

The Impact of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika School on Jaina Philosophy

The history of Jaina philosophy extends over a long period of 2600 years. The concepts of Jaina metaphysics and epistemology can be traced as early as the history of Jainism begins. Not only Mahāvīra (6th cent. BC) but the tradition of his predecessor Lord Pārśvanātha (8th cent. BC) also bears clear marks of the fundamental concepts of Jaina philosophy. Tradition reckons twenty-three prophets as having preceded to Mahāvīra, which takes us back to fabulous antiquity of the tradition. Pārśvanātha, born at Varanasi was the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara. Thus, historically Jaina philosophy existed long before the emergence of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools of Indian Philosophy. Due to the earlier emergence of Jaina philosophy, we do not find any impact of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school on the fundamental concepts of Jaina metaphysics and epistemology, such as *Pañcāstikāyavāda*, nine categories (*Nava-tattva*), six kinds of living beings (*Ṣaḍjīvanikāya*) including five kinds of knowledge (*Pañcajñāna*). On these earlier concepts we can trace some impacts of earlier Upaniṣads, early Buddhism as well as other contemporary Śramanic traditions. Generally, Jainism and Buddhism are regarded as the schools emerged against the sanctity of Vedic lore and oppressive priest craft. But this is not true as both of the traditions have their independent origin. Though, independent of Buddhism, Jainism resembles it in several respects, e.g. in its repudiation of the authority of Veda, its pessimistic outlook on life and its refusal to believe in Supreme God. Being sister religions of the same Śramanic tradition, both have various philosophical, religious and ethical concepts as common. Both of the philosophical schools, being based more or less on the same theory of *Vibhajyavāda*,

discord the one-sided views of their contemporary thinkers. Buddha's approach being negative one, culminated in *Śūnyavāda* but his penetrating vision led him to proclaim that the truth lies in the middle path. He opined that any kind of extreme view was likely to give rise to one-sided opinion, which by creating obsession may obscure our vision. Mahāvīra's approach being positive culminated in *Anekāntavāda* i.e. theory of Non-absolutism. This non-absolutistic approach of both the schools are totally absent in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools. By the emergence of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools, the earlier phase of Jaina and Buddhist philosophy were well established. But this does not mean that Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy has no impact on Jaina philosophy. It has certain influence on later established concepts of Jaina philosophy, which we shall discuss in this article.

The history of the development of Jaina philosophy can be shown in following four phases:

- I. The Āgamic philosophy - 5th cent. BC to 3rd cent. AD
- II. The period of Logical presentation of Jaina philosophy and its theory of *Anekāntavāda* - 4th cent. A.D. to 7th cent. AD
- III. The period of critical evaluation of other schools of Indian philosophy and - 8th cent. AD to 15th cent. AD
- IV. The period of applying of Navya-Nyāya technique in Jaina philosophy - 17th to 18th cent. AD.

Out of these five phases of the development of Jaina philosophy, the first phase may be called purely Āgamic. One cannot trace any impact of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools on it. It was the second phase where some impacts of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school can be traced on Jaina metaphysical and epistemological concepts. In the third phase, Jaina thinkers, while making a critical estimate of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools, adopted the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika concepts and also of their opponents. Jains by synthesizing these opposite views

with their theory of *Anekāntavāda* evolved some new theories such as *Sadasatkāryavāda*, *Parataḥ-svataḥ-prāmāṇyavāda* etc in support of their philosophy. In this phase, Jainas have vehemently criticized the philosophical doctrines of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and pointed out their logical as well as practical weaknesses of their doctrines based on one-sidedness views. In the fourth and last phase, Jaina philosophers adopted the *Navya-nyāya* (Neo-logic) technique of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya (12-13th cent. AD) for sound and logical presentation of their philosophical doctrines. It was a new turn to the development of Indian logic. The Jaina scholars also could not escape from the powerful trend of this thought. This technique made a profound influence on Jaina Ācāryas.

It is established fact that no philosophy emerges in vacuum. It has some impacts of its earlier as well as contemporary philosophies either in a positive or negative form. In other words, either they accept the philosophical concepts of their earlier or contemporary philosophical schools with certain logical modifications, or reject them by showing their logical inconsistencies. Jaina thinkers had used both the techniques, but instead of total rejection, they synthesized them with their opponent's view. Thus, the Jaina doctrine is nothing but a synthesization of two conflicting opposite views. Jaina philosophers used this technique regarding Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school also.

Some metaphysical concepts of Jaina philosophy which were established in the first phase of its development such as (1) the doctrine of *Pañcāstikāya*, (2) the nine categories (*Nava-tattva*), (3) the six types of living beings (*Ṣaḍjīvanikāya*), (4) the eight fold *karmas* (*Aṣṭakarma-prakṛti*) etc. have no impact of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. Similarly, on some ethico-religious concepts such as *Cāturyāma dharma*, *Pañca-mahāvratas*, four-fold or three-fold path of liberation (*Triratna*) and the concept of five types of knowledge (*Pañcajñāna*) etc. we do not find any impact of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. Though, in the 6th century BC of this first phase, Jaina

philosophers logically presented these doctrines without assimilating the views of other contemporary schools on their own footings.

The impact of other philosophical traditions on Jaina philosophy starts from the second phase i.e. after 2nd century BC. In this period Jaina thinkers propounded the doctrine of six substances (*Ṣaḍ-dravya*) and explained the relationship between substance (*Dravya*), attribute (*Guṇa*) and modes (*Paryāya*). Though, the words such as *sat*, *dravya* and *astikāya* were already used in Indian philosophy for Reality, but originally they belonged to different traditions. The word '*sat*' belongs to Vedic tradition, while the word *dravya* was used by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Similarly, the word *astikāya* originally belongs to the Jaina tradition but later on Jaina thinkers used all these three words for Reality. Etymologically, these three words connote three different meanings. The word '*sat*' means that which exists without changing, while the word '*dravya*' means that which exists with changes. The word *astikāya* means that which exists with extension in space. The Jaina doctrine of *Ṣaḍ-dravya* was a new development but really there was nothing new in this doctrine of six substances except the addition of *kāla* (time) as a substance along with the five *astikāyas*. It was a later development of the doctrine of *pañcāstikāya*. The acceptance of the word "*dravya*" in Jaina tradition seems to be an influence of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy. According to Jaina philosophy the number of the substances is six while Vaiśeṣika school accepts nine substances. In the list of both these schools *akāśa*, *kāla* and *ātman* (*jīva*) are common. *Ākāśa* and *ātman* are also included in the list of *pañcāstikāya*. Here, only inclusion of *kāla* (Time) may be considered as an impact of Vaiśeṣika school. It is worth to note that in the Śvetāmbara tradition even up to the seventh century AD, *kāla* was not accepted as an independent substance by some of the scholars. According to them *kāla* is only a mode (पर्याय) of *jīva* and *pudgala* (matter). The debate whether time can be regarded as an independent substance or not, begins from 3rd century AD, before the formulation

of *Tattvārthasūtra* and differences in this regard continued up to the period of *Viśeṣāvaśyaka-bhāṣya* i.e. 7th century AD. Regarding definitions of *dravya*, *guṇa* and *kāla*, we find some similarities in *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra*, *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra* as well as *Tattvārthasūtra*. Scholars are of the opinion that the *Tattvārthasūtra* and its auto-commentary have some influence of *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra* and *Yoga-sūtra*. When we talk of the impact of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school on the metaphysical doctrine of Jainism, we should not forget that Jainas have of course borrowed some of the terminologies/ideas of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school but they incorporated them in their own way with required modifications and not as it is. For example, regarding substance, which possessed of *guṇa* (attributes) and *paryāya* (modes) Jainas are very clear in their concept that *guṇa* and *paryāya* are not two different entities as the Nyāya holds but they are two aspects of the same Reality and they are interchangeable in different relations. Similarly, Jaina also not admit the destruction of all *guṇas* with the destruction of a *dravya* and the emergence of all the *guṇas* a new with every new *dravya*, as the Nyāya holds.

So far as the impact of Nyāya school on Jaina epistemology is concerned, Jaina philosophers have adopted some ideas of Nyāya school in toto and some ideas in their modified form. As I have already discussed, the doctrine of five-fold knowledge (*pañcājñāna*) has its origin in the philosophy of Lord Pārśva (8th cent. BC) that is why we do not find any impact of Nyāya School on this doctrine. Even in *Tattvārthasūtra* (3rd cent. AD), while establishing these five types of knowledge as *pramāṇa*, we do not trace any conceptual impact of these schools on it. In the beginning of Christian era, when the discussions regarding the nature and types of *pramāṇas* took place in different schools of Indian philosophy; the Jaina thinker Umāsvāti defined those five types of knowledge or knowledge itself as *pramāṇa*. *Tattvārtha-sūtra* accepts only two types of *pramāṇa* i.e. *pratyakṣa* (direct) and *parokṣa* (indirect) and satisfy himself by dividing these five types of knowledge into two. At the

prima-facie it shows an impact of Vaiśeṣika School on Jaina epistemology but in my humble opinion it would be a wrong supposition. Here the similarity is only regarding two broad categories or the numbers of *Pramāṇas* and not in the concepts itself. For Jains the knowledge itself is *pramāṇa* but for Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika *pramāṇa* is the means of knowledge (प्रमीयते अनेन इति प्रमाणं). Secondly, for Umāsvāti, the meaning of *pratyakṣa* (direct knowledge) and *parokṣa* (indirect knowledge) are totally different from that of Nyāya's definition of *pratyakṣa* and *parokṣa*. Umāsvāti maintains that the knowledge acquired through sense organs and mind is not a direct knowledge, but it is an indirect knowledge (*parokṣa*). On going through *Tattvārthasūtra*, one can observe that though Umāsvāti also adopted some concept of epistemology prevalent that time, but he explained it according to his own Āgamic tradition.

The first impact of Nyāya School on Jaina epistemology can be traced in the canonical works of later period (3rd - 4th century A.D.) or in the late incorporated works of early canonical works.

The Jaina theory of *pramāṇas* takes its birth from the scattered ideas found in the canonical works. In the Āgamic period or the first phase, the five-fold division of knowledge, which later on considered as *pramāṇa*, remained pure and unalloyed. In the second stage when the idea of two-fold classification came into existence, particularly in *Niryuktī* literature and *Tattvārthasūtra*, it was certainly due to external influence, yet the spirit of Āgamas remained dominating. For the first time, in *Anuyogadvāra-sūtra* five-fold division of Āgamic tradition goes into background and the four-fold division of the Nyāya School came into prominence. Here, the Jaina thinkers adopted the view of Nyāya School in toto. The four-fold *pramāṇas* - *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Āgama* and *Upamāna*, are mentioned in various canonical works such as *Samavāyāṅga*, *Bhagavati*, *Anuyogadvāra*, etc. in the name of *hetu* (हेतु), *vyavasāya* or *pramāṇa*. In the canonical works, we find mention of four-fold as well as three-fold divisions of *pramāṇas* as of Nyāya and Sāṃkhya School respectively. Siddhasena Divākara also followed this three-fold

division of *pramāṇa* in his *Nyāyāvatāra* (4th - 5th cent. AD). Another impact of Nyāya School on Jaina epistemology is seen in *Nandīsūtra* (5th Century) where the sense-cognition is included into *pratyakṣa* (*Nandīsūtra*-4) following the Nyāya tradition. Later on Jaina scholars such as Jinabhadraṇi Kṣamāśramaṇa and Akalaṅka designated it as 'perception according to the common usage' (*sāmvyavahārika pratyakṣa*). Regarding the five organs (*pañca-avayavas*) of inference (*anumāna*) Jaina thinkers are also agreed with Nyāya school. But in *Niryukti* literature we come a cross with ten organs of inference along with above-mentioned five organs. Though the concept of five organs is common to both the traditions, but the idea of ten organs is a peculiarity of Jaina tradition only. Similarly, due to the influence of Nyāya School, Jaina thinkers also adopted the three-fold division of inference (अनुमान) such as *pūrvavat* (पूर्ववत्), *śeṣavat* (शेषवत्) and *sāmānyato-dṛṣṭa* (सामान्यतोदृष्ट). In the Jaina canonical works of later period, we find mention of this classification, which shows the impacts of Nyāya School on Jaina epistemology.

The last, but no least, major influence of Nyāya School on Jaina epistemology is the adoption of Navya-nyāya technique of Gaṅgeśa by the two most versatile Jaina scholars- Upādhyāya Yaśovijaya (17th century AD) and Vimaladāsa. Yaśovijaya's *Anekāntavyavasthā* written in the neo-nyāya style helped the re-establishment of *Anekāntavāda*. Similarly, the *Jaina-tarkabhāṣā* and *Jñānabindu* were two important contributions to the Jaina *Pramāṇa-śāstra*. Vimaldās's *Saptabhaṅgītarāṅgiṇī* a treatment of *Saptabhaṅgī* (doctrine of seven fold predications) is the most celebrated work of Jaina logic written in the same style.

Some traditional Jaina scholars may be reluctant in accepting the Nyāya impact on Jaina philosophy but in my humble opinion, it would be against the intellectual honesty. First of all we should decide the chronology of the development of different philosophical schools as well as philosophical thoughts honestly and then the mutual influence be traced on the basis of chronology.

