going to be one soon. Similarly we may speak of every Bhavyajive a good soul as siddhajiva, a perfect soul. For somehow in the far off future perfection will be the goal of all; for everyone is God in the germ. Such an assertion is true according to Bhavanaigam or future Naigam.

(2) Samgraha : This standpoint is that which comprehends several different modes under one common head through their belonging to the same class. In other words, it deals with the general characteristic of an object or the class character of a factual situation. As for example, 'reality is one because it exists' is propositon of this naya. It does not look at the particular properties of reality but regards the general property as its subject matter though there can be no general or universal without particular, yet the enquiring from this standpoint keeps in view the generic qualities only.

This naya is of two kinds, para-sangraha (ultimate class-view) and Apra Sangraha (inferior class-view). Every existing thing partakes of the nature of reality. Hence we may speak of all things as one in the ultimate Reality and it is the example of Parasangraha naya. But the different classes of things living and non-living included in this ultimate Reality may themselves be spoken of as different classes and it is the subject matter of the Apra-sangraha naya.

The fallacy of this naya occurs when we consider the general property alone as constituting a thing. This kind of fallacious propositions gives rise to confusion of thought, because the general qualities alone can never constitute an actual object.

(3) Vyavahara : This Naya means the popular and conventional point of view, which rests on sense-perception of the concrete present. The concrete reality of things is sufficient for our practical life. It amounts to knowing things by their causal value. It takes into consideration a general object as possessing specific properties. It does not deal with generality as does the sangraha naya. On the other hand it classifies the subject matter of the sangraha in the mode of particularity. Examination of the specific Dravyas, Jiva Dravya and Ajiva Dravya, both belonging to the Dravya Genus, would be an illustration of the vyavahara naya.

Fallacy of Vyavahara Naya lies in wrong selection of species. When the generic correlative of specific feature is entirely ignored the resultant fallacy comes to have only the semblance of this naya. Which select, only four primary elements as real, is the best example of this naya. This type of fallacy is found in the Indian philosophy.

(4) Rjusutra : The argument underlying this standpoint is that of immediate utility which naturally must be grounded upon the present aspect of a thing. It denies all continuity and identity. It is purely momentary. It is important to note here that it does not refer to the past or future of the thing. In this respect it is still narrower than the vyavaharic present. At least for vyavaharic view there is a tolerable duration; for the present and the conventional things are real so far. But according to this naya a thing is what it is in the present mathematical moment. To speak of duration of a thing is rejected by this view as an unwarranted assumption. Thus it enables to secure the balance between change and permanence. Accordingly when we claim to know a thing; we mean thereby to know it only with reference to its present substantive state (Dravya) name (Nama) and form. For example, we

say, "It is very pleasant now." This proposition predicates something which is true of the subject only at the moment of the predication.

The fallacy of this naya occurs when the permanence of things is altogether denied. Each and every object is taken to be momentary without having any kind of general features in it.

(5) Sabda : The present standpoint of synonyms refers to the function of synonymous words which, despite their differences in tense, case, gender, number and so forth convey the same meaning. In other words, it treats synonymous words as all having the same sense. The meaning is that the sabda-naya does not concern itself with but simply deals with synonymous as if they were pure equivalents of one another. For instance kumbha, kalasa, ghata are all expressive of one and the same object viz. jar. Again, Jiva, Atman, Prana etc. are synonymous terms and though these differ from one another in their etymological hearings, yet they all refer to the one and the same thing conventionally.

Fallacy of Sabdanaya occurs when we ignore the distinguishing features of it and deal with synonymous words as absolutely having the same meaning. The sabdadvaitavadins and a few other schools in Indian Philosophy are said to have committed this fallacy.

(6) Samabhirudha : It is the differentiation of terms according to their roots. The difference in the roots must mean a corresponding difference in the terms and therefore in their meanings. In other words, it distinguishes the meanings of synonymous words purely on etymological grounds. For instance, a jar (Kumbha), a pitcher (kalasa) and a pot (ghata) signify different things according to their meanings. The point is that while the sabdanaya would treat synonyms as equivalent words, the samabhirudha naya would distinguish them from one another on etymological grounds. Thus it is only a special application of sabdanaya. In becoming specialised it becomes narrower and

more exaggerated than the above nayas. The fallacy of this naya consists in treating the synonymous words as having absolutely different meanings.

(7) Evambhuta : Etymologically, evambhuta means the truth of the word and its sense in its entirety. It calls for a different designation for each of the different attitudes which the same object assumes under different conditions. In other words, it recognises an object denoted by a word only in respect of its own natural function as suggested by the derivative meaning of that word. Thus, accordingly to this principle, the radical sense in general is not the appropriate sense of a term. Even the root signification must have different gradations and aspects. Of these various aspects and gradations in the manifestations of the thing. Only one particular aspect or gradation is contemplated by the root of a term and it is this contemplated aspect or gradation which is the legitimate meaning of the terms in its current usage. The very same thing in a different attitude must be designated by a different term altogether. For instance, Purandara should be designated as such only when he is actually engaged in the act of destroying his enemies. Similarly the designation 'sakra' is appropriate only when he is actually manifesting his prowess. Thus Purandara becomes as different from sakra as a cow is from a Jara.

The fallacy of this naya lies in making the existence of a thing absolutely dependent on the performance of the special function with reference to which a particular name has been awarded to it.

Thus, each of the seven nayas has a greater extent or denotation than the one which follows it. Naigama has thus the greatest and evambhuta the least extent : Naigama deals with real and unreal. Samgraha deals with real only Vyavadhara with only a part of the real. Sabda with only the expression of the real. Samabhirudha with only one particular expression. Evambhuta with only that particular expression which applies to the thing in its present activity.

In this connection, it can be noted that there cannot be a thing which is devoid of its modifications of birth and decay. On the other hand, modifications cannot exist without an abiding or eternal something, a permanent, for birth decay and stability-these three constitute the characteristic of a substance or entity. These three characteristics must dwell together in harmony to make a real diffinition of a thing in its integral form. In this respect each naya, therefore, if taken independently isolated from the other, can never yield an edequate idea of an entity. Both these therefore, divorced from each other, are wrong in their standpoints. Therefore, Jaina logicians say that "a man who holds the view of the cumulative character of truth (Anekantavada) never says that a particular view is right or that a particular view is wrong. Again "if all the nayas arrange themselves in a proper way and supplement to each other, then alone they are worthy of being termed as the whole truth or the right view in its entirety. But in this case they merge their individuality in the collective whole." Therefore the right approach should be to accept the relating validity of knowledge. In order to give a logical shape to this view the Jainas have formulated; a theory of relative standpoint" and "they are of opinion that there can never be an absolute claim about the truth of any expression."

At last, we can say in the words of G.H. Rao that "each philosophy approaching reality from a particular and a partial standpoint, looks upon the one they adopt as the only true standpoint. Jainas reject the idea of the absolute which is playing havoc in the field of philosophy by creating absolute monism, absolute pluralism, and absolute nihilism. By thus rejecting the absolute and one-sided, they claim to save philosophy from the chaos of conflicting opinions. Without partiality to any one they promise to give us a theory of relativity which harmonises all standpoints."

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16. Jayadhavala, p. 283
17. Sthananga - 209
18. There are four distinct phase of the development of the doctrine in the exegetical and logical literature of the Janas, Viz.
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20. Nikespa as a doctrine of aspects of reality
21. Nama-niksepa as entailing a doctrine of import of words and
22. Niksepa as a critique of absolutism.
23. Dr. Tattia, Acarya Bhiksu commenoration volume, Sect. III, p. 71
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- within the framework of reality which is conceived to be fundamentally dra'vya paryayarthika. The first one adopts a classification of seven, our treatment of the subject has been based on this classification. The second tradition drops ama which is the first among the seven nayas recognised by the first tradition. The third tradition reduces the number from seven to five by subsuming samabhirudha and evambhuta, the last two standpoints under sabda, and thus treating them as two subdivisions of the sabdanaya. Dr. Padmrajiah, *Jaina Theories of Reality and knowledge*, p. 325
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