

A PROBLEM CONCERNING NYAYA THEORY OF NIRVIKALPAKA PRATYAKSA

I

'There is no substitute for this thing' this type of usage is very common in language of advertisement of an object. From this it is understood that the necessity of this particular object cannot be met by some other objects. That is, there are some essential features (of this object) that are not common in others. The term 'essential' implies its inherent uncommon properties which can be expressed as 'essence'. If there is any opportunity to express the salient features of an object by language etc., it is *Savikalpaka* (or determinate). There are two types of awareness: the perceptual awareness being purely private cannot be communicated to others and perceptual awareness though not wholly manifested to us cannot be denied totally. In other words, there is an awareness, which is not capable of being expressed with the help of any word. Such a type of knowledge is technically known as *Avyapadeśya*. Though there is an awareness yet it cannot be expressed in as much as the nature of it is not wholly manifested to one. If it is asked the reason for it, the answer is that there is no substitute (*Vikalpa*). The 'concept' (in the sense of mental construction) of an object becomes a substitute for expressing it. The mental constructions that are borne by 'pure object' are called concepts. Names, colours, universals etc., are borne by an object and, hence, they are called 'concepts' (*Dhāraṇā*). The 'pure object' is called substratum (*ādhāra*) while the 'concepts' are called superstrata (*ādheya*). The concepts serve as substitutes for expressing that 'pure object'. The

knowledge having substitute is called *Savikalpaka* while the knowledge bearing no substitute is called *Nirvikalpaka*. The Naiyāyikas accept such type of *Nirvikalpaka Pratyakṣa*. The present paper deals with a problem arising out of the *Prāmāṇya* of such type of perception and its probable solution that could have been forwarded from the, Nyāya point of view.

II

The Naiyāyikas accept the theory of extrinsic truth (*Parataḥ Prāmāṇya*) of knowledge. According to them, the truth of our knowledge is determined through the successful inclination (*Saphala Saṁvādipravṛtti janakatva*) of the knowledge. If our knowledge leads us to the successful inclination, it is to be taken as acceptable. There, the argument that is involved can be expressed as follows : " The perceptual cognition is acceptable if it leads us to the successful inclination (*Praiyakṣānubhūtiḥ Pramā Saphal-pravṛttijanakatvāt*).¹ The knowledge of water would be taken as tenable if it really quenches our thirst. In the like manner, the untenability of our knowledge is determined by the unsuccessful inclination of the same (*asaphala Viśaṁvādipravṛttijanakatvāt*). If the knowledge of water does not quench our thirst, it is taken to be untenable. In this way, the truth of each and every knowledge is determined.

Now the problem is how the *Prāmāṇya* (tenability or truth) of *Nirvikalpaka* knowledge can be determined. It is true that indeterminate knowledge is a kind of sensation having no name, universal etc., and hence, there is no relation between qualifier and qualificand. There is no means through which the tenability of such type of knowledge can be determined as the two criteria, viz, *Saphalapravṛttijanakatva* and *Viśaṁvādipravṛttijanakatva* of determining *Prāmāṇya* are not applicable here. The knowledge which does not cognise the characteristic features of an object is

empty and hence the search for its empirical necessity or otherwise does not arise at all.

It may be argued how an object can exist without being endowed with its characteristic features. What is the proof for the existence of such a type of object? In reply it can be said that as indeterminate knowledge is a knowledge, it must have some object, since there is no knowledge which does not have an object (*aviśayaka*). As it is said that indeterminate knowledge is knowledge, it is already accepted that it has some object. According to some Naiyāyikas, the object of knowledge is three-fold : *Prakāratā*, *Viśayatā* and *Samśargatā*. In the case of *Nirvikalpakajñāna* (indeterminate knowledge) there is a special type of *Viśayatā* called *Turīyaviśayatā* (i. e., fourth *Viśayatā*) which is inexplicable in nature.² Hence a problem arises how the extrinsic truth of the object can be determined. Keeping this problem in view perhaps, Viśvanātha does not admit the perceptuality of the indeterminate knowledge. The perceptuality of an object having no relation with qualificand and qualifier is, as observed by Viśvanātha, not possible at all.³

If it is argued that the indeterminate perception may be taken as self-evidently true (*Svataḥ Pramāṇa*) just as the truth of the truth of the injunctions like '*Svargakāmo yajeta*' (i.e., one should perform sacrifice as a means to attain heaven) are taken as self-evidently true, it would go against the *Naiyāyikas*' position since they do not believe in this type of truth. *Naiyāyikas* have accepted the existence of the indeterminate perception, but they have not given any solution of the problem which lies in determinate perception.

III

One solution of this problem, I think, can be given from the *Nyāya* stand point if all of their views are critically reviewed.

They have pointed out that a man's action is of three types. When one forsakes some object, it is due to one's desire of rejection (*Hānabuddhi*). In the case of the acceptance of something, it is the result of his desire of acceptance (*upādānabuddhi*). An action existing between acceptance and rejection comes into being due to the result of the desire of being indifferent (*upekṣābuddhi*)⁴. Let us try to spell it out. The knowledge of the conduciveness of an object (*iṣṭasādhanaājñāna*) generates the desire of acceptance. The knowledge in the form 'The orange is good for health' is known as the knowledge of the conduciveness of the desired object. If the attainment of good health is desired, the observation of an orange will give rise to the knowledge in the form : 'This is conducive to its being desired' (*idaṁ madīṣṭasādhanam*). So the knowledge of the conduciveness of being desired gives rise to the knowledge of acceptance from which effort comes into being. That which does not seem to be conducive to my being desired is rejected. This rejection occurs due to the desire for the same.

The above view is put forth by the traditional Nyāya philosophers. In the case of acceptance and rejection I accept their view. So far as *upekṣā-buddhi* is concerned, I beg to differ from them. An object, I think, is either accepted or rejected but there is no scope for being indifferent. The indifferent state of mind which is claimed as *upekṣābuddhi* would fall under the category of rejection. That is to say, 'being indifferent' is also a kind of rejection in as much as this phenomenon also depends on the knowledge of the non-conduciveness of the object. In favour of this argument the following form of *Tarka* (Reductio-ad-absurdum) may be put forward : 'If it would have been conducive to us, it would be accepted. As it seems to us to be non-conductive, it may be ignored, which is also a kind of rejection.'

That in the case of *upekṣābuddhi* there is a sense of rejection is evidenced by the fact that a snake is rejected due to having the sense of *Aniṣṭasādhana* (i.e., which is capable of doing harm). It may be argued that *Aniṣṭasādhanatājñāna* is of two types: the knowledge of an object which is capable of doing harm and the knowledge of the absence of the usefulness of an object. In the case of the former, the *Naiyāyikas* have accepted the knowledge of *Hāna* (rejection) but in the latter case there is *upekṣābuddhi* as the object does not serve our purpose nor does it any harm to us.

The above-mentioned notion of *upekṣābuddhi*, I think, is not at all *upekṣā* in as much as it is in our awareness that the object does not serve our purpose and hence it may be ignored. This ignorance (in the sense of indifference) is not at all *upekṣā* in the true sense of the term, but it is also rejection as it is done keeping the knowledge of the absence of its conduciveness in view. *upekṣā*, in the true sense of the term, is possible in the case of an object if there is absolute negation of the sense of conduciveness or non-conduciveness. If an individual be indifferent towards an object as it does not suit him, it is a rejection (which is put in the name of *upekṣā*). The real *upekṣā* emerges when we have no consideration of such *iṣṭa* or *aniṣṭa* which is determined in terms of our attachment. To a seer the whole world is not at all the object of attachment and hence he becomes indifferent. Moreover, an object is not manifested as such to a seer, but it is manifested as the Divine. The true nature of the object is beyond his awareness as his mind is connected (*yukta*) with the Divine on account of which the indifferent state is possible. This indifferent attitude is *upekṣā* in the true sense of the term in as much as this state does not arise out of the sense of *Laukika iṣṭasādhana* (conducive to the desire for an ordinary object.)

From the above discussion it is concluded that there is no scope for *upekṣābuddhi* without having the knowledge of the absence of *iṣṭasādhanatā*. How did the *Naiyāyikas* insert it as one of the three types of *Buddhi*? What is the exact state of mind when there is *upekṣābuddhi*? In response to this one solution can be given in the following manner. It may be said that when an object is not endowed with name, universal, definition etc., there does not arise any question of accepting or rejecting it. In this situation alone, *upekṣābuddhi* arises. The acceptability or rejectibility of a particular object is not determined due to the lack of its determinator i.e., knowledge of conduciveness or otherwise which depends on the *Savikalpaka* knowledge of it. At this stage *upekṣābuddhi* comes into being. This type of knowledge which is known as *Avyapadcsya* or *Nirvikalpaka* is the producer of *upekṣābuddhi*.

Another argument may be forwarded in favour of the acceptability or tenability of *Nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa*. The *Naiyāyikas* are of the opinion that an object, just after its coming into being remains attributeless and actionless for a moment. If substance (*Dravya*) and attribute (*Guna*) are produced simultaneously, substance cannot be antecedent and hence, it cannot be inherent cause (*Samavāyī Kāraṇa*) of the attribute (*Guna*). That is why, attribute and action are accepted to be produced just after a moment of the origination of *Dravya*. Let us see whether the indifferent attitude towards an object is possible for a moment. It is true that an object may remain without attribute and action. An object may be described as effect (*Kārya*) by virtue of the fact that it is produced. That which is *Kārya* must exist in as much as on *Nyāya* view object is produced means the prior-absence (*Prāgabhāva*) of it is lost and hence, it becomes a counterpositive of its prior-absence (*Prāgabhāvapratyogī*).

So it is shown that an object exists, but due to its attributelessness it does not come to our direct awareness and hence, it cannot be rejected or accepted.

In this context it would not be irrelevant to point out that each and every object is recognised through the impression of the previous experience. In order to recognise an object at least one moment is essential. In order to recognise a jar as such the previous experience of it is to be recollected. The recollection needs at least one moment and through this a jar is recognised or known as such. During one moment the jar is not known as such and hence, it remains indeterminate to us. As the object is indeterminate only for this small period of time, the *upekṣābuddhi* towards this object arises. Through the experience of *upekṣābuddhi* the tenability of indeterminate perception can be determined and this is the extrinsic way of determining its truth (*Parataḥ prāmāṇya*). The form of the argument leading to it would be as follows : 'The indeterminate perceptual knowledge is tenable as it can produce the indifferent knowledge towards it' (*Nirvikalpapakapratyakṣānubhūtiḥ pramā upekṣābuddhijanakatvāt*). Here the *Sādhya* i.e., the acceptability of indeterminate perceptual knowledge is inferred on the strength of the *Hetu* i.e., being the producer of *upekṣābuddhi* (*Upekṣābuddhijanakatva*).

Philosophy Department
North Bengal University
DARJEELING 734430 (W.B.)

RAGHUNATH GHOSH

NOTES

1. *Siddhāntamuktāvali* on verse No. 133.
2. "Nanu trividhā ceha jñānaviśayatāprakārtāviśeṣyāśaiḥ sargatābhedāt, Tatra jñānamātrasya svaviśayakatvenanirvikalpakepi kācid viśayatāpekṣitacet. Turiyaviśayatāyā eva tatrābhyupagamāt". *Siddhāntamuktāvali*, (Edited by Pr. Pancanan Bhattacharya), p. 280.
3. "Tathā ca prathamato ghaṭagharatvayorvaisiṣṭyānavagāhyevā jñānam jñayate tadeva nirvikalpakaṁ. Tacca na pratyakṣaṁ. Tathā hi, vaitiṣṭyānavagāhijñānasya pratyakṣaṁ na bhavati. Siddhāntamuktāvali on Verse No. 58.
4. "Yadā jñānam tadā hīnopadānopekṣābuddhayaḥ phalaṁ". *Vātsyāyanabhāṣya* on *Vyāyasūtras* 1.1.3.
5. "Dravyasya guṇakriyā samavāyikāraṇatvāt guṇakriyāyorutpatteḥ prākṛtatsattvaṁ. Ata evorpannaṁ dravyaṁ kṣaṇamaguraṁ tiṣṭhātīti niyamaḥ". *Siddhāntamuktāvali* on Verse No. 14.