

Pratyabhijñādarśanam

Some Māheśvaras (followers of Śiva) felt that the Karma, which is devoid of consciousness (Jaḍa) cannot be the cause of creation and if it is said that Īśvara, following Karma, would do creation, then it amounts to restricting the complete independence of Īśvara. Therefore, Īśvara is the independent cause of the universe, which is non-different from him. The realization of "I myself am Īśvara, not different" is called Pratyabhijñā. The Darśanam or system that advocates Pratyabhijñā is called Pratyabhijñādarśanam.

More

It is generally stated that clay, stick, wheel etc. are the cause of a pot. In fact, it cannot be so. The things, which are Jaḍa (without consciousness), cannot have a desire to produce a pot. Since the potter has got consciousness, he may have a desire. Similarly, the Karma is also Jaḍa and therefore it cannot be the cause of creation. And if it is argued that Īśvara is creating the universe with the help of Karma, then it amounts to say that Īśvara is not completely independent in the task of creation. Therefore, it is proper to say that Īśvara, without any help is creating the universe as per his will. Parameśvara makes the universe, consisting of space etc., shine within himself, just like a reflection. Therefore the universe in the form of Cara (movable) and Jaḍa (immovable), is not different from Parameśvara, it is within Parameśvara. Although there is difference between Jīva (being) and Jīva, as well as between two Jaḍapadārthas (immovable things), there is no difference from the point of view of Parameśvara. If it is a tree there is non-difference and if taken as branches then there is difference. Similarly, here also there are Bheda (difference) and Abheda (non-difference). It is known, through personal experience and inference and Śaivāgamas that there is Tādātmyam (identity) between Parameśvara and Jīva. The realization of "I am Īśvara himself, not different" is called Pratyabhijñā. Since Parasiddhi (Mokṣa) and Aparasiddhi (attaining heaven etc.) do happen by Pratyabhijñā only, there will be the need of neither an internal activity, such as Prāṇāyāma (a breathing exercise under Yoga), nor an external activity such as Bhasmasnāna (bathing with dust) etc., which are difficulties. As the Sākṣātkāra (realization) gradually gets clarified there will be improvement in Siddhi (attainment).

The scope of Pratyabhijñāśāstram is clearly defined by scholars –

सूत्रं वृत्तिर्विवृतिर्लघ्वी ब्रह्मतीत्युभे विमर्शिन्यौ।
प्रकरणविवरणपञ्चकमिति शास्त्रं प्रत्यभिज्ञायाः॥
sūtram vṛttirvivr̥tirlaghvī br̥hatītyubhe vimarśinyau।
prakaraṇavivaraṇapañcakamiti śāstram pratyabhijñāyāḥ॥

Sūtram (an elliptical sentence), Vṛtti (explanation), Vivṛti (interpretation), Laghuvimarśinī (brief discussion) and Br̥hadvimarśinī (detailed discussion) – this five types of text cum explanation is called Pratyabhijñādarśanam.

Here is the first Sūtram –

कथञ्चिदासाद्य महेश्वरस्य दास्यं जनस्याप्युपकारमिच्छन्।
समस्तसंपत्समवाप्तिहेतुं तत्प्रत्यभिज्ञामुपपादयामि॥
kathañcidāsādya maheśvarasya dāsyam janasyāpyupakāramicchan।
samastasaṃpatsamavāptihetun̐ tatpratyabhijñāmuṇipādayāmi॥

samastasampatsamavāptihetuṃ tatpratyaabhijñānamupapādayāmi ॥

By all difficulties, having attained the place of servant of Maheśvara (through serving the feet of Guru, who is non-different from Maheśvara), desirous of helping people, I propose his Pratyabhijñā, that is the cause of the attainment of the entire wealth or that (Pratyabhijñā) which is caused by the attainment of the entire wealth (the eternal comfort, that is both internal and external).

"His Pratyabhijñā" means the realization of Maheśvara – in day to day transaction when we come across a person like Caitra, we recollect and relate him with the same person seen earlier and think – "this is the same Caitra I have seen earlier". This is called Pratyabhijñā. Here also when one's mind runs against Parameśvara, who is popular, described in Purāṇas and known through Āgama (scriptures) and Anumāna (Inference), then there will be Dṛkśakti (the capacity to know) and which ends up in the cognition – "in fact, I myself am that Īśvara". This is called Pratyabhijñā.

It is preached in Śivadr̥ṣṭi (= Śaivadarśanam) by the great Guru Somānandanātha (7-5,6) –

एकवारं प्रमाणेन शास्त्राद्वा गुरुवाक्यतः।
ज्ञाते शिवत्वे सर्वस्थे प्रतिपत्यो दृढात्मना॥
करणेन नास्ति कृत्यं क्वापि भावनयाऽपि वा।
ज्ञाते सुवर्णे करणं भावनां वा परित्यजेत्॥
ekavāraṃ pramāṇena śāstrādvā guruvākyaṭaḥ।
jñāte śivatve sarvasthe pratipatyā dṛḍhātmanā॥
karaṇena nāsti kṛtyaṃ kvāpi bhāvanayā'pi vā।
jñāte suvarṇe karaṇaṃ bhāvanāṃ vā parityajet॥

Once the Śivatva (the property of Śiva), that is there in everything, is known through Pramāṇas (Means of knowledge) such as Pratyakṣa (Perception) or Scriptures or the preachings of Guru, with firm knowledge then there is no need of Pramāṇas or thinking always that "I only am Śiva". Once it is known that "this is gold", then the Pramāṇa and Bhāvanā (thinking) should be given up.

Utpalācārya clarifies –

भक्तिलक्ष्मीसमृद्धधानां किमन्यदुपयाचितम्।
एतया वा दरिद्राणां किमन्यदुपयाचितम्॥
bhaktilakṣmīsamṛddhānāṃ kimanyadupayācitam।
etayā vā daridrāṇāṃ kimanyadapayācitam॥

What else is required by those who have the wealth of Bhakti (devotion or Dāsyam of, Īśvara) and what else is not required by those who do not have the wealth of Bhakti?

If the shining Jīvātmā (individual soul) is Īśvara then why is a tool needed to prove Pratyabhijñā? It is required as although the Jīvātmā is shining, it cannot shine fully due to the

influence of Māyā (illusion). Therefore, for a full shining of Jīvātmā, Pratyabhijñā is being demonstrated through Dṛkśakti and Kriyāśakti. Udayākarasūnu summarizes the concept –

कर्तरि ज्ञातरि स्वात्मान्यादिसिद्धे महेश्वरे
अजडात्मा निषेधं वा सिद्धिं वा विदधीत कः।
किन्तु मोहवशादस्मिन् दृष्टेऽप्यनुपलक्षिते
शक्याविष्करणेनेयं प्रत्यभिज्ञोपदर्शयते॥
kartari jñātari svātmānyādisiddhe maheśvare
ajaḍātmā niṣedham vā siddhiṃ vā vidadhīta kaḥ।
kintu mohavaśādasmin dṛṣṭe'pyanupalakṣite
śakyāviṣkaraṇeneyam pratyabhijñopadarśyate॥

This Jīvātmā himself, who is Kartā (Agent) and Jñātā (one who knows) is Maheśvara. When such a person is eternally available, who, other than a stupid, would refute or try to establish? But, although he is shining always, this Jīvātmā is not recognized as Parameśvara due to illusion. Therefore, Pratyabhijñā is being preached through demonstrating Jñānaśakti (the capacity of cognition) and Kriyāśakti (the capacity of action), that are there within.

It is explained –

सर्वेषामिह भूतानां प्रतिष्ठा जीवदाश्रया। ज्ञानं क्रिया च भूतानां जीवतां जीवनं मतम्॥
तत्र ज्ञानं स्वतस्सिद्धं क्रिया कार्याश्रिता सती। परैरप्युपलक्ष्येत तथान्यज्ञानमुच्यते॥
या चैषां प्रतिभा तत्तत्पदार्थक्रमरूपिता। अक्रमानन्दचिद्रूपः प्रमाता स महेश्वरः॥
sarveṣāmiha bhūtānām pratiṣṭhā jīvadāśrayā।
jñānam kriyā ca bhūtānām jīvatām jīvanam matam॥
tatra jñānam svatassiddham kriyā kāryāśritā satī।
parairapyupalakṣyeta tathānyajñānamucyate॥
yā caiṣām pratibhā tattatpadārthakramarūpitā।
akramānandacidrūpaḥ pramātā sa maheśvaraḥ॥

Here the state of all beings is dependent on Jīva. Jīvanam or Caitanya (consciousness) of living beings is of two types – Jñānam (cognition) and Kriyā (action) (Caitanyam of Jīva means Jñānaśakti and Kriyāśakti only). Between the two Jñānam is born on its own and it shines spontaneously. On the other hand, Kriyāśakti is recognized by self as well as others as it is dependent on the activity that is to be performed. The Jñānaśakti, that is there in others is also connected. The Jñānaśakti of Jīvas (beings), being associated by the order of different things, is exhibited in a contracted form. On the other hand, Maheśvara, who is the controller, has got the form of Jñānam only, that is without any order and full of bliss.

Somānandanātha also asserts – "A servant of Maheśvara always considers himself as a form of Śiva as well as that of Śivaśakti (the capacity of Śiva)." It is explained in Jñānādhikāraparisamāpti –

स्थितिः॥ तदैक्येन विना नास्ति संविदां लोकपद्धतिः। प्रकाशैक्यात्तदेकत्वं मातैकः स इति

स एव विमृशत्वेन नियतेन महेश्वरः।विमर्श एव देवस्य शुद्धे ज्ञानक्रिये यतः॥
tadaikyena vinā nāsti saṃvidāṃ lokapaddhatiḥ।
prakāśaikyāttadekatvaṃ mātaikaḥ sa iti sthitiḥ॥
sa eva vimṛśatvena niyatena maheśvaraḥ।
vimarśa eva devasya śuddhe jñānakriye yataḥ॥

Without merging with Maheśvara the Jñānas (cognitions) cannot have use in common parlance. Since Prakāśa (Jñānam) is only one and therefore, certainly he is the only Pramātā / Jñātā. The same Pramātā is called Maheśvara due to his stable Vimṛśatva (i.e. Jñānaśakti and Kriyāśakti). Because Vimarśa means pure Jñāna and Kriyā.

Samvit, Jñāna and Prakāśa are synonyms. Samvit is partless, eternal and single. Although we have ghaṭasamvit (cognition of a pot), paṭasamvit (cognition of a cloth) etc., in day to day life, there is one and only one Samvit. The difference is due to the difference in "Upādhi" (thing) with which it is associated – such as ghaṭa and paṭa. Rather, just like sunlight, a single Samvit makes the things shine. The same Samvit is Maheśvara.

This aspect is explained by Abhinavaguptācārya – "it is accepted that the gamut of things is being illuminated by the great capacity of Prakāśa in the form of Cit (cognition) and this is clearly stated by Veda –

तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति (कठोपनिषद्, 2.2)
tameva bhāntamanubhāti sarvaṃ tasya bhāsā sarvamidaṃ vibhāti
(Kāṭhōpaniṣad, 2.2)
Everything is shining following the Cit and everything is shining due to the light of it.

Then, nīlaprakāśa (blue light), pītaprakāśa (yellow light) etc. are due to the difference in the things. In fact, there is no difference due to space, time and form. The same Prakāśa, in the form of Caitanyam (consciousness) is called Pramātā."

In Śivasūtras this is clearly stated –

चैतन्यमात्मा 1.1
caitanyamātmā 1.1
The Caitanya or Prakāśa or Svātantryam (independent thing) itself is called Ātmā.

The same Vimarśa itself is pure and spiritual things – Jñānam and Kriyā. Jñānam is in the form of shining and Kriyā is creating the universe from Self. It is clearly stated in Kriyādhikāra –

एष चानन्तशक्तित्वात् एवमाभासयत्यमून।
भावानिच्छावशादेषां क्रियानिर्मातृतास्य सा॥
eṣa cānantaśaktitvāt evamābhāsayatyamūn।
bhāvanicchāvaśādeṣāṃ kriyānirmātr̥tāsyā sā॥

Since this Maheśvara has got limitless power, he is illuminating the visible things thus. The Kriyāśakti in him is creation of these things as per his wish.

In Upasaṃhāra also it is stated –

इत्थं तथा घटपटाद्याकारजगदात्मना ।
तिष्ठतासोरेवमिच्छैव हेतुकर्तृकृता क्रिया ॥
तस्मिन्सतीदमस्तीति कार्यकारणताऽपि या ।
साप्यपेक्षाविहीनानां जडानां नोपपद्यते ॥
itthaṃ tathā ghaṭapaṭādyākārajagadātmanā ।
tiṣṭhāsorevamicchaiva hetukartṛkṛtā kriyā ॥
tasminsatīdamastīti kāryakāraṇatā'pi yā ।
sāpyapekṣāvihīnānāṃ jaḍānāṃ nopapadyate ॥

Thus the desire, of a causative agent called Maheśvara, who wished the universe to be in the form of pot and cloth etc., itself is Kriyāśakti. Following the norm that non-living things cannot have the wisdom of cause and effect, i.e. if that is there then only this will be there. Even a being, without Īśvaratva (having all kinds of capacity), can have the wisdom of cause and effect.

There are six Bhāvavikāras enumerated in Niruktam (one of the six Vedāṅgas that deals with meaning) of Yāska – Jāyate (birth), Asti (existence), Vardhate (increases), Vipariṇamate (change), Apakṣīyate (decay) and Vinaśyati (perishing). Everything in the universe undergoes this six kinds of transformation. Maheśvara has got a desire by which he wanted to see the six transformations and other states in all other things and such a desire gradually reached its zenith and the same is called Kriyāśakti or creation of the universe.

The question, i.e. if Jīvātmā is non-different from Maheśvara, then how come he got Karmabandha (worldly bindings) is answered in Āgamādhikāra –

एष प्रमाता मायान्धः संसारी कर्मबन्धनः ।
विद्याविज्ञापितैश्वर्यः चिद्घनो मुक्त उच्यते ॥
eṣa pramātā māyāndhaḥ saṃsārī karmabandhanaḥ ।
vidyāvijñāpitaiśvaryaḥ cidghano mukta ucyate ॥

The same Pramātā, who is blind due to Māyā (illusion), is bounden by Karma and becomes Saṃsārī (one who has got worldly bindings). Then he understands Īśvaratva (all kinds of capacity) through Vidyā (cognition), attains Jñānaśakti and Kriyāśakti, i.e. becomes Cidghana, and is called Mukta (one relieved from worldly bindings).

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