

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION OF JAYARASIBHATTA

While studying Cārvāka Philosophy, the main difficulty, one has to face, is of making original Cārvāka texts available. In spite of the problem whether Cārvāka was a real historical personality, one cannot even get a detailed information of any particular Cārvāka Philosopher. The question, who exactly was Bṛhaspati referred to as the originator of Cārvāka system, is still unanswered. ( It is obvious that this Bṛhaspati is different from the so-called Guru of Gods. But we find many ancient Philosophical books confused even in this matter. Even the heretic Jayarāśibhaṭṭa denotes him by the name Suraguru at the end of his treatise. ) Therefore, one has to take a serious account of *Tattvopaplavasīmha* by Jayarāśibhaṭṭa as its philosophical position is near to, though not the same as, Cārvāka position

The main thread of thoughts presented by Jayarāśi can be stated in his two statements :- ( 1 ) One should follow the path based upon the worldly view.<sup>1</sup> ( 2 ) Hence, all principles being abolished, all the practices are justified, when they become beautiful due to the absence of thoughts.<sup>2</sup>

In these two statements, Jayarāśibhaṭṭa puts the principles on the one hand and the worldly practices on the other. By showing that, out of these two sides, one side ( i. e. that of the principles ) is abolished, when thought over Jayarāśibhaṭṭa established the other side ( i. e. that of the thoughtless practices. ),

Jayarāśibhaṭṭa says that “ Laukikomārgonusartavyaḥ<sup>3</sup> ” ( i. e. one should follow the path based upon the worldly view ) is the opinion of those who know the ultimate truth ( paramārthavid ). This expert of the ultimate truth may not be Bṛhaspati. If we take “ Laukikomārgaḥ. ” to mean the path of life which is based upon the belief in this world alone ( discarding the belief in any other world ), then the opinion suggested in the above sentence will apply not only to Jayarāśi but also to Bṛhaspati. Bṛhaspati's aphorism suggesting that “ There is no other world, because there is no one who belongs to other world ” ( Paralokinobhāvāt Paralokābhāvaḥ )<sup>4</sup> is accepted by Jayarāśi also. But “ Laukiko mārgaḥ ” does not mean only this, but

also a way of life. In this way of life one of the beliefs presupposed may be called as the secular belief. But it is not the only belief. Only believing in the existence of this world alone (i. e. exclusively) is not the sufficient condition of a successful practice. There are some other beliefs also which may be called necessary. These may be described as, to use the expression of G. E. Moore, the common sense view of the world. This common sense view of the world does contain a strong claim about certain principles. Thus, it may be said that there is no necessary dichotomy involved between the principles and the practice. Here the principles' means the common factors found in human experience and the objects of experience. Jayarāsi has expressed the same idea through the word "Tattva". For instance, he says :— "Now, therefore, we define tattvas. Earth, Water, Fire and Air are the Tattvas and the configuration of these acquires the denotations as body, organ and objects. Is it all that (I want to say)? No! Because (my) indication is different. What is the indication? It is 'to reflect'. What is being reflected here? Earth and the other tattvas are famous in the people. Even these tattvas, when thought over, do not stand for justification. What about others?" (*Tattvopaplava*—p. 1)

Here the tattvas mean the genres of the world. For Jayarāsi, these tattvas, when thought over, do not remain to be true. What remains is dry thoughtless behaviour. Thus the conclusion follows (at the end of his treatise)— "All the practices which have the beauty of thoughtlessness become just." Here the question may be asked, whether such a beautiful practice is possible. On the contrary if it is impossible, i. e., if tattvas and thoughts (of tattvas) are inevitable for any conscious practices, then how can Jayarāsi be in such an ambivalent situation of recognising worldly practices, but not recognizing the thoughts involved in them?

A possible answer to this question is that Jayarāsi is not talking of abolishing the principles as they are held by common people, but of the way in which they are treated in different schools of philosophy. The principles thought about in speculative philosophy are generally treated as if they were transcendental, definite in nature (unambiguous), never becoming out-of-date and so on. For instance, the Naiyāyikas' notion of Jāti ('class') suits to such a model. The Naiyāyikas, not having a strictly pragmatic outlook towards class-

concepts, treat them as eternal all-pervading entities. Jayarāśi cannot tolerate this. He takes this as the monarchy of a Nyāya philosopher and in the heat of argument calls him a beast.

Apart from this uncompromisingly hostile attitude of Jayarāśi, we may say that what Jayarāśi wants to oppose is such speculative principles and the speculations producing them. So in the compound word 'avicārīta-ramāṇīya', vicāra according to Jayarāśi, does not mean 'any thought' in general but the speculative type of thinking.

Of course, I suppose that, this cannot be a sufficient reason for justifying Jayarāśibhaṭṭa. Though his intention may be to oppose the orthodox and dogmatic views of philosophers, actually he has not stopped there only, but has opposed other common beliefs also. For example, commonly we do hold that we may have sometimes illusion and sometimes ( or, rather, many times ) sure and true cognitions. We also hold that in perceiving the things what we really perceive is the material objects and not merely sense-data. If we were always under the impression that what we are perceiving is merely the sense-data, then our common life would be impossible. But in *Tattvopaplavasīmha*, we find that these common beliefs are also denied and refuted by Jayarāśi. According to Jayarāśi—, for instance, we cannot distinguish between true and false cognition.<sup>7</sup> What we see are the forms ( shapes ) or perceptions and not the material objects. Any case of cognition delimits itself by its own object,<sup>8</sup> it does not go beyond that. This is such a sceptical position that is unable to validate worldly practices that are commonly experienced. But the conclusion drawn by Jayarāśi that ' Thus all the tattvas being refuted etc. ' suggests that from such a sceptical position, one can imply a receptive view towards worldly affairs. And thus the programme of Jayarāśi becomes ambiguous.

Still, while opposing Jayarāśi by pointing out that his scepticism cannot imply the defence of commonsense but rather it implies the opposite of it, one cannot neglect the strength of his sceptical arguments. His scepticism is of a peculiar kind, which does not seem to have been held by any other branch of philosophy in ancient India. That is why his position was given a new name by Vidyānandin ( a scholar of the 10-11th Century A. D. ) viz. *Tattvopaplavavāda* ( a doctrine which is framed so as to abolish all the principles ).

Jayarāśi starts his attack with two basic formal principles which, according to him, his opponent has to accept. ( If these basic principles are not accepted by the opponent, then the refutation of all principles is pre-established. ) These are as follows :- ( 1 ) The true cognition can be established only by defining it properly.<sup>10</sup> ( 2 ) The reality of the objects of cognition is dependent upon ( the establishment of ) the true cognition.<sup>11</sup>

Here the so-called principles or genres of the world are the objects of knowledge, and the reality of them becomes dependent ultimately upon the proper definition of true cognition. According to Jayarāśi every proposed definition of true cognition commits the fallacy of *petitio principii*. Traditionally, in Indian Logic, *petitio* ( *itaretarāśraya* ) is not taken to be a fallacy of definition. By definition, the definition means the distinctive feature of the definiendum ( i e. the concept or object that is to be defined ) which is devoid of any of the three fallacies, viz, being too narrow ( *Avvāpti* ), being too wide ( *Ativyāpti* ) and being impossible ( *Asambhava* ). In other words, if p is the definiendum and q is the definians ( i e. the term or conjunction of terms in which we define the definiendum ) then q must be a distinctive feature of p and there must be logical equivalence between p and q. ( *Avyāpti* would occur when q implies p, but p does not necessarily imply q. *Ativyāpti* would occur when p implies q, but q does not necessarily imply p and *Asambhava* would occur when p and q imply the negations of each other. In all these three cases there would not be equivalence between p and q and thus the definition will become fallacious ).

In this list of fallacies of definition we do not find the mention of *petitio*. But Jayarāśibhaṭṭa does *opine the petitio principii* ( *itaretarāśraya* ) to be a fallacy of definition. And I think that from a certain point of view ( which I call a pragmatic point of view ), Jayarāśi is right. This is as follows : The intention in defining a term is making the term known clearly and distinctly. So, if any definition is to be pragmatically significant, at the moment when it is presented, its definians must be known clearly and distinctly. The function of the definition, then will be to bring us from the ( clearly and distinctly ) known definians to the definiendum not known clearly and distinctly, and make the definiendum known, by pointing out the definitional equivalence between them. But if we

need the clear cut knowledge of the definiendum for the clear cut knowledge of the definians themselves, then there would occur the fallacy of *petitio*. In the present case, the definiendum under consideration is the clear cut knowledge itself. So when any so called proper definition of clear cut knowledge is given to us, if it is to be pragmatically significant, we must already have the clear cut knowledge of its definians. But whether we have the clear cut knowledge of the definians is dubitable because we do not know clearly and distinctly, what the clear cut knowledge is (which is our definiendum). Thus, it is a case of *petitio*.

While criticizing the definition of *pratyakṣa* (perception as true cognition) Jayarāsi's main attack is on the term "*avyabhicāri*" which is one of the definians. If "*avyabhicāri*" means "that which is given by non-defective sense organs", then according to Jayarāsi, the question arises: 'how is the non-defectiveness of sense-organs known?' It is of course not known by perception. If it is inferred from the true perception of the object itself, then it is a clear case of *petitio*.

If, on the other hand, the term *avyabhicāri* is taken to mean that which gives the 'volitional success' (*pravṛttisamarthana*), then apart from other objections, Jayarāsi raises a question whether this meaning of the term *avyabhicāri* is known or not. He asks - "Is this (meaning) known or unknown? If it is unknown how do you say that it is (the meaning)? And if it is known, then how do you know that this knowledge satisfies the condition of being *avyabhicāri*?"

While considering other definitions also he repeats the same kind of objection. It is rare, however, that a philosopher questions every definition of the cognition. In the history of Western Philosophy, an exceptional case can be quoted, that of Sextus Empiricus, an ancient Greek Philosopher, who raised a similar question in the following words: "By what means, then, can we establish that the apparent thing is really such as it appears? Either, certainly by means of a non evident fact or by means of an apparent one. But to do so by means of a non-evident fact is absurd, for the non evident is so far from being able to reveal anything; on the contrary, it is itself in need of something to establish it. And to do so by means of an apparent fact

is much more absurd, for it is itself the thing in question and nothing that is in question is capable of confirming itself."

One of the possible ways of getting rid of this danger is to take a position that the truth of any cognition is self-evident or it is intuitively determined and any how does not need any definition at all. If this way is accepted, then one has to face the difficulty of accepting contradictory cognitions to be true, when two persons have two mutually incompatible cognitions about the same thing and at the same time.

The alternative way of getting rid of this danger is to say that no cognition can be determined to be true. Jayarāśi goes by this way. Here it is to be clearly noted that by saying that no cognition can be determined to be true, Jayarāśi does not mean that every cognition is necessarily false, i. e. illusory. As he has denied the so-called knowledge (i. e. true cognition) he has denied illusion also. Here what Jayarāśi asserts is the indistinguishability between true and false cognitions ("satyetaravijñānayoḥ vibhāgābhāvaḥ abhyupagantavyaḥ"). For him, every cognition has some object (which is, according to him, the content of that cognition). But from this it does not necessarily follow that the object of cognition also exists in ontology. When Jayarāśi bhaṭṭa uses the words like *avabhāsa*, *viñāna*, *jñāna*, *buddhi*, it is not in the sense of the English word 'knowledge' (which generally means true cognition), but it is in the sense of cognition in general. Here, one has to take note of the distinction between illusion and appearance (*bhrama* and *avabhāsa*). Illusion is illusion of something and illusion on something. That is to say, illusion has some existential import (of which it is an illusion), as well as an existential support (*adhiṣṭhāna*). But appearance may have neither of them. G. E. Moore, for example, while explaining Berkeley's philosophy, says that, for Berkeley any appearance is not an appearance of anything. Thus, just by denying that no cognition can be proved to have ontological import, we cannot assert that every cognition is an illusion. For Jayarāśi any cognition is limited by its object ("Svaviśayaparyavasāyinyo hi buddhayaḥ"). It is like a sense-datum theorist saying that there cannot be unsensed sense-data. Any sense-datum is by definition and any sensation is by definition limited by its sense-data. Jayarāśi

instanciates the objects of sensation by calling them Rūpa, Ākāra sensedand so on. He regards the object of cognition as the content of cognition (*upādāna*) and ultimately identifies the objects with the cognition itself. (“Vijñānsyapi rūparupatā prapnoti”, “Akāarakadambātmakam Jñānam prasaktam”). By identifying the object of cognition with the cognition, he denies the possibility of there being pure cognition. Even when we try to cognize the cognition itself we do not directly cognize the pure cognition, but only concive of it. It is like David Hume identifying mind with the bundle of impressions and by that denyin<sub>g</sub> its separate existence.

Almost all the schools of thought in India had accepted the distinction between the knower and the known. Vijñānavādi Bauddha school was an exception. It denied the aexternal object and held the position that all cognised forms are the forms of cognition. For a Vijñānavādin, pure cognition was the ultimate reality to be achieved. Jayarāṣi does not agree with this. For him the cognition is reducible to the forms and not that the forms of cognition are ultimately reducible to the pure cognition, as according to Vijñānavādins. Thus denying, on the one hand, the principle of the classification of the material world and reducing the objects of sensation to sense-data Jayarāṣi avoids the realistic and materialistic view of the world and reducing, on the other hand, the cognition to its content, he gets rid of idealism.

Of course, one has to note here that this thesis of reducing cognition to its content has not been stated by Jayarāṣi very conclusively. According to him this thesis does not remain desirable, because we already assume our cognition to be basically one, assuming different contents at different times, and our thesis is contradictory to this assumption, Jayarāṣi suggests this thesis while advocating Bṛhaspati's aphorism viz. “Paralokinobhāvāt” etc. i. e. there is no other world because there is no one who belongs to the other world. Though it is not clear how he uses this thesis to prove Bṛhaspati's aphorism, it is certainly clear that he upholds the aphorism with complete approval.

When on the other hand, Jayarāṣi considers another aphorism of Bṛhaspati, he does not approve of it fully. This other aphorism, is

in Jayarāṣī's words " Śārirādeva " that is to say, " Life is only the product of body ". This aphorism as explained in *Sarva-darśana Saṅgraha*, " Tebhya eva dehākārapariṇatebhyaḥ kiṅvādibhyo mādaś-aktivat caitanyamupajāyate " (SDS, Cārvākadarśane) is in an inferential form, and in the same book Mādhavārcārya states that Cārvāka do not accept inference as valid means of knowledge. These mutually incompatible views must have been stated by Cārvāka thinkers before Jayarāṣī. These give rise to a contradiction and Jayarāṣī is aware of it. Dharmakīrti, the Buddhist philosopher had advocated two kinds of inference, viz. natural and causal (Svabhāvānumāna and Kāryānumāna), the second of which was the inference of the cause from the effect. Thus, the famous inference of fire from smoke on the mountain was an instance of the causal inference, where the fire is supposed to be the material cause of the smoke. Now, Jayarāṣī argues that if we agree that such an inference is a proper instance of inference then we will have to agree that the material cause need not be of the same form (Sajātiya) as the effect, and utilising this liberty we may be in a position to say that body is the material cause of the life in it (though body and life or body and consciousness are utterly of a different nature). If, on the contrary, we affirm that material cause must be of the same nature as the effect, then we cannot establish the causal connection between smoke and fire and thus the so called causal inference itself comes to an end. This argument of Jayarāṣī suggests that he does not approve categorically Bṛhaspati's thesis (regarding the causal relation between mind and body).

Thus, from various evidences, it is clear that Jayarāṣībhāṭṭa is not in full approval of Bṛhaspati, the so-called originator of Cārvāka system. At the end of his treatise he declares it and says that the doubts, which did not arise even in Bṛhaspati's mind, may be found raised in this book. We see in *Tattvopaplavasimha* that Jayarāṣī approves of those popular doctrines of Cārvāka, which are negative in nature, e. g. denial of the other world, denial of inference as valid means of knowledge etc. But he is not in full agreement with the positive doctrines of Cārvāka e. g. accepting four gross elements to be the classificatory principles of the world, accepting the causal connection between body and mind etc.

In spite of this negative contribution we have seen that, Jayarāṣī



has given some positive thoughts to some central problems of philosophy. They may or may not be acceptable, but certainly at the first place they are not popular Cārvāka thoughts but new and original and at the second place they try to give new answers to the old questions.

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### NOTES

1. *Tattvopaplavasīṃha* ( Go. Series Vol. No. LXXXVII, 1940 )  
( Laukiko Mārgonusartavyaḥ –p. 1 line 6 ).
2. *Ibid*, p. 125 line 11  
( Tadevānupapluteṣu tattveṣu avicāritaramanīyāḥ sarve  
vyavahārā ghatante iti ).
3. *Ibid*, p. 1
4. *Ibid*, p. 45, line 12
5. *Ibid*, p. 1 line 10–14
6. *Ibid*, p. 6 line 15
7. *Ibid*, p. 11 line 18 ( Anenaiva vartamānā satyetaravijñānayoḥ  
vibhāgābhāvaḥ abhyupagantavyaḥ ).
8. *Ibid*, p. 14 line 23
9. *Ibid*, Introduction, p. vi-vii
10. *Ibid*, p. 1 lines 15–13 ( Sallakṣaṇibandhanam mānavyavas-  
thānam
11. *Ibid*, p. 1 line 16 ( Mānanibandhanā cameyasthitiḥ ).
12. *Ibid*, p. 3 lines 13–15
13. “ *Against All Logicians* ” Sextus Empiricus ( Referred to by  
Hamblin in *Fallacies* p. 95 )

14. *Ibid.*, p. 11
15. G. E. Moore; *Some Main Problems of Philosophy* (1953) p. 21.
16. *Ibid.* p. 14
17. *Ibid.* p. 45, lines 9-10
18. *Ibid.*, p. 45, line 24
19. *Ibid.*, p. 45 lines 24-25 ( *aniṣṭatam caitat advayarūpatvena abhyupagamāt* )
20. *Ibid.* p. 88, line 9
21. *Ibid.*, p. 88, lines 1-4
22. *Ibid.*, p. 88, lines 21-23
23. *Ibid.*, p. 125, lines 13-14