

Svarajya Siddhih of Gangadharendra Sarasvati —Attaining Self-dominion

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(Continued from the December 2013 issue)

THE SAUTRANTIKAS BELIEVE THAT the inner perception or knowledge of objects like pot and cloth are brought about by the varied external experiences in the form of the sense perception of these objects and are non-different from the contact of the senses with these objects. If these external objects were absent, a corresponding knowledge of these objects would be impossible and so, we would have to infer that the cause of the knowledge of these objects is the variety of external objects and this is not direct perception. And hence, the existence of the external world is established only by inference. The Vaibhashikas—whose philosophy is also called *bahya-pratyakshavada*, the school of external-direct perception—hold that if the external objects did not exist, there would be no relation with them of the inner organs and there would be no possibility of inferring them. To infer fire from smoke, there should have been a prior experience of the direct perception of fire where there was smoke. Therefore, though absolutely speaking, the sense perceptions are false; on the relative plane, the external world of objects is not established just by inference but also by direct perception. So, for inferring fire from smoke, one cannot do away with the external fire. Hence, to infer the external sense objects their external presence is also a must.

The opinions of these two schools is being

seen as one because the stand of both these schools is one in that they do not give an absolute reality to the external sense-objects. Taking these two schools as one, they are being quashed and uprooted in the following three verses:

बाह्यं भोग्यं प्रजल्यन्क्षणिकमणुचयं भोक्तृ संघातमन्तः
स्कंधानां पंचकञ्चेदुशमिति सुगतः पृच्छ्यतां वेदबाह्यः ।
किन्ते मानान्तरेण प्रमितमिदमुत प्रौढिरेषा त्वदीया
किं वा मोहात्प्रलापः किमथ

जड जगद्धिप्रलिप्सा कुबुद्धे ॥ १.२२ ॥

*Bahyam bhogyam prajalpan-kshanikam-
anuchayam bhoktri sanghatamantah
Skandhanam panchakanchedrishamiti sugatah
pricchhyatam vedabahyah.
Kinte manantarena pramitamidamuta
praudhiresha tvadiya
Kim va mohatpralapah kimatha jada jagad-
vipralipsa kubuddhe. (1.22)*

We ask the agnostic Buddhists, who denounce the Vedas: ‘O dull and evil-minded ones, you blabber that all the material objects outside the body—produced out of earth and the other elements, form and other perceptions, and eyes and other sense-organs—having only a momentary existence and the atoms of earth and the other elements are the things that are experienced. You call the five *skandhas* in the body, which are momentary like the external objects, the group of experiencers. You have inferred the momentariness of these objects

and *skandhas* through some other means of knowledge like direct perception. Or could it also be said that this imagination of momentariness of objects is the greatness of your intellect? Or is it just your babble caused out of delusion? Or is it to dupe people?

The Buddhists believe that one *hetu*, cause, leads to another cause. One cause produces an effect, which becomes the next cause. So, depending on one cause, *pratita*, another cause is born, *samutpada*. This is called *pratitya-samutpada*. The relation within a group of causes is called *pratyayopanibandha*. Every object has the characteristics of the four elements like the earth leading to the qualities of hardness, softness, heat, and motion. For instance, a seed gives birth to the sprout. The hardness of the sprout is derived from the element earth in the seed. The softness of the seed comes from the element water. The assimilation necessary for the birth of the sprout comes from the element fire. The element air gives the motion necessary for the sprout to come out of the seed. The group of these elements is the group of the experienced.

There are five *skandhas* or aggregates that form the experience of a conscious being with the external objects. The *rupa-skandha* or the form-aggregate is the sense-objects and the sense-organs taken together, that produce the cause for actions. The *vijnana-skandha* or the consciousness-aggregate is the identification of the experience of the sense-objects through the sense-organs with I-consciousness due to the influence of *alaya-vijnana* or the storage-consciousness. The experience of happiness and misery forms the *vedana-skandha* or the feeling-aggregate. When the experience of the sense-organs gets identified with a particular name or form and gets related thus to a particular sense-organ, like the eye sees a wooden elephant, the ears hear a drum, and the like; it is called *samjna-skandha* or the perception-aggregate. The *samskara-skandha* or mental-formations-aggregate

consists of different emotions like attachment, aversion, delusion, righteousness, pride, and self-conceit. The subject of all experience is *alaya-vijnana*, which is self-revealing and of the nature of a changeless knowledge, which is also called *chitta* or Atman. Anything that can be understood by the intellect, anything that can be spoken, and everything other than that which has all three kinds of non-existence—*prag-abhava*, prior non-existence; *pradhvamsa-abhava*, posterior non-existence; and *atyanta-abhava*, absolute non-existence—is all momentary. The dictum, ‘Whatever exists is momentary like the lightning—all that exists,’ establishes the momentariness of everything.

Here the question is: ‘O dull and evil-minded Buddhists, is all this baseless imagination of yours meant to turn away simple spiritual aspirants from the Vedic path or is it for the entertainment of the stupid?’ Here the question is indirect, to show that the ridiculous standpoint does not even warrant a direct confrontation. People with arguments that are completely against the Vedas are not worthy of being directly addressed to. It has been said: ‘One should not honour, even by a greeting, heretics, men who follow forbidden occupations, men who live like cats, rogues, logicians (arguing against the Veda), and those who live like herons.’¹ Utterances that have no proof or base and are made out of delusion should always be looked down upon. That is why this verse is in a derogatory tone. The implication is that the Buddhists here do not understand their own good and yet they denounce others’ viewpoints.

The contention raised against the Buddhists here is: what is the means of knowledge that led them to form their conclusions? It cannot be direct perception since this method of knowledge accepts the reality of the sense-objects but the transient atoms are not permanent in sense-objects. The method of knowledge adopted by the Buddhists cannot be inference also because

inference needs invariable concomitance. However, since both the objects perceived and the senses cannot be attributed anything more than a momentary existence, their invariable concomitance becomes impossible. Similar is the case with other means of knowledge like presumption, and so on, because these are not accepted by the Buddhists. Then by what uncommon, unheard of, thoughtful proof, by what imagined seventh sense-organ has this conclusion been arrived at? Or has such conclusion been made just to prove that one is separate and unique; just to assert one's ego? Is it like saying: 'Though it is against all means of knowledge, since I have independence to think, so I assert my opinion thus?' This is like the blabbering of fools.

Till now the baselessness of the arguments of the Buddhists has been established. Now, the defects in their arguments are being shown.

संघीभावः कथंवा चलनविरहिणां भङ्गुराणामणूनां
संघोऽनन्यः कथंवा विषयपदमियात्कश्च संघं विधत्ते।
स्कंधानां सन्निपातः कथमिव कियतां भोक्तृता काच धारा
कस्य स्तां भोगमोक्षौ वद जड

सफलं केन वा दर्शनं ते ॥ १.२३ ॥

*Sanghibhavaḥ kathamva chalanavirahinam
bhānguranamanūnām*

*Saṅgho'nanyah kathamva viśhayapadamīyat
kaścha saṅgham vidhatte.*

*Skandhanam sannipataḥ kathamiva kiyatam
bhoktrita kacha dhara*

*Kasya stam bhogamokṣau vada jada saphalam
kena va darśhanam te. (1.23)*

How can the atoms—that are without action because of the impossibility of a cause and have actions that destroy in a moment because they are momentary—come together in a group in the body and the like? How can this body, that is just a group of atoms according to you, be perceived by the senses? And since you do not accept any conscious principle other than this mass of atoms, who would bring about the different combinations

of the elements? How will the grouping of the *skandhas* be done? Which *skandhas* can experience? What is the nature of your *vijñāna-dhara*, a continuous flow of momentary discrete units of knowledge connected with the ego? Who would experience and who would get moksha? O stupid, tell me how can your philosophy be successful?

Refuting the Vaisheshikas, we held that actionless atoms cannot form dyads and triads. Here too, how can actionless atoms form a group like the body, as such formation would be causeless. The Buddhists say that even if atoms were permanent, they would be actionless, more so since they are momentary. Further, is this Buddhists' grouping of atoms, different from or similar to grouping of atoms in objects like a pot? If it is different, then it would be an erroneous conclusion against their own stand. And if it is similar, then such coming together would be imperceptible by the senses.

Objection: Individual strands of hair are not seen from a distance but the entire group of hairs is seen, similarly it could be held that the individual atoms cannot be perceived by the senses but the entire group of atoms can be perceived.

Reply: No, that is not a plausible argument. In the case of hairs, the individual strands are also visible from close proximity. An object does not become imperceptible because of defects like improper eyesight or distance. However, the objects in question are held to be naturally imperceptible even as a group, just like one cannot see a group of air molecules. Further, the insentient atoms can come together only under a sentient being just like a bundle of grass or a heap of grains can be created only by a sentient being. Since you do not accept a sentient doer, the coming together of atoms can also be not accepted.

(To be continued)

References

1. *Manusmṛiti*, 4.30.