Pakṣābhāsa on *Nyāyapraveśa*: A Short Discussion

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Abstract: The Buddhist logician *Dignāga* known as the father of the medieval Indian logic. He introduced some new concepts on the discussion of logic or inference. Here *Pakṣābhāsa* or the fallacy of thesis, a notable concept of *Dignāga's* philosophy, has been discussed after following his great work '*Nyāyapraveśa*'.

Key Word: *Pakṣābhāsa*, *Hetvābhāsa*, *Dṛṣṭābhāsa*, *Aprasiddha-biśeṣana*, *Aprasiddha-biśeṣya*, *Aprasiddhāvāya*, *Prasiddha-saṁvandha*.

According to a traditional principle of classification, most likely adopted by orthodox Hindu thinkers, the schools or systems of Indian philosophy are divided into two broad classes, namely, Orthodox (*āstika*) and Heterodox (*nāstika*)[1]. We may call orthodox to those schools who believe in the authoritativeness of the *vedas*. On the other hand, we may call heterodox to those schools who do not believe the authoritativeness of the *vedas*. In Indian tradition, Samkhya and Yoga, Nyaya and Vaisesika, Mimansa and Vedanta, popularly known as *ṣad-darśana*, are called orthodox. On the other side, *Cārvāka*, Jaina and Bauddha are called heterodox. So totally there are nine schools or systems in Indian traditional philosophy. Among these schools, *Cārvāka* and Buddha denied the *vedas* radically. But the Buddhist philosophy system developed through their ethical and their moral bases. In the first stage of their origins, they basically discussed about moral values and how to achieve highest goal through these moral values. And later to discuss their theories and to defend the opponent's opinion, they engaged themselves in argumentation and they started to participate in different disputation. For this purpose, they started to develop their epistemological base. Now I discuss a part of the Buddhist epistemology, specifically, the Buddhist logic.

We know that the profounder of Buddhist philosophy was Lord Buddha who talks about highest goal of life which is called *Nirvāṇa*. He shows the path of *aṣṭāṅgika-mārga* to achieve the highest goal. In this stage, this system is known as a religious system. In that time, we could not find any discussion on systematical epistemology, basically, systematic logic. After the death of Lord Buddha, the Buddhist system was divided in many schools. Among these, *Sautāntrika*, *Vaivāśika*, *Mādhyamika* and *Yogācāra* are the main. They all discuss the Buddhist theories in different aspects. In the basis of their different tools, they known by different names. *Sautrāntrika* known as *bāhyānumeya-vādīn*, *Vaibhāaṣika* known as *bāhya-pratyakṣa-vādīn*, *Mādhyamika* is called *śunya-vādīn* and *Yogācāra* is called *vijñāna-vadīn*. Among these, first two consists of *Mahāyāna* and second two consists of *Hīnayāna*. In the first stage although Buddhist philosophy was spread but the logic did not spread so much. Though in that time some logics were applied in the discussion of philosophy and religion. During 400-500 AD the logical discussion is found in works of *Vaivāṣika* philosopher *Vasubandhu* and *Yogācāra* philosopher *Maitreya* and *Asaṅga*. But the main aim of their discussions was to solve some specific philosophical problems of *Vaivasika* and Yogacara. After 500 AD the systematical discussion of the Buddhist logic was dealt by its own[2]. In that stage the most significant logician was *Ācārya Dignāga*. He was known as the Father of Mediaeval Logic[3]. Among all his notable works, *Nyāyapraveśa* is another excellent work on Logic by *Dignāga*[4].

In *Nyāyapraveśa*, *Dignāga* classified the fallacies of syllogism. He said about three types of fallacies. These are the fallacies of thesis called *Pakṣābhāsa*; the fallacies of middle term called *Hetvābhāsa* and the fallacies of example called *Dṛṣṭābhāsa*. In this paper I will discuss on the fallacies of thesis. After *Dignāga's* view, the thesis is a proposition that creates a link between a minor term and a major term. Here 'minor term' refers to the subject called *pakṣa* or *dharmin* in Sanskrit and 'major term' indicates the predicate called *sādhya* or *dharma* in Sanskrit. For example – The hill (minor term) is fiery (major term). So, we can say that a thesis is a proposition which is offered for proof. But sometimes the thesis is fallacious because of the incompatibility with perception etc. It is called *Pakṣābhāsa*.

In the work *'Nyāyapraveśa'*, *Dignāga* said about nine types of the fallacies of the thesis. These are discussed below:

1. *Pratyakśa-biruddha* (A thesis incompatible with perception[5]): To explain this Fallacy *Dignāga* introduces this example: "*aśravaṇaḥ śabda iti*"[6] means "Sound is inaudible." In this thesis, it is tried to establish inaudibility of Sound. But it is not possible because of its incompatibility with perception. We all know that sound is always perceivable with ear, known as sense organ of audibility. So, in this case, we can say that the thesis is obligated by sense-perception. That's why it is called 'A thesis incompatible with perception'.

2. *Anumāna-biruddha* (A thesis incompatible with inference[7]): To explain this fallacy Dignāga gives this example on his *Nyāpraveśa* – "*nityo ghataḥ iti*"[8] means "A pot is eternal." In this thesis philosophers tried to establish the eternity of a pot. But it is impossible as it is incompatible with inference. This thesis is obligated with a valid inference that is "A pot is non-eternal, because it is a product." And we all know that when a thesis is obligated by any *pramāna* or any valid source of knowledge, it is called fallacy of

thesis or *pakshāvāsa*. Here the thesis is obligated by an inference that's why it is called "A thesis incompatible with inference."

3. *Loka-biruddha* (A thesis incompatible with the public opinion[9]): To state this fallacy of thesis *Dignāga* introduces this example - "Man's head is pure, because it is the limb of an animal being."[10] This thesis is not proved. Because this thesis is incompatible with public opinion. In general people do not believe that man's head is pure. So, in this case the thesis is obligated by public opinion that's why this fallacy is called "A thesis incompatible with the public opinion."

4. *Āgama-biruddha* (A thesis incompatible with one's own belief or doctrine[11]): To state this fallacy of thesis *Dignāga* says that when A *Vaiśeṣika* philosopher says "Sound is eternal", it will be *āgama-biruddha*. In this thesis the *vaiśeṣika* philosophers try to establish the eternity of the sound. But it is not possible. Because in the *vaiśeṣika* philosophy it is already established that Sound is non-etarnal. So "Sound is non-eternal" this doctrine or this belief is pre-established by the *vaiśeṣika* philosophers. In this case the thesis is obligated by a doctrine or a belief of a philosophy school that's why it is called "A thesis incompatible with one's own belief or doctrine."

5. *Svabacana-biruddha* (A thesis incompatible with one's own statement[12]): To explain this fallacy *Dignāga* gives this example – "*mātā me bandhyeti*"[13] means "My mother is barren."[14] In this thesis disputant wanted to prove barrenness of his mother. But it is impossible to prove. Because it is impossible to think any one's existence without their mother's child bearing capability. If a man wants to prove that his mother is unable to bear a child, he will be ridiculed by others. Here in the thesis the word 'My' refers 'My existence'. That's why his statement creates a contradict with his earlier statement. So, it is called *Svavacana-viruddha*.

6. *Aprasiddha-biśeṣana* (A thesis with an unfamiliar minor term[15]): To explain this fallacy *Dignāga* gives this example – "*Bauddhasya sāṃkhya prati binaśī śabda iti*"[16] means "The Buddhist speaking to the *Sāṃkhya* 'Sound is perishable'."[17] Against this thesis *Sāṃkhya* replies to Buddhist, the minor term or *pakṣa* '*vinaśītva*' used in the thesis is unfamiliar. Because Samkhya does not say about '*vinaśītva*', they say about '*avivava*'. Though Buddhists say about '*vinaśītva*' but the opponent does not accept it. That's why it can not be used in this thesis. So, it will be a fallacy which is called 'A thesis with an unfamiliar minor term.'

7. *Aprasiddha-biśeṣya* (A thesis with an unfamiliar major term[18]): To state this fallacy Dignāga introduces this example – "*Sāṃkhyasya Bauddhaṁ prati cetana atmeti*"[19] means "The *Sāṃkhya* speaking to the Buddhist 'The soul is animate'."[20] In this case the Buddhist replies against *Sāṃkhya* that the major term or *sādhya* '*cetana*' used in this thesis is unfamiliar to them. Because, Buddhist philosophers reject the existence of permanent soul. They refer soul as the stream of consciousness. Though *Sāṃkhya* accepts the existence of permanent soul but the opponent rejects it. That is why '*cetana*' cannot be used in this thesis. If this term is used, it will be a fallacy which is called 'A thesis with an unfamiliar major term.'

8. *Aprasiddhāvāya* (A thesis with both terms unfamiliar[21]): To explain this fallacy *Dignāga* says that if The *Vaiśeṣika* philosophers speak to the Buddhist that "The soul has feeling as pleasurable, etc."[22], it will be *Aprasiddhāvāya*. In this case the Buddhist replies that the minor term or *pakṣa* and the major or *sādhya*

of this thesis is unfamiliar to them. Because Buddhist philosophers reject the existence of permanent soul, but accept the soul as the stream of consciousness and also deny the permanency of pleasure in the soul. Though *Vaiśeṣika* philosophers accept the permanency of pleasure in the permanent soul but the opponent does not accept this. That's why it has not the ability to be used as a thesis. In this case it is called 'A thesis with both terms unfamiliar.'

9. *Prasiddha-saṁvandha* (A thesis universally accepted[23]): To state this fallacy Dignāga uses this example – "*śābaṇaḥ śabda iti*"[24] means "Sound is perceivable." In this thesis the disputant wants to prove the perceivability of sound. But in general, it is already proved. So, it has no need to prove again. That's why it will be a fallacy which is called 'A thesis universally accepted.'

In the Conclusion, it might be said that *Dignāga*, the greatest logician in Indian philosophy, represents the logical problem of the thesis. But the *Nyāyayikas* accept only the fallacies of reason to verify the validation of an inference and they do not talk about any other fallacies on the discussion of inference. Whereas, in the Buddhist traditional logic, it is accepted that if the thesis is not compatible with the perception, the inference etc., the thesis would not be able to be a part of a valid inference. So, these fallacies of thesis are newly added as a machinery for verifying the validation of a part of inference or inference.

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[1] Chatterjee,S and D, Dutta, An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, p: 5

[2] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 78

[3] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 78

[4] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 89

[5] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 90

[6] Dhruva, Anandshankar B. The Nyāyapraveśa, p: 2

[7] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 90

[8] Dhruva, Anandshankar B. The Nyāyapraveśa, p: 2

[9] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 90

[10] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 90

[11] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[12] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[13] Dhruva, Anandshankar B. The Nyāyapraveśa, p: 2

[14] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[15] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[16] Dhruva, Anandshankar B. The Nyāyapraveśa, p: 2-3

[17] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[18] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[19] Dhruva, Anandshankar B. The Nyāyapraveśa, p: 3

[20] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[21] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[22] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[23] Vidyabhusana, Satis Chandra. History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p: 91

[24] Dhruva, Anandshankar B. The Nyāyapraveśa, p: 3

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