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Concept of Paryāya in Jain Philosophy

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2.
Wide Implications of the Concept of *Paryāya*

Samani Chaitany Pragya

The concept of *paryāya* (mode) is related to the concept of change. Substance and mode are the issues which have been widely discussed in the field of philosophy under the names of being and becoming, permanence and impermanence, identity and difference and last but not least the universal and the particular. More or less all of them have emerged out of the same problem i.e. the problem of change-cum-eternity.

According to Bhagavatī Sūtra and Pannavaṇā substance is being, permanent, identical and universal and mode is becoming impermanent, different and particular. Bhagavatī Sūtra mentions that reality manifests in two forms i.e. substance and mode. It does not mean that reality is divided. It is, in fact, one but observer can see it in two forms. Siddhasena Gani supporting the scriptural view in his commentary on Tattvārtha Sūtra says :

"Ontologically substance and mode are inseparable. The distinction of the two is only the mental projection."[1]

In such a situation the absolutist view about the substance and the mode in the reality can not be reasonable, as both are interconnected. To regard one as true and another as untrue is as meaningless as to breathe without air. Substance is the uniting force through which paradoxical nature of the reality merges into unity. Contrary to it, mode is the dividing force through which unity of reality is changed into diversity. If it were not so, why everything is not coming out of everything ? This is the

ground on which Sāṁkhya Philosophy accepts that only the apt effect emerges out of the apt cause.

The interdependence and co-existence of substance and mode imply that mode is nothing but the changing property of a substance. When a substance passes through one condition to another and from one moment to another without loosing its essence it is recognised as mode.[2]

Change can occur in the both substance and attribute.[3] Scriptures like Bhagavatī Sūtra and Pannavaṇā deal with both the types of change. The remarkable thing in them is that change takes place at two levels, viz., micro and macro technically known as *'pariṇāma'*[4] and *'paryāya'*[5] respectively. The former is recognized as mutation and the latter as mode. The former stands for internal change and the latter for the external. In the absence of the former the latter can not take place. Thus, mode is always preceded by mutation. There is cause-effect relationship between the two.

To explain internal change both the *Bhagavatī Sūtra* and *Pannavaṇā* have mentioned two types of mutation occurring in the world of consciousness and that of non-conscious respectively.[6] Each of them is further classified in 10 types. The mutations related to the conscious world are such as, mutation related to next birth, development of sense-organs, passions, psychic colours, mental, physical and vocal activities, application of knowledge, power of knowledge, power of intuition, self-restraint and sexual tendency. Likewise, the mutations related to non-conscious world are also of 10 types, such as, the unity of matter, movement of material entity, structure of material body, separation of material objects, colour, taste, touch, smell, weightlessness and sound property of non-physical element. Each of the ten is further divided into many according to possible alternatives.[7] For example, senses are five. Mutation of one is almost different from that of the other. In this way change multiplies in mathematical proportion passing through the three periods of time.

Wide Implications

The concept of *paryāy* referred to in the canons can be the concrete base to the following theories that are of universal application. In brief, the theories are as follows:

1. Objectivity of causal-efficiency
2. Notion of possibility and probability
3. Multiformity of the universe
4. Objectivity of relativity
5. Individuality of any object

The explicit order of the universe is fundamentally dependent on the theory of change. If there were not potency of change there would have not been the causal-efficiency or cause-effect relationship among the objects. Causal-efficiency is the essential characteristic of an object.[8] All the schools of thought are unanimous about the fact that in the absence of the causal-efficiency nothing can exist.[9] Many of the scientific researches and experiments are based on the cause-effect principle. The philosophy that does not believe in the reality of modification has no answer to the problem that how is the whole universe coming out of one absolute static reality ? This has really been a great problem before Vedantins. This may be a reason for which they have to accept an extra element named as Maya to answer the problem. Accordingly, it is Maya with the help of which change takes place.

The upshot is that to deny modification as real means to deny the causal-efficiency and thereby to deny the existence of the whole world of being.

The whole world of being is passing through the threefold change, viz. natural, by conscious exertion and by both.[10] The change that occurs without conscious exertion is natural. e.g. the change of colour, taste, touch, smell, structure, motion, etc. of a material body.[11] The change which involves the conscious exertion, such as, the matter converted in the form of body, sense-organ, physical properties like colour, touch, size, etc. by the living being itself[12] is of the second type. The change, which starts with the help of consciousness but later on continues in its natural way[13], is of the third type. For example, house, table, etc. once having made by conscious being sustain and decay in their own way.

Sometimes it happens that object is changing even though there is no effect of the change on that object. In fact, change is twofold, viz.; similar and dissimilar, technically known as *'sadrsa'* and *'visadrsa pariṇamana'* respectively.[14] The former is implicit, subtle and

instantaneous. The latter is explicit, gross, lasting for some time and amenable to verbal expression.[15] In other words, what occurs independently is the similar change. What depends for its occurrence on conditions that are external is called dissimilar.[16] The noticeable thing here is that the former is too subtle to be recognized. This is the reason an object, after having changed, does not appear to be so. In the case of the liberated self, the medium of motion, the medium of rest and the change is always similar. Apart from these all other objects have both similar and dissimilar change.

The conceptions of probability and possibility are of paramount importance in modern science. By accepting reality as multifaceted the Jain philosophy has provided grounds for their scientific principles. In the context of change, Acharya Shree Mahapragyaji has beautifully presented the scientific outlook of the Jain Thinkers in the following manner:

"The subtle modifications can not be known through the senses. They are the object of super-consciousness. The visible modifications are gross. They are manifest and, therefore, can be known through the senses also. It is in the case of these gross modifications that we can think of both, the possible and the probable. Every modification has the possibility of changing into any other mode. A colour can change into another colour, a smell into another smell, a taste into another taste, and a touch into another touch. Yati Bhoja has described two types of potentialities, viz.; the potentiality that can be actualized at a distant time (*oghaśakti*) and potentiality that can be immediately actualized (*samucitaśakti*). The former is the mediate cause, while the latter is the immediate cause of change. Grass has the potentiality of becoming ghee at a distant future. Curd can change into ghee immediately. The potentialities are too many to be enumerated. Theoretically, it could be said that potentialities of an object are innumerable as far as the mediate form of potentiality is concerned. A scientist through his research can know a few of these. A person, with the power of super-sensuous knowledge can know them through super-sensuous knowledge. An ordinary man can, however, know only the immediate cause or the visible modifications. We, therefore, can not put any limitation on the possibilities or probabilities."[17]

Multiformity of the universe depends upon the multiformity of relationship among the fundamental realities. The fundamental realities postulated by all the philosophical schools are limited in number. For

example, Sāṁkhya system believes in maximum 24 and minimum 2 elements. Yoga system believes in maximum 25 and minimum 2. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika believe in 16 and 7 basic elements respectively. Likewise, Vedanta system considers only one reality while Buddhist and Jaina consider 5 and 2 fundamental realities respectively. This is really a great wonder how infinite objects are coming out of finite realities. Without accepting the modification in the basic elements the multiformity of objects can not come into being.

Fusion and fission, number, configuration, conjunction, disjunction, etc. are the distinct modifications[18] happening through out the world causing variations in it. In modern science also, fusion and fission are regarded essential to generate energy and sub-atomic particles.

Moreover, the concept of modification also provides concrete ground to the theory of relativity. Unless we accept that one reality undergoes many changes relativity can not work. In modern science, the Theory of Relativity has been formulated on the base of the speed of light that is constant or rather absolute. In this reference, the question raised by some scholars is, if everything, which is empirical, is relative then what is absolute according to the Jaina view ? Without absolute nothing can be relative. So far as the concept of mode is concerned it appears from scriptures that substance is an absolute reality.[19] It is the constancy of substance on the basis of which relativity of modes can be justifiable whether they are successive or simultaneous.

Similarly, the individuality of any object can be maintained only on account of modification. It is in the sense that modification does not mean only mode but qualities also. Special quality of an object alone fixes the identity of the object. For example, consciousness is the only quality by which a sentient is known as sentient. If we overlook the quality there would be no difference between the sentient and insentient elements, as Acharya Akalanka has remarked in the context of Non-absolutism:

"Except consciousness in all other regards, the soul can be identical with the non-soul."[20]

So does the Vedanta system. Overlooking all the differences it sees oneness of the whole world of being. So far as Jaina view is concerned it believes in oneness of the world[21] but at the same time it emphasizes the individuality or difference of the entity constituting the world.

Bhagavatī Sūtras and Pannavaṇā deal with such differences pertaining to the living and non-living entities. How one atom and the living being differ from another of the same category, of being similar in many respect, has been shown in them with the help of higher mathematics technically known as *chatthanavadiya* (six-fold gradation).[22]

One more astonishing factor referred to in Nayachakra is this that apart from the mode *Agarūlaghū* there is one quality also named *Aguru-laghū* in each substance.[23] It is only the quality that helps substance to maintain its identity in the eternal flow of time. Due to this attribute animate always remains animate and inanimate always remains inanimate. Otherwise nothing could stay in its nature. Thus, the attribute *Aguru-laghu* plays an important role to reserve the nature of basic elements.

Looking at the discussion of mode cultivated in the Jaina canonical and the philosophical texts it appears that sharp and scientific vision is necessary to penetrate into the deeper levels of the concept.

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