

SVARŪPA – SAMBANDHA – A PECULIAR RELATION OF NAVYA – NYĀYA

As an exponent of extreme Realism—Nyāya has postulated everything conceived by mind to have a corresponding real existence in the world. Thus, to quote an extreme case, even the absence (abhāva) of something has been postulated to have a real objective existence in world. Similarly, relations like conjunction (Sāmyoga) and inherence (Samavāya) have been conceived as having a real objective existence, beyond their relata. Nyāya has gone to the extent of postulating a separate category for one of the relations, viz., the inherence relation (Samavāya – Sambandha). But at one place, in the case of svarūpa-sambandha, Nyāya has been forced by its own logic to accept a relation, which though relating two relata, is at the same time, non-different from one of the relata. In normal case, Nyāya had already postulated a relation of identity (tādātmya), connoting an identity of an entity with itself. But in Svarūpa relation, we find something more, it is not simply identity, it is more than that, in so far as it relates itself with some other entity.

Nyāya concept of relation has often been criticized by Buddhist and Vedānta philosophers in the manner in which Bradley has done in Western Philosophy. This is often called the paradox of relation. It can briefly be stated in the following manner. If r is a relation relating two entities x and y , then we must postulate a relation r_1 relating r with x and a relation r_2 relating r with y . Again, in order to relate r_1 with r and x we must postulate other relations r_3 and r_4 . We shall have to repeat the process ad infinitum and thus face an infinite regress. In order to avoid it, we must stop somewhere. Nyāya has done so by postulating this Svarūpa-sambandha. We know that there are two well-known relations sāmyoga and samavāya, accepted by Nyāya. Sāmyoga has been regarded as a quality residing in the two relata, while Samavāya is a separate category. Being a quality, Sāmyoga subsists in its relata by samavāya relation. But the question is asked : what is the relation between this samavāya and the relata? If we postulate another samavāya to relate them, the same infinite

regress comes in. Nyāya, therefore, came forward and asserted that samavāya is related to the relata by itself, there is no other relation between them. Thus, the relation between samavāya and relata was called svarūpa-sambandha, i. e. the relation of self-sameness, which was regarded to be non-different from the Samavāya in the case cited above.

There was still another case to force the Naiyāyikās to take recourse to the svarūpa relation. We know that saṃyoga and samavāya are possible only between two positive entities. But how is the negation (abhāva) of an entity, say a jar, connected with its substratum, say ground? As Nyāya regards negation to be an objectively existent entity, there must also be a relation to relate it to its substratum. It cannot naturally be saṃyoga or samavāya because they are possible only between two positive entities. Nyāya postulated that there is only a relation of qualificierness (Viśeṣanātā) between the negation of the jar and its substratum, the ground, i. e., the negation here qualifies the substratum. And as the qualifier negation is non-different from the qualificand, the ground, the relation of qualificierness in this case was called the svarūpa-sambandha.

Once accepted, the concept of this relation of Svarūpa-sambandha was extended to many other relations like temporal qualificierness (kālika Viśeṣanātā), spatial qualificierness (daiśika-viśeṣanātā) and many other relational abstracts, where other accepted relations of Nyāya were not applicable. To take the case of temporal qualificierness. We know that everything exists in time, or in other words time can be regarded as the locus of everything. Now, what can be the relation between time and the thing existing in the time? It cannot be conjunction because conjunction can exist only between two substances, while time, though itself a substance, according to Nyāya, is a locus of entities which are not always substances, e.g., qualities, actions etc. The relation cannot even be samavāya, because all the entities already have their own loci in which they reside by samavāya relation and an entity cannot reside in two loci by samavāya relation at the same time.

Thus, being neither saṃyoga nor samavāya, it was construed as a relation of qualificierness (Viśeṣanātā-sambandha), the time being a qualifier of the thing existing in time, and this qualifier

being one with the qualificand, the thing existing in time. Similar is the case with spatial qualificerness (*daiśikavişeṣaṇatā*) in which the space forming the locus of the thing becomes a qualifier and the qualifier being one with the qualificand, the relation is that of *svarūpa*, i.e., self-sameness.

Relational abstracts constitute an important part of the *svarūpa* relation. It is easy to form an abstract noun in Sanskrit by adding the suffixes 'tva' or 'tā', not only to words denoting concrete entities, but also to abstractions of the concrete entities. Usually, when such abstractions are made of the terms denoting a common noun consisting of a class of many individuals, it is regarded as a universal (*sāmānya* or *jāti*), but when an abstraction is made of a term denoting an individual, it is not regarded as a 'universal', and it is called 'upādhi', i.e. 'adjunct' or 'imposed property'. Now 'Sāmānya' or 'universal', is a separate category in Nyāya, but an 'upādhi' cannot be included in any accepted category. It is thus regarded, as one with the subjunct, i.e. the term of which it is abstracted, and thus forms a *svarūpa*-relation. All relational abstractions and also abstractions of abstractions are covered under this type of *svarūpa* relation. To illustrate the point, the relations like counterpositiveness (*pratiyogitā*) and delimitantness (*avacchedakatā*) can be included in *svarūpa-sambandha* because they are abstractions of individual entities, counterpositives (*pratiyogins*) and delimitants (*avacchedakās*) being different entities in different cases and their abstractions therefore not being included in category of universal (*sāmānya*). In the case of *pratiyogitā* (counterpositiveness), it relates the *pratiyogin* to the *anuyogin* (subjunct) and at the same time it is non-different with the *pratiyogin*. Thus it can be easily designated as *svarūpa sambandha*. In the case of *avacchedakatā* (delimitantness), it also relates the *avacchedaka* (delimitant) to its locus (the delimited), and at the same time it is non-different from the *avacchedaka* (delimitant). This, too, therefore, can be included in *svarūpa sambandha*.

We can go futher in abstractions and abstract the relation *pratiyogitā* (counterpositiveness) to *pratiyogitātva* (counterpositiveness-ness) and again *pratiyogitātvatva* (counterpositiveness-ness-ness) and so on ad infinitum. Now, all these abstractions

being non-different from their loci i. e., the entities of which they are abstracted, are svarūpa-sambandhas and can be called relational abstractions.

The svarūpa-sambandha has often been designated as *viśeṣa-natā sambandha*, i. e., the relation of qualificierness. An analysis of the relation will show that in all the cases of svarūpa-sambandha, one of the relata becomes a *viśeṣaṇa* i. e., a qualifier to the other relatum. In the case of samavāya being related to its relatum, for example, the samavāya itself becomes a *viśeṣaṇa* of the relation; in the cases of temporal and spatial qualificierness, the time and space become the *viśeṣaṇas* of relata and so on. The idea underlying in calling all these relations as svarūpa-sambandha is that the *viśeṣaṇas* (or qualifiers) in all these cases are non-different from the *viśeṣyās* (i. e. qualificands) and at the same time they work as relations in relating two relata. In the case of 'pratiyogitā', for example, it is non-different from the 'pratiyogin' and at the same time, it connotes a relation between the 'pratiyogin' and the 'anuyogin'.

The svarūpa-sambandha gives rise to a problem : Is a relation different from the relatum or non-different? In the case of other relations, Nyāya has obviously accepted a relation to be different from the relata. *Saṁyoga*, i.e. conjunction, for example, is different from the relata and is regarded as a 'guṇa' (quality) subsisting in the relata. *Samavāya*, again is different from the relata and is regarded as a separate category. In *tādātmya* (identity), of course, the relation is non-different from the entity. But in *tādātmya* an entity relates itself to itself; it is not a relation between two entities. In the case of svarūpa-sambandha, however the relation is between two entities and should be therefore different from the relata. The fact that Nyāya has accepted it to be non-different from one of the relata poses a serious threat to Nyāya stand. If in one case a relation can be non-different from the relata, why not in other cases? why should we regard 'saṁyoga' (conjunction) or samavāya (inherence) as different from the entities related by saṁyoga and samavāya? In the cases of saṁyoga and samavāya, too, we can say that they become *viśeṣaṇa* (qualifier) to the relata and thus constitute a *viśeṣaṇatā-sambandha*. If in one case, the *viśeṣaṇatā sambadha* is

non-different from the relata, why not in other case? we can therefore, justly support B. K. Matilal's remark regarding 'svarūpa-sambandha', — "carried to its logical conclusion, the doctrine destroys the traditional system of categories."¹

2690 Roshan Pura
Nai Sarak
Delhi - 6

Sarita Gupta

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1. B. K. Matilal : *The Navya Nyaya Doctrine of Negation* (Harvard University Press : 1968) p. 44.

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