

6. Jaina doctrine of the many-ness of reality, i.e., *anekāntavāda*

The Jaina theory of judgment which is known as *Syādvāda* is a logical corollary of the theory of reality advocated by the Jainas. The Jainas hold that every object known by us is endued with infinite number of qualities and modes.¹ A constant change is going on within the object, and thus the object is changing its appearance at every moment. The Jainas urge that reality is extremely complex in its nature. A clear understanding of this complex nature requires of us to view the object from all possible

standpoints. We may judge an object in one of its

An object has
innumerable
features

particular aspects, from a particular standpoint.

It is because we forget this limitation and regard

our judgments as unconditionally true that we

commit error. We then think the partial aspect of the object to be

the object as it really is, and thereby our knowledge of the object

becomes partial and incomplete. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, for example,

says that all change is unreal. Various things are made of gold.

These gold-products are all transitory and unreal. What is real

among these products is their underlying substance, viz. gold.

Variety or many consists in the name and form. Name and form

is unreal. The Buddhists, on the other hand, contend that there

1. ananta-dharmakam vastu.

is nothing permanent. Every thing is change and becoming. We can only experience the attributes of objects, and these attributes are constantly changing. There is no reality which is permanent. The Jainas opine that both these contentions are partial, since they have viewed the reality in one of its many aspects and from a particular standpoint. Hence they are one-sided (*ekānta*). One-sided or partial positions are called *ekānta vāda*.

Viewing the reality in only one of its aspects from a particular point of view, and regarding it as the real and complete view is like the descriptions given of an elephant by six blind persons. The man, who touched the leg, regarded the elephant as a pillar, and he who touched its ear, gave out that the animal was a winnowing fan. It is evident that these blind persons were telling only partial truths. Thus all things possess infinite qualities and infinite relations. If one desires to have the knowledge of the reality as it is in itself, one should view it in all its aspects and from all possible standpoints. This philosophic outlook of the Jainas has come to be known as *anekānta-vāda* or the theory of reality as many-faced.

According to the Jainas, every object is many-faced. We can say nothing categorically about this object. All our statements and judgments about object are only relatively true. Our judgments about object are true under certain conditions. The world is a system of inter-related objects possessing infinite qualities and infinite relations. Hence, one who comprehends one thing completely comprehends all things completely, and one who comprehends all things completely, comprehends one thing completely. Only an omniscient person can obtain, through *Kevala jñāna*, complete knowledge about an object.

7. Jaina conception of Substance (Dravya)

In philosophy a distinction is made between characters (*dharma*) and that which possesses characters (*dharmī*). That which possesses

characters is, generally, called a substance (*dravya*). By characters are meant qualities or attributes, and by *dharmī* is meant the substratum of these qualities or attributes. *Dharmī* is called *dravya* or substance. The Jainas have accepted the term 'substance' in this sense. They, however, point out that there are two kinds of characters found in every substance—essential and accidental. The essential characters of a substance reside in the substance as long as the substance remains. Without these characters the substance will cease to be what it is. But the inessential characters

A substance is what possesses qualities as well as modes

are changeable. Consciousness is an essential character of the soul. The inessential or accidental characters of the soul are desires, volitions, pleasure and pain, since these always change. It is

through the changes of these accidental characters that a substance undergoes change or modification. In the Jaina philosophical language, the essential unchanging character is called *guṇa* (quality), and the accidental, changing character is called *pariyāya* (mode). A substance has, therefore, been defined in Jaina philosophy as what possesses qualities as well as modes²

If we note the changes occurring in objects, we shall find that some of the characters of the object disappears, some new characters make their appearance and some characters remain unchanged. When a pot is produced out of a lump of clay, the lump is

Substance is what remains unchanged, permanent and identical

destroyed, but the clay remains. The lump-form disappears after giving rise to the pot-form. The qualities, i.e., the essential characters of clay do not change in the process of transformation of clay into the pot. A substance is permanent from

the standpoint of its unchanging essence. There are in every object or thing certain characters called qualities, which remain unchanged in the midst of incessant changes. Hence, the nature of substance is neither wholly permanent, nor wholly changeable. Substance (*dravya*) is permanent in regard to its qualities or essential characters and impermanent in regard to its modes or changing characters. A substance is that which is abiding, unchar-

2. *guṇa-pariyāyavad dravyam.*

changeable and identical. The modes of a substance are impermanent and changeable. Thus substance is what endures through all these changes, and the changes are the manifestation of the inherent substance.

Considered from the standpoint of the essential characters of substance, the world is permanent, and in so far as the accidental characters undergo modification, the world also changes. Therefore, the Buddhists who hold that there is nothing permanent in the universe and that everything changes from moment to moment, are one-sided. Equally one-sided are the monistic Vedāntins who declare change to be unreal. In fact, change and permanence are both real. From the standpoint of modes, change is real. This standpoint is known in Jaina philosophy as *pariyāya-naya*. From the standpoint of substance, permanence is real. This view is called *dravya-naya*. Therefore, the same thing viewed from different standpoints, is both permanent and impermanent.

A substance has the characteristic of existence. It is a real entity. A thing is real when it has origin, existence and destruction. A part of substance is unchangeable. Hence substance has existence. In so far as the modes are changing—old ones disappearing and new ones appearing—the substance has origin and destruction. Substance possesses these three characters. So it is real.

To sum up, substance is that which persists in and through its own qualities and modifications. "Substance is one, the inherent essence of all things, manifests itself through diverse forms, has the three characteristics of creation, destruction and staying, and may be described by opposites."

The Jainas have classified substances into extended (*astilīna*)