

## Metaphor as Will-generated Cognition: A Philosophical Analysis

Sangeeta Tushir

UGC-NET in Philosophy

heehsangeeta@gmail.com

### Abstract:

Reviewing the point of view of *NavyaNyāya* Philosophy, we see that there is also a cognitive aspect to desire something. Such intentional desire is found not only in *Navya Nyaya* but in addition to this in other traditional treatises like Grammar, *Alamkārasāstra*, *Bhaṭṭikavyā* etc. In Indian literature metaphors (*rūpaka*) are used in poetry, literature and anytime when someone wants to add some colour to their language. In metaphor, a person is compared to an object which is not same with him but having some resemblances.

**Keywords:** traditional, desire, language, literature, person.

A metaphor is a word that is used to express a particular idea by imagining the similarity between two objects. In this paper we will discuss main features of metaphor that are as follows:

- i) In case of metaphor, we express the feelings of mind by imagining identity between two objects.
- ii) In this case, a common quality between different person or object is imagined. Such similarity is really found between two objects or sometimes the similarity between them is imagined by the poet. In case of metaphor in the sense of *rūpaka*, the poet's intention is to show the absolute identity between *upamāna* (object, say, the moon with which something like face etc. are compared) and *upameya* i.e., the object of comparison i.e., face. Though it is known to the poet that the face and moon (*mukhacandra*) can never be compared yet he cannot resist the temptation of unhiding the difference between them. In this context, the difference between two objects which is really there, is going to declare as identical having no difference at all. It is called by Viśvanātha *asanapahnutabhedayofi* i.e., unhiding the difference between them. The poet has got two purposes in his mind- unhiding the difference between them and imposition of one's property on the other. That there is a difference between face and the moon is intentionally unhide and intentional imposition of the characteristic features of face to those of moon. In other words, metaphor remains in the representation of the subject of description, which is not concealed, as identified with another well-known standard ("*Rūpakamrūpitāropādviṣayenirapanhave*")<sup>1</sup>. The subject is an object on which something is superimposed. In the above example, *mukhacandra* (face-moon) face is identified with moon. In this case, 'face' is a *viṣaya* or subject on which the *candratva* or moonness is superimposed (*āropa*). The term *viṣaya* is otherwise called *upameya* i.e., 'face' which is taken as identical with the 'moon' which is otherwise called *upamāna*. In such cases, the distinction between them is not concealed though there are a lot of similarities. The superimposition of the identification between two objects in spite of non-concealing their difference (*'atisāmyādanupahnutabhedayofiupamānopameyayohabhedāropafi'*) is metaphor in the sense of *rūpaka*.<sup>2</sup>

We may take an example of ‘*pāṣāṇahridaya*’ (stone-heart) where there is superimposition of the property i.e., hardness between two different objects heart and stone. Here, the heart has been compared to stone. Heart is to be taken as *upamāna* and stone is *upameya*, heart is considered as subject (*viśaya*), on which the hardness of the stone is imposed. On the other hand, stone is the *viśayās*, it is superimposed on heart. So, according to this example, heart is *upameya* and stone is considered as *upamāna*. The poet hypothesizes a common quality between two different things. The metaphor is the name of the fictional attribute to show their similarity. There is no such tendency of author to try to keep something secret for reader. The super-imposition of one object on another is prior to metaphor. The author of ‘Song of myself’ Walt Whitman has used a strong metaphor. In his own words “grass is the beautiful uncut hair of graves”. Here, the poet hypothesizes a common quality between two different things. The concept *upamāna* and *upameya* will be clarified gradually.

Ācārya VisvanāthaKavirāja in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa* defines *rūpaka* as “*rūpakam rūpitāropovisayaniraphnave*” i.e without prohibiting the subject called *upameya*, if the identity of *upamāna* is imposed on *upameya*, it is called metaphor. Let us try to explain the term ‘*āropa*’ in this definition.<sup>3</sup> An object is placed on another object in such way so that the second one transforms the first into its own form. As a result of this resonance, two alien objects are imagined to be one.

For example, “*ādharīhṛdayākāsetui pūrṇasāīa*

*mār*”. In this example, the word

‘*pūrṇasa*

*śīās* superimposed on Indrajit is considered as the cause of imposition of sky (*ākāsāropa*) on heart (*hṛdaya*). To the mother, the son (Indrajit) has to take the form of moon, so that the mother’s heart has taken the form of sky because the son is just like moon to mother.

In metaphor, one expresses his own thought by imagining the unity between two objects. This is how the intention of a writer’s desire is revealed through metaphor. As we have the freedom to create humor in literature, to express one’s thought individually. The poet does not make an effort to hide anything from the reader. By applying metaphor, a common feature is imposed on the two different things.

Another term we have found in the definition of metaphor as stated above is ‘*nirapahnave*’. This term carries an important meaning. Without prohibiting the subject called *upameya*, if the identity of *upamāna* is imagined to *upameya* is called as *rūpaka* (metaphor). In case of metaphor, the distinction between *upamāna* and *upameya* is well known, and the author never made an attempt to hide the different nature of these two.

From this we can say, though objectively / by nature *upamāna* and *upameya* are different from each other, the hypothetical imposition of *abheda* to exhibit the extreme similarity between them is known as *rūpaka* (metaphor). In case of metaphor, *upamāna* does not consume *upameya*, rather it obsessed *upameya*. In metaphor, the value of the *upamāna* is much higher.

So, when we analyze metaphor, we can see its three main components – *upamāna*, *upameya* and the common quality. Let us try to understand this concept by showing the following example i.e. ‘blood-red hibiscus flower’.

- i) **Upameya:** that which is the matter of comparison. In this example ‘blood’ and ‘hibiscus flower’ – the metaphor is created after searching similarities between two different objects. In this case, the subject of comparison is ‘flower’. So, the flower has to be taken as ‘*upameya*’.

- ii) **Upamāna:** The object with which something is compared is *upamāna*. Here, flower is compared to blood. For this reason, ‘blood’ is the second part of *rūpaka*, i.e *upamāna*.
- iii) **The common qualities:** It refers to that quality which exists in two different objects and makes each other comparable. The common property ‘redness’ exists both in ‘blood’ and flower’. This quality is the basis of comparison between ‘flower’ and ‘blood’. So, ‘redness’ which is the common quality is the third part of metaphor.

From the above discussion, we can say although *upamāna-upameya* are different by nature, but to show the excessive similarities (*atisāmyāt*) between them the imposition of identity (*abhedāropa*) is called as metaphor.

Moreover, the term *nirapahna* inserted in the definition has got a great significance. This term makes metaphor or *rūpaka* as distinct from illusion and *apahnuti*, another *alamkāra* in poetics. In case of *rūpaka*, the distinction between *upamāna* and *upamiti*, though awareness is there, is not concealed while in case of illusion, the distinction between them is not ascertained (*bhedāgraha*) at all. When there is the cognition of snake in case of rope, there is no cognition of distinction between them. In case of *apahnuti*, an object’s real character is denied and that of something else is ascribed to it. As for example, if it is said- ‘this is not face, but the moon’- *nedam mukham kintucandraeva*, it is called *apahnuti*, but in case of *rūpaka* no such denial is admitted. As the *viṣayī* ascribes its form (*rūpa*) on the *viṣaya*, it is called *rūpaka*.<sup>4</sup> Though between face and moon there are opposite properties and though the distinction between them is clearly ascertained, the hypothetical superimposition identity (*kālpanikābhedāropa*) in order to show their excessive similarities.<sup>4</sup>

There are certain cases where both the *upameya* and *upamāna* are clearly mentioned while some cases are there where either of them is mentioned and the other is not. We find such situation in case of implicative (*lākṣaṇika*) and suggestive (*vyaṅgya*) meaning. In such cases, *upamāna* is mentioned while *upameya* is assumed. Such assumption varies from person to person. One story from Buddhism may be taken to exemplify such case. Once Buddha says to his disciples at the end of the day- ‘The Sun is set’ (*gato ’stamarkah*), the import of this varies from disciple to disciple. Three disciples have taken the meaning of the metaphor in three ways. Here, the sun is the *upamāna* and a particular interpretation given by a disciple is taken as *upameya*. The meaning assigned to the metaphor by a particular disciple is as per the desire of him. A disciple who is religious in nature has assigned the meaning of the sentence- The Sun is set as an indirect instruction of Buddha to go to his residence to perform evening rituals. The second disciple who is a thief interprets it as an indirect order of Buddha to go out for burglary. The third one who is a romantic lover has interpreted the sentence as an instruction of Buddha to go out to meet the ladylove. From this it may be argued that though the metaphor is the same, the implicative meaning from this is ambiguous as it has got capability of providing various meanings. Hence, it is not always true that metaphor can give us an accurate meaning of a sentence. In the cases of *mukha-candra* and *pāṣaṇa-hṛdaya*, the meaning is clear but in the above-mentioned sentence of Buddha the implicative and suggestive meaning has got some aesthetic value which is required for literature. But in our daily communication it creates some problems due to its ambiguous nature. The metaphorical language is normally understood through convention which is called *vṛddhavyavahāra* (verbal usage of the seniors) in most of the cases though not in all cases. If a metaphor is used for the first time or if a metaphor is heard by someone for the first time, the meaning would not be clear due to not having any convention. Sometimes the ambiguity of language be virtuous and sometimes be vicious after taking the context or situation in view. The ambiguity remaining in metaphor

sometimes creates misunderstanding among the people. In the same way, there may be certain cases which cannot be expressed in ordinary language due to the delicacy of the case which can be easily expressed in metaphorical language. But one thing should be kept in view that metaphor should match with what is indicated by the metaphor. The metaphor of face and moon is matching with face and the moon and hence, it is called a good metaphor. If otherwise, it is called a bad metaphor which may be avoided in communication.<sup>5</sup>

In some cases, the *upameya* is used as *upamāna* in order to show the incomparability (*atulanīyatva*) of an object. Sometimes, the object metaphorized is used as a metaphor in order to show an object's incomparability, which may be illustrated as follows. In the cases like Darjeeling is Darjeeling, Uttamkumar is Uttamkumar etc. *upameya* is identical with *upamāna*.<sup>6</sup> In this context, the identification between them is shown which is a kind of artificial intellectual exercise for the purpose of indicating the incomparability of the object. Such usages are also valuable in our day-to-day life.

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