



The Principle of Non-Sensuous Awareness in Jaina Philosophy

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Abstract – Indian philosophers have been too much preoccupied with their theories of inference. As a result, theories of perception and linguistic meaning have suffered from comparative neglect. Besides, though much is known about the theories of perception of the Buddhists, the Naiyāyikas, the Sāmkhyas, very little is known about their criticism by the Jainas, Furthermore, the works that have appeared so far on the subject are mainly concerned with psychology and not epistemology. In this respect the present work that fills up the lacunae is the most welcome addition to the literature on Indian philosophy. The paper discusses the Jaina theory of the concept of non-sensuous perception in philosophy also the paper concludes with the analysis of the Āgamika concept of perception and its classification into mukhya and sāmvyavaharika knowledge.

Keywords: sāmvyavahārika, nirjarā, saṁvara, rāga, Āśrava, Mokṣa, anantajñāna, anantadarśana, anantavīrya, jñānāvaraṇīyakarma, matijñānāvaraṇīya, śrutajñānāvaraṇīya, avadhijñānāvaraṇīya, manaḥparyāyājñānāvaraṇīya, pudgalas, Paramātmā, pariṇāminitya, kūṭasthanitya, mukhya pratyakṣa.

I. INTRODUCTION

Jaina theory of the concept of non-sensuous perception This is what seems to me to be the strictly philosophical truth in the thesis that knowledge is of the essence of the individual self, that it is not acquired, that what seem to be the causes of knowledge are really instrumental in removing those hindrances which obscure the full manifestation of it. In the next place, with regard to perception, the Jainas begin with a rather strict definition of what should count as perception and required that perceptual knowledge should be not only immediate but should not be caused by the senses – which, in other words, is the same as saying that true perception is such immediate knowledge as does not require the mediation of the senses. But on this definition only the perception of the mystics, the Kevalajñāna, or at most the supposed perception through clairvoyance or telepathy, deserve to be called 'perception'. However, the more down-to-earth thinkers of the later period were willing to relax the requirement, and distinguished between ordinary, empirical perception and extraordinary, non-sensuous perception.

The Jaina Theory

The Jainas classify perception into two types – the sāmvyavahārika and the mukhya. The former is empirical perception which depends on the sense-organs and mind. The mukhya or the non-sensuous perception is direct knowledge, which arises directly in the self without the help of the sense-organs and mind; we may call it therefore super sensuous perception

The Jainas believe in seven tattvas or principles: jīva, ajīva, āśrava, bandha, saṁvara, nirjarā and mokṣa¹

Here we may try to explain the seven principles of the Jainas.



1. **The Jīva or the self** – Self is a conscious entity. It possesses infinite knowledge, infinite vision (darśana), infinite power and infinite bliss. These are the essential qualities of the self. In its pure condition the four qualities are fully developed in the self.
2. **Ajīva** – What is other than the jīva is ajīva. The jīva is conscious but ajīva is non-conscious. It may be called matter. Every self is essentially pure; matter is the cause of an unclear veil on the self-due to which the self cannot shine in its natural conditions. Jīva and the matter are mixed up from the beginning less time. But the veil of matter may be destroyed by the discipline of body and mind, and then the self may come to its natural condition of infinite knowledge and infinite bliss etc.
3. **Āśrava** – The āśrava may be called as the movement of the karmic matter. The whole universe is full of karmic matters, according to the Jainas. And through the action of body, mind and speech the karmic matter is attracted to the self. The movement of the karmic matters towards the self is called āśrava. It means a door-way or a channel. The passage through which water finds its way into a tank is called āśrava. In the same way, the principle through which karmic matter flows into the self is called āśrava.

The self is affected by rāga, dveṣa, rati, and moha, which are the actions of body, speech and mind. These actions are called yoga; that is the kāyayoga, vacanayoga and manoyoga. Due to these three forms of yoga, karmic matter flows into the self; yoga is thus the same as āśrava.²

4. **Bandha** – The bandha may be called the karmic bondage. Āśrava leads to bandha or the bondage of the self, On account of yoga, karmas begin to collect in the self, bringing about its bondage. It is to be noted that along with the inflow of karmas into the self, passions or kaṣāyas make their appearance and as a consequence of that, the self goes along the path of its own bondage.³ And by continuing to take in the karma matter, there arises in it mithyātva or false faith, avirati or non-restraint and pramāda or delusion. And, these are the causes of the bondage of the self (bandha-hetavaḥ).
5. **Saṁvara** – Saṁvara may be called stopping the inflow of karma matter. The inflow of the karmic matter may be stopped and this is called saṁvara.⁴ The self, that wants salvation, must first try to break the fetters of karma. Ordinarily it is very difficult to break them off, all of a sudden, because the activities of the self are first directed to the stoppage of the karma-flow or āśrava. Saṁvara consists in the stoppage of the āśrava. It prevents the further inflow of karma. It is brought about by the threefold restraint of body, mind and speech (kāyagupti, manogupti, vacanagupti), and by the performance of duties (samiti), by pity towards all living beings (dharma), by the suffering of privations (pariśahajaya), by penance (tapasā), by contemplation of the unsatisfactory nature of the world (anutprekṣā) and by good conduct (cāritra)⁵ for the achievement thereof.
6. **Nirjarā** – Nirjarā means the falling away of the karmic matters from the self. Saṁvara stops the inflow of fresh karmas. But it is also necessary that the already collected karmas should be destroyed, because salvation is impossible so long as karmas remain in the self. Nirjarā consists in the annihilation of the already introduced karmas. It is of two types-savipāka and avipāka. The former consists in the annihilation of the karmas, which arise when their fruits are all enjoyed. Avipāka nirjarā is the destruction of the karmas through penance etc., even before their fruits have been enjoyed.



- Mokṣa**– It may be called liberation from karma or complete freedom of the self from karmic matter. When āśrava is stopped, bandha becomes loosened, the already collected karmas are destroyed by nirjarā and thus the karmas disappear from the self altogether. In the state of salvation there is no bondage. Mokṣa consists in the state of infinite knowledge, infinite vision, infinite power and infinite joy (anantajñāna, anantadarśana, anantavīrya and anantānanda) in the self. The self-returns to its natural state. Thus, the karmic matters are the cause of ignorance or the obstructions of knowledge. There are eight types of karmic matters – one of them is the jñānāvaraṇīya karma or the knowledge obscuring matter.⁶ The jñānāvaraṇīya karma or the knowledge obscuring karmas is sub-divided into five types. This classification is based on the classification of knowledge.⁷ In the Jaina Āgamas, knowledge is described as being of five types – ābhinibodhika or matijñāna, śrutajñāna, avadhijñāna, manaḥparyāyajñāna and kevalajñāna. There are also five corresponding knowledge-obscuring karmas–matijñānāvaraṇīya, śrutajñānāvaraṇīya, avadhijñānāvaraṇīya, manaḥparyāyajñānāvaraṇīya and the kevalajñānāvaraṇīya. Due to these five types of āvaraṇas, the five types of knowledge are obscured or not manifested.

2. RELATION BETWEEN SELF AND KARMAS

The matter or the pudgalas which attract the self are very subtle and cannot be seen by an eye or even by any instrument; only an omniscient being may perceive them.⁸ They belong to the whole atmosphere and due to the activities of body, mind and speech they are attracted towards the self.

The relation of the self and matter has existed from time immemorial. Matter mixes with the self just as water mixes with milk; the relation between the self and matter is called as a relation of water and milk.⁹ There is a link of the relation; the old matters of the self-affect its present activity and the present activities determine the future of the self.¹⁰ But the relation of the self and matter is not permanent.¹¹ This pure self may be called Jina, Arhat or Paramātmā.

The question may be asked, if knowledge is the essential quality of the self then how it is veiled by the karmic matters? Hemaçandra would reply¹² that though the self is obscured by the veil of the karmic matters, yet there is no harm to the nature of the self; the light of knowledge is not destroyed by the veil in the same way as the light of the sun or moon is not destroyed by the veil of the clouds. In the same way the formless self may be influenced by the karmas.¹³

The Jainas reply that the self is eternal in one sense and non-eternal in another sense. Self is eternal in its essential nature; the karmic matters do not influence its essential nature. But the self is non-eternal in the sense that its attribute or the paryāyas are changing, they are not eternal. Thus, the self is kūṭasthanitya but pariṇāmīnitya. That is why, though eternal, yet it undergoes change.¹⁴

3. THE MEANING OF THE MUKHYA PRATYAKṢA

The Jainas believe that mukhya pratyakṣa is of three types – avadhī, manaḥparyāya, kevala. These are the direct knowledge's by the self itself and are not based on the instrumentality of the sense organs and the mind. The kevala or omniscience occurs when there is complete destruction of all karmas. But when the destruction of the veil is not complete, the two other varieties, the avadhī and the manaḥparyāya, appear.¹⁵



4. THE DEFINITION OF MUKHYA PRATYAKṢA

The mukhya pratyakṣa is defined in different ways by different Jaina philosophers, although the meanings are not very different. For example, Akalaṅka defines it thus:¹⁶ "the mukhya pratyakṣa is not caused by sense-organs, it arises in the self". Vādidēva defines it thus: "the pārmārthika pratyakṣa arises in the self without any intermediation."¹⁷ Māṅikyanandi and Hemacandra also define it as a perfect knowledge arising in the self without the instrumentality of the sense organs. Now we will try to explain Māṅikyanandi's definition of the mukhya pratyakṣa.

Māṅikyanandi defines mukhya pratyakṣa thus: "Mukhya is that clear, non-sensuous and infinite knowledge of which all veils are removed by special conditions".¹⁸ The question may be asked as to what is the specialty of such infinite knowledge. The commentator Prabhācandra replies that it arises when all the veils of the karmas are removed completely under special conditions (sāmagrīviśeṣa). Right faith (samyakdarśana), is the internal condition while space, time etc. are the external conditions. When all these conditions are favorable, the karmas are removed completely and there arises the mukhya pratyakṣa.

Prabhācandra explains mukhya pratyakṣa with the help of an inference: "wherever there is clear and true knowledge, there is the destruction of all veils, just as in the case of perception of trees etc. which were being enclosed by clouds or mist"¹⁹. Mukhya pratyakṣa is clear and right knowledge. It is non-sensuous (atīndriya), i.e., does not depend on mind and the sense-organs, so it is perfect and infinite. Whatever is not non-sensuous does not possess the adjective "is independent of the mind and the senses" (yattu nātīndriyādisvabhāvaṁ na tattadanapekṣatvādiviśeṣaṇaviśiṣṭam), just as our ordinary sensuous knowledge, which is caused by the sense-organs and the mind. Thus, the mukhya is that pratyakṣa which is non-sensuous, infinite; whatever is not of this kind is not mukhya, just as our sensuous knowledge. Therefore, its limitations must be due to some āvaraṇa.²⁰

The Advaitins hold that avidyā is the āvaraṇa, not the karmic matter, because something (mūrta) cannot veil the immaterial (amūrta) knowledge. For if it was so, and then the body may also be the āvaraṇa. The Jainas point out that this is not true, because it is found that intoxicants which are material may obscure knowledge. There is no such rule that the āvaraṇa of knowledge must be itself immaterial.²¹

The Sāṁkhyas hold that the karmas are not the quality of the self but they are the production of prakṛti. The Jainas would reject this for they do not believe in the Sāṁkhya theory of prakṛti. The Jainas reply that there are some special conditions under which they may be destroyed; these are the right knowledge (samyakjñāna), right faith (samyakdarśana), and right conduct (samyakcāritrya). The possibility of nirjarā may be proved by the following inference; "the karmas of the self may sometimes be all destroyed because their effects are exhausted. If something is not destroyed then its power of producing effects does not come to an end, as in the case of time".

Again, there is the principle of saṁvara. Saṁvara stops the karma attraction towards the self. Thus Prabhācandra says that nirjarā and saṁvara destroy the beginningless karma obstruction of the self.²²

5. KINDS OF MUKHYA PRATYAKṢA

The Jainas hold that there are three types of mukhya pratyakṣa: aavadhijñāna, manaḥparyāyajñāna and kevalajñāna. The former two are called as deśapratyakṣa and the last one called sarvapratyakṣa²³ (or vikalapratyakṣa and sakalapratyakṣa). Although all the three types of mukhya pratyakṣa are non-sensuous and they all arise in the self directly, yet the deśapratyakṣa are partial knowledge's. The



sarvapratyakṣa is the knowledge of all; it is perfect and infinite knowledge. Thus the kevalajñāna is the knowledge of all, it is omniscience. The three types of mukhyapratyakṣa may now be explained one by one.

Avadhi jñāna

As mentioned before, there are five types of knowledge according to the Jaina Agamas—namely, mati, śruta, avadhi, manaḥparyāya and kevala. The former two are sensuous knowledge and are called sāmivvahārika pratyakṣa and the latter three are non-sensuous knowledge and are called mukhya pratyakṣa in the logical literature. There are five types of obstruction corresponding to the five types of knowledge. Each type of knowledge is obscured by its own obstruction or jñānāvaraṇa.²⁴ As for example, matijñāna is obscured by matijñānāvaraṇa and it arises by destruction and subsidence (kṣayopasāma) of its karmic veil (matijñānāvaraṇa). In the same way, avadhijñāna arises by the destruction and subsidence of the avadhijñānāvaraṇa.

The avadhijñāna is non-sensuous knowledge. It arises in the self without the help of the sense-organs and the mind. Avadhi means limitation, though avadhijñāna is non-sensuous yet it is limited, because due to avadhi one can perceive the objects which possess form or shape (rūpin)²⁵. All the objects which have form are manifested in avadhi but all their modes cannot be manifested in this knowledge.

Avadhijñāna is divided into many types. All kinds of avadhijñāna cannot apprehend all objects of all space and of all time. This faculty differs in different beings on account of the development of their spiritual discipline. The highest type of avadhijñāna is able to apprehend the material objects of all time and of all space. The lower type of avadhijñāna extends to a very small fraction of space and time.²⁶

The question may arise as to who possesses this knowledge. With respect to its possessor, the avadhijñāna is of two types²⁷ – bhavapratyaya and guṇapratyaya. The former is that which arises in a person due to his birth; for example, the beings of heaven and hell acquire this kind of avadhijñāna which is their birth right.²⁸ The guṇapratyaya avadhijñāna is that which has to be acquired as a result of special merit. Everybody can acquire it when his avadhijñānāvaraṇa is destroyed by meditation and discipline. Just as the birds acquire the capacity of flying in the sky from their very birth, similarly the beings of heaven and hell acquire avadhijñāna from their birth.²⁹ This avadhijñāna is not the highest type of avadhijñāna; it is a limited avadhijñāna.

Manaḥparyāya Jñāna

Mind, according to the Jainas is a material substance. Its modes are its different changing states. As our states of thought change, the modes also change correspondingly. These changing modes of mind are called manaḥparyāya. And the knowledge which knows the modes of thinking of the mind of other persons is called manaḥparyāyajñāna.³⁰ A person possessing manaḥparyāyajñāna directly knows the others' mental states without the help of sense organs and mind. Such knowledge arises by the destruction and subsidence of manaḥparyāya jñānāvaraṇa.³¹

There are different views regarding the nature of manaḥparyāyajñāna.³² According to Jinabhadra, in the manaḥparyāyajñāna, one perceives the states of the mind substance directly, but the external objects of thoughts of another mind are known only by inference, because the external objects of thought may be material or non-material (mūrta or amūrta) and the nonmaterial objects cannot be apprehended directly by manaḥparyāyajñāna. (The amūrta are known directly only in kevala).



Akalaṅka rejects this and points out that manaḥparyāya jñāna also apprehend directly the objects of others' thoughts. The knowledge of such objects cannot be an inference, it is perceptual knowledge. It possesses the characteristics of pratyakṣa; it is clear and it is direct and not dependent on sense organs and mind. Therefore, it should not be regarded as an inference, which is not clear and independent.³³ Akalaṅka holds that the external objects also are directly apprehended by manaḥparyāyajñāna, as they are associated with the mind which is thinking of them.

According to Hemacandra, the external objects of others mind are not apprehended directly in manaḥparyāyajñāna; they are known only by inference.³⁴

Akalaṅka argues that mind is only the apekṣā in this knowledge, not the cause. For example, when one sees the moon in the sky he cannot see the moon without perceiving the sky. The sky is only the apekṣā in the knowledge of the moon, not its cause. In the same way mind is not the cause in manaḥparyāyajñāna but only an apekṣā or a factor depending on which one perceives the mental states of others.³⁵

Manaḥparyāyajñāna is of two types—namely rjumatī and vipulamati. In respect of purity and duration, they are different.³⁶ Rjumatī is less pure and it sometimes falters. Vipulamati is purer, clearer and more enduring. It lasts up to the rise of omniscience. Man can possess both types of manaḥparyāyajñāna in the state of spiritual perfection.

Kevalajñāna

Kevalajñāna is the perfect and infinite knowledge. We may call it omniscience. As mentioned before, when the obstructions of all the karmas are destroyed, the self attains kevala or omniscience. In this knowledge one apprehends simultaneously all substances and all their qualities directly without the help of sense-organs and mind. Nothing remains to be known and nothing is unknown.³⁷ When there is the total destruction of karmic matters the other knowledge's also could not arise. There would be only the state of omniscience.³⁸

Yaśovijaya replies that though the different knowledge's are manifested by the destruction of their own knowledge—obscuring karmas, yet the āvaraṇa of perfect knowledge is also at the same time the cause of the manifestation of imperfect knowledge, just as the veil of a cloth may be both an obstruction of clear vision and also a cause of unclear vision.³⁹ In other words the obstruction of perfect knowledge is the cause of the manifestation of imperfect knowledge. Thus, according to Yaśovijaya, for an omniscient person, partial knowledge is not possible, for the cause of partial knowledge, i.e. the kevalajñānāvaraṇīya, has been destroyed.⁴⁰ It may be asked, how can the self be both āvṛta and anāvṛt at one and the same time? In reply, it is said that this is possible only from the anekānta viewpoint. Kundakunda's Explanation of

Kevalajñāna

Kundakunda explains the nature of kevalajñāna with the help of niścaya dṛṣṭi and vyavahāra dṛṣṭi. Therefore, it will be necessary to understand at first what is the niścaya dṛṣṭi and what is the vyavahāra dṛṣṭi.

6. THE JAINA VIEW OF NON-SENSUOUS PERCEPTION

We have explained the different kinds of non-sensuous perception recognized in the different schools of Indian philosophy. In the Nyāya system, there are three types of extraordinary perceptions. Of these, the



first two – sāmānyalakṣaṇa and jñānalakṣaṇa-cannot be called atīndriyapratyakṣa or non-sensuous perception from the Jaina point of view. Atīndriya pratyakṣa is a perception which is not caused by the sense-organs and mind, while sāmānyalakṣaṇa and jñānalakṣaṇa arise with the help of the senses. As regards jñānalakṣaṇa the Jainas point out that it is a mixed mode of knowledge (samūhālabhāna jñāna) in which the visual perception of sandal and idea of fragrance are integrated into one knowledge.⁴¹ Thus, it is not the atīndriya pratyakṣa. The Yogi pratyakṣa of the Naiyāyikas may be called as alaukika pratyakṣa or the atīndriya pratyakṣa, for it is not caused by the sense-organs; it is the direct apprehension of the objects of the past, future and distance. It may be compared with the kevalajñāna of the Jainas.

7. CONCLUSION

Regarding the nature of non-sensuous perception the Jainas are not very clear. They say simply that in avadhijñāna one apprehends material objects directly by the self; in manaḥparyāyajñāna the knowledge of other's mind is acquired; and in kevalajñāna, the self-possesses the knowledge of all things, past, present and future and also of its own pure nature. The Jainas do not say much about the nature of non-sensuous perception. Does the self-apprehend the objects in the same manner as our sense organs apprehend their objects? Or, do the objects come into contact with the self only in the shape of ideas? Or, is this knowledge a purely subjective experience like pleasure and pain? In some places we are told that the self sees all things in the same way as one sees the āmalaka fruit on his palm or just as one sees objects in the mirror. But these analogies are not enough to make us understand the real nature of non-sensuous perception.

Most systems of Indian philosophy believe in the possibility of an omniscient being. But the Jaina concept of omniscience has its own distinctive place amongst them. The Jainas hold that everybody can become an omniscient while most other systems believe only in God as the Omniscient being. According to the Nyāya-vaiśeṣikas, a yogi can acquire omniscience but this omniscience is not permanent; for, in the stage of release there would be no knowledge. Knowledge, according to them, is a non-eternal attitude of the self. Only God's omniscience is eternal but the omniscience acquired by the power of yoga cannot be eternal. But according to the Jainas, every self is omniscient; due to the obstruction of the karmic matters, however, this omniscience is not manifested. By the practice of mental and bodily discipline and meditation everybody can destroy the āvaraṇa and can manifest the latent omniscience. As knowledge is the essential quality of self, the omniscience would be permanent, even in the stage of release. Again, though the other systems (which believe in the possibility of an omniscient being), have given some arguments, yet these are not as strong as those given by the Jainas. A large part of the logical literature of the Jainas is full of the arguments for the possibility of omniscience. Regarding the nature of omniscience or kevalajñāna, the Jainas are not very clear. They simply say that in kevalajñāna the self-possesses knowledge of all objects, of past, present and that nothing remains unknown to an omniscient. But, as stated earlier, Kundakunda explains the nature of omniscience in a new way. He says that though a kevalī omniscient being perceives all objects of all time and of ace, yet it is so only from the vyavahāra dṛṣṭi. really, however, a kevalin knows only himself or he has only an intuitive experience of the pure self. This explanation about the nature kevalajñāna is very remarkable and true. In fact, when a wolf becomes pure, it becomes indifferent to all worldly things and shines in its own light, that is, the knowledge. Knowledge is the essential quality of the self, but due to the āvaraṇa of the karmic matter, it is not manifested. When the āvaraṇa is destroyed, there arises the knowledge. There is the knowledge of self-realization or ātmapratīti or ātmasākṣātkāra. In this stage there is no difference between knowledge and self.



Thus, the explanation of kevalajñāna given by Kundakunda has its own important place in Jaina philosophy. This explanation is more satisfactory than that of the others. On this interpretation, the conception of omniscience or kevalajñāna gains a spiritual significance which it would lack if it were taken merely as knowledge of all things.

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18. sāmagrīviśeṣaviśeṣitākhlāvaraṇamatīndriyam aśeṣato mukhyam PKM, p. 241.
19. yadyatra spastatve satyavitatham jñānam tat tatrāpagatākhlāvaraṇam yathā rajonīhārādyantaritavṛkṣādau tadapagamaprabhavam jñānam, ibid.
20. yad jñānam svaviṣaye' pravṛttimat tat sāvaraṇam yathā kāmāline locanavijñānamekacandramasi, svaviṣaye aśeṣārthalaṣaṇe' pravṛttimacca jñānamiti, ibid. p. 242.
21. madirādinā mūrtenāpyamurtasya jñānāderāvaraṇadarśanāt, ibid., p. 243.
22. All the arguments are quoted from PKM, pp. 241-46.
23. tad dvedhā deśapratyakṣam sarvapratyakṣam ca desagratyakṣamavadhīmanahparyāyajñāne, sarvapratyakṣam kevalam, IV, I, 20.15.
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37. Ibid., I. 30.
38. TB, I. 31.
39. spaṣṭaparakāśapratibandhako mandaparakāśajanakatvam anutkaṭe cakṣurādyāvaraṇe vastrādeva, JBP, 4
40. tatra hetuḥ kevalajñānāvaraṇameva, ibid. 3.
41. Radhakrishnan. S. Indian Philosophy, II, p. 60.

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