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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS-PHILOSOPHY

SEMESTER-I

INDIAN EPISTEMOLOGY

CORE-102

BLOCK-2

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavors.



INDIAN EPISTEMOLOGY

BLOCK-1

Unit-1 Philosophical Questions And Pramanas

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Unit-3 The Debate About The Nature, Origin (Utpatti) And Ascertainment (Jnapti) Of Validity; Svatahpramanyavada; Paratahpramanyavad

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BLOCK-2 INDIAN EPISTEMOLOGY

In this block you will study minor pramanas . The block also talks about sabda , the special role of sabda and skepticism.

Unit-8 deals with minor pramanas namely Upamana, Arthapatti Anupalabdhi

Unit-9 deals with Sabda,

Unit-10 deals with the debate about knowledge: savisayatva,sakaratva, svaprakastva, paraprakastva

Unit-11 deals The debate about the validity and invalidity of dream and memory cognitions

Unit-12 talks The debate concerning pramana- vyavastha and pramana-samplava

Unit-13 deals with Scepticism

Unit-14 deals with The special role of sabdapramana.

UNIT 8 OTHER PRAMANAS : UPAMANA, ARTHAPATTI ANUPALABDHI

STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Upamana (Comparison)
- 8.3 Arthapatti (Postulation)
- 8.4 Anupalabdhi (Non-apprehension)
- 8.5 Let Us Sum Up
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- 8.7 Questions for review
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8.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about role of upamana
- know the arthapatti
- understand the importance of anupalabdhi

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Upamana, that is knowledge by comparison, arthapatti, knowledge by postulation and anupalabdhi, knowledge by non-existence is expected by few schools of Indian philosophy and rejected by some.

8.2 UPAMANA (COMPARISON)

Upamana is also a major source of knowledge. The term upamana has been translated in various ways as comparison, analogy, identification,

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knowledge by similarity or knowledge by assimilation, etc. It is the knowledge derived from comparison and generally corresponds to analogy. In our day-to-day life, we obtain many bits of information just by comparing certain things and events. We also get knowledge by resemblance or similarity. Mukta Biswas defines in

'Samkhya Yoga Epistemology'; upamana is derived from the words 'upa' meaning 'sadrasya' or "similary" and "mana" meaning "cognition". Hence, Upamana derivatively means the knowledge of the similarity between two things. When we see a particular object and recall another, the knowledge that we have of the similarity of the recalled object to the seen object is said to be due to the comparison. So upamana is comparison or analogy by which we gain knowledge of a thing from its similarity to another thing. Upamana has an important role in everyday life, like the urban man understands the unknown animal gavaya through the sadrsyajnana or similarities of the cow. For example, a child who does not know about a thing can understand the unknown object when he gives an example about the thing i.e., the name and the particulars of the object and we can give many examples of this kind.

1. A person, who does not know the ginger, knows from another person that ginger is like the turmeric. After hearing the words of the familiar thing he comes to know about the unknown object as ginger.

2. A person, whose name is Ram, tells his friend that his son Sham will land at the railway station at six p.m. and he looks like himself. The friend reaches the railway station and sees a person like Ram, and then he remembers the words of his friend that his son is like him. Thus he is able to recognize Sham easily. Here the sadrsyajnana and the 98 authority statement of his friend helped the person to recognize Sham at the railway station.

3. A person, who does not know the animal sheep, but he perceives from another person that it is like a goat, and there is a slight difference between these two animals i.e., the sheep, has long hair along its body. Thus, he perceives the unknown animal as sheep through the similarity of a well known animal, goat. Thus we can understand many things

through sadrsyajnana of well known object. From the above mentioned examples, we can understand that the upamana is

widely used as means of knowledge in everyday life. Upamana has been admitted mostly by the realist philosophers. Their theory of pramana (including upamana) mostly follows Bhatta Mimamsaka. In Indian Philosophical tradition, there are three major realist schools. They are Nyaya, Vaisesika and Mimamsa. Of these three schools, the First and the third accept upamana as a distinct pramana while the Vaisesika realist does not admit upamana as a distinct source of valid cognition. Advaita also accepts it as a source of knowledge. According to the Nyaya, third kind of valid cognition is upamiti and its means is called upamana. Gautama defines comparison as the knowledge of a thing through it's similarly

to another thing previously well known¹. Vacaspati Misra states that upamana is a distinct means of knowledge since it produces a distinct type of cognition. Comparison is the relation between the names and the objects denoted by them. Sabara has defined the results (pramiti), in the case of upamana, he choose to define the means is always clearly distinguished from the result. Vatsyayana states that upamana is the knowledge of an unknown object by means of its resemblance to a known object. He supports Sutrapara in his assertion that effect of similarity

does not depend upon its degree (e.g., project, great or partial), but upon its familiarity. He makes it clear that upamana does not proceed on mere resemblance, but on well known resemblance. Sabara regards comparison as the knowledge of similarity subsisting in an unperceived object (e.g. a cow) on the perception of a similar object. Parthasarthi Misra defines it as the knowledge of similarity subsisting in a remembered object (e.g. a cow) with an object

(e.g. a wild cow) perceived. The cow which was perceived by a person in a town is similar to this cow perceived in a forest at present. The Prabhakara also defines comparison as the knowledge of similarity subsisting in a remembered object, which arises from the perception of

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similarity. Its derivative meaning suggests that comparison is its proper substitute.

This knowledge is gained by comparison. Example, suppose we do not know what 'Saxophone', it means a musical instrument something like a u shaped trumpet." If on subsequently seeing a saxophone, we are able to give its name, it will be clear that we understand what 'saxophone' means. It is clear that upamana is just this way of knowing the denotation of words, or the relation between names and the objects denoted by them. In upamana we have such knowledge when we are told by some authoritative person that a word denotes a class of objects of a certain description, although we might not have seen them before.

The third pramana, which is admitted by Nyaya, is upamana and consists in associating a thing unknown before with its name by virtue of it. According to Nyaya, upamana is the means by which we gain the knowledge of previously unknown object on the basis of it's similarity to another object previously well known.

The Advaitins explain upamana by this example; A person, who has perceived a cow in a town, goes to a forest, and perceives a wild cow, then has an apprehension, "this animal is similar to a cow" owing to the intercourse of his eyes with the animal, then he has an apprehension, "my cow is similar to this animal, this knowledge of similarity of a cow with a wild cow is acquired by comparison.

Mimamsa recognize that the instrument of knowledge is the result of the cognition of similarity. It is illustrated that a person who has not seen a forest animal called gavaya is informed by the forester that it resembles a cow. Then he goes to the forest and comes across gavaya, he sees the similarity of the cow to gavaya, he also discovers that a cow is similar to gavaya, it is the second similarity or the recollected similarity that is known as upamana.

This differs from the Nyaya view which described upamana as the relation between a name and an object denoted by it. The upholders of upamana as an independent means of valid knowledge also differ in details. There are divergences of opinion regarding the nature of resultant knowledge through upamana. The Purva Mimamsa and the Advaita

Vedantins are on one side and the Naiyayikas on the other. According to Purva Mimamsakas, the resultant knowledge pertains to the similarity which the remembered object bears to the directly perceived one. But according to the Naiyayikas, it is the knowledge that a certain word denotes a certain class of objects. There is a difference of opinion among the Purva

Mimamsakas, Vedantins and the Naiyayikas about the resultant knowledge or upamitis.

In Tarka sanigarh Annambhatta defines upamiti.

Karanam Upamanam Samjnasmjani Sambandhajnanam Upamiti, i.e., relations between a name and the object are denoted to it. There are some factors which are needed in the process of upamana i.e., the authoritative statement, the indirect knowledge of similarity, the recollection of the authoritative statement and resultant knowledge or upamiti. In broader sense it could be understood to mean either upamiti or upamiti-karana depending on the context. Standard grammar permits derivation of both these meanings. Form the grammatical point of view the word upamana is a complex expression. It is constituted by an upasarga

(prefix), dhatuprakrti (a verbal root) and pratyaya (suffix). Therefore the structural analysis of the word upamana is upa+ma+lyut. The suffix may or may not add anything by way of meaning the word upamana to which it is added to form the word upamana. When any meaning it's added to add the meaning karana and then the word upamana means upamitikarana. Upamanamca manantram anumanad eva tadarthasiddheh-NL, P.53, Knowledge by similarity is due to comparison. It has been recognized as the means of knowing denotative relation between a word and certain class of objects through the intermediary knowledge of similarity, dissimilarity or particular characteristics conveyed by authoritative or particular characteristics conveyed by authoritative statement.

Mimamsa accepts that it is the way by which we know similarly, which is distinct kind of object, example, If we see first an American bison and then an Indian Buffalo, we perceive the similarity between the two, when

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we see the Buffalo, we at once perceive that it is like the bison. The Nyaya thinkers take a little different view of upamana. According to them it is a process by which one identifies an object with particulars of name by recognizing a similarity in it, pointed out before with an already perceived animal is apprehended as a gavaya (wild cow) an account of a similarity of wild cow perceived in it, this similarity having been pointed to the perceiver by somebody before.⁴ Dr. Ganganath Jha has taken analogy as the English equivalent of the term 'upamana'. Dr. S. N. Das Gupta also uses analogy as equivalent of upamana. Dr. Radhakrishnan and Dr. J. N. Sinha either adopt the term in its original form or use the word in comparison as its substitute. According to Nyaya, the result is the cognition of the relation of a name with the named, e.g. in the given case, the cognition that the animal which is found to resemble cow is called 'gavaya'. It is produced by the knowledge of similarity because a man recognizes a wild cow as a 'gavaya' he remembers the description that 'a gavaya is an animal like a cow'. This knowledge is called upamiti and upamana is the instrument thereof. It is definite knowledge of the object sought to be definitely known through its similarity with an object already well known. Nyaya defines comparison as the knowledge of the relation between a word and another word or between a thing and another thing but between a word and thing and another thing but between a word and thing. Comparison makes an object through its resemblance to a known object, e.g. as the cow so the gavaya. Comparison sub serves perception. It enables one to know an object designated by a particular name. The third pramana as identified by Gautama is also upamana (comparison). In Nyaya Sutra, Gautama states that, the comparison or analogy is "The means of proving that which is to be proved from a well known similarity" e.g. the assertion 'the cow so the gavaya' i.e., the animal called gavaya is just like the cow In upamana we are to know the objects denoted by a word from their similarity, dissimilarity to certain well known things or from their peculiarities but more resemblance or difference without any universal relation cannot be the ground of a certain conclusion. We have such knowledge when we are told by some authoritative person that a word denotes a class of

objects of a certain description. We apply the words to some objects which fit in with that description, although we might not have seen them before. Gautama says the function of upamana is to impart knowledge of the relation of the name (with the corresponding object). When the proposition conveying the comparison that gavaya is like the cow "is employed, a person perceiving through sense object

contact an object having similarity with the cow learns, the relation between the naming word and the object denoted. In his, Sutra 1.1.3 Gautama first introduced Upamana by name. According to the Naiyayikas; upamana is one of the four pramanas. In Sutra 1.1.6 Gautama has given the definition of upamana as under;-

Prasiddha Sadharmyatsa Dhyasadhanam Upmanam. (Comparison is the knowledge of a thing consequent to its likeness to another thing which is familiar.) It means in English, Upamana (analogy or knowledge by analogy) is the knowledge of the sadhya which results from prasiddha (known) similarity. 10 The definition given in the Sutra 1.1.6 means that upamana is the knowledge (sadhana) of the relation, a name has (samkhya sambanadha) with its object and this knowledge is occurred by known similarity (prasiddha sudharmyat).

To understand the meaning of the Sutra, there are many comments and sub comments. Comparison implies likeness between the things compared and the things to which one compares it. For example one may see a thing which one is like a cat, only much bigger and with stripes, or a chameleon, he recollects the comparison and at once recognizes the animal. In this case, knowledge follows from a likeness to a thing which is previously known, through the mind

which mentally compares the pictures of what it has already a clear idea of, with the one which is projected by the object, which is now presented to it.¹¹ Nyaya Sutra definition is acceptable and whether upamana is really an independent pramana has been considered in the sutra 2.1.44 – 2.1.48 of Nyaya Darsana or Gautama's book of Nyaya-Sutra. In that connection Gautama has stated of critical examination of revival views and finally stated that Upamana actually is an independent Pramana.¹² Upamana is the identification of previously unknown object from its

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description given by a reliable person. Nyaya, Upamana is a way of knowing the denotation of words and solving the problem of identification.¹³ Vatsyayana explains Gautama's definition of upamana which makes known what is to be made known, from similarly with an object that is already well known. Naiyayikas famous example of upamana is "as the cow so the gavaya" i.e.; the animal called gavaya is just like a cow. It could be explained by a person who is ignorant of the exact meaning of the word gavaya, goes to the forest and asks the forester what is gavaya. From the forester, he learns that the gavaya is similar to a cow. After hearing the words of the forester, he knows that there is a relationship between these two animals. On some future occasion when he happens to see gavaya, he recollects the instructive assertion of the forester and perceives the similarity with cow in gavaya. Here the sadrasyanjnana of the cow which helps the person to understand the unknown animal gavaya, is called upamiti. Here the resemblance of the meaning of words of the forester (the authoritative statement) is the vyapara or intercourse for making upamiti. The upamiti jnana is the result of upamana and it is not ascertained by other pramanas. We can say that upamana is the identification of a previously unknown object from its description given by a reliable person. Vatsyayana is the first commentator who clarifies the idea of the utility of upamana, he gives another Nyaya example for upamana, a person is asked by the doctor to bring the medicinal herbs called mudgaparni (a kind of herb) and masparni (another kind of herb) and told that mudgaparni is like mudga and masparni is as masa. After the propositions, he goes to the forest to collect medicines and acquires the knowledge of the relation between the naming word and the object. Such analogies are of great practical value in everyday life and many things are known through upamana. So upamana is an efficient instrument of valid knowledge and it should be regarded as a separate pramana. Bhasyakara state the nature of resultant knowledge and upamati. His statement is that the purpose of upamana is the knowledge of the relation of the corresponding object. Udayotakara says that the authoritative statement has an important role to make upamiti

and the knowledge of similarity is led by the authoritative statement. Udyotyakara connects the authoritative statement and knowledge of similarity. He explains that the mere knowledge of similarity cannot lead to the knowledge of the relation of the name with a particular class of objects. One doesn't know the name of an object when he sees a thing, but when he understands the recollecting of the remembrance of the sentence spoken by the trustworthy person. Here the recollection of the authoritative statement helped the person to understand the name of the thing in front. According to him merely the knowledge of similarity of an object is not sufficient to group the name and its denotation. Gangesa defines comparison as the knowledge that a word denotes the generic character of an unfamiliar object, which coexists with its similarity or dissimilarity with a known object.

The word 'gavaya' denotes the community of wild cow (gavaya), which is indicated by similarity with a cow. So there is a difference of opinion among the Naiyayikas about the karana or the cause of upamiti. According to Pracina Naiyayikas, the meditate activity or vayapara and sadrsyanjnana is karana. Annambhatta accepts the opinion of Navinanaiyayikas.

Two factors are involved in an argument by comparison. (i) The knowledge of the object to be known (ii) The perception of similarity.¹⁴ Mere resemblance, whether it be complete, considerable or partial is not enough to justify an argument by comparison. In the first case of complete resemblance or identity, there is no new knowledge. We do not say the cow is like a cow. In the second case of considerable resemblance, the inference need not be valid, for a buffalo is not a cow, though there are many points of resemblance between the two. If there is only partial resemblance, the case is worse. The description in terms of dissimilarity is illustrated thus, a person of North India tells a person of South India that the animal is an animal which is ugly, lives on hard and sharp thorns and has a very long and crooked neck. The person from the south sees a camel. In this animal, he perceives all these characteristics which are totally dissimilar to those of other animals previously known to him. This knowledge of dissimilarity leads him to recollect what he

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previously heard and knew that it is was the animal denoted by the name as camel. Knowledge of similarity is the efficient instrument to assimilative cognition, e.g. a person is ignorant of the exact meaning of the word 'gavaya'. He has learnt from somebody that a 'gavaya' is similar to a cow; he goes to a forest, sees the animal called 'gavaya' which is similar to a cow', and recollects the information conveyed by the assimilative proposition and then the cognition arises. This is the animal denoted by the word 'gavaya'. This knowledge is due to the Comparison which is the source of knowledge relation either between a name (samjñi) and a thing (samjña) or between word and its denotation.¹⁵ Vatsyayana states that it is the cognition of the relation of a name with the named. In the Nyaya theory of upamana we face some difficulties. The reason is that there is no single version of Nyaya theory of upamana. The views of Gautama, Gangesa, Bhasarvajna or Jayanta are somewhat different. It seems that the Nyaya theory of upamana has been formulated, understood and interpreted somewhat differently by different Naiyayikas over the ages. Gautama equates

upamana with the well known similarity. Vatsyayana takes it as the statement of a reliable person conveying similarity, whereas Uddyotakara thinks it as knowledge of the well known similarity.

Gautama argues that upamana is neither perception nor an inference. The reason for its not being perceptual is that its contents include a reference to linguistic usage of that cannot be perceived. It is not inference, since inference gives us knowledge about things which can be verified through perception.

Napratyakse gavaye pramanartham upamanasya pasyamah- N.S, 2.1.47

It is the means of knowing. Nyaya states that it is produced by the knowledge of similarity because a man recognizes a wild cow as a 'gavaya' when he perceives its similarity to the cow and remembers the description that a gavaya is an animal like a cow.' Nyaya accept that sadrsajñana is an important cause of upamiti and the authoritative statements are needed to complete this idea. So we can understand that opinions of Navinanaiyayikas are suitable to make upamiti. On the other

hand, we accept the pracinanaiyayikas opinion i.e. vakhyartha sabdabodha as a karana, there is no upamiti originates.

THE MIMAMSA VIEW OF UPAMANA

The Mimamsakas consider upamana as an independent source of valid knowledge. According to them, knowledge of similarity about an absent object is obtained by the means known as comparison. For example- one who has seen a cow previously in a town or other place, goes to a forest and finds a gayal and perceives its similarity to the cow which is not present there. He may then obtain by comparison the further knowledge that the cow in a town or elsewhere is like the gayal. Such type of knowledge cannot be brought under perception. From their argument it is clear that there are two similarities. From the knowledge of one similarity, one acquires knowledge of the other similarity. The other similarity being imperceptible must be known to another distinct source of true knowledge. It does not come under memory, since though the object was perceived in the past, its similarity to the present object was not then known. Therefore, this similarity cannot be said to be memory recalled. It is also not an inference. From a knowledge like "this gayal is like the cow in a town or elsewhere," we cannot infer the cow in a town or elsewhere is like this gayal, unless we have another premise like "all things are similar to other things which are similar to them." Such an invariable coherence between two terms is not really used in the above case where one arrives at the knowledge of absent cow's similarity to the present gayal, from the perception of the gayal as similar to the cow. Such knowledge cannot be brought under verbal testimony, since the man who hears that a gayal is like a cow is not given any further idea of the gayal's attributes and so does not know that gayal denotes the animal until he sees it. Sahara Svamin thinks that upamana in Indian philosophy is what is named in Western logic as analogy. For example, just as one feels the existence of one's own self, similarly by analogy one can believe that others also feel the existence of their own selves. Sahara Svamin defines upamana as knowledge of an unperceived object as being similar to some known object. According to Mimamsakas, comparison

may be brought under two heads, namely, comparison of similarity and comparison of dissimilarity. The example of comparison of similarity is already explained. The comparison of dissimilarity is as follows. "the camel is dissimilar to the horse."

The Mimamsakas conclude that comparison is different from perception, inference, memory and verbal testimony. In this case, the knowledge of the similarity and dissimilarity found in the cow is the causal condition par excellence and the knowledge of similarity of the gayal to the cow and that of dissimilarity of the camel to the horse are the results of comparison.

Advaita View Of Upamana

The Advaitins accept upamana (comparison) as the source of valid knowledge. Upamana is the means of the knowledge of similarity. A person, who has perceived a cow in a town, goes to a forest, and perceives a wild cow. He has an apprehension "this animal is similar to a cow" owing to the intercourse of his eyes with the animal. Then he has an apprehension, "my cow is similar to this animal." This knowledge of similarity of a cow with a wild cow is acquired by comparison. The knowledge of similarity cannot be acquired from perception, since the cow is not in presence of the eyes. It cannot be acquired from inference also for similarity existing in a wild cow cannot serve as a mark of inference. For example, my cow is similar to this wild cow, because she is the correlate of similarity existing in this wild cow. Whatever is the correlate of similarity with another thing is similar to it, as Caitra, the correlate of similarity existing in Maitra, is similar to Maitra. According to the Advaita Vedantins, the reason "similarity existing in a wild cow with a cow" does not exist in the subject "my cow." Therefore, the knowledge of similarity existing in "my cow" with a wild cow cannot be acquired from inference. It is acquired from comparison. It is neither perception nor inference but an independent means of valid knowledge.

THE SAMKHYA CRITICISM OF UPAMANA

The Samkhyaists do not consider upamana as a distinct source of valid knowledge. According to them, the knowledge obtained through

upamana is verbal, inferential or perceptual, as the case may be. Thus, upamana has been illustrated by means of verbal testimony. It is said "gavaya is like the cow." This is purely verbal when it is uttered by an elderly experienced person (vrddhavyavahara) to cognize an inexperienced person about the unknown animal gavaya. In the opinion of Vacaspati Misra, the instructive sentence that the cow is similar to a gavaya which is held to be a distinct source of knowledge is really verbal testimony. The Yuktidipika is aware of the Nyaya view and includes upamana under verbal testimony and states that mere similarity does not lead to knowledge of some objects, rather it is a valid statement which leads one to the knowledge obtained through upamana. Like verbal testimony upamana also depends upon the fact whether the speaker has visualized the object, or not. Knowledge is justified only when the speaker is an authority. Further like verbal testimony or sabda, upamana also depends upon particular words. The statement of similarity is only a mode of expression and is not a factor for making upamana an independent means of knowledge. If this kind of mode is taken as a condition for an independent means of knowledge, the other modes of conveying the meaning like waving the hand and closing the eye would also be independent mean of knowledge. Gaudapada includes upamana under verbal testimony. According to Jayamangala, upamana can be included under verbal testimony or inference. When a person comes to know from some authoritative person that the animal similar to cow is called gavaya, it is a case of verbal testimony.

Secondly, upamana can be included in inference. The conclusion of Udyotkara that the word gavaya denotes an animal which is similar to a cow is really inferential, according to Vacaspati. Mathara and Vijnanabhiksu include upamana under inference.

Thirdly, upamana may be included in perception. It is purely perceptual when the knowledge arises in this way - "the animal before our eyes is similar to the cow." Thus, when the cow is remembered and its remembrance is seen in the gavaya, it is perception. When some portions of the component parts of the body of one animal is found to be almost the same as that in the body of another, it is resemblance or similarity.

These points of similarity must be one and equal so that the direct perception of one can indirectly denote the perception of another (gavaya). The similarity is the collection of the components of cow and gavaya and is perceived directly on the sight of either of the two.

Thus, it may be concluded that upamana or comparison is not accepted as an independent pramana by the Samkhyaists. The knowledge obtained through upamana is verbal, inferential or perceptual. Therefore, upamana is by no means the fourth pramana according to the Samkhya. The Yoga also does not accept upamana as an independent means of valid knowledge on the same ground on which Samkhya rejects it.

8.3 ARTHAPATTI (POSTULATION)

The Mimamsakas and the Advaita School of Vedanta advocate the hypothesis of arthapatti (postulation) as a distinct source of valid knowledge. Arthapatti is the presumption of something for the explanation of a known fact. The word arthapatti goes under various translations as presumption, postulation, supposition, implication and assumption. The definition of arthapatti given by the Advaita School of Vedanta is as follows: arthapatti is the presumption of the ground of explanation through the knowledge of what is to be explained. When a given or perceived fact cannot be explained without some other fact we have to presuppose or postulate the existence of this other fact even though we do not perceive it. A phenomenon is presented to our experience and we find that there is a seeming contradiction involved in it. We try to get over this contradiction by supposing some other fact which explains away the contradiction. The given fact which is to be called upapadya and that which explains it is called the upapadaka. When a particular person named Caitra known to be alive is not found in his house, it is assumed that he must be somewhere outside. When one notices apparent contradiction in various forms of knowledge he presumes something to remove the apparent contradiction in it. What is presumed is said to be a distinct source of knowledge.

According to Sabara, arthapatti is the presumption of an unperceived object on the ground of a fact already seen or heard that cannot be explained without that presumption, for instance, if it is found that Devadatta who is alive is not in the house, the presumption would be that he is somewhere outside as otherwise the fact of his being alive and not in the house could not be explained. Kumarila and Prabhakara both regard arthapatti as a means of knowledge, but they differ in the details regarding the nature of arthapatti. According to Prabhakaras, there is an element of doubt in presumption while Kumarila denies its existence in it. There is doubt, according to Prabhakara, as to the truth of the two perceived facts which cannot be reconciled with each other. The assumption of another fact removes the doubt, and reconciles the apparently inconsistent facts.

The element of doubt, according to Prabhakaras, distinguishes presumption from inference. There is no element of doubt in inference. From the undoubted perception of smoke, we can infer the existence of fire. The sign is free from doubt. But the perceived absence of Devadatta from his house leads to the presumption of his living outside his house only when it has made the fact of his living doubtful. Thus, there is doubt in presumption, while there is no doubt in inference. Presumption retains doubt and cannot be regarded as inference.

But in the opinion of Kumarila there is no doubt in presumption. One perceives the absence of Devadatta from his house. He knows that he is alive. In order to reconcile these two well-known and undoubted facts he assumes that he has gone out of his house. If the knowledge of his living were doubtful, it could not be the sound basis of presumption.

According to the Advaita Vedanta and the Mimamsakas, arthapatti is a separate source of knowledge, because it gives us a knowledge of facts which cannot be otherwise explained. It cannot be explained by perception, since the fact known through arthapatti is not perceived by us. Presumption cannot be regarded as an inference. It cannot be reduced to anvayi inference, because there is no anvaya or agreement in presence between fatness and eating at night as between smoke and fire. Negative concomitance is not admitted by the Advaita Vedanta. The

kevalavyatireki inference based on negative concomitance is nothing but presumption.

The Samkhya Criticism of Arthapatti

The Samkhyaists do not consider arthapatti as an independent means of knowledge. They hold that it is a case of inference. The Yuktidipika explains the opponent's position which states that arthapatti is found in the case where two objects are observed to be invariably together, and after seeing or hearing one of them, there arises the knowledge of the other. Thus, arthapatti is of two kinds: (i) when knowledge of one correlative arises through seeing the other correlative and (ii) when knowledge of one correlative arises through hearing of the other correlative, e.g. in the first case, after seeing a treacle one knows its sweetness. The second case is exemplified as after hearing the word treacle one comes to know its sweetness. According to Yuktidipika the above kinds are known as drstarthapatti and srutarthapatti. The Yuktidipika does not accept arthapatti as an independent means of knowledge. It states that sometimes presumption refers to some object which is misunderstood to be invariably concomitant, e.g. when it is stated that the conjunct object is non-eternal, it connotes that the object which is non-conjunct is eternal. Such a conclusion is not applicable in case of objects like action which is non- conjunct but is still non-eternal. Again where the invariable concomitance is present in that case also arthapatti should not be considered as an independent means of knowledge because in that case arthapatti is reduced to a case of inference.

Vacaspati Misra criticizes the validity of arthapatti and holds that it is a case of inference. In his opinion, absence of an object at a place indicates its presence in some other place, for instance, Caitra is absent in his house therefore the existence of Caitra somewhere outside the house can be inferred through his absence in the house. Hence, presumption can ver well be a case of inference. Mathara, Jayamangala and Gaudapada include arthapatti in inference. Jayanta Bhatta also in his Nyayamanjari does not accept presumption as a distinct source of knowledge. The Yoga system also does not accept arthapatti as an

independent means of valid knowledge on the same ground on which the Samkhyaists reject it.

8.4 ANUPALABDHI (NON-APPREHENSION)

In Indian philosophy, anupalabdhi or abhava (negation) has been discussed in two forms, viz. as ontological reality and as a way of knowing. In the first form, it is mentioned by such words as *asat*, *alika*, *nirupakhya*, *ni svabhava*, etc. and in the second form, it is referred to as *anupalabdhi*. The Bhatta Mimamsakas and the Advaita Vedantins accept *anupalabdhi* as a distinct source of knowledge.

THE MIMAMSA VIEW OF ANUPALABDHI

According to Kumarila Bhatta, *anupalabdhi* is an independent source of knowledge. The Bhattas hold that *abhava* is the non existence of an object in a specific locus and its ascertainment requires an independent means of knowledge called *anupalabdhi*. When one says "there is no jar in this place" one cognizes the absence of the jar. Absence or non-existence (*abhava*) cannot be apprehended by perception, which stands in need of sense-contact with present object which is not possible in this case. Non-existence of the jar is not inferred from its non-perception, because such an inference is possible if one knows that there is universal relation between non apprehension and non-existence. The knowledge of the jar's non-existence is neither derived from comparison, nor from testimony, nor from postulation. Thus, *anupalabdhi* is considered as an independent source of valid knowledge. Again Kumarila states that without accepting *anupalabdhi* or non-apprehension as an independent source of knowledge we cannot solve the conflicts between the results of Vedic and non-Vedic performance. Again the relationship of its part and the whole also cannot be explained.

But all cases of non-apprehension do not prove the non-existence of what is not perceived. A pot which exists in a room is not perceptible due to the darkness of the room. There are atoms, ether, virtues, etc. which are

imperceptible. But we never say that they do not exist. If a thing should have been perceived under certain conditions, then only its non-apprehension under those conditions proves its non-existence. This non-apprehension is the source of the knowledge of nonexistence.

ADVAITA VIEW OF ANUPALABDHI

According to Advaita Vedantins, the particular cause, i.e. the instrument of the cognition of non-existence which is not generated by any knowledge, is called anupalabdhi. The statement that there is no pot on the floor as it is not cognized is an example of anupalabdhi which is an independent means of knowledge through cognition of non-existence. The non-existence of a jar on the ground is known by non apprehension when the jar is removed from the ground, we perceive the ground, the locus of the non-existence of the jar, but we do not perceive the non-existence itself. We know the non-existence by non-apprehension. Though the locus of non existence is perceived, the non-existence itself is not perceived. Non-existence is known by non-apprehension. It can never be known by perception.

Some scholars deny negation as a means of valid knowledge. Others accept negation but not as an additional means of knowledge. The Prabhakara School does not admit the negation as a separate source of knowledge. When we perceive a jar on the ground, we perceive the ground as related to the existence of the jar. But when the jar is absent, we perceive the bare ground or more space. The non-existence of the jar is nothing but the existence of its bare locus, the ground. The knowledge of the sustainer by itself (tanmatradhi) is erroneously called non-apprehension. However, source or means of knowledge is necessary only to establish the knowledge of a certain object. There is no distinctive category to be named as non-existence, so there requires no extra means of valid knowledge termed non-apprehension. The Buddhists hold that non-existence, is directly perceived by the sense organs and no separate source of knowledge is required to apprehend it. The ground and the absence of the pot on the ground is perceived through sense-organs. The Naiyayikas and the Vaisesikas hold that absence is perceptible. Hence,

knowledge about absence can be included under the means of perception, inference or any other positive means of knowledge. So an independent means of knowledge called non-apprehension is not acceptable. The Samkhyaists also do not consider abhava as a distinct source of knowledge. According to Yuktidipika, abhava is the postulation of invariable association of objects of opposite nature, just as presence of fire is known through presence of smoke, absence of fire is through absence of smoke. The postulation of invariable association of objects of opposite nature, however, is a case of arthapatti. But in the case of heated iron ball invariable association of absence of fire and smoke is not applicable. Again the Yuktidipika explains abhava in a different way. When it is said that Caitra is not in the house, it is deduced that he is somewhere outside the house. According to Yuktidipika, it is a case of arthapatti. Since arthapatti is a case of inference, abhava is also a case of inference. Vacaspati, however, considers abhava as a case of perception. According to him, non-apprehension or negation is not a distinct source of knowledge. In the example "absence of pot on the ground" is a particular type of change of ground in the form of bare ground. This bare ground can be cognized directly by perception and there is no need of assuming some additional pramana. Jayamangala and Vijñānabhikṣu also include abhava under perception. Gaudapada includes it in verbal testimony. Mathara includes it under inference. According to Mathara, abhava is of four kinds: anterior, posterior, mutual and absolute. All these are the cases of inference. For example, after observing dried up plants one infers absence of rains.

The Yoga also does not accept anupalabdhi as a distinct means of knowledge on the same ground on which the Samkhya rejects it. The Samkhyaists feel the necessity of admitting anupalabdhi in case of excessive distance, proximity, destruction, suppression, and intermixture with other like-objects. The non-perception of these is due to its subtlety and others but not due to its non-existence, since it is actually apprehended through its effect.

8.5 LETS SUM UP

Upaman, arthapatti and anuplabdhi are regarded as additional sources of pramanas by various schools of Indian Philosophy .

8.6 KEY WORDS

Arthapatti, the fifth of the five means of knowledge (pramana) by which one obtains accurate knowledge of the world. **Arthapatti** is knowledge arrived at through presumption or postulation.

Upamana, the first of the five means of knowledge, or pramanas, that enable a person to have correct cognitions of the world.

Anuplabhi Means 'non-recognition', 'non-perception'. This word refers to the Pramana of Non-perception which consists in the presentative knowledge of negative facts.

8.7 QUESTION OF REVIEW

1. Explain upamana pramana
2. Write a note on Arthapatti
3. Comment on Anuplabhi as pramana

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8.9 ANSWERS CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Upamana according to Various Darsana
 - The Naiyayikas hold that when one finds out the meaning of an unfamiliar word by means of a statement which contains resemblance, it is the resultant consciousness of comparison (upamiti), and the sentence which contains resemblance is the instrumental cause (upamana)Jain

Notes

- The Mimamsakas consider upamana as an independent source of valid knowledge. According to them, knowledge of similarity about an absent object is obtained by the means known as comparison.
 - The Advaitins accept upamana (comparison) as the source of valid knowledge. Upamana is the means of the knowledge of similarity. A person, who has perceived a cow in a town, goes to a forest, and perceives a wild cow. He has an apprehension "this animal is similar to a cow" owing to the intercourse of his eyes with the animal
2. The Mimamsakas and the Advaita School of Vedanta advocate the hypothesis of arthapatti (postulation) as a distinct source of valid knowledge.
- Arthapatti is the presumption of something for the explanation of a known fact.
 - According to the Advaita Vedanta and the Mimamsakas, arthapatti is a separate source of knowledge, because it gives us a knowledge of facts which cannot be otherwise explained.

UNIT 9 SABDA

STRUCTURE

9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Sabda as Understood by Various Schools

9.3 The Nature of Word

9.4 Logical Structure of a Sentence

9.5 Classification of Verbal Testimony

9.6 Let Us Sum Up

9.7 Keywords

9.8 Questions for review

9.9 Suggested Readings

9.10 Answer to Check your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

- learn Sabda as a pramana
- understand the importance of sabda

9.1 INTRODUCTION

ETYMOLOGICALLY the word sabda means sound (dhvani). Sabda literally means verbal knowledge. It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or sentences. In the domain of linguistics again, the word sabda is found to be used to signify a pada (word). A pada, however, consists of certain letter or letters (varna). A letter is undoubtedly a special kind of sound. So even in linguistics sabda keeps in fact its basic character of being a sound. The word sabda again is technically used in the school of Nyaya in the sense of a pramanaavakya. A sentence is undoubtedly a specific collection of words. So, a sentence is inevitably a

Notes

special collection of sounds, i.e. mutually related articulate sounds. This sabda in its basic character of dhvani is a guna (quality) and not a dravya (substance). Being a guna, it must belong to a substratum. The substratum to which sabda belongs is the akasa. This is the view of the Nyaya-Vaisesika. Sabda, the sound, according to them, is the specific or differentiating quality of akasa. Here the Naiyayikas differ from the Mimamsakas, who understand sabda as a dravya. Epistemologically sabda refers to a source of knowledge namely verbal testimony (sabdapramana). It consists in the assertion of a trustworthy person. All verbal knowledge, however, is not valid. A verbal statement is valid when it comes from a person who knows the truth and speaks the truth about anything for the guidance of other persons. But it is a matter of common observation that a sentence or a statement is not sufficient to denote any knowledge of things. Nor the mere perception of words of a sentence does give any knowledge about objects. It is only when one perceives the words and understands their meanings that he acquires the knowledge of a verbal statement. Hence sabda or testimony as a source of valid knowledge consists in understanding the meaning of the statement of a trustworthy person. It is, however, in the context of verbal testimony that sabda has aroused a long discussion in the domain of Indian philosophy. The Samkhya-Yoga admits verbal testimony as an independent means of knowledge in addition to perception and inference.

Verbal testimony consists of verbal statements of people intended to express certain facts. Testimony is an important source of knowledge. A major portion of a person's stock of knowledge is acquired from the oral or written testimony of other persons. The verbal testimony requires an understanding of the meaning conveyed by words without which there is no possibility of verbal communication. The words of a foreign language carry no sense unless their meanings are clear. Thus, verbal testimony depends upon employment of words and understanding of their meanings. In verbal testimony knowledge arises through words, and this fact differentiates it from the other two means of knowledge, i.e. perception and inference. Verbal testimony as a source of knowledge is accepted by the Jainas, Samkhyaists, Vedantins, Mimamsakas as well as

by the Naiyayikas. Verbal testimony is designated in various ways by the different schools of Indian system. Thus, it is sabda, according to the Naiyayikas, sustra to the Mimamsakas, aptavacana to the Samkhyaists, agama to Vedantins, Yoga thinkers and Jainas also while it is nigama to the Bhagavata. Except the Carvakas, the Buddhists and the Vaisesikas all Indian philosophers have recognized verbal testimony as an independent source of knowledge.

9.2 SABDA AS UNDERSTOOD BY VARIOUS SCHOOLS

The Denial of the Validity of the Verbal Testimony by the Carvakas

The Carvakas have not recognized verbal testimony as a source of valid knowledge. The Carvakas reject testimony in general because, according to them, it does not give rise to valid knowledge, and scriptural testimony in particular, because Vedic knowledge in his opinion is "all fraud, a device of the cunning priests to earn their livelihood by cheating the ignorant persons. "They are false because they make statements which are false. They are contradictory because they make statements which are incompatible with one another. A Vedic text declares: "one who desires a son should perform the putresti sacrifice." Yet it is found that a son is not born after the sacrifice has been performed. The text is false. If a text is false with regard to perceptible results, the text with regard to imperceptible results must be false. The three Vedas are inventions of cheats, knaves and demons. The rites and ceremonies enjoined by the Vedas are the inventions of the brahmanas, who cheat the other castes to earn their livelihood. Religion is priestcraft. If a beast killed in a sacrifice goes to heaven, why does not a person sacrifice his own father. The rites are the inventions of imposters for their livelihood.

Again, according to the Carvakas, there is no logical ground or justification for believing in anything simply on the statement of another person because in that case, they think that they would have to believe the utterance of absurd and fictitious objects of any fool. If, however, sabda or testimony is restricted to the statements of a trustworthy person,

it would be, in their opinion, at best included in inference. But in the opinion of the Carvakas, inference cannot be accepted as a valid source of knowledge. Hence, sabda or testimony should not be recognized as a pramāṇi or valid method of knowledge.

Bauddha View of Verbal Testimony

According to the Buddhist logicians, sabda is not an independent source of knowledge, but a form of perception or inference. According to the Bauddhas, there is no relation of a word and an external object referring to it. If there were a relation between them, it would be either identity (tadatmya) or causality (tadutpatti). The relation of identity cannot distinguish a word and its object because these two are quite distinct from each other. A relation of identity is called oneness and if oneness is accepted among the two distinct objects, then cow and horse would be one. Again there is not any relation of causality between a word and an object. Because, between word and object relationship neither a positive relation of agreement nor a negative relation of difference is understood. For example, a pot is produced with a lump of clay, a stick, water, wheel, etc. without the operation of words. If it is assumed that there is a different kind of relation other than identity and causality between a word and an external object, it would follow that a man without knowing the significance of the meaning can get the definite meaning of a word just as a jar is cognized when it is illuminated by a lamp. But this may not happen for a stranger who does not grasp any meaning from the word vahni (fire) when he hears it for the first time. A word denotes an object when the denotation and signification (sanketa) is known. This contention is untenable because it cannot be upheld by any reason, for any signification can be applied to any object. After examining all the factors it is found that there is no justification for the "settlement of a relation between a word and an object meant. The Bauddhas do not accept the validity of the Vedas and do not believe in the Vedic assertion of a seer. The Vedas deal with other worldly objects like heaven, hell,

etc. e.g. the performance of agnihotra sacrifice will lead a person to paradise. The Buddhists rely on objects which are either perceived or inferred. If by sabda it means the statement of trustworthy persons, it is reduced to inference. If, however, it is used to prove that these are actual facts corresponding to a statement, Bauddhas reduce it to perception. So they do not admit. the validity of the verbal testimony.

The Vaisesika View of Verbal Testimony.

The Vaisesikas do not accept the verbal testimony as an independent source of knowledge although they agree with the Naiyayikas and the Bhattas on the validity of the verbal testimony. The Vaisesikas include verbal testimony within inference. Prasastapada says that sabda and other sources of knowledge belong to inference because these sources involve invariable coherence with a perception free from doubt. Sridhara says that there is no natural relation between word and its object, i.e. the meaning of the words is but conventional in origin. Verbal testimony is an inference because we understand the meaning only through coherence, as smoke indicates fire in the hill. According to the Vaisesikas, sabda as a form of knowledge is to be included in inference, since the ground of our knowledge is the same in both. Just as in inference one knows an unperceived object from the perception of something which is related to it, so in sabda from the perception of words one knows the objects which are unperceived but related to the words perceived by us.

JAINA VIEW OF VERBAL TESTIMONY

In the Jaina system, sabda or verbal testimony is recognized as a separate pramana or source of knowledge. It consists in the knowledge derived from words which, when properly understood, express real objects and are not inconsistent with the evidence of perception. It is called laukika or secular testimony when the words come from an ordinary reliable person of the world. It is called sastraja or scriptural testimony when it proceeds from a liberated person of extraordinary powers and knowledge and relates to supersensible realities. The Mimamsakas and Vedantins

give the status of this pramana primarily to the Vedas. Hence, in these schools sabdapramana or Verbal testimony is known sastra, sruti and agama also.

MIMAMSA VIEW OF VERBAL TESTIMONY

According to the Mimamsakas sabda as a pramana consists in the true knowledge of objects, derived from the understanding of the meaning of a sentence. It is called pauruseya or personal when constituted by the words of trustworthy persons, and apauruseya or impersonal when constituted by the words of the Vedas. The Prabhakara School of the Mimamsa, however, takes sabda to mean only vaidika or scriptural testimony about the existence of supersensuous realities.

VEDANTA VIEW OF VERBAL TESTIMONY

According to the Vedantists, sabda or agama as a source of valid knowledge consists in sentences or propositions which assert a certain relation between things that is not contradicted in any way. In the Samkhya-Yoga system too, we find a recognition of sabda or verbal testimony as a valid method of knowledge. Yet with some of the Samkhyas, we directly find sabdapramana being named as aptavacana.

The Mimamsakas, Naiyayikas and Vaiyakaranas have a discord among themselves regarding the nature of sabda. Kumarila Bhatta recognizes sabda as eternal and all-pervading substance (dravya). Prabhakara Misra also accepts eternity of sabda. According to him, all sounds heard are in the shape of some letters. In the view of the Prabhakaras, it is the letter that is the direct cause of verbal comprehension, and neither perception nor inference can give any idea of the sabda as apart from its constituent letters. The grammarians explain the eternity of sabda in a different way. According to them, "word" is successive sounds of a series called letters. A series of such letter sounds manifests one inarticulate sound essence called sphota. This sphota is an eternal essence that exists corresponding to every word. The Naiyayikas do not accept the eternity of sabda. Both the Mimamsakas and the Naiyayikas oppose the theory of sphota of the grammarians.

NYAYA VIEW OF VERBAL TESTIMONY

Gautama in his Nyaya philosophy defines verbal testimony as the statement of a reliable person. The reliability of a person making a statement is a condition ensuring the validity of the knowledge derived in this way. Gautama defines sabdapramāṇa as aptapodeśa. This aptapodeśa means a communication from or assertion of a trustworthy person. Manu understands upadeśa only in the sense of an instructive statement or assertion. From the bhāṣya of Vatsyayana it is understood that only the Prācīna Naiyāyikas understood this upadeśa in the sense of an instructive assertion. But if Gautama's upadeśa is understood in the sense of an instruction, all non-instructive statements or assertions uttered by the trusted person (aptas) will not obtain the status of the sabdapramāṇa. It will limit the scope of sabda very much. Probably on this account, some Navya Naiyāyikas used the word vākya in place of the word upadeśa in the context of defining sabda. They did it only to widen the scope of sabdapramāṇa. So from this definition, it is clear that the basic character of sabdapramāṇa is a sentence instructive or non-instructive, uttered or used by an aptapuruṣa (trustworthy person). The Mimāṃsakas, however, do not accept it for the following reason: The Nyaya definition presupposes that all verbal statements are made by persons. But according to them, Vedic statements are not made by any person. According to Nyaya, Vedic statements are statements of God who is a supernatural person. But according to the Mimāṃsakas, there is no God and hence Vedic statements are impersonal and thus hold the Nyaya definition too narrow. According to Śaṅkara, verbal testimony is the knowledge of an object which is not perceived by a sense-organ, but is the result of knowledge of words. Kumarila Bhaṭṭa defines verbal testimony as a statement which produces in the mind of the hearer, who knows the meaning of words, a knowledge of facts that lie beyond the range of his perception. The Prabhakaras following Śaṅkara call sabdapramāṇa as sastrapramāṇa (scriptural word). Prabhakara while commenting on the Sabarabhāṣya holds that the term sūtra applies to the Vedic injunctive sentences (vidhi) only which alone bear upon verbal

testimony. Thus, according to the Prabhakaras it is only the Vedic sentence that can be called sabdapramana. This sutra or sabdapramana is, in the view of the Prabhakaras, the knowledge acquired regarding objects that are outside the scope of perception by way of knowing the words that constitute the sentence concerned.

Check your Progress

1. Explain Sabda and Charvaka's Critique
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SAMKHYA-YOGA VIEW OF VERBAL TESTIMONY

It may be stated that in Samkhya philosophy, Samkhyakarika is the earliest work to define verbal testimony. Its definition is precise but meaningful. The Samkhyakarika defines verbal testimony as the statement (sruti) of the reliable (apta). The author of the Samkhyakarika tries to satisfy both the sections of the Samkhyists namely atheists and theists, by the very definition of verbal testimony. From the atheist standpoint it may be explained as words which convey that uncontradicted knowledge is authentic. The compound word aptasruti may mean the words derived from reliable persons are trustworthy. Isvarkrnsna does not explain the word aptasruti himself, but later on it was interpreted by his successor.

Among the commentators on the Samkhyakarika, Gaudapada is the earliest one. He explains the karika in a different manner. According to Gaudapada, aptas are the speakers, but figuratively it stands for the words written by them, and sruti means the Vedas. The words of the trustworthy persons like the creator of the world - Brahma and sages of his status are reliable. He has not discussed whether the Vedas are the works of God or eternal. He simply accepts sruti as the authoritative source of knowledge.

Mathara does not expound the compound word aptasruti. But his manner of explanation indicates that the expounding sentence should be like this: apta -aptebhyaagatani sastrani srutisca. He states the qualification of an

apta. The persons who are free and never go against the views of the Vedas are aptas. According to him, the Vedas are the main source of true knowledge. The works of the followers of the Vedas as qualified by positive and negative virtues mentioned before are also the source of true knowledge. Thus, he follows Gaudapada to a great extent. The concept of an apta is very essential to the concept of sabdapramana or verbal testimony. Gautama in his Nyaya philosophy does not explain the term apta. But the bhasyakara explains the term. According to him, an apta is one who has directly perceived the true nature of things and who is prompted to communicate the properly experienced ideas. Perception of objects may be termed apti. As he is prompted to communicate by that very apti he is called an apta. Thus, this definition of the term apta holds good equally with seers, Aryas and even Mlecchas. Sometimes, even thieves and decoits may speak the truth. According to Visvanatha, apta is one who possesses a perfect knowledge in respect of the meaning of the sentence of the context.

AnnambhaHa explains the term apta as a truthful speaker, i.e. who speaks about the things as they really are. Nagesa in his Paramalaghumanjusa refers to Patanjali, the author of the Carakasamhita, according to whom apta is one who comes to be fully aware of something through experience and who does not make false or distorted version of own experience even out of any passion. According to Jayanta Bhatta, an apta should be able to communicate adequately. He explains the point of this criterion, by saying that a dumb person cannot be an apta even though he possesses the relevant knowledge, for he lacks in the ability for adequate communication. He can of course communicate through gestures but it can hardly be counted as adequate communication. However, this is too general a requirement, for one may be very good at communication and yet be a villain, i.e. be far from an apta.

Now the question arises as to how do we know the person who is apta. To this question, the answer is that a person who possesses expert and relevant knowledge in the given area can be known mostly by past experience about the given person.

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The Yuktidipika states that the word *tiptavacana* of the *Samkhyakarika* may mean reliable statement. The statements may be of two kinds: (i) occurring in the Vedas, and (ii) uttered by some worldly authority. The Yuktidipika states that the definition applies to both the kinds of statements. To derive the sense denoting both the above kinds from a single statement of the *Samkhyakarika*, the Yuktidipika holds that it is a case of *ekasesa* compound, i.e. one component factor which is similar to the next one is dropped according to the rule of grammar. The first denotes the Vedas which are not a creation of human beings. The term *aptasruti* occurring second time refers to the statements of the *Smrtis*, the argumentation, historical records, *Vedangas*, *Puranas* and those proficient in many arts but free from attachment, aversion, etc. According to *Vacaspati Misra*, the term *apta* is used in the definition to exclude the source books of the *Bauddhas*, the *Jainas* and the *Carvakas* which are not actually sacred literature from the domain of the *Sruti* literature. *Vacaspati Misra* further states that *aptasruti* as a *pramna* does not refer to the wording but the knowledge arising out of it.

The *Yogasutra* uses a new term namely *agama* instead of *sruti*. *Vyasadeva* the commentator of the *Yogasutra* brings out clearly the significance of the term *agama*. The authoritative person communicates his knowledge to others by words.

These words constitute an authentic work. According to *Vyasadeva*, all the trustworthy persons cannot directly know all matters related to their works. All matters cannot be perceived. Some matters are perceived but other transcendental matters or substances are only inferred. All the commentators of *Samkhyakarika* agree on this point. According to *Vacaspati Misra* and *Vijnanabhiksu*, *Veda* is the absolute authority and God is the author of the Vedas. In the view of *Vacaspati*, a reliable person is one who is endowed with the realization of object, piety and efficiency of organs. The *Smrtis* of *Manu*, etc. are reliable because the original speaker there is God. According to *Vijnanabhiku* a reliable person is one who is devoid of defects like confusion, negligence, desire for selfish gain and inefficiency of organs. According to *Vacaspati Misra* verbal testimony is restricted to the Vedas only. According to him,

statements of worldly authority are not included in verbal testimony. The statements of the Puranas and Smritis are authoritative not because of their authors but because they are based upon the Vedas. The founder of Samkhya philosophy is Kapila, and Hiranyagarbha is the founder of Yoga philosophy, who are human beings only. Now the question naturally arises as to how can these systems be taken as authoritative and their founders as lipta or reliable. On this point Vacaspati Misra replies that Samkhya philosophy is an interpretation of the Vedas. This philosophy is not an imagination of Kapila but it is the result of Sruti texts which Kapila had memorized in the earlier cycle of creation. He had remembrance of the Sruti read in earlier birth just as a person has the memory of knowledge of earlier day after getting up from deep slumber the next day. He quotes the authority of Jaigisavya in the Mahabharata who narrates in his discussion with Atavya the memory of his past ten births. In this way Samkhya is rooted in the Vedas and is, therefore, authoritative. According to Vacaspati Misra the statements of the Vedas are valid because these are not composed by any worldly authority, and therefore faultless.

The Samkhya-sutra discusses elaborately about the noneternality of the Vedas. The Vedas are not eternal because they themselves speak of their production. The Vedas are composed by human beings and as these are composed by human beings these are non-eternal, because all created objects are non-eternal. Neither the liberated nor the unliberated person is the author of the Vedas. The unliberated man is not omniscient and hence cannot be the author of the Vedas. Again a liberated man also cannot be the author of the Vedas because he is indifferent to everything by his very nature. The Isvara cannot be the author of the Vedas because the existence of Isvara is not established. The Samkhya-sutra further states that the Vedas being free from human agency does not mean its eternality. The case may be like that of sprout, etc. which are not created by any human being, but are non-eternal in nature.

The Mimamsakas deny the existence of God as the creator of the universe since every creator must be corporeal. They do not agree on this point that God is the author of the Vedas. In their opinion the Vedas are

eternal. On the other hand the Samkhyasutra states that the Vedas came out of the self-born spontaneously without any effort or without giving thought to create them. The Carvakas, the Buddhists and the Jainas challenge the trustworthiness of the Vedas. Jayanta Bhatta and Udayana, the stalwarts of the Naiyayikas, establish the authority of the Vedas. According to the Naiyayikas, the authority of the Vedas can only be established if they are the works of God.

9.3 THE NATURE OF WORD

The word named pada, as grammarians state, technically means an inflected word or the stem of a noun in the middle cases and before some taddhitas. But the Naiyayikas and the Mimamsakas opine that sound having capability to express the meaning of the object is termed as word or pada. The function of such a word is associated with its meaning as well. A statement, as we are concerned, is a cluster of words or padas arranged in a certain way. A word, again, is a group of letters arranged in a settled order to express meaning. Sometimes a mere word is loosely regarded as pada. Therefore, the definition of 'word' covers three aspects: sound, letters and meaning conveyed. In the first aspect, letters and meaning are not involved, sound is a physical phenomenon. It is the attribute of an intangible and all-pervading substance called akasa or the ether. Sound is a product of the conjunction of two bodies or of the disjunction of the parts of one composite body. It is, therefore, non-eternal or subject to origin and cessation in time. The Mimamsakas, however, hold that sound is eternal since it is not produced, but only manifested by the contact of two bodies. Regarding the eternality of the word, the Mimamsakas and the Naiyayikas differ from one another. The Mimamsakas uphold the theory of the eternality of the word and the Naiyayikas regard the word as non-eternal. The Mimamsakas maintain that words are manifested in the form of sounds by human effort; they are not created by any one. The Naiyayikas on the other hand are of the view that words do not exist before their production by human effort, nor there exists any veil which covers them.

Sound is of two kinds, namely dhvani and varna. A dhvani is an inarticulate sound, e.g. the sound of a bell or a drum. It has no fixed nature of its own, nor any fixed relation to other like sounds. On the other hand, varna is a sound produced by the action of the vocal organ of human beings, e.g. the alphabet. Varna is a letter which has a fixed character and a definite place in the alphabet of any language.

In the second aspect of the definition of word, it can be said that a word is a group of varnas or letters arranged in a certain fixed order. The essential nature of a word lies in its meaning. The meaning of a word is known only when its relation with its meaning is known. The relation between word and its meaning is that of expresser and 'expressed. There is power of expression in word and that of being expressed in meaning.

Aniruddha in his Samkhyasutravrtti states that acceptance of such a relation implies rejection of the relation of identity between word and its meaning. Otherwise the seeing of an object would imply the seeing of word, and mouth would have been burnt by uttering the word 'fire.

Vacaspati Misra, alike the followers of Prabhakara School of Purva Mimamsa, holds that such a relation is known through inferring it by observing that a person is prompted to a particular activity after hearing particular words. The observer infers from such a relation between word and the object involved in the activity performed. This process is popularly known as vrddhavyavahara. The Samkhyasutra states that the relation between a word and its meaning is determined by three means. These according to its commentators are: information from the reliable person (aptapodesa), the usage of the old men (vrddhavyavahara) and association with the word already known (prasiddhapadasamanadhikarana).

According to the Naiyayikas, there are three kinds of meaning of a word, namely, abhidhti, paribhasa and laksna. By abhidhti is meant the primary meaning of a word. It is also called sakyartha, vacyartha and mukhyartha. The meaning called up by the sakti or inherent potency of a word is its abhidhti or sakyiirtha, i.e. primary meaning. The word which possesses such a meaning is called sakta or vacaka word. When sanketa or the direct relation between a word and its meaning is non eternal or

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changeable, it is called paribhasa. By laksana is meant the secondary meaning of a word. It is the indirect or implied meaning in which a word with its direct or primary meaning does not consist with other words. When it is said that the house is on the Ganges, the word 'Ganges' is taken not in its primary meaning of the current of the river but in the secondary meaning of "the bank of the Ganges." The rhetoricians recognize another kind of meaning of words, namely, vyanjana. This stands for such meanings of words as are neither directly nor indirectly related to them, but only suggested by them. Thus, the sentence "the house is on the Ganges" means that the house is cool and sacred. This is the suggested meaning. Words are divided into four kinds namely, yaugika, ru4ha, yoga-rudha and yaugika-rudha.

Now it could be discussed what does a word signify or refer to. According to the Samkhyas a word refers to the particular (vyakti). By an individual is meant a composite material body possessing specific properties. It is a substance which has a limited dimension and may have such qualities as smell, taste, colour, touch, etc. It is manifested and open to sense perception, e.g. in the expression "that cow stands" mean the individual called cow. According to the Jainas a word denotes the particular form (akrti). The form (akrti) of a thing consists in the particular arrangement of its component parts and the constituent particles of those parts. In the opinion of the Mimamsakas and the Advaitins a word signifies universality (jati). The universality or jati is the basis of similar cognitions with regard to different individuals. According to the old Naiyayikas, a word refers to all the three - vyakti, akrti and jati. For the later Naiyayikas the referent is the particular characterized by the universal, whereas the grammarians hold both the particular and the universal as the referent. It may be said that the Samkhyas, like the Mimamsakas, hold that the relation between the word and the object denoted is learnt from elders and is natural, e.g. the child knows the denotative relation with reference to the object which is in operation, and the activity and desisting from activity are possible in case of an individual object only. So, according to Samkhya, a word denotes a vyakti. However, in the system of Yoga, a word denotes

generality to which particularity lies as subordinate in forming the nature of an object and it is exemplified by stating that the referent of a word is known to the child by considering the entire sentence.

The way of conveying the meaning of a particular word can be discussed based upon the Samkhya-Yoga view. According to Samkhya-Yoga the meaning of a word is understood by the buddhi's act of taking the form of an object. The form is not presented by the organ of sense. The organ of sense involved is ear which has sound as its object, but does not reveal the object denoted. Speaker's organ of speech also produces sound only and cannot form the image of the object denoted in listener's buddhi. The Yogabhasa offers a solution on conveyance of meaning of word in the light of the theory of sphota, without mentioning it by name: the meaning is conveyed through a word. The word is not the sound itself. It is revealed by sounds and is the meaning-bearing unit. One apprehends a word after listening to the phonemes separately when collected together in succession. Though the letters uttered earlier to the completing one help in revealing that word, the form of the word is not completed without last letter. For example, after hearing each letter like "go" and "au" one gets the idea of their being a single unit, and comprehends them as a single word.

9.4 LOGICAL STRUCTURE OF A SENTENCE

Authority, as we have seen, gives knowledge about certain things through the understanding of the meaning of a sentence, either spoken or written by some authoritative person. The knowledge deduced from the Vedic statement is also authoritative but it is not connected with human being on Supreme Bliss. But any single word of a sentence cannot imply the complete sense. A sentence is a combination of words having a certain meaning. Any combination of words, however, does not make a significant sentence. The construction of an intelligible sentence must conform to four conditions. These are: akanksa, yogyata, sannidhi and tatparya. Words mutually having the link of expectation, semantical

suitability, contiguity and purport express their meaning. It is said that expectancy, compatibility and contiguity have been regarded as accessory causes in verbal understanding. Some later logicians add the fourth one named purport to make a sentence.

EXPECTANCY

The words must be such that the expectancy set up by each is satisfied by the others. By expectancy is meant those words of a sentence by which they expect or imply one another. Generally speaking, a word like "cow," "horse," "man," "elephant" cannot by itself convey a complete meaning. It has to be brought into relation with other words to express a full judgement. When one hears the word bring he at once asks "what"? The verb "bring" requires some other words denoting some object or objects, e.g. "the cow." So expectancy is the mutual need that the words of a statement have for one another in order to express a complete sense. This need or requirement is called akanksa or mutual expectancy.

COMPATIBILITY

The second condition of the combination of words in a statement is their mutual fitness and in short, compatibility. It is also called suitability. A string of words may be syntactically well-formed but may not constitute a meaningful statement. It requires compatibility. It consists in the absence of contradiction in the relation of objects denoted by a statement. In other words, the relation of one meaning with the meaning of another word or words is called compatibility. So when the meaning of a statement is contradicted, there is no compatibility between its constituent words. The statement "moisten with fire" is faulty of unfitness, since there is a contradiction between "fire" and "moistening" and so in this case there is no verbal understanding.

CONTIGUITY

Contiguity is the third condition of verbal knowledge. It consists in the juxtaposition or proximity between the different words of statement and it merely requires that there is no long gap between the uttering or

writing together of the words making up the statement. Spoken words when separated by long interval of time cannot make a statement. Similarly written words cannot form a statement when they are separated by long intervals of space. Thus, absence of contiguity is of two kinds, not being near and not being signified by words. The words "bring a cow" will not construct a statement when the utterance spreads over several days or writing takes several pages, even though they have the first two requirements, expectancy and compatibility. Hence, it can be concluded that contiguity is understanding the meaning created by words without interruption.

PURPORT

Some later logicians add a fourth requirement, that a string of words must be uttered with intent to communicate a proposition and that it is the nature of this intention or purport which unequivocally identifies the meanings of the constituent words. Purport as a condition of verbal knowledge stands for the meaning intended to be conveyed by a sentence. A word may mean different things in different cases. Whether it means this or that thing in a particular case depends on the intention of the person who uses the word. Thus, when a man is asked to bring *saindhava*, he is at a loss to understand whether he is told to bring salt or a horse, for the word means both. This can be ascertained only if one knows the intention of the speaker. Hence, the understanding of a sentence depends on the understanding of its purport or intended meaning. In the case of ordinary sentences used by common people one may ascertain their purport from the context in which they are employed. In case of understanding the hymns of the Vedas one takes the assistance of the logical rules of interpretation systematized by the Mimamsakas.

With regard to the importance of purport as a condition of verbal knowledge there is much difference of opinion among Indian philosophers. Some hold that a definite knowledge of the purport or the intended meaning is an essential condition of verbal knowledge. Others think that purport is necessary only in the case of equivocal terms and ambiguous expressions having two or more possible meanings. Others

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again think that purport is not to be admitted as a separate condition of verbal knowledge, but should be included within the first condition of akanksa or syntactic expectation.

According to the Samkhyas a statement is a sentence composed of words arranged in a certain way. A word is a sign which denotes something (vacaka) and its meaning is the thing denoted by it (vacya). To understand a sentence the knowledge of the meaning of the words which comprise it is essential. The knowledge of the meanings of the words can be had in eight different ways: (a) Knowledge of verbs, indeclinables, suffixes, compounds, etc. can be had from grammar, i.e. vyakarana. Thus, the sakti (meaning) of the root bhū is "to exist," the meaning of the root gam is "to go." The indeclinable ca is used in the sense of "and." The suffixes su, au, jas, etc. are used to denote a word in their respective ways. (b) Knowledge of similarity can be obtained through comparison, i.e. upamana, e.g. a gavaya is similar to that of a cow. (c) Knowledge of synonymous terms, etc. can be gathered by consulting a dictionary, i.e. a kosa. Thus Visnu Narayana, Krsna, Radhakanta, etc. are all the different names of the Lord Vishnu (d) The example of knowledge derived from aptavakya is, when a reliable person utters that pika means "a cuckoo," the listener gathers the knowledge of cuckoo from the word pika. (e) The example of the knowledge of vyakarana is that it is laid down in the siistra - yavamayacarubhavati. Now what is the meaning of the word yava? Different people give different definitions. Naturally doubt arises among the common people as to the clear conception of the word yava. To remove the doubt one has to depend on sastra then. It is laid down in the sastra that when all the corns are decayed yava remains fresh. (f) To express the meaning of a word by another word is called vivarana. Thus, pacati means pakam karoti. So we can convert the English word cook to Sanskrit pacati and pakam karoti. Both are correct. (g) siddhapada sannidhya means the knowledge of a word which is very near to a famous word, i.e. a siddhapada. Thus, for example, when somebody says "iha sahakara tarau madhuram rauti pika" Sahakara means "a mango tree." So by the word pika, it is to be understood as cuckoo because there is natural relation of cuckoo with that of a mango tree. (h)

Vrddhavyavahara means usage of an elderly people, some knowledge which one can derive from the usage of superiors.

9.5 CLASSIFICATION OF VERBAL TESTIMONY

There are two kinds of verbal testimony, human and transhuman. This division is made by the Mimamsakas and the Naiyayikas. According to Vatsyayana, verbal knowledge is of two kinds, namely drstrtha or that relating to perceptible objects and adrstrtha or that relating to imperceptible objects. The first is limited to the ordinary sensible objects of this world, while the second is related to the supersensible objects of this world which cannot be known by perception. Under the first head we are to include the trustworthy assertions of ordinary persons, the saints and the scriptures. Thus, the evidence given by witnesses in law courts, the scriptural injunctions about certain rites for rainfall, the knowledge of plants that we get from a reliable cultivator are illustrations of drstartha sabda. The second includes the trustworthy assertions of saints, prophets and the scriptures as they bear on supersensible realities. Thus, the scientist's assertions about atoms, ether, the scriptural texts on God, heaven, future life are the illustrations of adrstartha sabda. Both these divisions are again sub-divided into two - namely, revealed and perspective. Authority may either give information as to the existence of objects or give direction for the performance of some action. The former indicates revealed and the latter denotes the perspective. The perspective again can be brought under two heads, namely, instinctive and exemplary. The instruction runs like this, "Do this in this way." As for human example "Ravi is fed sali rice with ghee and milk porridge." The transhuman example is, "Create paradise by the darsapuramasa sacrifices by obeying the process of the prayaja, avaghata and the like. The exemplary is meant "Do this like this." As for human instance, Sutapa is to be fed in the similar way as Ravi is. The transhuman instance is "Rouse divine splendour by the solar sacrifice as by Agneya."

The Mimamsakas are interested in the transhuman authority of the Vedas and that is because the Vedas give directions for performing the sacrificial rites. The Vedas are eternal, since the words of which they are composed are eternal. The relation of word and its meaning is natural and not produced by convention. In addition to the transhuman Vedic authority, the statement of a reliable man also is accepted by the Bhattas as a valid source of knowledge.

Again, according to the later Naiyayikas there are two kinds of sabda or verbal testimony - namely, vaidika or the scriptural and laukika or the secular. The Vedas are created by God and are, therefore, valid on all points. Vaidika or scriptural testimony is thus perfect and infallible by its very nature. As distinguished from this, laukika or secular testimony is not all valid. It is the testimony of human beings and may, therefore, be true or false. Of laukika testimony, only that which proceeds from trustworthy persons is valid but not the rest.

In conclusion, it can be said that verbal testimony as a source of knowledge is applied by all human beings in their day-to-day dealing. If one does not believe in the validity of the utterances of one's teachers and experienced persons, one will never be able to learn anything from elder's experiences. It is, of course, true that on many occasions what is learnt from a so-called reliable person turns out to be false, but this fact should not minimize the importance of verbal testimony as a source of learning in human life

9.6 LETS SUM UP

IT has already been discussed that the expounders of Samkhya-Yoga system of thought accept only perception, inference and verbal testimony as the means of valid knowledge. But for this reason one should not firmly believe that there are only three pramanas and nothing else. Besides the above mentioned three pramanas, there are other sources of knowledge which find their place in different systems of philosophy.

9.7 KEY WORDS

Sabda, : verbal testimony as a means of obtaining knowledge.

Dhvani, meaning sound, or resonance is the "soul" or "essence"..

Sannidhi : semantic fitness

akanksha : Syntactic expectancy

9.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Bring out the significane of Sabda pramana
2. Write a note on criticisms of sabda Pramana

9.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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9.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- Sabda literally means verbal knowledge. It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or sentences.
- Verbal testimony as a source of knowledge is accepted by the Jainas, Samkhyaists, Vedantins, Mimamsakas as well as by the Naiyayikas.
- The Carvakas have not recognized verbal testimony as a source of valid knowledge. The Carvakas reject testimony in general because, according to them, it does not give rise to valid knowledge, and scriptural testimony in particular, because Vedic knowledge in his opinion is "all fraud, a device of the cunning priests to earn their livelihood by cheating the ignorant persons

UNIT 10 THE DEBATE ABOUT KNOWLEDGE: SAVISAYATVA,SAKARATVA, SVAPRAKASTVA, PARAPRAKASTVA

STRUCTURE

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Conception-free Awareness: Gangesa

10.3 Let Us Sum Up

10.4 Keywords

10.5 Questions for review

10.6 Suggested Readings

10.7 Answer to check your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the Sakartva
- know what is Svaprakastva
- understand paraprakastva

10.1 INTRODUCTION

According to the Buddhist idealist, there is no 'external' object, i.e. there is no inner-outer or external-internal dichotomy. Just as each material body has a recognizable form by which it is distinguishable and identifiable, each awareness, under this view, has likewise a form (akara.) by which it is distinguishable and identifiable. This form is in each case the form of the apprehensible, i.e. what is apprehended by the awareness, and what thereby distinguishes itself from the

apprehension, viz. the awareness itself. It is self-awareness which combines them. It is the inherent tendency (anadivasana) of us, humans, to externalize the form of the apprehensible, such as blue, and thereby falsely introduce the inner-outer dichotomy. In this view, an awareness of blue is distinguished from an awareness of yellow by such forms ('blue' and 'yellow') as they have. The test of truth in this view lies in the coherence of the awareness with the rest, its capability as well as success. This view is accordingly called sakara-vijnana-naya, awareness-with-a-form' view. (It is, however, difficult to say whether Dharmakirti was originator of this view. Nyaya tradition ascribes it to Dharmakirti.) In any case, Udayana says that in this view there is not much point in regarding the conception-free perception as indubitable and the conception as not so. For, by Dharmakirti's own admission, both cases of awareness will be indubitable as regards their self-awareness.

It may be argued that this is an epistemological consideration, and the Buddhist is not concerned here with an idealistic metaphysic. An external reality may be accepted here. If such an external reality is accepted, then Udayana argues, the awareness, conceptual or otherwise, cannot have a form intrinsic to itself. Whatever forms (blue, yellow, firehood, etc.) it appears to have they must belong to the external reality. The form of the apprehensible, say a shared character like firehood, flashes through a conception-loaded awareness; it cannot belong to the awareness itself, for the awareness is only a unique occurrence. The shared character then should belong elsewhere, not to the awareness. If the Buddhist says that like externality, the property of having a shared character is also what is falsely attributed to the object by the conception-loaded awareness, then Udayana comes back to his previous argument: unless the unique particular that is purportedly grasped by the conception-free awareness is also grasped by the conception-loaded awareness, there is no possibility of attributing anything to such a particular. If the conception-loaded awareness refers to a fictional object as mentioned by 'this' in 'This is fire', to which attribution would be made, then Udayana says that such an attribution would be a fortiori impossible. For, as he has already said, there cannot be attribution (falsely) of one fictional object to another. A false attribution must be of a (fictional) property to where it does not belong (the non-

fictional), to that with which it is incompatible. But two fictions are supposed to be compatible with each other. And if they are compatible in this way, the situation would lack an essential character that a false attribution must have.

The Buddhist may further claim that if two cases of conception-loaded awareness (as two distinct episodes) seemingly agree as regards their forms, we call that form to be the shared character, such as firehood. Such a shared character is obviously due to a false agreement of forms belonging to awareness. On this ground the conception-loaded awareness is said to be a misrepresentation. Udayana answers that it would be impossible for us to find even such a seeming agreement, if the 'forms' of awareness are identical with the awareness itself. If two different cases of awareness arise, their two 'forms' cannot appear as non-distinct, for they have already arisen as two distinct events. One may still say that the form 'fire' may be identical with the awareness 'This is fire', but still it is attributed to the external object. And hence as ascripts or attributions vaguely expressed as 'It is fire' in both cases, the two forms may agree, although the individual cases of awareness where they belong may be different as episodes. Udayana says in reply that if the form expressed as 'fire' ('... is a fire') is cognized as identical with the awareness, then it is difficult to see how externality would also be attributable to it. In other words, if the intimate (identical) relation of the form (expressed as 'It is fire') with the awareness itself is known by 'self-awareness', the form, i.e. the concept firehood, cannot be externalized any more even by mistake.

The problem before the Buddhist is to make sure at first that the concept firehood is not different from, but rather an integral part of, the conception-loaded awareness, and at the same time make it possible for it to be externalized (in fact to make it seem to belong to the external). For in that way he can maintain his thesis that the conception-loaded awareness is both dubitable and corrigible, while pure perception is not so. But Udayana says that this cannot be done. For you cannot have a cake and eat it at the same time. If the concept firehood is an integral part of (identical with) the conceptual awareness, then it must be known to be so in the self-awareness of the conceptual awareness. This type of self-awareness is admitted by the Buddhist. But then the concept

cannot be externalized or falsely attributed to the external. If this false attribution of the concept, firehood, is not possible, then, Udayana claims, our conception-loaded awareness, which grasps firehood even internal to it, would be as much indubitable and incorrigible as the pure perception is. The Buddhist claims that the mistake in the conceptual awareness lies in its revealing the non-existent objects such as firehood as existent. Udayana says that the truth of the conceptual awareness, in this context, would lie in the fact that it reveals the object as it is, i.e. identical with the awareness, as the Buddhist claims. Whether that object i.e. firehood exists or not is a separate question. Even if firehood is only an integral part of the awareness, and if the awareness reveals it as such, we cannot doubt the truth of the awareness. Therefore, the conception-loaded awareness can be both true and born out of the capacity of the senses and objects, just as the conception-free awareness is. Hence its perceptual character cannot be denied. In short Dharmakirti's way out is to say that such conceptual awareness is true in so far as its self-awareness is concerned. But Udayana's counter-claim is that if such an awareness is true its perceptual character cannot be denied. For Udayana, we may note, there is no self-awareness of awareness, only another (inward perceptual) awareness of an awareness.

Check your progress-1

Buddhist View of Sakaratva

10.2 CONCEPTION-FREE AWARENESS: GANGESA

The Buddhist's claim about the existence of a conception-free awareness, awareness of a completely 'colourless' raw datum, has been called into question. In the Navya-Nyaya school doubts were raised as regards the actual occurrence of a pre-linguistic, preconceptual, pre-construction perception - on which the entire Buddhist epistemological principle as well as much of the old Nyaya epistemology depended. We should remember that it is not the occurrence of a pure sense-perception that is being doubted, nor the physical concomitant of a sensory awareness that

is in dispute here. What is in dispute is the awareness-hood of the so-called conception-free, pre-linguistic, sensation. The Buddhist, it may be recalled, wants the pure sensation to be cognitive and at the same time pre-linguistic and conception-free in character. In raising doubts about the possibility of such a cognitive event, Navya-Nyaya revived some of the old arguments of Bhartrhari according to whom each cognitive episode is 'inter-shot' irresistibly with concept or word or what he called *abda-bhavana*. The plausibility of such a doubt {raised in Navya-Nyaya} seems clear when we admit, for example, that perception without conception, is mute and hence useless. The Buddhist conception of a conception-free perception has similarly to be mute and hence useless. For it is admitted by all parties alike that our speech-behaviour (*vyavahiira*), i.e. our linguistic expression of the cognitive event, arises only from the conception-loaded awareness. Even an object-identification by a proper name for the Buddhist, a conception, an imaginative addition (*yojana*) to the pure object.

- Our distinction between pure sensation and conception-loaded awareness need not be conflated with certain parallel problems of distinguishing between the immediate and the mediate, the direct and the indirect forms of perception usually current in Western philosophical writings. For obviously the dispute between the Nyaya and the Buddhist on this point has different moorings.
- Can there be awareness of the so-called conception-free awareness? The Buddhist has claimed that this conception-free awareness is necessarily self-aware. (This is also why it has to be distinguished from Dretske's non-epistemic seeing; see above.) This is, further, the ground for calling the conception-free event an awareness, a cognitive event. But this argument is patently circular. The essential mark of awareness-hood is the presence of self-awareness. For just as one can question the occurrence of the awareness at that stage, one can equally question the occurrence of the self-awareness. Can this episode be recalled in memory? For admittedly the purity of the datum of such conception-free grasp is unrepeatable. But could I remember it happening? It is difficult to answer this question clearly. For we cannot remember something which has not even been identified with a name. If the

minimal object-identification of the datum, the verbal association (yojana) of the datum with the name, is denied in our conception-free perception, then we cannot recall it. Therefore, the strictly conception-free grasp (of the Buddhist) must be compromised to some extent. It must be tinged with the minimal conception in order for it to be 'tinged with awareness'. In other words, where the purely physical reaction, i.e. the sensation, is impregnated with a minimal conception (and potentially with a word), it becomes a 'usable' (cf. vyavaharya) and useful awareness.

- Guided mainly by such considerations, Navya-Nyaya tries to review the matter in a different way. Roughly, Navya-Nyaya formulates two principles which explain the nature of our awareness in a somewhat clearer fashion. First, whenever an object x figures (or floats, or swims= avagahate) in my awareness, it figures or features there as distinguished in some way or other (kincit-prakarena). Second, a pre-condition for having a clear and distinct awareness of this type (we shall call this a qualificative awareness) is a further awareness of the qualifier or the distinguishing or 'attributive' element (visesana). Metaphorically speaking, when an object x features distinctly in our awareness, it is distinguished by a cloak that may either be put upon it by us, or that may belong there initially, and be recognized by us as such. Further it is claimed that to have such a distinguishing ('qualificative') awareness, we need to have a prior awareness of the distinguisher or the 'cloak'.

Let us formulate the principles as follows:

- P_1 : If something x is presented to my awareness, it is presented there under the cloak of a purported qualifier.
- P_2 : To give rise to an awareness in which the object x is presented as qualified by f , a prior awareness of f is needed as one of its causal factors.
- P_2 simply means that in order that I may be able to characterize or qualify x by f , or attribute f to x in my awareness, I must be in possession of an awareness of f , prior to it. Unless I know what 'blue' or being blue is, I cannot judge something to be blue. (A

similar principle seems to have been formulated in the early Vaisesika-sutra.)

- PI raises an obvious problem. If I am aware of x as distinguished by a property I then I is also a part of what I am aware of This implies that f must also float in my awareness as much as x does, and hence one can argue that we need a further distinguisher for qualifying/ If I am aware of a piece of gold as a piece of gold then being gold is also what I must be aware of. It would be absurd to claim that I do not know what gold is or what being gold is like, and yet I know this to be gold. If this claim is right, then by our PI we must say that if I know what being gold is (or goldness), I should know it, i.e. be aware of it, under a further characterization. This leads to the peril of infinite regress: If x figures in my awareness by way of being gold, and being gold figures there by way of being something else, then there will be no stopping. To avoid this problem, an exception of PI is formulated:
 - EI: When I know an ultimate universal, a simple property (ajriti or an akhanda upadhi), I may know it as such (unqualified).
 - Two observations are needed in this context. First, the sense of such expressions as purported property, ultimate universals, and simple property may be taken to be ontologically neutral. Such properties may or may not be separately real, or existent in the mind-independent objective world. It may be that there are only chairs in this world, but no separate thing called 'chairhood'. Our talk of chairhood is restricted only to its being a recognizable distinguisher (visesana). It is significant that Nyaya does not make any distinction in this context between a real (objective) universal (jati) and a nominal universal in so far as they play the logical role of 'simple' properties. A simple property is ultimate in the sense of being a property that is (further) unanalysable (unbreak-able).
 - Must I always be aware of the ultimate universals or simple properties in their unqualified forms, i.e. in their nakedness? The Nyaya answer is no. A simple property can sometimes take on a

verbal guise while it floats in our awareness. This constitutes a notable exception of EI. Nyaya claims that when the simple properties, such as goldness and waterness, float as such in my awareness I cannot directly verbalize them with the words that denote them, that is to say, I cannot capture them with such words. I can capture them using directly such words or denote them in the verbalization of my awareness only if put upon them some other verbal or nominal guise (i.e. a purported property qualifying the property concerned):

- E₂: If a simple property can be verbalized by the use of the word that denotes it, it must have been presented in my awareness under a further mode of presentation.
- This leads to my second observation. We can have, according to EI, a very direct communion with such simple properties, an uncoloured, non-mediated acquaintance. The distinction between such a knowledge of the simple property and the pure sensation of the uncoloured, un-propertyed, naked object is this: The former is called here 'knowledge' only in virtue of its being an integral part of a knowledge episode, such as knowledge of x as distinguished by a qualifier f, a simple property; but the latter has to stand apart and be counted. Whether or not a purported awareness of a simple property can also stand apart and be counted (as a separate episode) is a controversial issue to which I shall now turn.
- P₂ is appealed to by Navya-Naiyayikas in order to settle an intricate controversy in their traditional theory of perception and knowledge. Previously we have noted the Nyaya ambivalence about the status of a pure, pre-linguistic, conception-free sensory grasp of the object in its theory of perception. Nyaya denies knowledge hood of such episodes, and argues further that we are never 'consciously' aware that such a sensation has arisen. In other words, one is never aware that one is sensorily aware of anything in such pre-linguistic, conception-free manner. The powerful arguments of Bhartrhari have well persuaded the Naiyayikas to recognize the 'word-impregnated', conception-laden, nature of our awarenesses. Only in this way are our

thoughts properly formed, employed, and communicated. But the older Naiyayikas did talk about a non-conceptual sensory grasp. In order to resolve the issue whether or not such graspings do arise in us, the Navya Naiyayikas (Udayana, Gangesa, and others) emphasized the fact that only an inference can help us in deciding this matter. Roughly the procedure is this: if we believe in P_2 , then my perceptual awareness of something x (say a piece of metal) as qualified by f (being gold, or goldness) must be preceded by my awareness of f (what it is to be gold, or goldness). Combining PI , EI , and P_2 , we may then say that as long as goldness is a 'simple' according to our definition, it is possible for us to have a non-qualificative, non-mediated, perceptual awareness of goldness prior to the proper judgemental perception. The word 'perceptual' need not raise our eyebrows, for Nyaya maintains that if the individuals are perceptible, the so-called universals or simple properties residing therein may also be perceived, unless there is some stronger reason to believe them to be imperceptible. The only other difficulty in this is that universals like goldness or cowness are thought to be 'abstract' in some sense, while their locations, the individuals, are 'concrete' and hence perceptible. But this 'concrete-abstract' division will cut no ice with Nyaya, for such a distinction does not exist in this system. It will be further argued that if I can see that the chair has four legs (which is nothing but the property of four-legged-ness), I can also see that this has chairness. Nyaya is not a nativist it believes in the observation-based character of our initial awareness of some universals.

- We may say that we need simply a conception of f (goldness), in order to be able to have an awareness of x as qualified by f . This can be supported by arguments of the following kind. Unless some awareness (or conception) of fire is present in a person, he cannot infer that the hill has fire there on the basis of his seeing a body of smoke there. If I have never been aware what it is for an object to be a camel, I cannot certainly be aware, all of a sudden, of an object as being a camel. Even a colour-blind person must understand the meaning of 'green' as a compatible colour, in order

to be able to comprehend what is meant by the sentence 'This is green'. In this way, only a prior conception of the qualifier as such needs to be postulated for making a qualificative awareness possible.

- It may be countered that the above argument is faulty. For, even if we concede the point about the conception of the qualifier in the case of a non-perceptual awareness, in perception such a prior stage may not be needed. For it is argued that the contact of my sense-organ with the qualifier, 'colour', would be enough to generate the awareness of the object as coloured. Gangesa, in fact, has conceded all this, if only implicitly. For him, all that we need is a notion of the qualifier *f*, somehow presented prior to our being aware of something as qualified or distinguished by *f*. In some cases such a presentation may be made possible through the revival of some memory impression. In the case of inferred knowledge, or 'verbal' (speech-generated) knowledge, such a requirement is supplied by what is technically called *sadhyaprasiddhi* (literally, a familiarity with the predicate property). I can neither infer something to be an abracadabra, nor understand the meaning (gain knowledge from the utterance) of the sentence 'it is an abracadabra', unless I am already familiar with what it is for a thing to be an abracadabra. However, cases of perception are certainly different.
- An example of the following kind is considered by Gangesa. The opponent may try to get around the difficulty in a perceptual situation in this way. (I have taken the liberty of modifying the actual example considerably in order to make it more intelligible.) Suppose, a disc has just turned blue, and I am looking at it. Further suppose that it has a particular blue tint, the like of which I have never seen before. Now, for Nyaya, the qualifier can be either a universal property or a particular one; and in this case, the particular blue tint would be the relevant qualifier. (Only such a particular has to play the role of a property, i.e. it has to become universal-like, in the context of a propositional combination.) The argument continues by pointing out that I would in this case first see the blue tint, the particular,

in conception-free awareness before I could become perceptually aware that the disc is qualified by that particular blue tint. In other words, I would have no other access to the idea of that blue tint (obviously it cannot be remembered, because it has never been experienced before) except to the extent my sense has now grasped it. Here, therefore, we have a possible case for a simple perceptual awareness of a 'simple' entity. The opponent may still argue that the particular blue tint, in effect, will be seen, according to our PI, as a blue tint; which means that it will produce a complex awareness of the particular colour-tint as being blue. I simply cannot have an awareness of the tint without seeing it as blue. The notion of being blue, an ultimate universal, would in that case be supplied by a memory-revival. But we can still say that this memory-revival, if it has occurred, is generated in such cases (cf. *prathamika-go-pratyak a-Gangesa*) by the sensory apparatus (sense-object intercourse); and since the object (the particular blue tint) is visually given, it would not be a case of remembering, but rather a case of simple perceptual awareness:

- A follower of Bhartrhari may continue the debate in another way. It may be claimed that the notion of cowness, horseness or goldness may be 'congenital' to us, and this will be postulated on the basis of the pan-Indian belief in the transmigration and previous births. The notion of many 'simple' properties may be only memory from a previous birth. This is the nearest equivalent in the Indian context of the 'innate idea' theory. Unlike Western rationalists, Indian thinkers never say that there are some innate ideas in us; instead, their hypothesis is that the ideas which seem to be congenital (innate?) are acquired through experiences over countless previous existences. Hence, when a child first recognizes a cow as a cow, he may be aided simply by the memory-traces inherited from his previous births. This, however, cannot ultimately rule out a primary perceptual experience at some time in the past. In any case we can ignore the hypothesis of previous births in this context, and endorse the nearly conclusive argument of Gangesa that at some point there could be cases of a

pure perceptual grasp of the simple properties, the qualifiers as such, which will then precede some of our qualificative perceptual knowledge of the object as qualified by such properties or features.

- The argument of Gangesa here obviously implies that we do not need to postulate a non-constructive, conception-free, perceptual awareness always occurring at the beginning of a constructive, conception-loaded perception. This goes against the general assumption by these philosophers that a sensory awareness in unstructured form must precede all structured, conception-loaded perceptions. Gangesa's point, if I understand it correctly, is that there is no logical necessity here. Only in some cases (as in those already described) does such a preconceptual, unstructured perception become 'logically' and causally necessary to precede judgmental perception.
- It may be emphasized again that we should distinguish the present issues from certain parallel problems concerning the distinction between the immediate and the mediate perception - problems that are usually frequently discussed in modern philosophical writings on perception. We are instead trying to outline here a general theory of cognition or awareness, following the Nyaya principles, and this I think may throw some light on the intricate problems connected with our perception, sensation, conception, and speech behaviour.
- A general critique of P₂ can be made as follows. If a prior awareness, in some form or other, of the qualifying entity is necessary for the arising of a cognitive awareness (a supposition, or a knowledge) of an object (the qualificand) as qualified by such a qualifier, why is it not equally necessary to have a prior awareness of the object itself, the qualificand? If the precondition of a knowledge of an object as distinguished by a (purported) property is the awareness of the purported property itself, an awareness of the object itself may likewise be deemed as another necessary precondition. The general principle of thought seems to be that it is not possible for a person to have a thought about something that it is F or that it is qualified by F-ness, unless he

knows which particular individual in the world he is thinking about. If, for example, I suppose or judge or know that a particular cow is white, then it is not only needed that I should already possess an awareness or knowledge of what it is for something to be white, but also that I should have the capacity to identify such a particular. Hence if it is emphasized that a prior awareness of the colour white is needed, it may be equally emphasized that a prior awareness of a cow is also needed.

- This, however, is not a criticism of the Nyaya view, for, with a little twist, it can be turned into a clarification of the Nyaya position. Let us consider the verbalized version of a knowledge-episode such as 'A cow is dark.'
- I shall not consider the more usual 'The cow is dark'. For one thing, the Sanskrit philosophers seldom discuss such formulations. For another, this presupposes that the object x is identified in more than one way: (i) by being qualified by cowness, as well as (ii) by being a previously identified object in the discussion or the context. Nyaya would say that the qualifier here is not only the dark shade or the condition of being dark, but also cowness. Cowness is called (in this context the *dhannitiivacchedaka*) the delimiting character of the object x to which another qualifier, or attribute, has been attributed. We have to know both qualifiers in order to know the object x as qualified by them. According to the usual interpretation, the above-mentioned knowledge would be explained as that of an object x which is first qualified by cowness and then, being so qualified, is further qualified by a dark shade, and this dark shade, in its turn, is qualified by being a dark shade (a universal, a 'simple' property). Notice that being a dark shade is not a qualifier of x ; rather it qualifies one of the qualifiers of x , and in this respect, that qualifier of x is also playing the role of a qualificand being qualified by another object, viz. the particular dark shade is qualified by being-a-dark-shade!
- One of the implications of the above critique and rejoinder is that P_1 actually leads to a theory of identification of objects through descriptions or information about them. I cannot identify an

object unless I already possess some information about it. Part of this information may be perceptually given as in the case of being-a-cow when a child (according to Gangesa) first perceives a cow and identifies it as a cow. But most bits and pieces of information are gathered continuously by a subject, and retained in his possession until some later time. Another important source of information is the exercise of reason upon the existing information. A third source is speech or language through which the speaker wishes to transmit the information already in his possession (sabdabodha).

- We must note another point in this connection. When I follow Nyaya and talk about an object that floats in my awareness, I do not talk about an idea in the mind or even what is called the content of consciousness. For Nyaya, there is no such thing, no 'veil of ideas' between us and the things outside. In other words, the object is not mental unless we talk about internal states or psychological events where the object floats only temporarily and then disappears, for the event lasts only for a moment.
- The philosophical underpinnings of our P_2 , which Navya-Nyaya upholds, can further be brought to light by examining a rival claim or principle which would apparently require us to revise P_2 , and which, nevertheless, has some intuitive support:
 - P': I cannot have a judgement or an awareness that something is F, i.e. I cannot be aware of something as being qualified by a qualifier f, unless I have already an awareness of that something, the qualificand or the substratum, as well as the qualifier, f.
 - This is not exactly incompatible with P_2 , but obviously it demands more by way of precondition. Nyaya does not accept this. If the logical or causal requirement for perceptual judgement is formulated so strictly as P' demands, then it seems (to Nyaya) to be unreasonable. We may call it the fallacy of constructionism. A judgemental awareness is exclusively viewed as a construction of elements that can be treated as its building-blocks. I believe this metaphor of building-blocks induces the idea that we must

first lay hold of (grasp) all the building- blocks, the elements, before we can construct the building (i.e. the judgement). The Navya-Nyaya critique of this rather too strict a principle may now be stated.

- An atomic perceptual judgement is one where there are at least two parts; one is the subject of qualification or prediction (the qualificand) (the dharmin or visesya) and the other is what qualifies it (the visesya). Nyaya emphasizes that we construct here with characteristics or qualifiers as the building-blocks, but we construct, to continue the metaphor, upon the subject of characterization as representing the building-site. We need therefore a prior grasping of the qualifiers or characteristics, but we need not have a prior acquaintance with the subject or dharmin. For we can become acquainted with it at the same time we 'construct' the judgement. For example, we may have to obtain the prefabricated materials as building-blocks beforehand, but the building-site is required only at the time of construction. In other words, Nyaya says that a prior awareness of the qualifiers is all that is logically needed to formulate a 'qualificative' judgement. We may know the subject or the substratum or the qualificand only as qualified by the said characteristics or qualifiers as we identify such a subject or formulate the judgement concerned. To use a more familiar terminology, prior awareness of the meaning of predicate is more important than an awareness of the subject entity prior to the formulation of the atomic judgement 'This is blue' or 'blue, there'. For example, from a distance we may have a dim perceptual awareness of something blue, where no previous acquaintance with that thing is possible, or where the subject is in fact like the Lockian 'We know not what'. But we do need to have a prior notion of what 'blue' means in order that the judgement 'blue, there' could be formulated. The knowledge of the location or place signified by 'there' may simply co-arise with the judgement, for we are grasping the dharmin, the subject of characterization, only with the help of the attribution of blue.

- The important difference between P' and P₂ is this. Let us suppose that we are dealing with atomic judgements or atomic construction, which is a combination of some qualifier with a subject or a place where the 'quality' resides. According to P', it seems that awareness of both the qualifier entity and the subject would be required prior to the formulation of the judgement. According to P₂, however, an awareness of only the qualifier entity or the meaning of the so-called predicate expression would be required (and not of the subject or dharmin) prior to the judgemental awareness. The dharmin or the 'subject entity or the 'place' where the particular instance of the property resides may be known along with arising of the judgement. In other words, in the judgemental awareness, it is sufficient if we know the subject-entity simply as what the qualifier qualifies.
- Sighting an object from a distance in dim light we may speculate in various ways whether it is F, G or H, where we are already acquainted with the 'meanings' of F, G and, H. The object sighted enters into our speculation (i.e. the oscillating judgemental awareness) only as an 'it'. It is something 'we know not what', but we attempt to characterize it with one or the other known characteristics. In this way we can formulate some arguments for the plausibility of P₂ and the implausibility of P'. The situation envisaged here by Nyaya seems to have a parallel in the 'name-predicable' analysis of the atomic sentence, where the name is believed to be a logically proper name or a rigid designator (i.e. it must be non-connotative), but the predicables must have a meaning, i.e. they must be significant independently of their being applied to the object named.
- It may be argued, however, that in the case of a perceptual judgement of the form 'This is blue' we nevertheless have a prior, non-constructive, immediate, sensory awareness of both blue and the thing, before the given perceptual judgement is constructed. But Nyaya direct realism admits that even the pot-as-such is grasped by sensory perception, for there is the sense of sight, which is wide open, and there is also the relevant contact between the sense and the object. It is therefore possible to claim that in

the 'immediate' sensory awareness there are both the colour blue and the thing, which are later construed as 'This is blue'. Some would even claim that since Nyaya accepts a real connector or relation in this case, there would be three elements presented to our visual organ: (the colour) blue, the thing, and the connector. In reply to this, Navya-Nyaya makes a distinction between what is 'logically' necessary for the perceptual judgement to arise, and what is or may be factually present prior to the arising of the said judgement. The awareness of the thing, the subject entity, may be present, but it is not logically relevant, not causally potent. Nyaya even allows that we can have judgemental i.e. conception-loaded, awareness, even in the first moment where sense and mind cooperate immediately. This may happen in the case of a habituated and recurring perception. Suppose I am used to drawing the curtains every morning and seeing a black lamp-post outside. After a while I become so used to this fact that I expect to see the black lamp-post immediately after opening the curtain (my memory presents me with the required notion of the qualifiers). Hence in the first instant I see something as a black lamp-post or see that it is a black lamp-post, without the intervention of a sensory, non-constructive, awareness of black colour, lamp-post, etc. In a recurring or continuous perception, the perceptual awareness that arises after the first moment would likewise need no prior presentation of the qualifier by a conception-free awareness. For the qualifier here would be presented by the judgemental awareness of the first moment.

In sum, P_2 may be in need of further examination, for only in this way would we be able to see whether it is a basic principle of our thought or awareness, as it has been claimed to be by Nyaya.

10.3 LETS SUM UP

On the broader issue whether an un-conceptualized awareness is possible or not, we may add the following. A certain indefiniteness surrounds our notion of awareness. We may therefore talk about 'dim awareness of a nameless presence' or 'subliminal awareness' and so on. Those who

favour the possibility of an un-conceptualized awareness- event are most probably trying to say something similar to what Kant said about the two capacities, sensibility and understanding: 'The understanding can intuit nothing, the sense can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise. But if it is true that these two powers cannot exchange their functions, it may be plausible to argue along the line of Udayana (who was influenced by Bharthari) that the so-called sensory grasp of an infant (to the extent it is indistinguishable from the reception of the photo lens of a camera) does not even amount to awareness. For, as it is emphasized, thought, concept, or implicit language or even manaskara must penetrate the sense-given to develop into an awareness event. What is called sensory experience, or alocana, in this theory will refer to such an awareness- event. It is contended here that such an awareness-event cannot be totally un-conceptualizable since it is, though very modestly, conception- loaded. It may lack full-blown concepts but then it is only unconceptualized in this sense, not unconceptualizable.

10.4 KEY WORDS

Sakara, particularized presentation

Svaprasaka, self-luminous nature of knowledge

10.5 . QUESTION FOR REVIEW

1. Analyse the Nyaya – Buddhist debate of Sakaratava.

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10.7 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- According to the Buddhist idealist, there is no 'external' object, i.e. there is no inner-outer or external-internal dichotomy.
- Just as each material body has a recognizable form by which it is distinguishable and identifiable, each awareness, under this view, has

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likewise a form (akara.) by which it is distinguishable and identifiable.

UNIT 11 THE DEBATE ABOUT THE VALIDITY AND INVALIDITY OF DREAM AND MEMORY COGNITIONS

STRUCTURE

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Valid Knowledge (Prama)
- 11.3 Invalid Knowledge
- 11.4 Memory (Smrti) and Dream
- 11.5 Doubt (Samsaya)
- 11.6 Error (Viparyyaya) and Illusion (Bhrama)
- 11.7 Hypothetical Reasoning (Tarka)
- 11.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 11.9 3 Keywords
- 11.10 Questions for review
- 11.11 Suggested Readings
- 11.12 Answers to Check your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the dream cognition
- know the role of memory

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Knowledge – Its Forms

Taking knowledge in the most comprehensive sense as the cognition of objects, the Naiyayikas proceed to distinguish between its different forms, according to the differences in the nature and validity of

cognitions. In view of these, knowledge is first divided into anubhava or presentation and smṛti or memory. In anubhava there is a presentational knowledge of objects. It is original in character and not the reproduction of a previous knowledge of objects. Smṛti or memory on the other hand, is not the presentation of objects, but a reproduction of previous experience. Each of these has been further divided into valid (yathatha) and non-valid (ayathartha) forms according as it does or does not accord with the real nature of its object.

Under anubhava or presentative knowledge we have two kinds of valid and non-valid presentations. Of these the former is called prama and includes all cases of true presentational knowledge objects. According to the Nyaya, there are four distinct kinds of prama or valid presentation, namely, perception (pratyakṣya), inference (anumana), comparison (upamana) and testimony (śabda). In each of these there is a presentation of some object as it really is. Hence prama, according to the Nyaya, is not any cognition nor any true recognition as such. It is a valid presentational knowledge of objects.

11.2 VALID KNOWLEDGE (PRAMA)

After knowing various forms and nature of non-valid cognition, the writer is trying to describe what according to Nyaya, valid knowledge means and what the methods of arriving at it are. Gautama, Vatsyayana, Uddyotakara, Vacaspati Misra and Jayanta all refer to knowledge through the terms, 'buddhi', 'uplabdhi' or 'jnana', irrespective of the validity or non-validity of a particular type of cognition. The later Naiyayikas, however, use the term prama: for valid knowledge and aprama for non-valid cognition. The terms 'pramana', 'pramati', 'prameya', and 'pramanya' were, however, as current in the old Nyaya as in the later. Conclusively valid knowledge is prama.

Prama has been defined by the Nyaya as true presentational knowledge (yatharthanubhava). It is a definite and an assured (asamdigdha) cognition of an object, which is also true and presentational in character. Hence prama excludes all kinds of non-valid knowledge, such as

memory, doubt, error, hypothetical argument (tarka), etc. Memory is excluded because it is not presentational. Doubt and the rest are excluded either because they are not true or because they are not definite and assured cognitions. It appears from this that prama has three main characteristics, namely, assuredness, truth and presentativeness. These characteristics need a brief exposition.

Prama may be explained by saying that prama or valid knowledge is a definite categorical assertion as distinguished from all indefinite, problematic and hypothetical knowledge. That means, valid knowledge is always connected with a firm belief. The second characteristic of prama is that it is true or unerring (yathartha) knowledge. But what makes knowledge true (yathartha)? In response to this, Nyaya account is this that knowledge is true when it is not contradicted by its object (arthavyabhicari). This means that knowledge is true when it reveals its object with the nature and attribute which abide in it despite all changes of time, place and other conditions.⁴¹ Hence, according to the Nyaya, the truth of knowledge consists in its correspondence to facts.

The Nyaya goes further and adds a third qualification to prama. Accordingly, prama is not only a true and an assured cognition, but also a presentational cognition (anubhava).

How is the validity of knowledge to be known? Indian theories of knowledge are divisible broadly into two classes—one maintaining the self-validity (svatah-pramanya) of knowledge, and the other contending that it needs to be validated by an extraneous means (paratah-pramanya). In the former view, knowledge is taken to be self-assured. In the latter case knowledge by itself guarantees nothing in this respect; and its truth or falsity is to be ascertained through some appropriate test. Nyaya-Vaisesika upholds the second view that the truth or falsehood of knowledge is to be determined by practical verification (samvadi-pravrtri). The validity of the perception of say, water, is known by the successful quenching of our thirst by it. If it fails to satisfy this or some other similar test, we conclude that it is invalid.

Nyaya lays full stress on the cognitive function of pramana. Error implies ignorance of the true character of the object given, and the removal of

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that ignorance is the primary purpose of knowledge. With regard to the nature of prama, different systems of Indian philosophy have expressed divergent opinions. According to D.M. Datta, "prama" is generally defined as a cognition having the two-fold characteristics of truth and novelty, and that as regards the first characteristic-truth-all schools of Indian philosophy are unanimous. According to Jayanta, prama is that knowledge of objects which is free from doubt and illusion. If we compare the Nyaya view of prama with western thinking, it resembles the correspondence theory of western realists.

Prama or valid knowledge has been defined by the Nyaya as true presentational cognition (yatharthanubhava). Analysing this conception of prama we get three essential factors involved in all valid knowledge. These three necessary factors are namely, the subject, the object and the method of knowledge (pramata, prameya and pramana).

Regarding pramata, it has been said that every knowledge involves a subject or knower, in which knowledge inheres as an attribute. The subject is the substantive ground of all cognitions. The pramata is the self-conceived as an intelligent agent. It is also independent in the sense that it exists for itself and is an end to itself. Pramata is that which knows and strives, enjoys and suffers, remembers and expects, it is an agent, a striver, a desirer, a refuser.

Secondly, prama or valid knowledge implies some prameya or object, to which the process of knowledge refers or to which it is directed. The object of knowledge may be either existent or non-existent. Both positive or negative facts may become the objects of true knowledge, but the knowledge takes different forms in the two cases. In the case of existent objects our knowledge is positive and does not depend on any objects. In the case of non-existent objects knowledge is negative and conditional on the direct apprehension of similar existent objects. "The light of a lamp, which reveals the existence of certain perceived objects in a dark room, manifests also the non existence of those that are not perceived, for if the latter had existed there, they would have been perceived like the similar perceived objects. Subject and object (pramata and prameya) are strictly correlative factors involved in all knowledge. They are

distinguishable no doubt as the knower and the known, but not separable in any act of knowledge.

Thirdly, all true knowledge must be connected with some method of knowledge. Nyaya recognises the special cause of knowledge (pramana) as an important factor. Also, Nyaya considers the subject, object, method and resulting state of knowledge (pramata, prameya, pramana and prama) as mutually implicated aspects of the whole truth. Each of these is as essential to knowledge as the rest, and each of them involves the rest by way of logical implication (prasakti). So it has been said that in these four principles, when taken together as one whole but never as disjoined, there is the realisation of truth (tattvaparismamapti).

The subject (pramata), the object (prameya) and the method (pramana) are all necessary conditions of valid knowledge (prama). Here the question naturally arises: How are we to distinguish the method from the subject and the object and say that the first is the special cause of valid knowledge? First of all we see that there is a uniform relation of agreement in presence and in absence between pramana and prama as between cause and effect. A pramana is always accompanied by valid knowledge which, in its turn, can never arise without the former. In every case in which a pramana is operative, prama or valid knowledge must appear as a natural sequel. Thus, a man has no perception of objects in relation to which no sense organ is operative.

Secondly, we observe that the pramata or subject arrives at a true knowledge of objects only when it is aided by a pramana or an operative cause of knowledge. That is, the subject knows objects only when it makes use of a certain method, but not singly by itself. Thirdly, we see that pramana is the last link in the chain of antecedent conditions that lead to the knowledge of objects. The aggregate of psycho-physical conditions, on which knowledge depends, is completed by pramana, and knowledge appears immediately as an effect. Pramana is the cause of knowledge in as much as it is the immediate antecedent, on which knowledge follows first and immediate.

Lastly, it has been pointed out by the Naiyayakas that a distinction between the different kinds of knowledge is made by reference to the

methods of acquiring knowledge. Perception inference, testimony etc. are regarded as different kinds of knowledge because they are presented by different pramanas or methods of knowledge. This cannot be due to the subject or the object of knowledge, because these may be the same in what are generally admitted to be different kinds of knowledge. The same subject may know the same object first by inference and then by perception, as when a man confirms the inference of fire in the distant place by approaching it. Hence, the subject and object cannot explain why one kind of knowledge is called perception and another inference. Hence, pramana or the method of knowledge is the means or the operative cause (karna) of knowledge, as distinguished from the pramata or subject and prameya or object.

11.3 INVALID KNOWLEDGE

The Nyaya divides non-valid presentation (ayatharthanubhava) further into doubt (samsaya), error (viparyaya) and hypothetical argument (tarka). Hence it is not correct to speak of aprama or non-valid presentation, always as a case of bhrama or error. It becomes so when it definitely contradicts its object (viparitanirnaya). It is argued that memory is not prama or valid knowledge, since it does not refer to presented objects. It may be of two kinds namely, true and false. True memory is in accord with the real nature of the objects remembered, whereas false memory does not fully correspond with the real character of the remembered objects. In waking life we have both these kinds of memory. In dreams our cognitions are false memory-cognitions. All knowledge, however, including dreams, refers to some real object; only dream is false memorial representation of the real.

After Naiyayik definition of knowledge and its classification, there is need to understand the nature of knowledge in detail. As has been noticed knowledge is first divided into presentation (anubhava) and memory (smriti). The detail description of memory is important to

understand two forms of valid and non-valid knowledge which includes doubt, error, illusion and hypothetical argument.

11.4 MEMORY (SMRTI) AND DREAM

According to Nyaya memory (smrti) is knowledge of one's own past. It is a representative cognition of past experiences due solely to the impressions produced by them. It is thus different from recognition (pratyabhijnan) which according to the Nyaya is a form of qualified perception and has reference to the direct presentation of some object, although it involves an element of representation. In memory, however, there is only a revival of our past experiences, in the form of ideas and images, in the same form and order in which they were actually experienced by us at a certain point of past time. The ground or condition of this revival is of course the latent impressions left by our past experiences and retained in the soul. When the mind comes in contact with such psychic dispositions (bhavana) there is a remembrance of the corresponding original experiences. Memory we may say is knowledge arising solely out of the impressions of previous experiences and pertaining to a permanent soul.

While memory has for its general conditions some original past presentation (purvanubhava) and its impression (samskara), it has a number of specific causes that serve either to retain the impressions or revive them in consciousness, and thereby bring about the phenomenon of memory.

Causes of Memory

These causes are:

- Attention (pranidhana)-which fixes anything in mind i.e. it enables us to fix the mind on one object by checking it from wandering away to any other object.
- Association or context (nibandha)-which connects different experiences and makes them suggestive of one another.
- Repetition or Exercise (abhyasa)-which secures persistence for the impressions.

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- Sign (linga)- that leads the mind to the thing signified. It may be (1) connected, (2) inseparable (intimate), (3) correlated or (4) opposite e.g. Smoke is a sign of fire with which it is connected; horn is a sign of a cow from which it is inseparable, an arm is a sign of a leg with which it is correlated and the non-existent is a sign of the existent by the relation of opposition.
- Mark or Characteristic Mark (laksana)-That recalls the class to which an object belongs.
- Similarity or Likeness (sadrasya)-that associates the ideas of like things.
- Ownership or Possession (parigraha)-which is suggestive of the owner or the thing owned. Or, such as a property awakens the memory of the owner and vice versa.
- Refuge and Refugee or the relation of dependence (asrayasritasam-bandha) of which one term suggests the other e.g. a king and his attendants.
- Contiguity or Immediate subsequence (anantaryya)which binds together successive phenomena.
- Separation (viyoga) - that frequently reminds one of what he is separated from.
- Identity of function - or similar employment-that recalls similar agents e.g. as a fellow - disciples.
- Enmity or Opposition (virodha)-that suggests the rivals in any sphere.
- Superiority or Excess (atisaya)-that reminds us of what it is due to or awakening the memory of that which exceeded.
- Acquisition or Receipt (prapti)-that frequently recalls its source or reminding us of one from whom something has been or will be received.
- Intervention as covering (vyavadhana)-that suggests what is covered e.g. a sheath reminding us of the sword.
- Pleasure and pain (sukhaduhkha)-the feeling of pleasure and pain i.e. reminding us of that which caused them.

- Desire and aversion (icchadvea)-reminding us of one whom we liked or hated.
- Fear (bhaya)-reminding us of that which caused it, e.g. death.
- Entreaty or need (arthitva)-that reminds one of their causes and objects or reminding us of that which was wanted or prayed for.
- Action (kriya)-which is suggestive of the agent e.g. a chariot reminding us of the charioteer.
- Affection (raga)-that often reminds us of its objects.
- Merit (dharma) and Demerit (adharma)-that are suggestive of the belief in pre-existence and help or hinder the retention of experiences.

These causes of memory cannot be simultaneously operative. Hence recollections are not simultaneous but successive in their appearance in consciousness.

Nyaya talks about two kinds of memory - true (yathartha) and false (ayathartha). A true memory has its basis in valid presentation (pramajanya) and false memory arises out of such original cognitions which are erroneous (apramajanya). We have both these kinds of memory when we are awake.

The Naiyayikas hold memory as non-valid knowledge, since, according to them, it is different from anubhava (experience). Jayanta maintains that memory is non-valid cognition since its object is non-existent at the time of its remembrance. He concludes that memory fails to give valid presentational experiences, and, therefore, it is not a valid knowledge.

Check your Progress-1

Nyaya view of Memory

Dreams

Dreams illustrate what is intrinsically false memory. According to the Nyaya, dream-cognitions are all memory cognitions and untrue in character. They are brought about by the remembrance of objects

experienced in the past, by organic disorders and also by the imperceptible influences of past desires and actions (adrsta).

It may so happen that dreams sometimes turn out to be true and tally with the subsequent experiences of waking life. But such correspondence between dream - cognitions and waking experience is neither normal nor invariable. Hence, according to Nyaya, dream can never be called pramana, or the source of such presentative knowledge as has a real and an invariable correspondence with the object. Dreams have not the regularity and orderliness of waking perceptions.

11.5 DOUBT (SAMSAYA)

According to Gautama doubt (samsaya) is a conflicting judgement on the precise character of an object. Doubt is an uncertain cognition about the nature of a particular object. Nevertheless, it is a form of cognition because it makes itself known. Doubt is itself apprehended and therefore, correctly called apprehension (pratyaya). In it the mind oscillates between different alternate characterisations of some given object. Doubt, thus, consists in an alternation between different conflicting notions with regard to the same object.

Doubt arises when with regard to some perceived object there is the suggestion of such conflicting alternatives but no definite cognition of any differentia to decide between them.

Hence, it can be said that it is incomplete or indecisive cognition. But, doubt is not merely the absence (abhava) of assured cognition (niscaya) and not a mere negation of knowledge. It is a positive state of cognition of mutually exclusive characters in the same thing and at the same time.

To analyse the state of doubt, following factors may be considered. First, the presentation of some existent object. Next, by virtue of association the presented fact calls forth two or more apperceptive systems each of which tries to appropriate it but is counteracted by the rest. In the absence of any definite cognition of such differentiating characters in the presentation the mind oscillates between them. Hence, doubt supposes the recollection of the differentiating characters of an object but no

corresponding presentation of them. The actual process of mental oscillation in doubt is generally expressed in the form of an interrogation. Doubt is of five kinds. First, it may arise from the perception of such properties as are common to many things, as when we perceive a tall object at a distance and are not sure if it be a man or a post or a tree-trunk, because tallness is common to them all. Secondly, it arises from the cognition of any peculiar and unique property, as when the cognition of sound makes us doubt if it is eternal or non-eternal, since it is not found in eternal objects like the soul and the atom, nor in non-eternal things like water and earth. Thirdly it may be due to conflicting testimony as when the different philosophical theories of the soul leave us in doubt as to the real nature of the soul. Fourthly, it is caused by the irregularity of perception, even there is a perception of water both in a tank and in a mirage. Lastly, doubt springs from irregularity of non-perception, as when we are not sure if the thing we cannot see now really exists or not, since the existent also is not perceived under certain conditions.

There is a difference of opinion with regard to types of doubt. Gangesa speaks of only two sources of doubt, namely the suspicion of upadhi or condition, and the perception of a property common to many things without any presentation of their differentiating attributes.

Although, doubt is not a valid knowledge (prama), it may sometimes have the character of presentation (anubhava) of an object. But it has neither the mark of being an assured definite cognition (asamdigdha) nor that of a true correspondence with the object (yathartha), and so does not lead to successful activity. Nevertheless, doubt is not error (viparyaya). Doubt as a form of cognition, is neither true nor false. The value of doubt lies in its being a great impetus to study and investigation. It is the starting - point of a critical knowledge of objects. In this sense it may be said to be the beginning of philosophy.

According to Nyaya, doubt gives us some important truths. As a mental state, doubt is shown to be different from both belief and disbelief. It neither affirms nor denies anything. Doubt is never a definite cognition (avadharana) but an indecisive questioning attitude towards an object.

Notes

Perception yields knowledge. For to perceive, in at least one acceptable sense of the verb, is to know. Sometimes this is well expressed in such commonplace sayings as 'Seeing is believing'. In fact, we should be saying instead, 'seeing is knowing' for such a cliché is obviously about a person whose disbelief is removed by the ultimate evidence of the sense. The proof of the pudding is in the eating is another such common cliché. Sometimes even the converse seems to be true. When Theaetetus said to Socrates, 'The way it looks to me at the moment is that knowledge is nothing but perception' he was responding to very common intuition. More generally, however, perception, in the sense of 'sensing', is regarded as an important source of knowledge. Or, to put it in the Indian terminology, it is a primary 'means' of knowing (pramana), one of the main 'ways' of knowing. We cannot therefore get a clear idea of perception in the Indian context unless we are sure as to what counts as knowledge or a knowing event in traditional Indian philosophy. I shall now try to introduce the notion of a knowing event. This will lead me to discuss many issues related to the notion of a mental event, for a knowing event will be treated here as a species of mental event.

Our discussion in the previous chapter has shown that philosophical investigation starts from that unsatisfactory state of mind in which one feels a curious uncertainty regarding something. Vatsyayana has described philosophical activity as something that is applied to objects, questions, problems, or purposes (the word 'artha' is ambiguous enough to allow all these meanings) about which we are uncertain or entertain a doubt. For if we already know the answers, philosophical activity ends; and if we do not have any idea about the question itself, philosophical activity cannot begin. The example that is discussed in this connection is one of a vaguely viewed object (in darkness or at a distance), a vertically erect thing with some thickness, in the form of a dark blur. This initial dark blur is seen gradually more clearly, as one approaches near. One tends to form a 'dubious judgement' such as whether it is a man or a tree-stump.

The uncertainty referred to here is what Nyaya calls *samsaya*, which I propose to translate as 'doubt' or 'dubiety'. The Nyaya process is

comparable to that of watching and gradually discovering an object approaching from a distance through thick fog. S. T. Coleridge has thus described the emergence of the phantom ship in *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*:

At first it seemed a little speck,

And then it seemed a mist:

It moved and moved and took at last

A certain shape, I wist.

The Sanskrit poet, Magha, typifies, in *Sisupalavadha*, a similar process in his rather ornamental description of the descent of Narada on earth from the sky:

(1) People anxiously looked upwards and wondered: The light of the Sun's charioteer, Anuru, travels horizontally, (and) it is well known that fire blazes upwards; but what is this light that is descending downwards, glowing in all directions?

(2) The Lord (Krsna) first took it to be a mass of light, then he ascertained it to be an embodied being with a particular shape; afterwards he saw him to be a man having limbs distinctly, and thus gradually he recognized him to be Narada!

Knowledge is often arrived at through a process of this kind, initiated by a doubt and sustained by inquiry. Doubt is the precursor of knowledge. There is, perhaps, little need to belabour this point. According to Nyaya doubt is not only the harbinger of knowledge or certainty (in the manner already described in Chapter 3.2), but it is also constituted by some knowledge in the minimal sense as one of its essential components: Our uncertainties, under such consideration would be based upon some certainties or other. We cannot be uncertain unless there is a subject for us to be uncertain about, and in this context we must be more or less certain about the existence (or possibility) of that subject (dharmin). It will be argued that one could very well be uncertain about the subject too. But we may do so only by switching our attention from one theme to another. Our uncertainty or doubt about the subject X, for example, would presuppose some other certainty-certainty about something else or some other fact in the background. In fact, uncertainty or dubiety gets

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formulated only in the background of some certainty of another kind. Hence to be able to doubt is to concede some minimal knowledge about something. We need some 'fixed' pegs, so to speak, to hang our doubts upon.

Nyaya tries to prove the point in question as follows. Suppose I doubt whether something X, a vaguely visible object for instance, is A or B, but I cannot be in this case in doubt about there being an X, a vaguely visible object. If I doubt, however, whether I am seeing X or not, I merely fall back upon another certainty, viz. that I am having, or have just had, a palpable mental occurrence which I am trying to interpret: it may be a seeing or a hallucination; I am not sure about its exact nature. In other words, there is a central core (cf. a dhannin) around which we weave our doubtful alternatives, A or B. But in the context of the doubt 'whether X is A or B', the central core cannot be held to be in doubt.

If this analysis of doubt can be shown to be relevant in the Cartesian tradition also, then one can argue that our search for rock-bottom certainty in the Cartesian manner should, in a sense, have ended even before it had begun, and that Descartes' cogito argument was unnecessarily prolonged! But this may be unfair. For we are trying to subject here Descartes and the Cartesian philosophers to a scrutiny, using a notion of doubt that was well entrenched only in the Indian Nyaya tradition. Descartes might have conceded this point while asking his readers to indulge in some hyperbolic doubt. In any case the point remains that doubting necessarily involves some knowing in the minimal sense, and that knowing in the non-minimal sense is what is achieved when the dubious alternatives (A, B, or C) are cancelled in favour of only one that is justified.

It is not that something like the above Nyaya-inspired critique of the Cartesian cogito argument has never arisen in the Cartesian context. The critique, for the sake of simplicity, may be roughly formulated like this: Our formulation of a doubt as 'it is doubtful whether X is A or B' entails 'it is certain that there is X'. Hence the philosophic programme may be built upon this available certainty on each occasion of doubt and the resulting attempt to replace this partial certainty or partial knowledge by

full-fledged certainty or more precise knowledge, such replacement being done on the basis of a theory of 'evidence'.

The controversy over the exact significance of the cogito argument is well known. It will certainly be out of place to recount it here. The Nyaya point that I am suggesting here is not, however, to establish the certainty of the existence of the thinking subject, or the self-verifiability of such sentences as 'I exist', but to reveal what we understand today as the 'existential presupposition' in logic. Any sentence of the form 'a is B' or 'B(a)' presupposes 'a exists'. Hence the doubt-and-certainty argument depends upon such a logical implication as:

$$B(a) > (Ex) (x = a).$$

The general logical principle involved is that in order to have any property, even a dubious one, predicated of a subject, it is necessary for the subject to exist. Since, in the statement of doubts (formulable doubts) in the Nyaya sense, predicates (though dubious ones only) are attached to the subject-term, the subject-term must be non-empty, or what amounts to the same thing, the existence of the entity denoted by the subject-term must be a certainty. J. Hintikka argues that Descartes sometimes mistakenly thought that his cogito depended upon some indubitable logical principle of existential presupposition. But obviously this interpretation of the cogito cannot be sustained, for such a logical principle has nothing to do with at least two elements that Descartes thought necessary for his cogito argument: (i) the connection between thinking and existence, and (ii) the use of the first person."

I have already described that the end-product, or to use the modern computer terminology, the output of the Nyaya philosophic method is a decision or certainty (nirnaya). The process is set in motion by doubt and ends in a decision. What is decided would be claimed to be knowledge at least by the investigator, if he is satisfied. The end-product takes the form of a mental episode called prama, 'knowledge' (a knowledge-episode). It is such a cognitive episode (jnana) as hits the mark! It is this 'truth-hitting' character of the episode that turns the cognitive episode into a knowledge-episode, a piece of knowledge.

This way of looking at things raises some obvious questions. Knowledge is usually understood by the philosophers of the Western tradition, and by ordinary people of any tradition, not as a momentary episode of the mind, but as a more stable, inter-subjectively communicable item. We do say that knowledge is treasure. We are said to acquire or gain knowledge. The Gita and many other texts do talk about knowledge that stays with us, i.e. 'does not run away'. In the Western philosophical tradition since Plato (Meno) it has been customary to talk about knowledge as justified true belief. Writers of pramana-sutra were not unaware of this 'dispositional' character of knowledge, but in the context of developing their pramana-sutra they emphasized solely the 'episodic' character of emergent awareness.

11.6 ERROR (VIPARYYAYA) AND ILLUSION (BHRAMA)

One of the typical form of non-valid cognition is known as error (viparyyaya). When an object is presented in a form which does not belong to it, it is a case of error or illusion. Error is the reverse of valid knowledge (prama). While valid knowledge is the presentation of an object as what it really is (tattvanubhava), erroneous knowledge is the cognition of an object as what it really is not (atattvajnana). Thus, error has been described as the wrong apprehension (mithyopalabdhi). The cognition of a shell as silver, or a rope as a snake, of a post as a man are all cases of error or wrong cognition.

Error is to be distinguished from doubt. Unlike doubt, it is not only non-valid knowledge (aprama), but is positively invalid or false knowledge (bhrama). An erroneous cognition goes beyond the state of uncertainty in doubt and carries with it a definite assertion (avadharna or niscaya) about some presented object. We become conscious of error when there is a contradiction between our cognitive and volitional experiences. Erroneous cognitions do not lead to successful activity.

For all philosophy, the explanation of errors of perception has been a perplexing question. According to Nyaya, while valid knowledge

(prama) is objective in the sense of being grounded in the object itself (arthajanya), all error is subjective in so far as it is due to the introduction of a certain foreign character into the object by the knowing subject (adharopa). In the case of the mirage, for example, there is nothing wrong in the object. It is the cognition which instead of appearing as the cognition of the flickering rays, appears as the cognition of water. Hence the error lies not in the indeterminate perception of the given rays to the sun but in the determinate perception of it i.e., water as worked up and modified by sun representative elements.

Nyaya shows great ingenuity to explain the perceptual character of illusory experience. That in illusion there is the attribution (aropa) of a false character to a perceived fact in no doubt true. The error lies not in the presentations concerned in the perception but in the determination of one presentation by another given through association and memory. And since this determination results in a judgement of the object as something other than what it is, the Nyaya theory of error is called anyathakhyati or viparitakhyati. This view of anyathakhyati is common to both Nyaya as well as Vaishesika.

Among the prominent Naiyayikas, Jayant has preferred to use the term Viparitakhyati for the theory of error. It is to be seen that with him Viparitakhyati is identical to Anyathakhyati.

After having looked into elements that are impediments in realising valid knowledge, we shall take stock of those of the objects of knowledge's which help in determining the truth.

11.7 HYPOTHETICAL REASONING (TARKA)

Hypothetical reasoning, according to Gautama, is an intellectual act which contributes to the ascertainment of truth by means of adducing logical grounds in favour of one of the alternative possibilities when the reality is not known in its actual character.

Vatsyayana endorses Gautama's views and states that when two contradictory alternatives seem to be equally possible with regard to a

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particular point of enquiry and the mind oscillates between them, hypothetical reasoning (tarka) in support of either of them helps to resolve the indecisiveness. He however, makes it clear that it is not pramāṇa but simply an aid to pramāṇa.

The fact as to why the hypothetical reasoning has not been regarded as an independent means of knowledge was brought home by Uddyotakara. He maintains that it simply facilitates the operation of a relevant means of knowledge but does not itself determine the desired characteristics of the datum. Vacaspati Misra agrees with Vatsyayana and Uddyotakara, but lays greater stress upon the aspect of elimination which happens to be his valuable contribution to hypothetical reasoning. According to him the method of elimination helps to prove that one of the alternatives is logically impossible and the remaining one is nearer to truth.

Jayanta is of the view that hypothetical reasoning serves to produce a strong presumption in support of the probandum. He maintains that in doubt both the alternatives have equal strength and neither of them is specific with the result. As far as tarka is concerned though it favours one of the alternatives, yet it does not leave the other altogether.

It can be said that tarka is a type of implicating argument by which we may test the validity of the conclusion of any reasoning or of any judgement. The process of reasoning in tarka consists in the deduction of an untenable proposition from a certain position (anistaprasanga). Thus, with regard to the inference of fire from the perception of smoke, there are two alternative positions, namely, that the smoky object is fiery, and that it is not fiery. From the latter position we deduce the proposition that the object is not smoky, which is contradicted by our direct experience.

This is expressed in the form of a hypothetical proposition, viz. 'if the object be fireless, it must be smokeless'. Here tarka validates the inference of fire through the deduction of an inadmissible proposition from the contrary hypothesis. It is general rule that whatever has a mark (the vyāpaka), has that which it is a mark of (the vyāpya). Now the absence of fire is a mark of the absence of smoke. Hence, if it be said that there is absence of fire in the object, we cannot resist the conclusion that there is absence of smoke in it, i.e. it is smokeless. Such a

conclusion, however, is contradicted by direct observation. Hence, it is that tarka has been defined by the modern Naiyayikas as the process of deducing from a mark that of which it is a mark, but it false.

When the proposition established by any method of knowledge (pramana) is doubted or disputed, we should have recourse to tarka to lay the doubt or end the dispute.

According to Nyaya there are five kinds of tarka. These are called atmasraya, anyonyasraya, cakraka, anavastha and tadanyabadhitharthaprasanga. In all of them the logical form and character of the argument is the same, and they serve the same purpose of testing the validity of some reasoning or judgement.

The first, Atmassraya is an argument that brings out the inconsistency involved in a reasoning which seeks to prove that anything is dependent on itself in respect of its origin or duration or cognition. The argument may be stated in this form: 'If A is the cause of A, it must be different from itself, because the cause is different from the effect. The second type Anyonyiissraya is an argument which brings out the contradiction involved in the judgement that two things are reciprocally dependent on each other. The argument may be stated thus. "If A depends on B and B depends on A, A cannot depend on B. To say that B depends on A' is virtually to deny that 'A depends on B'.

The third type of tarka is called cakraka. It consists in exposing the fallacy of a reasoning in which a thing is made to explain the pre-supposition of its own pre-supposition. If A is pre-supposed in B and B is pre-supposed in C, then to explain A by C is to reason in a circle, because C by its inherent limitations leads us back to A. Here the curve of explanation makes complete circle in so far as our thought returns to its own starting-point through two or more intermediaries.

The fourth type of tarka is called anavastha. It is an argument which brings out the absurdity of an indiscriminate extension of the fallacy of undue assumption. Here we expose the fallacy involved in the indefinite regress of thought from point to point without any final resting ground. It occurs when in an explanation we make use of an indefinite number of principles, each of which pre-supposes its next. Here our thought moves

not in a circle, but up a staircase, as it were. Thus, if we explain A by B, B by C, C by D, and so on ad infinitum, we do not really explain anything. Or, if we try to deduce the ground of inference from inference we are logically committed to the fallacy of infinite regress. The fallacy may be exposed by a tarka like this: 'If inference depends on inference for its ground, no inference is possible.'

The last type of tarka is called tadanyabaddhitarthaprasanga. It is an argument which indirectly proves the validity of a reasoning by showing that the contradictory of its conclusion is absurd. This may be done by opposing the contradictory of the conclusion of some fact or some universal law. If, therefore, its contradictory be false, the original conclusion must be true and based on a valid reasoning. For example, the inference: whatever is smoky is fiery; this object is smoky; therefore, this object is fiery. If this conclusion be false, then its contradictory 'this object is not fiery' should be true for if A (smoke) be a mark of B (not-fire), and B (not-fire) were a mark of a (not-smoke) then A (smoke) would be a mark of C (not-smoke).

With regard to the nature of knowledge (prama) Nyaya says that knowledge is directly experienced by a mental perception called apperception (anuvyavasaya). A determinate perception in the form 'this is ajar' is followed by an apperception in the form 'I know the jar'.

11.8 LETS SUM UP

The Nyaya as the principal defender of realism laid great stress on the fact that the knowledge is formless, and that the object of knowledge is directly and immediately presented by it. The directness or immediacy, in a way, belongs to the object and not to knowledge. Thus knowledge and the soul are both divested of their glory, luminously or consciousness in order to invest the object, the focus of realism, with full-blooded reality. Kumarila went a step further in his theory of the 'manifestedness of an object'. As soon as the knowledge of an object is produced, that knowledge, in turn produces in its object a new quality called manifestedness or the state of being known. It becomes illumined and

manifested, as it was not before. The new quality of 'manifestedness' has been produced in the object by its knowledge. Knowledge, on the other hand, not being self-luminous, cannot be directly cognized. It is merely inferred from the new quality of 'manifestedness' produced in the object.

11.9 KEY WORDS

doubt (samsaya): is a conflicting judgement on the precise character of an object

Memory(Smriti) : It is a representative cognition of past experiences due solely to the impressions produced by them.

Prama, Valid representational knowledge

11.10 QUESTION FOR REVIEW

1. Write a note on doubt
2. Explain the role of Memory
3. Explain the role of dream.

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11.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- memory (smrti) is knowledge of one's own past
- representative cognition of past experiences due solely to the impressions produced by them.
- memory as non-valid knowledge

UNIT 12 THE DEBATE CONCERNING PRAMANA- VYAVASTHA AND PRAMANA-SAMPLAVA

STRUCTURE

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Buddhist Theory

12.3 Jayanta's Critique of the Buddhist Theory of Consciousness Having Form

12.4 Critical Consideration of Jayanta's Criticism of the Buddhist Theory of (i) Pramana and (ii) That of Cognition Having Form

12.5 Jayanta's Critique of the Theory of Pramanavyavastha: Buddhist Defense and Possible

12.6 Jayanta's rejoinder to the Buddhist view is as follows :

12.7 Let Us Sum Up

12.8 Keywords

12.9 Questions for review

12.10 Suggested Readings

12.11 Answers to Check your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn pramanavyavastha
- know pramanaSamplava

12.1 INTRODUCTION

The Buddhist theory of the restriction of pramanas (pramanavyavastha) to their exclusive objects (prameyas) is opposed by the Naiyayika theory of the co-operation of different means of valid cognition (pramanasamplava). According to the Naiyayika, the same object can be

known by different means of valid cognition (pramana), viz. perception, inference, verbal testimony, etc.

12.2 BUDDHIST THEORY

According to the Buddhist, there are only two sources of valid cognition (pramana), viz. perception (pratyaksa) and inference (anumana). The exclusive object of perception is svalaksana, and the exclusive object of inference is samanyalaksana. According to Dharmakirti, pramanas are twofold inasmuch as their objects are twofold (manam dividham visayadvaividhyat). Dharmakirti develops his theory of the restriction of (two) particular pramanas to (two) exclusive objects, known technically as pramanadvaividhya from certain remarks made by Dignaga. In Pramanasamuccayavrtti Dignaga states that svalaksana alone is the object of anumana:

svalaksanavisayam hi pratyaksam samanyalaksanavisayamanumanamitti pratipadayisyamah.

According to the Buddhist, there is a distinct polarity between two kinds of objects (prameyas) of knowledge, svalaksana and samanyalaksana. Svalaksana is momentary, unique, different from everything else. Because it is unique, it cannot be referred to by the words (anabhilapya). (Whatever is verbally referred to has a common characteristic that is shared by others.) It alone is real, as it alone is causally efficacious. Samanyalaksana, on the other hand, being a conceptual construction, has no such efficacious power. samanyalaksana is not to be understood as a real universal. It derives its designation from the fact that its so-called common property (laksana) is common (samanya) to many. Yet, this so-called common property does not stand for any objective reality. It is a conceptual construct created by the human intellect on the basis of observed similarity of producing similar effects by members of classes of individuals.

It is to be noted in this connection that the Buddhist distinction between perception and inference is based on the immediate objects of these two modes of cognition. The immediate object (grahyavisaya) of perception

is svalaksana, while that of inference is samanyalaksana. The ultimate object attained on the basis of both of these modes of cognition, however, is svalaksana. The same svalaksana is known directly in perception, in its own form (svarupena), while it is known indirectly by inference, in its form as compared with that of others (pararupena).

The Buddhist theory of the restriction of pramanas (pramanayavastha) to their exclusive objects (prameyas) is opposed by the Naiyayika theory of the co-operation of different means of valid cognition (pramanasamplava). According to the Naiyayika, the same object can be known by different means of valid cognition (pramana), viz. perception, inference, verbal testimony, etc.

The Buddhist contends that if the same object is known in the same way, by perception and inference, then either of the two sources of cognition will be redundant. If X is already fully known, by perception, in its entirety, then inferring the identical X would serve no purpose. The controversy regarding prammanavyavastha versus pramanasamplava will be discussed in detail in

Jayanta's Critique of the Buddhist Theory of Pramana as Avisamvadakajnana

According to Dharmakirti, Jayanta Bhatta says, both perception (pratyakya) and inference (anumana), as valid cognitions, present (pradarsayati) objects to a knower. The initial presentation is later on interpreted by concepts and expressed in a judgment (adhyavasaya). If the presented object is desirable, there arises in the knower volition (pravrtti) to obtain it. If the object is detestable, there arises in the knower a volition to avoid it. Finally, the volition leads the knower successfully either to the attainment of the object or to its avoidance. In brief, the validity of cognition is invariably linked to its un-contradictedness in experience.

Jayanta Bhatta asks the Buddhist to clarify whether the object thus cognised through the instrumentality of valid cognition is the object of presentation (pradarsana) or that of judgmental awareness (adhyavasaya). The object perceived, in Jayanta's view, cannot be the object of both presentation and attainment. An object perceived is

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undoubtedly directly presented to the knower. However, inasmuch as the Buddhist considers everything to be instantaneous (*ksanika*), the object perceived would not endure at the time when the object is supposed to be attained. In so far as the object of inference is known only indirectly, it cannot be said to be the object presented to the knower.

Neither is the Buddhist entitled to claim, Jayanta argues, that the object attained is the object of judgmental awareness. Since the Buddhist admits that the object of a judgment is conceptual, and conception is the result of imaginative construction (*kalpana*), its object cannot be real. Consequently, it is not possible to attain it.

The Buddhist contends that although a real object, *svalaksana*, is momentary, yet it produces a series (*santana*) of similar momentary real *svalaksanas*. Attainment of a later member of such a series is as good as the attainment of the earlier member (of the series) perceived. Jayanta considers such a contention untenable. The hypothesis of a series cannot be established inasmuch as the Buddhist is unable to solve the dilemma as to whether such a series is identical or not with its members. If the series is not identical with the members, if it is something over and above the members, then, in contrast to the individual momentary members, the series would have to be considered as enduring. And such a consideration would throw overboard the Buddhist momentariness theory. If, however, the series is considered to be identical with the momentary members, the series itself would be momentary and, as such, incapable of being attained.

There is another difficulty, Jayanta believes, Buddhist would be at pains to deal with if he insists upon uncontradictedness (*avisamvadakatva*) or attainability (*prapakatva*) as the invariable characteristic of a valid cognition. The Buddhist classifies objects of knowledge as either desirable (*upadeya*) or undesirable (*heya*) and claims that valid cognition leads a knower either to successfully attain the desirable or to get rid of the detestable. However, Jayanta points out that among the objects of valid cognition are included, besides the desirable and despicable, objects about which we feel indifferent. The knower is neither inclined to attain them nor to get rid of them. Hence, all talks of attainment or riddance is

ruled out as far as these objects are concerned. And yet such objects are surely validly cognised (as cognitions of them are neither erroneous nor doubtful). Hence, the Buddhist attempt to analyse the source of valid cognition in terms of attainment (prapti) or abandonment (parihara) of the objects is doomed to be a failure. As the Buddhist definition of the source of valid cognition as uncontradicted knowledge fails to apply to the valid cognition of an object of indifference, such a definition is too narrow.

The Buddhist would like to argue that since the object one feels indifferent about is not a desirable one, it is negligible, and hence, belongs to the category of objects that are avoided or got rid of (heyavisaya). Jayanta, however, argues that such a Buddhist contention cannot be supported by reason. One cannot sensibly hold the thesis that a hermaphrodite (napumsaka) is a male because such a person is not a female, or that the former is a female because such a person is not a male. Similarly, an object of indifference is neither a desirable one (upadeya) nor an object that is got rid of (heya).

When someone passes through a road a tuft of grass or fallen leaves would come within his/her field of vision. He/she feels neither inclined to obtain them like valuable objects (such as umbrellas) nor to avoid them like dreadful creatures (such as snakes). Yet, such a vision is a true cognition (in spite of its failing to produce the appropriate volition).

Perhaps the Buddhist would rejoin that it is not necessary that a valid cognition or its source must lead the knower to successfully obtain or abandon the object. What is necessary is that a valid cognition or its source must present the object to a knower in a proper way. Even if such a presentation of the object does not lead to its attainment, the validity of a cognition of a negligible object (upeksanyavisaya) would still remain intact in so far as it discharges its function (vyapara) of presenting the object in a proper way (visaypradarsana) [which is the necessary prerequisite of a cognition's eventually leading to the attainment of the object known]. The king does not kill the enemy himself. However, since he gives the order to kill, he can be regarded as the ultimate killer in that sense.

Jayanta points out that if the presentation of the object (pradarsakatva) be the distinguishing mark (laksana) of a valid cognition, then the illusion of water in a mirage could also be said to be a valid cognition. The reason is: that illusion also has the character of presentation of an object.

12.3 JAYANTA'S CRITIQUE OF THE BUDDHIST THEORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS HAVING FORM

According to the Nyayavadi Bauddha, a cognition is valid when the form (tiktira) of the object corresponds to that of the cognition. A correlate of this theory of correspondence, arthasarupya, is the Buddhist theory of sakaravijnanavada. According to this theory, consciousness (vijnana) always has specific forms (akara), which, in its turn, is due to the objects' leaving impressions of their forms on consciousness or cognition. Jayanta reacts against this theory in the following way:

If consciousness or cognition is to have a form, then the question the Buddhist is supposed to answer is : how is that object which is different from consciousness known ? Is it known through perception or through inference?

Jayanta points out that the Buddhist cannot possibly argue for the second alternative consistently. Inference is based on knowledge of universal concomitance (vyapti). The relevant universal concomitance would take a positive and a negative form: (i) whenever consciousness assumes a form there is an external object which impresses its form on it; (ii) whenever the external object of a certain form is absent, consciousness does not have any specific form. Since the Nyayavadi Bauddha, Jayanta urges, believes that an external object is known only indirectly, through its impression on consciousness, and never directly, he is not entitled to argue for such positive and negative concomitances. Only a Naiyayika, who believes external objects to be independent of consciousness and known directly by consciousness, is entitled to argue for such concomitances.

Neither can the Buddhist contend, Jayanta argues, that consciousness is aware of such external objects through perception. Since, according to the former, both the external object and consciousness have their respective different forms, he will have to admit that when the external object is perceived, both the specific forms are perceived simultaneously. In Jayanta's opinion the simultaneous apprehension of both is not possible, as is evident from introspection. Moreover, in Jayanta's view, the Buddhist position would lead to a vicious infinite regress. Since the form of the object cannot be known by a cognition without form, by parity of reasoning, it has to be admitted that the knowledge of the said cognition, having a specific form, also cannot be had by a cognition lacking any form. However, the second cognition having a specific form, can also be known only by a cognition having a specific form, and the latter again by another consciousness of a specific form. A vicious infinite regress would thus set in.

The Buddhist may contend that the above theory is not affected by the said regress. After impressing its own form on cognition the external object, together with its form, merges without any residue with the form of cognition. It is not fair to maintain that when an external object is perceived, the forms of both the external object and the cognition are simultaneously perceived. Only the form of the cognition is perceived thereby.

Jayanta, however, does not find the Buddhist contention satisfactory. This contention, in his opinion, implies that the external object ceases to exist after having completely submerged itself into the cognising consciousness (*jnanatmani samarpitatma bhavati*). However, to retain the validity of a continuous perception (*dharavahikapratyaksa*) it must be admitted (keeping in mind the Buddhist theory of momentariness) that another object comes into being after the object of the first moment is perceived. Yet, the second object will cease to exist at the third moment of a continuous perception. Still another object must be admitted to spring into existence, if the validity of the perception of the third moment is to be acknowledged. In this way, Jayanta points out, another sort of

infinite regress would tend to vitiate the Buddhist theory of cognition/consciousness having a specific form.

Jayanta's Critique of the Buddhist Theory of Pramana as Agrhitagrahi

Jayanta is critical of the Buddhist view that an accredited source of valid cognition (pramana) must have novelty (agrhitagrahitva) as its necessary criterion. He presents the Buddhist case in the following way.

What, the Buddhist asks, is the function of the so-called source of valid cognition which acquaints us with what we are already acquainted with? It cannot be said to be production of a knowledge which has already been produced. Nobody can kill a bird which is already killed. The accomplishment of an accomplished task is both impossible and futile. Similarly, repetition of the knowledge of the same thing is useless.

Jayanta, however, reacts to it by observing that although the object cognised remains the same, yet a source of cognition of the already cognised (grhitagrahipramana) reveals the same object in a different way on a succeeding occasion. Since its product is a new piece of cognition regarding the same object, its function is not the accomplishment of what is already accomplished.

It is not fair to ask: why does a source of valid cognition reveal what is already revealed? The question cannot be addressed to a source of valid cognition as it is not a conscious individual. Neither can it be addressed to a conscious knower. Since the knower cannot help seeing the same object once again when his eyes are in contact with it, he cannot be remonstrated for seeing the same object already envisaged. Is it fair to ask him to close his eyes and refrain from seeing the same thing?

Moreover, such a source of cognition, Jayanta adds, cannot be proved to be an invalid one, inasmuch as the object revealed by it on a previous occasion cannot be said to be contradicted (vadhita) in any way by a later cognition. Hence, the grasping of what is already grasped is no bar to its being a valid source of cognition.

12.4 Critical Consideration of Jayanta's Criticism of the Buddhist

Theory of (i) Pramana and (ii) That of Cognition Having Form

As we have already shown, in Jayanta's opinion, valid cognition cannot be analysed in terms of attainment or avoidance of the object presented in valid cognition. As an indirect knowledge, inference cannot be considered to be a presentation of an object. The object of perception, which disappears after being presented, cannot exist at the time of attainment. Hence, the object perceived cannot be attained either. Inasmuch as judgmental awareness (*adhyavasaya*) deals with the imaginary, the Buddhist is not even entitled to claim that the object attained is an object of judgment.

However, we should bear it in mind that, according to the Buddhist, presentation (*pradarsana*) is not restricted to perception. Even the object inferred can be said to be the object presented. Presentation really boils down to bringing an object to the level of awareness of the knower.

It is true that the object initially presented to the perceiver is not attained at a later time. What is attained is a momentary object, which is a later member of the series of objects, causally produced by the object of the initial perception. It is a *svalaksana* interpreted by the superimposition of a concept on it (*samanya laksamaasamaropita-svalalaksana*). Hence, it is not, strictly speaking, identical with the *svalaksana* perceived. However, it is not completely distinct from the perceived *svalaksana*, since it is specifically causally linked with the former. Because it is an object interpreted by concepts, judgmental awareness (such as 'this is water') undoubtedly colours this perception. Yet, the object attained is not strictly speaking (as Jayanta would have it) only a fully constructed imaginary unreal. Since it is a product of relational thought (connecting the *svalaksana* with a conceptually constructed *samanyalaksana*), which is necessarily carried on by the use of words, it cannot, strictly speaking, be a measure of reality. However, the construction involved here is different from the figment of imagination like the sky-flower (*khap pa*). It is a construction that arises in the train of sense-object-coordination

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(indriyarthasannipata), being strictly determined by the similarity between the form of the object and that of cognition (arthasarupyā). Neither the svalaksana nor the concept (vikalpa) super imposed on it are pure figments of imagination. As a result, the object of attainment, in the case of perception of water, is a svalaksana which has causal efficacy (such as the power to quench thirst), and not a purely imaginary object like an imagined water (which lacks the causal efficacy to quench thirst). Undoubtedly, unless the initial perception is followed by a judgment (savikalpakadhyavasāya) involving concepts (viz. this is water, and this is desirable), that perception cannot generate volition to attain the object. Yet, the Buddhist is very careful in pointing out that the power a judgmental awareness following the initial perception has, to lead to the attainment of the object, is only a power derived from that of the initial perception (pratya ksabalotpanna). If the initial perception lacked similarity (sarupyā) between the form of the object and that of the cognition, the consequent judgmental awareness could not, by itself, lead to the attainment of the desired object. Hence, the Buddhist cannot agree with Jayanta's contention that the object attained is the object of judgmental awareness (adhyavasitavisāya). Since the original source of the power of attainment is not judgmental awareness, the latter cannot be said to lead to the attainment of the object of valid cognition.

Let us now try to assess the force of Jayanta's criticism that since our knowledge of the negligible (upeksaniya) does not lead to any attainment or rejection, valid cognition cannot be characterised as uncontradicted knowledge that leads to attainment (prapakajna).

We must point out at this stage that the Buddhist tries to exhaust the universe of discourse in terms of the bipolarity between a class (and the concept generated by its perception), and its complementary (and the concept generated by its perception). Thus, he tries to comprehend the whole universe of discourse by analysing it in terms of the bipolarity of the two raises such as momentary (ksanika) and eternal (nitya), cause (karaka) and non-cause (akaraka), simultaneous (yugapat) and successive (kramena), existent (sat) and non-existent (asat). Of course, the complementary class does not consist of homogeneous members. There

are many heterogeneous (asama/visama) constituents lumped together in such a class. But in spite of heterogeneity (vaisamya) the members of the class are conceived as being linked by a sort of common conceptuality. In this way he tries to exhaust the entire universe of volitional discourse in terms of the desirable and the undesirable. Since the negligible object is not desired (upadeya) by the knower, the Buddhist tends to include it in the complementary undesirable (anupadeya) class. Of course the class of undesirable includes in its fold both the dreadful ones (like poisonous snakes) and the objects about which we are not particularly concerned. A dreadful object is similar in some respects to the negligible (upeksaniya) in so far as both are unwelcome and unwanted (anakamksita). If such an unwelcome object or person appears before us we feel rather irritated and want it/him/her to be out of our way. This feeling arises out of a sense of our wanting to avoid it/him/her (parihanabuddhi). It is not unreasonable to hold that a negligible object (upeksaniyavisaya) is quite similar to an object we want to avoid (heyavisaya). Of course we do not try to exterminate it/him/her like a dreadful poisonous snake. Nevertheless, the possible conative response we would feel in the presence of such a negligible object would be similar to that of avoidance (nivr̥tti). However, the question remains as to whether a Buddhist like Dharmakīrti is entitled to treat the negligible to be identical with the detestable in all respects. Probably Dharmakīrti never intended to treat the two as identical. He probably only suggested that the two belonged to the same category.

We could do well to remember that, according to Dharmakīrti, the characteristic of being able to lead to the attainment of the object that a source of valid cognition possesses is nothing but the following.

A valid cognition is a cognition which presents its object in such a way that if the cogniser feels an urge to attain it, he/she would be successful in attaining it (pravartakatvamapi pravrttīvisayapradarsakatvameva).

The negligible object would, as far as Dharmakīrti is concerned, count as an object of valid cognition, in so far as it is presented to the knower in such a way, that in case the knower had wanted to get rid of it, she/he would have been successful in doing so. The validity of the cognition of

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the negligible thus does not consist of its ability to arouse a volition to get rid of the object, but rather in its presentation in the way mentioned above.

We would now try to assess the force of Jayanta's critique of the Buddhist theory of cognitions having form (sakaravijnanavada).

Jayanta pointed out that the Buddhist is unable to give a satisfactory account of how the objects which impress their forms on consciousness are eventually known. The Buddhist would react by maintaining that the existence of the external object is known through inference. He would start by pointing out that since the form a cognition is endowed with (such as in the case of the cognition of a pot) is an emergent phenomenon, there must be a causal factor responsible for it. Nothing is self-caused. The forms of cognitions are not, accordingly, caused by cognitions themselves. Hence they must be caused by external objects having specific forms.

It is obvious that the Buddhist would not have to infer the existence of external objects with the help of positive and negative concomitances that Jayanta advances in his critique.

As regards the infinite regress Jayanta points out the Buddhist is likely to point out that such a regress is possible only on the hypothesis that a cognition is always cognised by another cognition (jnanantara-grahyavada). As far as the Buddhist is concerned, he holds that a cognition is self-cognised. It is the nature of a cognition that it reveals itself as well as the object. Jayanta however criticises the self-revelatory character of a cognition. We shall have the occasion to deal with Jayanta's critique later on.

Jayanta contended that the Buddhist hypothesis of the external object's merging with the cognition after impressing its form on cognition would make continuous perception impossible. The Buddhist, however, would point out that this is hardly an objection against his position, inasmuch as he does not endorse the validity of a continuous perception. According to the theory of universal flux, the enduring existence of an object is impossible. Consequently, the continuous perception of an enduring object is also impossible.

The Buddhist complains, as we have noted above, that a source of cognition that grasps what is already grasped is completely redundant and useless. Jayanta retorts by remarking that grasping of what is already grasped is not wholly redundant. It does have some effective purpose. We are all acquainted with ferocious animals like tigers and venomous reptiles like snakes. However, even when we come across such dreadful beings, on each occasion we feel frightened and run away from them anticipating danger. Conversely, on every occasion when we come across a piece of sandalwood, camphor, jewellery and an attractive woman, we feel delighted. Hence, it is unfair to argue that a source of repeated cognition of the object is redundant and useless, and, accordingly, invalid.

Reacting to Jayanta's observation the Buddhist would point out that, according to his doctrine of universal flux, there is no enduring object. Hence, he would not agree that the same beneficial and pleasing ones (like a particular sandalwood and an attractive woman), or the same harmful ones (like a particular tiger and snake) appear time and again; and on every occasion the person confronting them is subject to fresh emotions of pleasure or fear. On every such occasion the object concerned is really different from object perceived earlier (in spite of a similarity of appearance). And this is why the fresh apprehension of a novel object (of the same kind) effectively produces a fresh feeling of fear or pleasure. (Such an apprehension is valid not because it is not contradicted by another apprehension, but because it is an apprehension of an object having causal efficacy.) Thus, the Buddhist could reaffirm his theory of the object known by a source of valid cognition as being always a novel object.

Any discussion of the Buddhist theory of pramana invariably leads us to the Buddhist theory of pramanadvaividhya or pramanavyavasthti (restriction of two pramanas to their respective objects). Jayanta's critique of the Buddhist theory of pramana thus necessarily includes in its fold a critique of the theory of pramanadvaividhya/pramanavyavasthti advocated by the Buddhist. We will now turn our attention to a critical reflection on Jayanta's critique of the latter theory

12.5 JAYANTA'S CRITIQUE OF THE THEORY OF PRAMANAVYAVASTHA: BUDDHIST DEFENSE AND POSSIBLE

The Nyayavadi Bauddha contends that the two accredited means of valid cognition, viz. perception (pratyaksya) and inference (anumana), are restricted to the knowledge of their exclusive objects, viz. svalaksana and samanyaksana (manam dvividham visayadvai vidhyat). The sources of valid cognition are determined in accordance with their objects, and not (as the Naiyayika holds) in accordance with the mode of their presenting objects. The objects exclude each other, and thus exhaust, between them, the universe of cognisable, and exclude the possibility of there being a third sort of cognisable object. (Just as a class X and its complementary exhaust the whole universe of discourse.) The Buddhist would have accepted a third source of valid cognition if a third type of object could be proved. But since a third type cannot be proved, an additional means of knowing it cannot be admitted.

The Buddhist may be asked: how does he know the nonexistence of the third type? The Buddhist would reply that perception itself reveals the non-existence. It is to be noted at this point that the Nyayavadi Bauddha himself did not explicitly treat the controversy regarding restriction (vyavastha) or non-restriction (samplava) of pramanas in his treatises. All arguments in this controversy as recorded by Jayanta seem, therefore, to be in accordance with Jayanta's own interpretation.

The Buddhist is supposed to have clarified his point by remarking that the perception which is directed towards a blue object grasps it as blue (as excluded from the non-blue). That which is an object of awareness of blue is blue, and that which is not the object of such an awareness is non-blue. Hence the possibility of the existence of a third type of object is ruled out. And it is the perceptual knowledge which rules this out.

The distinguishing mark of something being considered blue or non-blue is the former's being an object of the awareness of blue and the latter's not being its object. The same rule holds good in the case of the objects

of direct perception and non-perceptual awareness. A direct perceptual knowledge indicates its object as a directly perceived one. It also indicates that what is not known by such a perception is the object of inference. We should, by the same logic, try to disprove the possibility of a third type of object other than the svalaksana and the samanyalaksana.

The Buddhist may argue that the non-existence of a third type (rasi) of object, besides the svalaksana and the samanyalaksana, may also be proved by inference. If two things are opposed to each other (e.g. hot and cold), then, when one of them is grasped definitely, the negation of the other is certainly established. Accordingly, when a svalaksana is definitely perceived, that perception negates the fact of a samanyalaksana as its object. If any third type of object besides the svasamanyalaksana existed, it would have been opposed to the duo. The definite cognition of svasamanyalaksana by perception and inference respectively then rules out the possibility of a third type of cognisable (viruddhaya rekaraparicchadasamaye dvitayanirasanamavasyam bhati, viruddhatadeva sitosnavat trtiyavisayo'pi tadviruddha eva tadbuddhipratibhasamanatvat). Since the existence of the third type of object is ruled out, the possibility of a third source of valid cognition is also eliminated thereby.

It may be argued against the Buddhist that one thing can be said to the opposite of another only when they are known to be so opposed. Since the third type of object, besides the unique svalaksana and the constructed samanyalaksana, has never been cognised by a Buddhist, how can he prove the opposition (virodha) between it and the duo?

The Buddhist may be prompted to reply by arguing that to know the opposition between X and not-X, the knowledge of opposites is not necessary. X is said to be opposed to that which is not grasped when X is presented to our awareness. An object is proved to be the opposite of those which are not revealed by its awareness. Thus the twofold classification of all objects of valid cognition, as shown by the Buddhist, may be said to be an established fact. In this way, the whole universe of discourse may be exhausted in terms of a class of objects and its

complementary. Between perception, revealing only a unique svalaksana and inference, a constructed samanyalaksana, the whole universe of discourse is exhausted. There is no third knowable.

One and the same object cannot, the Buddhist may contend, be revealed by more than one source of valid cognition. The revelations would be either of the same kind, or of a different kind. If they are identical, then one of them would be redundant and use less. Revealing the same object in the same way is use less and also absurd like the crushing of what is already crushed. If the revelations are different, then they would oppose each other, and consequently, if the initial revelation is valid, then the later revelation would be regarded as invalid.

The Naiyayika upholds the theory of pramanasamplava, viz. the mutual cooperation of many a means of valid cognition. But the Buddhist thinks that it is hard to establish that there is a common object of many a source of valid cognition. Perception only reveals an exclusive particular, svalaksana. A constructed universal can only be known by an inference.

If it is admitted that an inference and a verbal testimony have the same object as that of perception, then the resultant knowledge would be similar. But perceptual knowledge is never similar either to the inferential or the verbal knowledge. The light of the stars or that of the moon is entirely different from that of the sun that illuminates the entire world. The Buddhist thus holds that what is sensed is absolutely different from the object of verbal knowledge. A blind person does not see the colour, but gets an idea of it on hearing the word, 'colour'. Moreover, the perceptual experience of being burnt is totally different from the knowledge of burn produced by the word burn.

12.6 JAYANTA'S REJOINDER TO THE BUDDHIST VIEW IS AS FOLLOWS :

Jayanta does not agree with the Buddhist view that perception is competent enough to exclude the possibility of a third type of object besides svalaksana and samanyalaksana.

Since in the Buddhist view perception is a non-conceptual cognition, it cannot judge. It cannot even connect the content of the antecedent cognition with that of the consequent one (by associating the object of the former cognition with words, universals, etc.) How can such a perception, which is incapable of judging, establish and arrange the objects and the means of cognising them, and exclude the possibility of a third means of cognition? The power of determinate cognition following pure sense perception is limited to imaginary construction. Such a cognition dealing with the imaginary is also incapable of establishing properly the real objects and the real means, of cognising anything validly and thereby excluding the possibility of the third type mentioned above.

A perception while revealing its object does not also reveal its perceptual character (*pratyaksata*). A perceiver only knows the object blue, in its own form. His/her perception is not of the form, 'I am perceiving blue.' What actually is the perceptibility of an object? Is it just its being the object of the sense-organ (*aksavisayatva*)? Or is it the fact of an object's being within the range of knowledge produced by the sense organ (*aksajajnanavisaya tvam*)? According to this latter alternative, whatever comes within the domain of knowledge produced by the sense is perceptible. (The definition of the perceptibility on this view can also cover cases where perception is dependent on the memory of the past state of the object.) Of these two alternatives the first one is really known by inference based on the concomitance in presence and absence of the sense with the sensory knowledge produced. (The sensory knowledge of the object is produced when the senses operate, and it is not produced when the senses do not operate.) This knowledge is obviously an inference.

Nor can the perceptual character be known from the fact that an object has come within the range of knowledge produced by the sense. Since no perception is introspected at the time when the object is perceived, the perceiver is not aware of his perception. An object and its perception have different forms, which should be simultaneously present in a perceiver's consciousness if it be held that the perceptual character is

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known by perception. While perceiving anything we never have two experiences of the form: 'this is perception' and 'this is an object of perception.' We have only an experience of the form that an object is being perceived.

The Buddhist may point out that if perception is not self-revealing, then it cannot even reveal an object. The underlying idea is that the distinguishing mark of an awareness (like perception) is that it shines in its own light. And matter is revealed by the light of consciousness. If awareness itself remains unconscious, veiled, like matter, how can it reveal a material object? Perception thus must know itself as a perception.

Jayanta at this stage points out that the Buddhist will have to face a dilemma if he insists that perception is known as a perception. Is that perception revealed by another cognition? Or, is it self-revelatory? On the first alternative, the second cognition concerned will have to be the object of still another and so on ad infinitum. On the second alternative, if a cognition be an object of its own self, then, qua object it will be no better than an inert thing like a blue or a yellow patch.

The Buddhist may, however, contend that if nobody is aware of his awareness, then there will be hardly any difference between an emergent cognition and a non-emergent one. In case a subject is aware of something and yet he or she does not know the fact that he or she is aware, his or her awareness is as good as nonawareness. And, if a cognition emerges, and yet the subject is not aware of it, then it will be hardly distinguishable from a non-cognition. In the absence of a difference between an emergent and a non-emergent cognition everybody, would be either absolutely ignorant or omniscient.

Jayanta however points out that the essence of a cognition consists of its revelation of an object. It does not consist in its power of self-revelation. When such a cognition emerges in a person, the person becomes a knower. When such a cognition does not emerge in some cases, the person concerned is called an ignorant one. In this way, Jayanta claims, the difference between an emergent cognition and a non-emergent one

lies in the fact that the former makes a person a knower and the latter fails to do so. Hence, the Buddhist contention, Jayanta urges, is baseless.

A. Possible Buddhist Answers

The Buddhist is likely to argue that perception is quite competent to point out that when someone perceives something, he/she is immediately aware of the fact that he/she is perceiving. As pointed out by Dharmakirti, perception is analysed, neither in terms of an effect of sense-object-contact, nor in terms of what comes within the range of the knowledge produced by such a contact. Perception is conceived by Dharmakirti as a direct awareness (sakastkarijnana) And when a person has direct awareness of an object he /she does not have an iota of doubt that he/she is directly cognising something.

Moreover, Dharmakirti rightly points out that if a perception does not reveal itself as a direct mode of cognition, it cannot effectively reveal anything as a directly apprehended object either. The difference between an inert object and a conscious knowledge lies in the latter's capacity to illumine itself. Unlike an inert unconscious object an awareness both reveals itself and its object. It is true that we do not have two simultaneous perceptions of the form : 'I am perceiving X' and 'this is perception'. But this should not deter us from claiming that we are directly aware of the fact that a particular cognition is a direct one.

The supposed infinite regress would vitiate the Buddhist position only if the Buddhist acknowledged that an awareness is an object of cognition like an inert thing. The Buddhist makes an absolute distinction between the way an object is known and the way an awareness reveals itself. It makes no sense to claim that the sun reveals itself in the same way it illuminates the objects on which its light is reflected.

Inasmuch as a knower would have to be identical with the ego or self (atman), the Buddhist does not acknowledge a knower in addition to the acts of cognition. Hence, the attempt to distinguish between an emergent and a non-emergent cognition with reference to the concept of a knower would be a pointless one as far as Buddhist epistemology is concerned.

An emergent cognition, in the Buddhist perspective, is such an awareness which makes itself known as soon as it is produced.

Jayanta's Reaffirmation of the Theory of Pramanasamplava Buddhist Reaction and Possible

A. Jayanta's View

Jayanta reaffirms the Nyaya theory that an object is known by more than one pramana by pointing out the speciality of inference as a pramana. An inference is dependent on the knowledge of the relation of invariable concomitance (vyapti) between a probans (hetu) and the probandum (sadhya). Jayanta alleges that the knowledge of a relation depends on that of the relata. Now, the probandum, a relatum in an invariable concomitance, is regarded by the Buddhist to be a constructed universal (samanyalaksana). According to the Buddhist admission, the knowledge of such a constructed universal owes its origin to an inference, inasmuch as only inference is capable of knowing a non-particular. Inferential knowledge is thus dependent on the knowledge of invariable concomitance. At the same time, the knowledge of invariable concomitance is, as already shown, dependent on inferential knowledge. This is surely a case, Jayanta contends, of anyonyasrayadosa (defect of circular reasoning).

In addition, Jayanta contends, if the knowledge of the probandum, a relatum, owes its origin to an inference, then, in order to make that inference a valid one, the knowledge of another invariable concomitance would be required. As this knowledge of the further relation of invariable concomitance depends on the knowledge of its relata, a fresh instance of inference would be needed in order to produce the knowledge of this relata. A vicious infinite regress is thus likely to crop up.

In order to avoid the defects of circularity and vicious infinite regress the Buddhist should rather admit that what is conducive to the knowledge of the invariable relation between the probans and the probandum is not any inferential knowledge, but rather perception. The universals involved in the knowledge of concomitance are real universals, and not products of conceptual construction. As real universals inhering in individuals

(vyakti), they are grasped by the perceptions of the individual (vyakti). Thus, the Buddhist should have no qualms in admitting that it is the same universal, e.g. firehood, which is known by perception on a particular occasion and can, in a different circumstance, be known through the knowledge of its invariable concomitance with an other universal, e.g. smokehood. This admission, Jayanta points out, is readiness to accept that the same universal known by perception can, on another occasion, be known through inference. And this is really agreeing with the Nyaya view of the cooperation of different pramanas (pramanasahplava) in cognising the same object.

In support of the theory of the cooperation of different pramanas Jayanta gives an example. An object which is perceived at one time at a particular place, can go beyond the range of perception if it exists in a different place and time. It can then be inferred. The same object, which is now only inferred at a particular place, was an object of perception earlier at a different place. It can again be an object of a future perception when it comes within the range of perception.

Jayanta urges that the Buddhist charge of redundancy, if the pramanasamplava theory is accepted, noted earlier, has already been tackled with when it was shown that a pramana need not have novelty (agrhitagrahitva) as its necessary characteristic. Again, it is quite possible, as the Buddhist contends, that two pramanas may reveal the object in two different (and, consequently, in contradictory) ways. However, Jayanta says, in such a case the revelation by a pramana that is more powerful would cancel that by the less powerful one. For example, the powerful antecedent knowledge, 'this is silver' would cancel (and stand in the way of the production of a) subsequent knowledge of the form, this is not silver.

An individual object, which is a substratum (dharmin), Jayanta continues, is possessed of many properties (dharmas). When it is maintained by a Naiyayika that perception, inference and verbal knowledge can all be engaged in cognising the same object, what is meant is that they are all engaged in revealing the identical substratum (dharmin) underlying the different properties. Depending on the different

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conditions of cognition, perception, inference and verbal testimony reveal respectively, the different properties of the object. For example, perception reveals the specific properties of fire (like its bright colour and heat), inference reveals its generic property (of firehood), and verbal testimony also reveals its generic nameable property. Jayanta quotes in support of his case Vatsayana's observation. Vatsayana observes (in his commentary on Nyayasatra):

From the words of a trustworthy (authoritative) person (aptapurusa) we come to know that a fire exists in the distant hill. This verbal information only tells us in a general way that an object qualified by firehood exists in the hill. It thus gives us a knowledge of a certain property of the object. Relying upon this verbal information we proceed towards the hill and when we reach it we see smoke and infer the existence of fire. This inferential knowledge is still concerned with some generic property of fire. Upon advancing further, we come in the vicinity of fire and perceive its specific features (like its special colour, heat, etc.). In this way, although the same individual that is the substratum (dharmin) is approached by different prama, yet what is revealed by them are, strictly speaking, its diverse properties (dharmas). It should be quite clear that there is a diversity in the revelations by the diverse prama. Hence, the revelations are not superfluous and redundant (each being concerned with revealing different properties of the substratum). And the variety of revelations are conditioned by the different conditions in which cognitions originate. The difference of pramana is dependent, not on the object (which remains the identical dharmin) but on the modes of knowing them.

The theory of pramanasamplava is, however, not applicable to all cases of cognition. In some cases the restriction of pramanas (pramanavyavastha) is imposed on a particular pramana revealing a particular object only. Take, for example, the Vedic injunction, one who intends to be in heaven should perform the agnihotra sacrifice. It alone can reveal to a knower the fact that ascent to heaven is possible through that sacrifice. Neither perception nor inference can reveal this fact. On hearing the roaring of thunder one infers its cause, thunder-cloud. This

knowledge is not available by perception or by scriptural injunction. One knows directly that one has two hands. In the majority of cases all sources of cognition cooperate in the production of the knowledge of objects. But there are a few cases in which a particular source of cognition gives us an exclusive knowledge of its object.

1. Check your Progress-1

The Buddhist theory of the restriction of pramanas (pramanayavastha) to their exclusive objects (prameyas) is opposed by the Naiyayika theory of the co-operation of different means of valid cognition (pramanasamplava).

Buddhist Reaction

According to the Nyayavadi Buddha, whatever is a samanyalaksana is the product of conceptual construction (kalpana). As a conceptual construction is not an object of direct knowledge, it can be cognised only mediately. Any mediate knowledge is treated by the Buddhist as a kind of inference ('anumana'). It is to be noted here that the word, 'inference' ('anumana') is used by the Buddhist (i) in a broad sense, to refer to any conceptual cognition whose relationship with an object is a contingent one, and (ii) in a restricted sense, to refer to that conceptual cognition, which basing itself on an invariable concomitance is necessarily related to a real object, svalaksana.

When the Buddhist claims that the probans and the probandum related in universal concomitance are constructed universals (vikalpas) and, hence, are inferred objects, they use the word inference in the first sense. As this inference is not based on an invariable concomitance, the Buddhist theory of inference cannot be said to be vitiated by circular reasoning or by an infinite regress.

12.7 LETS SUM UP

We have already noted above how the Buddhist would not agree with Jayanta's remark that repeated observations of a harmful or desirable

object must be recognised to be pramana as on every occasion of their recurrence they produce fresh emotions of fear or pleasure. Jayanta's observation that, in case of the possibility of a conflict between cognitions it is the verdict of the stronger one that cancels the verdict of the weaker one, would leave the question, the Buddhist would point out, as to how one could decide which cognition is weaker and which is stronger, unanswered. Jayanta makes it clear that, that which is the common object of a plurality of pramanas is only the substratum of the properties. The Buddhist does not consider the substratum to be a real entity over and above the so-called 'properties'. In his opinion the proper object of a pramana is nothing but the so-called property. The Buddhist would not, for the reason shown above, agree with Jayanta that a substratum remains the identical object of perception, inference and verbal testimony. (The Buddhist does not consider verbal testimony to be a pramana. Accordingly, he would not even be concerned to disprove that perception, inference and verbal testimony all reveal an identical object. The object of perception, the Buddhist contends, is svalaksana. A svalaksana is an indivisible object, no part of which remains unrevealed when it is perceived. As such, it would not be fair, in the Buddhist opinion, to claim that an unrevealed property of it is revealed by inference or any other pramana. (Inference, in the Buddhist opinion, has as its object a constructed generality, which is no real property of the svalaksana.)

12.8 KEY WORDS

Praman vyavastha The Buddhist theory of the restriction of pramanas

Praman samplava: the mutual cooperation of many a means of valid cognition.

12.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Nyaya View on Pramana Samplva

2. Buddhist view on Praman Samplva

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12. 11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- According to the Naiyayika, the same object can be known by different means of valid cognition (pramana), viz. perception, inference, verbal testimony, etc.
- The Buddhist contends that if the same object is known in the same way, by perception and inference, then either of the two sources of cognition will be redundant. If X is already fully known, by perception, in its entirety, then inferring the identical X would serve no purpose.

UNIT 13 SCEPTICISM

STRUCTURE

13.0 Objectives

13.1 Introduction

13.2 Nagarjuna's Critique of Knowledge and Pramanas

13.3 Nyaya Defence of Knowledge and Pramanas

13.4 Is Radical Scepticism Feasible?

13.5 Let Us Sum Up

13.6 Keywords

13.7 Questions for review

13.8 Suggested Readings

13.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of knowing
- know the philosophical understanding of epistemology

13.1 INTRODUCTION

UNCOMPROMISING empiricism leads to scepticism. One can stop short of the sceptical route by making some sort of a compromise. But compromises need not always be degrading or scandalous. The question arises, on the other hand, whether scepticism itself is a coherent position. Would not the sceptic himself run into some dilemma of his own? It may be claimed that even the 'uncompromising' sceptic eventually makes a compromise of a sort. we shall pursue this question here, after presenting the arguments of the Indian sceptics, viz. those who reject altogether the pramana doctrine along with its emphasis upon the empirical foundation of knowledge, while tentatively accepting the empiricist stance of their opponents.

A philosopher has to learn to live with the sceptic, for they are both in the same profession, so to speak. A sceptic is not an intruder in the

Temple of Truth, he shares the same concern for truth with the philosopher, and is reluctant to accept anything less. A sceptic is first and foremost an 'inquirer', and in this regard, all philosophers participate in inquiries and play the role, at least provisionally, of a sceptic to varying degrees. Both persist in seeking and probing, but a sceptic is distinguished by his persistence or concern, which is (the philosopher rightly points out) out of proportion, and hence, impractical. Thus Kumarila says about the hyper-sceptic: If somebody imagines (the existence of) even some unknown counter-argument, he, doubting his own self, would be destroyed in all practical behaviour. But this rebuke which the sceptic receives from his opponent-the rebuke of being impractical, holding an impossible position and leading to an impossible situation-seldom matters to the sceptic, (as will be shown below) he can argue his way out. Thus the frequent jokes and insults that are normally heaped upon the sceptic are, vide of the mark. For instance, Udayana points out that if the sceptic does not believe what he does not see, then he should not believe that his wife is alive when he is out in the street and hence should mourn for her death. Against such attacks the sceptic can justifiably claim that his point has been seriously and severely misunderstood. Or if, as Russell has said, radical scepticism is untenable and impractical, for 'from blank doubt, no argument can begin', the Indian sceptic might reply: (i) that he does not see a great virtue in practicality when one is seriously embarking upon a theoretical dispute; and (ii) that he is again being misunderstood for he does not doubt simply for the sake of doubting, nor does he seek nothing beyond uncertainty ('blank doubt'); he simply refuses to prejudge the issue and to believe beforehand that there is 'the rock or clay' (the indubitable ground for certainty) to be reached once we have 'cast aside the loose earth.

The sceptic claims that his sceptical position is what is demanded by consistency for he sees that the pro-arguments and the contra arguments for any thesis are equally balanced. If it is shown however that scepticism itself involves some inconsistency or that it is an incoherent position to hold, then it would be a serious objection indeed and should

be answered adequately. Nagarjuna's scepticism about all existents (bhava), or about all philosophical positions was actually accused of paradoxicality and therefore inconsistency. This critique presented by the pramana theorists such as Nyaya can be given in the form of a dilemma: if all things lack existence or all theses lack certainty (in Nagarjuna's language, lack svabhava or essence or ownbeing), then this particular thesis (and it is also a 'thing') must not lack essence. For if it does, there is no reason for us to believe it and Nagarjuna should refrain from asserting it. And if it does not, there is at least one counter-example to falsify Nagarjuna's thesis. Objections of this sort were formulated in the Nyayasutra and in Vatsyayana's commentary.

We can use the notion of utterance and meaning to formulate the same problem. If the sceptic's position is that all utterances are devoid of (i.e. empty (sunya) of) meaning, then this itself cannot be an utterance. For if it is, it falsifies itself. We can think of 'meaning' here as something that is not necessarily separable from thinking or intending. This is at least the non-technical sense of meaning. For we cannot mean something by utterances unless we have thoughts that we intend our utterances to mean. Both Nagarjuna and his opponents use such schematic terms as bhava and sva-bhava which are general enough to allow such interpretations. Their argument presupposes that a statement or an utterance is to be included in the domain of bhava. For it is stated as follows: 'If all bhavas are empty of their svabhava, then your utterance (vacana or saying) that all bhavas are empty must also be empty of its sva-bhava for it is also a bhava.'

Whether the above formulation expresses a genuine paradox or not, it did have the consequence of showing that pure scepticism (or the Madhyamika scepticism) cannot be consistently maintained. Nagarjuna's reply is to be found in the Vighrahavyavartani. He says: 'I have no proposition, no thesis to defend (which may lack any essence). If I had any thesis, I would have been guilty of the faults you ascribe to me. But I do not, hence I have no fault.'

This reply of Nagarjuna is amazingly simple. But can he get away with this? The purport is that 'no (philosophic) thesis has svabhava, i.e.

essence-is itself not a thesis. It is not an assertion. It may be an utterance but only an empty utterance. To put it another way: 'No statement is certain, or has svabhava, or is meaningful' should not be regarded as a statement, so that we cannot raise such questions whether or not it is itself certain, has svabhava, or is meaningful. I think this reply should be satisfactory, for at least it is not inconsistent on the face of it. For it is quite possible that every thesis lacks essence or svabhava, and this will remain so even if there is nobody (not even a Nagarjuna) who asserts it as a thesis. If anyone asserted it, he would falsify it; but if nobody did, there is no falsification. We can imagine a possible world where all assertions made are empty but there is nobody to make the crucial assertion that all assertions are empty. A. N. Prior once followed J. Buridan in resolving the paradox with 'no statement is true' in more or less the same way: 'But if God were to annihilate all negative propositions, there would in fact be no negative propositions, even if this were not then being asserted by any proposition at all. The air of paradoxicality in the sceptical position, then, can be resolved only at the expense of disallowing the sceptic to assert his own position. For it is possible for a sceptic to believe that all beliefs have dubious value, including the said belief in question! One can raise many questions here against Nagarjuna. Is not his way of wriggling out of paradoxicality incomplete without a Buridan-like assumption that there is a higher power which decrees what is or is not in the world? I think Nagarjuna would rephrase the point differently: It just so happens that everything is empty (lacks svabhava), but it must remain unsaid, for to assert (say) it is to falsify it.

Dismissing the air of paradoxicality in the above manner, Nagarjuna proceeded to formulate some serious criticisms of his rivals, the pramana theorists, the Naiyayikas in particular. What he called in question was the very concept of pramana, our standards of proof, our evidence for knowledge. He did not use what is generally called argument from illusion, nor did he appeal to the fallibility of our cognitive process. He did not argue on the basis of the fact that we do misperceive on many occasions, or that we make false judgements more often than not. Instead

he developed a very strong and devastating critique of the whole epistemological enterprise itself and therefore his arguments have a lasting philosophic value.

13.2 NAGARJUNA'S CRITIQUE OF KNOWLEDGE AND PRAMANAS

If we claim that we have means of knowing (pramana) the way the world is, or if we believe that we have such means available to us, it stands to reason to ask further: how do we know those means of knowing? For, obviously, we have to know or recognize that those are the means we have; otherwise, it would be like having in our pocket some money, the presence of which we are unaware and which therefore would be useless for all practical purposes. A means is not a means unless it does something and hence if we have the means, we have to make them effective. To make them effective, we have to know that they are there. Nagarjuna therefore raises the legitimate question: how, or through what means, do we know that they are there? By raising such a question, Nagarjuna is not simply urging a fault of circularity against his opponents. For there will be other serious logical difficulties in store for the Naiyayika or the pramana theorist.

In the above argument, the pramana theorist seems to have conceded already that the means of knowing can also be, or can be turned into, the object of knowing. (A pramana is also a prameya, i.e. is among the knowables. If this is so, then we need further pramanas to measure them.) If our means is turned into an end, then to achieve that end we need further means. If our standards for determining others are themselves to be determined by another set of standards and then a further set is needed for the second set of standards, we may regress into infinity and our search for the final standard may never come to an end. In the words of Nagarjuna: If the proof of the pramanas were by means of other pramanas, then there would be an "infinite regress" (anavastha). There would be no proof of the first, nor of the middle, nor of the last." In Sanskrit dialectics this fault is called 'lack of a firm grounding'. This

situation as the sceptic envisions it would partly be comparable to the never-ending search for the rock-bottom certainty. In Cartesian epistemology for instance, a similar sort of scepticism is presupposed and the epistemologist tries to come forward with either the cogito, or the sense-impression, or the self-evident sense-data, as his final court of appeal.

There may be objections against my use of the term 'scepticism' in connection with Nagarjuna. One could say that Nagarjuna was a Buddhist and not a sceptic. It may also be said that if a sceptic is simply one whom Descartes characterized as a person who doubts only 'that he may doubt and seeks nothing beyond uncertainty itself, then he would try to cast doubt upon as many fundamental beliefs of the pramana theorists as possible and certainly Nagarjuna has not followed this method. By calling Nagarjuna a sceptic, or rather by using his arguments to delineate the position of my sceptical opponent of the pramana theorists,

Such a general characterization would undoubtedly be applicable to Nagarjuna, Jayarasi, and Sriharsha although we can understand that even in Ayer's discussion the sceptic becomes more specific in raising some questions. He raises questions about such things as whether, or how, we are justified in making assertions about physical objects on the basis of our sense-experience, or in assuming and talking about other minds on the basis of their bodily behaviour, or in regarding our memories as giving us knowledge of the past. Nagarjuna, however, raises more fundamental questions about the consistency of the pramana doctrine as a whole: he asks whether or not our so-called standards of proof form a coherent system, whether our fundamental assumptions are endowed with at least psychological certainty. It is his contention that in the long run the concept of the standard of proof would be found to be self-refuting or self-stultifying.

However, the charge of infinite regress against the pramana theory is not a formidable objection for there are obviously several alternative ways of answering it. Nagarjuna anticipated and countered most of them. Some of his counter-arguments will be examined here so that one may

appreciate the position of the sceptic in so far as he offers formidable objections to the pramana theory.

The purported answers of the pramana theorists may fall into two general categories. First it may be claimed that there are some, if not all, means of knowing which do not require any further means for knowing them, for they are what may be called self-evident or self supporting (svatah prasiddhi). Second, the authoritativeness of the means of knowing may be derivative in a way that need not lead to any infinite regress. The locus classics of this argument is Vigrahavyavartani, verse 51. I shall, however, rearrange the alternatives as follows:

A. Neither knowledge nor means of knowing derive their authority (or validity) from anything else. They have (intrinsic and natural) authority and validity.

A proof is used to prove something else but it itself does not require a further proof. A piece of evidence is evidence for something else but is itself self-evident. This can obviously have two ramifications:

- (i) Each piece of knowledge is self-validating, each means of knowing is self-supporting, each piece of evidence is self-evident.
- (ii) A subset of knowledge-pieces or a subset of pramanas as are self-supporting and self-evident and upon these we base others of their kind.

In either case the analogy would be fire or light which reveals itself besides revealing others. (Nagarjuna confounds the argument based upon fire-analogy.) The first view is upheld by the Mimamsakas (including the Vedantins) as well as the Buddhist pramana theorists. The second view may be attributed to the epistemologists in the Cartesian or the Humean tradition who want to reach rock-bottom certainty, casting aside the loose earth and sand. Nagarjuna's criticism is applicable to both of them with equal force. For in either case we have introduced a clear-cut dichotomy. The pramanas belong to a privileged class, the set of the self-evident, self supporting items, while the other

items, viz. prameyas, are not so. Nagarjuna questions this dichotomy as well as the validity of the principle lying behind it.

The question is why certain items, the so-called self-evident or the self-supporting 'means', should be sacrosanct, i.e. should enjoy the privilege of being independent of any requirement for further support. A dichotomy proposed by a philosopher should be based upon some dichotomizing principle and the philosopher concerned should be prepared to spell out the latter. In other words he should not only say what the difference is but also, and more importantly, account for the same. This is exactly what Nagarjuna demands: 'Visea-hetus ca vaktavyah. And the reason for such differentiation should he stated).' what exactly is being asked here? The pramana theorist has to account for the fact that why out of all items in the world certain items do not stand in need of being established or revealed to us by a means, while others necessarily do. What accounts for this difference in character? To say that it is the nature of one kind of things to reveal and that of the other to be revealed will not serve the purpose, for that will be hardly more helpful than saying, as we have already said, that one group comprises the means of knowledge (pramanas) while the other group comprises the objects of knowledge (pramanas). For in philosophy appeal to the nature of things is almost as good (or as bad) as an appeal to the caprices of Nature or Providence.

The second difficulty, Nagarjuna points out, is that the pramana theorist by introducing this dichotomy contradicts his original thesis the very thesis that started the debate . The pramana theorist started with the fundamental thesis that everything is established, or made known by, some pramana or other. In fact, the very well-known and much-debated Nyaya thesis is that to be an object of knowledge (prameya) is a feature shared by all things whatsoever. Now it is being suggested that there are certain things, self-supporting pramanas themselves or self-evident pieces of knowledge, which do not require a further pramana or a further support. If to answer this difficulty it is urged that these self-supporting 'means' of knowing are not absolutely independent but simply require nothing beyond themselves to be proven valid or sound, then Nagarjuna

could go back to his first criticism: how to account for the alleged difference or discrimination between pramanas and prameyas?

The question Nagarjuna raises is fundamental to scepticism in the Indian tradition. The early Nyaya method is essentially a programme that presupposes an initial doubt (samsaya), and through the employment of pramana, moves on to reach a certitude (nirnaya) at the end of the inquiry. This is not exactly Descartes' project of pure inquiry which is carried on with the fictional malin genie who devotes all his efforts to deceive us.) According to Nyaya, if a state of dubiety is to be entertained with regard to the truth of any proposition (thesis) before certitude is reached through the application of pramanas, means of knowledge or evidence, then a similar state of doubt could ipso facto be entertained with regard to those very means of knowledge or evidence before certitude regarding their effectiveness or efficacy can be reached. This is presupposed by the Nyaya programme for arriving at certitude. If the means or evidence for knowledge is not subjected to this procedure, then Nyaya is simply arguing for a preferential or privileged treatment for a set of items, the pramanas, which is unwarranted. By admitting the universal possibility of doubt Nyaya is committed by the same token, according to Nagarjuna, to the possibility of universal doubt.

The Naiyayika cannot say that he has chosen the means of knowing as requiring no further evidence and hence immune from doubt because of our subjective feeling about their certitude or indubitability. For one thing, this subjective feeling may not be universal. The Nyaya programme is to establish objective evidence for all things whatsoever and hence the same requirement must be met for the means of knowing as well. It is true that the self-evidence or self-validity of knowledge, or its means, is not accepted by the Nyaya School. But in so far as the Nyaya method is partially accepted by philosophers who argue for the 'self-evidence' thesis, Nagarjuna's criticism would be relevant. In his sceptical refutation of the pramanas, a Nagarjunate obviously moves here from the universal possibility of doubt to the possibility of universal doubt, though this passage from one to the other may not be logically warranted.

It is indicated that Nagarjuna's critique of knowledge would be relevant even if we transpose it to the Cartesian programme for the foundation of knowledge. Descartes himself paved the way for the super-critic by introducing the fiction of the malin genie. His own programme was to reach a set of irresistible and indubitable propositions on which to lay the foundation of other kinds of knowledge. This was quite in line with the general task of any philosopher, whether of East or West: to cast doubt on everything in order to reach certainty, to destroy apparent platitudes in order to gain genuine certitudes. Or as Ryle once suggested, the task is comparable to the destruction-tests by which engineers discover the strength of materials. We all know that the destructive side of the Cartesian programme proved more convincing and successful than its positive side. To be sure, Descartes' search for truth was also a search for knowledge as well as a search for certainty. An obvious criticism was that he set his standards too high to make it attainable by his programme. But this criticism does not apply to the Nyaya method, for there the standard for certainty is not set too high. Without doubt it is made to depend upon standard means of knowing and evidence. Once the standard means of knowing are recognized, very little remains to frustrate the programme. If the initial doubt is removed through standard procedures, we have obtained a piece of knowledge. Hence Nagarjuna's strategy was to find an internal inconsistency in the very presupposition of the programme. If everything is to be considered certified (certain) when and only when the means of knowing certifies them, why should the means of knowing not be certified in a similar way?

Where Descartes would reach his set of irresistible and indubitable propositions, the cogito or the idea of a benevolent creator for the successful completion of his programme, a Nagarjunite could very well say: 'Why are the indubitables indubitable, while the others are not?' It is well known that Descartes involved himself into a circularity for he used the criterion of self-evidence in order to prove the existence of God and then used God to validate the criterion of self-evidence. A Nagarjunite would have loved to expose this circularity for his sceptical

claim is that either all propositions should be subjected to doubt to ensure their final and objective certitude, or none should be so subjected. If we select some, that would be unwarranted preferential treatment. The moment our programme sets objective certitude of propositions as its goal we forfeit the claim to demand objective indubitability of our self-evident, subjectively irresistible propositions such as envisioned in the cogito or the benevolent creator.

The epistemologist may give up the claim of self-evidence or the non-derivative nature of the authority pertaining to the means of knowledge or knowledge itself. He may choose the second alternative and say:

B. A piece of knowledge or a means of knowing derives its authority and validity from something other than itself (pramana). This can lead to the following possible positions:

- (i) A piece of knowledge derives its authority from another piece of knowledge. One instance of perception is proven by another instance of perception or by an inference. One instance of inference is proven by an instance of perception or by another inference. A piece of verbal knowledge is proven by an instance of perception or an inference and so on. Nagarjuna notes all these cases in his Vrtti (verse 51).
- (ii) A piece of knowledge is validated by its 'object', which is part of the independently existent real. It assumes that there is a knowledge-independent world and that there are independently existing entities, the nature of which is known when we have knowledge. The real object validates knowledge as well as its means.
- (iii) Our means of knowledge and our objects of knowledge are mutually dependent. They validate each other. (Notice that this answer tries to bypass the question of the existence of a knowledge-independent world.)

A third alternative C is also formulated by Nagarjuna, which says that the validation of the means of knowledge is a-kasmat 'unaccountable',

neither intrinsic nor derivative. This however could be included in alternative A (the non-derivativeness of the pramanas)

Alternative B(i) is summarily rejected on pain of the regressus ad infinitum. But this may not be as absurd as it is made to appear under the sceptic's scrutiny. This may be a very pragmatic solution of the age-old problem. To prove A we may need B and to prove B we may need C, but it is then possible that we do not need to prove C also. The reason for not requiring to prove C may not be the claim that C is self evident, but that the question regarding C's validity has not arisen. Such contingency may stop the regress, but that is not the crux of the argument. The main point is: must we necessarily validate C before we use it as a means to prove B?

There is the dubiety principle which we must accept: If C proves B, and C is doubtful, then B is also doubtful. There is also the invalidation principle. If C is the only way to prove B, and C is invalidated, then B is invalidated. But we may not require a validation principle along the same line: If C proves B, and C is validated, then and then only B is validated. For this would be too strong. We can simply say: If C proves B, then B is validated. The issue here is connected with two broader questions about the concept of knowledge. First, if I know that p, must I know that I know that p? Second, if I know that p, must I always feel certain or will there simply be an absence of doubt? As we shall see later, the Naiyayika argued that from the fact that somebody knows that p, it does not necessarily follow that he knows that he knows that p. For example, on entering this room someone may know, on the basis of perception, that there are four chairs in this room without by the same token knowing that he knows that there are four chairs there. His knowledge-episode proves here that there are four chairs there, and hence the proposition that there are four chairs there is validated. But it would be too odd to claim that his knowledge-episode must also and always be validated by another knowledge-episode. (For he may not always know that he knows!) All these intricate problems will engage us later on (Chapter 5). For the present we can only say (and I follow Vatsyayana on this point) that the

regress to infinity can be stopped, and is actually stopped, despite Nagarjuna's insinuation.

Alternative B(ii) can indeed be upheld. For a knowledge-independent world can indeed validate our knowledge and its means, provided they are in accord with that knowledge-independent world as it really is. But the sceptic is quick to point out that the existence of that very knowledge-independent world is what is in question here. An epistemologist can say of a cognitive situation that it yields knowledge only when it is in accord with his experience. For we cannot know about a cognitive situation that it is in accord with the world as it really is without encompassing that knowledge-independent world within the act of cognition. We thereby run into circularity. We posit the world (the *prameya*) to validate knowledge and then validate the world by the criteria of that knowledge itself. It is like Descartes' attempt to prove God through self-evidence and then use God to validate the criterion of self-evidence.

Alternative B(iii) is rejected by Nagarjuna because of the fault of mutual dependence, which is no doubt a kind of circularity. But why the position is asserted at all by explicitly courting the mutual dependence? Is there any sense in which it seems plausible? The answer is yes. I think the model of mutual dependence is not necessarily a faulty model. For when two sides are equally weak and uncertain, mutual dependence in the form of mutual reinforcement of certainty may be regarded as a virtue rather than a vice. If two propositions are mutually dependent upon each other, while both lack certitude, is there any comparative gain? It may be argued that both may be allowed to stand until either is proven wrong or right. There may be greater collective plausibility to both of them, although there is no strong argument in favour of either.

Besides, the mutuality of the means of knowing and the object of knowledge may point up another direction. If the object depends upon the means and the means upon the object, then both may be said to be knowledge-dependent. This position will then have a consequence that will be welcome to the Buddhist phenomenologists and other idealists. If we locate the object in what appears in experience, and identify

knowledge with what makes it appear the way it does, we court some sort of mutuality between knowledge and its object, which may point up their essential non-difference. In any case, such a position cannot be treated lightly or rejected on frivolous grounds.

13.3 NYAYA DEFENCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND PRAMANAS

Analogy is often a powerful argument in fundamental matters. The analogy of knowledge or its means with the light of a lamp adds just that much credence to the pramana theory as to make the epistemologist's programme hath plausible and possible. The position is an extended version of the self-evidence thesis discussed above. Knowledge or means of knowledge establishes both itself and its object, for it is like the light of a lamp which reveals both itself and others. Nagarjuna criticizes it as follows:

It may be said-my means of knowing establishes both itself and the other. As it has been said: Fire (i.e. light) reveals itself in the same way as it docs others. The means likewise establishes itself and the others... in reply we say: 'This analogy is improper. Fire does not reveal itself. For unlike the pot, fire is not seen to be unrevealed in darkness.' ... If it were the case that just as the pot is first unrevealed by fire while it lies in darkness and afterwards being revealed by fire (light) it is perceived, similarly fire being unrevealed by fire first lies in darkness and afterwards it is revealed by fire itself, then it would happen that fire reveals itself But this is not so.

Nagarjuna's source for this light analogy is not known to us, but an argument based on it is recorded in a similar vein in Nyayasutra 2.1.18. In reply to an objection raised in Nyayasutra 2.1.18 that if a 'means' is not revealed by another means it remains for ever unrevealed or unestablished, it says: It (the pramana) is established like the lamplight If this cryptic comment means that a piece of knowledge as well as its means establishes both itself and its object just as the lamplight reveals both itself and other objects, then Nagarjuna's criticism becomes relevant. (Vatsyayana, however, proposes a different interpretation of the

Sutra as we shall see below.) Nagarjuna rejects the light analogy by arguing mainly that it is improper to claim that 'light reveals itself' is a true proposition. For, he claims, it is more proper to say that light does not reveal itself. Hence the analogy does not work. But Nagarjuna does not completely succeed in this rejection. For what does he mean when he claims that light does not reveal itself? Is it, according to him, meaningless to say that light reveals itself? Further, if light does not reveal itself, does it simply mean that it is revealed by something else? Or is it revealed at all? Probably Nagarjuna would have claimed that it does not make any sense to say that light is revealed. For the expression 'light is revealed' may presuppose a prior existence of light before its revelation. We may concede the point that 'light reveals objects' is truly an awkward formulation. The expression may simply mean that there is revelation of objects. It may be that we are in fact asserting here the existence of some state of affairs or the happening of an event.

It is a stylistic device in language (as well as in thought connected with it) to separate agent, action, and object-patient, although we may be reporting a single happening or event. For example, when we report a battle we may say, 'They fought a battle'. 'Light reveals object' may simply be a stylistic way of saying 'There is revelation of objects'. Thus 'Light reveals itself' may be a stylistic variant for saying 'There is light'. But now we can push this point further to upset Nagarjuna's own strategy. The expression 'There is light' may be only a variant way of saying 'There is revelation of objects'. For it is impossible to separate clearly the existence of light and revelation of objects. If this is so, Nagarjuna has raised a vacuous question to confuse the issue. For you cannot have your cake and eat it. Nagarjuna intends to reject the statement 'The means of knowledge reveals or establishes itself' as meaningless because the analogical statement 'Light reveals itself' is meaningless to Nagarjuna as it stands. If instead of saying 'Light reveals itself' we are simply warranted to say 'There is light here and now', we can, instead of saying 'The means of knowing reveals itself', say *mutatis mutandis* 'There is or has been a means of knowing' or 'A means of knowledge has occurred or taken place'. Or, better still, we can say that

there is revelation or establishment of objects whenever there happens to be a means of knowledge, just as we say that there is revelation of objects whenever there is light. If the matter is resolved in this way, then the proposed fault of infinite regress or circularity cannot arise. For we cannot raise such questions as 'What does reveal the object?' or 'What does reveal the means?' For, it may be argued, it is not necessary for some agent to reveal the object whenever such revelation takes place. The agent-action-patient distinction may be an arbitrary linguistic device and not an ontologically significant one. The same applies to the means. Talk of a means may be a stylistic device only, and need not be taken to be ontologically significant.

The light analogy in Nyayasutra 2.1.19 presents, however, an exegetical problem. For, if it is cited to support the self-revealing character of knowledge or its means, that would not be in accord with the prevailing standard view of the Nyaya school. The standard Nyaya view is that a cognitive event called knowledge or knowing is neither self-revealing nor self-validating, but is revealed (known) by another episode of knowing and validated also by something besides itself. The first theory is technically called *paratah prakasa* and the second *paratha pramana*. As we have already noted, according to the view of *paratah prakasa*, from the fact that someone knows that *p* it does not necessarily follow that he knows that he knows that *p*. A means of knowing, in Nyaya view, cannot be likewise self-validated; it is to be validated, if necessary, by another means. Vatsyayana, therefore, interpreted the light analogy of the sutra in a way compatible with the standard Nyaya view.

Vatsyayana explains that the light (of the lamp) becomes a means when it is an aid to an act of perception of a visible object, but the same lamplight becomes itself an 'object' of another perception caused by its contact with the sense of sight. In this way, the light plays the role of a 'means' when it helps us to see an 'object', and that of an 'object' when it is itself seen by the sense of sight. The means and 'object' of knowledge are therefore not two distinct types of entities forming two ontological categories. The same entity (the same thing or the same substance) may play different roles—that of an 'instrument' or a 'means' as in 'I see the

table by the light', and of an 'object' as in 'I see the light by the sense of sight'. Ontologically, the same light doubles as a 'means' and as an 'object', depending upon different linguistic descriptions. The grammatical case-inflection expresses the particular role that our particular thought-construction has assigned to the thing in a given context. This is what Vatsyayana means when he claims that different karakas are not denotative of different things, but of potentialities (sakti) for different role-playing in the construction, and therefore the same thing or substance may appear in different roles indicated by the use of different case-inflections as in the following sentence constructions:

- (1) The tree stands there. (Nominative or agent)
- (2) He cuts the tree. (Accusative or patient)
- (3) He shows the moon by the tree. (Instrumental)
- (4) He sprinkles water in the tree. (Dative)
- (5) Leaves fall from the tree. (Ablative)
- (6) Birds live in the tree. (Locative)

Once we have thus understood the difference in the roles played by the same ontological entity, i.e. a particular tree, it becomes easy for us to understand, so argues Vatsyayana, that the difference between 'means' of knowledge and 'objects' of knowledge is the assigning of different roles to the entities in a given knowledge-situation. Certainly to be a means signifies nothing but playing the role of an 'instrument' in the generation of knowledge, and to be an 'object' means to fill in the role of an accusative case in a knowledge-situation. Notice that Vatsyayana's argument partly answers one of the Nagarjunian criticisms: *visesahetusa vaktavyah the distinction (between 'means' and 'objects' of knowing) must be accounted for*'. As this is not an ontological-type distinction, we need not go any further than what has already been said to account for it. Nagarjuna asks for the formulation of the criterion for some ontological or typological distinction, that between the pramanas and the prameyas, the 'means' and the 'object'. Vatsyayana, I think rightly, resolves the issue by pointing out that the so-called distinction is only a distinction in role-playing, or, to be exact, a distinction in grammatical features. To ask

why the same tree is the 'object' (accusative) in (2) above and a 'means' (instrument) in (3) above is to conflate an ontological issue with that of grammatical categories. Under one description the tree has become the 'object' and under another it becomes a 'means'. In this connection one may be reminded of the correct warning of G. E. M. Anscombe about the prevalent confusion regarding the nature of grammatical concepts: 'Grammatical understanding and grammatical concepts, even the most familiar ones like sentence, verb, noun, are not so straightforward and down-to-earth a matter of plain physical realities as I believe people sometimes suppose. Here Vatsyayana explains the underlying grammatical structure to answer a puzzle posed by Nagarjuna.

The charge of infinite regress is tackled by Vatsyayana in an ingenious way. He argues that it is perfectly natural for a 'means' to be revealed or established by another 'means' just as the lamplight reveals the table while it is itself revealed by our sense of sight. This process need not regress to infinity. For it is not essential for every entity to be known or revealed to us first before it can play the role of a 'means'. We see with our eyes, the sense of sight, but we do not see the sense itself. We can infer that the sense of sight exists in us from the fact that we can see, but the fact of seeing does not depend upon our prior knowledge of the sense of sight. In order to use the money in my pocket, I would have to know that I have money there; but in order to use my ear-organ, my faculty of hearing, to hear a noise, I do not have to know first that this is my faculty of hearing. A prior knowledge of the 'means' is not always necessary before that means can be used for the generation of a piece of knowledge. This also does not imply that such a means is a self-evident one.

Nyayasutra 2.1.16 uses another analogy (besides the light analogy) to answer the Nagarjunian sceptic. It is the analogy of the weighing-scale (cf. tula). Vatsyayana says: 'The scale is the measuring instrument for the knowledge of the weight measure, the heavy substance such as a lump of gold is what is measured, the "object" of knowledge. When by such a lump of gold another scale is examined, then in ascertaining the second

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scale the lump of gold is the instrument (pramana) and the scale the object measured (prameya).

Uddyotakara explains the light example of the Sutra in a slightly different way. He does not think that the example is intended to show that some or all pieces of knowledge or their means are self-evident or self-validating. It only shows, according to him, that the rigid distinction between what is a 'means' of knowledge and what counts as an 'object' of knowledge collapses, without necessarily implying thereby that the same item which acts as a means, or a piece of evidence, for something else is also evidence for itself. The opponent, i.e. the sceptic, insists that there are, according to the pramana theory, two separate domains-one is the domain of the means or evidence, the other, of the objects. A member of the first domain establishes, or is evidence for, some member of the second domain, and hence there would be a need for a third or a fourth domain (and so on ad infinitum) to contain items that would be evidence for members of the second (or the third) domain. Uddyotakara argues that the example of the lamp is used to point out that the rigid distinction between the first domain and the second domain collapses (for the same item can sometimes be a means and sometimes an object) and there is therefore no need to regress to infinity.

Uddyotakara cites an interesting case to illustrate his position in regard to the problem of self-validation of the means of knowledge. He says that when someone wishes to test the water of a lake, for example, he takes a sample, viz. one bucket of water, and puts it to test. Having tested the sample, he proves the water of the lake to be pure (or impure as the case may be). Here the sample of water is the evidence for the purity of the lake water and what establishes the purity of the sample of water also establishes the purity of the lake water. People say that the sample of water is the means for knowing the purity of the lake water, although it is part of the same water in reality. Just as we do not say in this case that the evidence is also evidence for itself, we need not say similarly that a means of knowledge is also a means for itself.

Uddyotakara's position is that something a can be taken to be evidence for something else, say b, and if and only if we search for as evidence

might we obtain another item, c, as evidence for a; but in practice, for every bit of evidence, we do not always need to search for further evidence. For practical life (vyavahara) goes on well as long as we are satisfied with the evidence that is available. It is maintained that a thing can be a measuring instrument to measure a lump of gold, for example, but what gives the measure of that lump of gold, can itself be tested by another measuring device. What measures the lump of gold is what we call a measuring instrument (a pramana) in so far as the lump of gold and such other things are concerned; but other devices are also available when we need to measure our measuring instrument, and in that context we should call it a measurable object rather than a means of measuring.

It may be argued that if our calling something a means of knowing or an instrument of measuring is in this way made dependent upon its direct connection with the act of knowing or measuring, then indeed we would not call something a 'means' when in fact it does not aid any measuring act or a knowing act. A measuring-stick will not be called a measuring-stick unless we measure something with it. Uddyotakara points out that our practice of calling something a means for knowledge, or for measurement, does not obey this ruling. For example, we do call somebody a cook (pacaka) even when he is walking along the street and is not cooking, e.g. 'There goes our cook'. Our practice or verbal usage is not simply arbitrary or unreasonable, for it is based upon the notion of powers or potentialities. The person we call 'cook' does not lose his 'power' or potency to cook just after one cooking. The power (sakti) existed in him even before the present act of cooking and will continue to be there, under normal circumstances, long after the present act of cooking. Hence when we see him walking along the street we say, 'There goes our cook'. This paradigm is applicable to our use of the term pramana or prameya, 'means of knowing' and 'objects of knowing'. We can call something to be a 'means' even when it is not acting as an instrument in generating knowledge. Uddyotakara says, 'He who does not understand the use of pramana and prameya with reference to the three time-stages (past, present, and future) contradicts even such ordinary uses as Fetch the cook.'

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The ontic status of 'power' or potentiality is, however, a highly controversial topic. Uddyotakara does not go into it here. He simply states that our use of words may be justified on the basis of this assumed presence of power or potentiality (to cook, for example) even when such power is not manifest. In other words, he argues for two different states of the same power—a manifest state when the power is actualized in action and an un-manifest state when the presence of such power is only assumed but not visible in the form of action. It is pointed out that even an ordinary object like a table or pot could be said to have an 'un-manifest' state when it lies in darkness invisible to anyone and a 'manifest' state when it is visible in light. It is not clear from Uddyotakara whether he would accept causal power or potentiality as forming a distinct reality locatable in the thing itself. It is the Mimamsakas who accept power or potentiality to be a distinct category (padartha) on a par with things and qualities. The prevailing Nyaya view, despite Uddyotakara's point here, is that causal power does not form a separate category, and it was Udayana who elaborately refuted the mimamsaka view about causal power.

The Nagarjunian sceptic may argue that there are no means of knowledge such as perception and inference, for they do not establish objects in any of the three time stages, past, present, or future. In reply, Uddyotakara claims that the sceptic contradicts his own statement (svavacana -vyaghata). For the negation in the implicit premise ('that which can never establish any object is not a means') cannot, by the same token, negate. Such a statement cannot be a means for establishing the said negation (non-existence) of the means, without itself being a means in the first place. Uddyotakara says that the case is like that of one who wishes to burn others by lighting his own finger. For either he would be able to burn others by burning, in the process, his own finger, or he would not be able to burn anything if he does not first burn his own finger.

I have already pointed out that Nagarjuna would allow such a situation. He would let his finger be burned with all readiness (destroy his own proposition, *nasti kacana pratijina me*) if that allows him to burn all

others. This, however, may be an impossible feat, for if I first burn my own finger, I cannot use it as a means for burning others, for that would be using a non-existent (already destroyed) means. However, Nagarjuna can remain silent without formulating his own statement, for if all other propositions do not in any case exist, a statement is not needed to refute them!

13.4 IS RADICAL SCEPTICISM FEASIBLE?

The upshot is that a radical scepticism of this kind is not, or does not seem to be, a storable position. For if it is storable, it becomes incoherent or paradoxical. In other words such a position could be coherent only at the risk of being unstorable. It seems to me that both radical scepticism and Nagarjunian Buddhism would welcome this situation, for here we may find the significance of the doctrine of silence in Madhyamika. (The same point may also explain the ironical comment of Aristotle, though not the irony of it, regarding Cratylus who only wiggled his finger, instead of teaching anything.) Is it the only way to make radical scepticism a coherent position? If it is, then the teacher-philosopher is forced to remain mute and so lose any chance of success in communicating his doctrine. But there is another way. The sceptic may claim, as Srihara explicitly did, that he enters into a debate simply to refute others and it is not his responsibility to state his position, much less to defend it. Assuming the standards of argument and proof of his opponent as only provisionally correct or acceptable, he would be inclined to show that the opponent's position is wrong, and there ends his philosophic discourse. In other words, his philosophic activity consists in refutation only, not in assertion.

The obvious difficulty here would be that the sceptic would have to answer the following challenge: How can he logically not assert anything while he refutes something? Is refutation of a proposition possible without any (implicit) assertion? According to the standard notion of logic, refutation cannot be successful without negating something, i.e. some proposition, and negation of some proposition P is

equivalent to assertion of not-p. If we follow this line of argument, then it is difficult to see how the sceptic can simply refute without asserting or stating anything. In other words, it is impossible to maintain the position of 'non-assertion' or 'non-statement', even though the sceptic enters into debate only for the sake of refutation. I think the radical sceptic has an easy answer to this problem. He may say that his refutation should not, and need not, be equated with the negation as it is understood in standard logic (where to negate p means to assert not p). His refutation is a strong refutation of a possibility (cf. Indian notion of *prasajya-pratisedha*) but without any implication for the contrary or contradictory possibilities. This notion of refutation is more or less prominent in our question-and-answer activity. It is a non-committal act of refutation or what once called the commitment less denial of the Madhyamikas.

What emerges here is that the problem of negation or the ambiguity of negative statement is philosophically very central. Negation, as Richard Rorty has commented (in private correspondence) 'is a fundamental, but ill-understood, ill-explained, and much-disputed notion across a wide philosophical spectrum'. The sceptic may or may not find his position paradoxical, but what we should not do is to attack or threaten the sceptic with the two very sharp horns of a dilemma, or a paradox which has been generated in the first place by our own standard classical logical definition of negation. The standard classical theory of negation in a two-valued system does capture, we must admit, a very pervasive sense of negation. But it is also a fact that some important uses of negation are left out in the account that we get from standard logic. The sceptic's use of negation, perhaps, can be better understood as an act of refutation, an illocutionary act where one negates some illocutionary force rather than a proposition.

I wish to refer here to J. R. Searle's distinction between a propositional negation and an illocutionary negation to explain the sceptic's point Y. This is, I think, quite suitable to explain the Sanjaya type or the Nagarjuna-type negation. Such negations were obviously formulated in the context of speech-acts. For example, Sanjaya said, 'I do not say it is so. Nor do I say it is otherwise and so on. If we construe assertion as an

illocutionary act and the proposition is represented by p , then we can write, 'I assert that p '. By illocutionary negation, we can then write for the sceptic's utterance, 'I do not assert that p '. Here the sceptic does not make another assertion such as 'not- p ', for illocutionary negation usually negates the act or the illocutionary force. A propositional negation would leave the illocutionary force unchanged, for the result would be another proposition, a negative one, similarly asserted as the affirmative one.

The sceptic's attitude of non-assertion is therefore a possible one, and this does not force him into a contradiction. He can very well say, 'I do not say that it is p . Nor do I say that it is not- p ', just as I can say, 'I do not promise to come, nor do I promise not to come'. I think the Buddhist dilemma or tetralemma could be better explained in the context of such illocutionary acts. Consider also the following. Suppose p stands for the proposition that everything is empty or that all assertions are false. A Nagarjunian sceptic has the perfect right to say, 'I do not assert that p , nor do I assert that that- p '. This does not seem to lead him to any position even when the sceptic participates in the debate only for the sake of refutation.

The sceptic in the Sanjaya-Nagarjuna tradition is more in line with the Greek sophist or the Pyrrhonist (as described by Sextus Empiricus) than with the Cartesian sceptic. But, nevertheless, the critique of knowledge and evidence that the Indian sceptic has generated can hardly be ignored by an epistemologist in any tradition. In classical India, as I have already indicated, the generally accepted style of philosophizing was the formulation of a *pramana* theory as the basis for a defence of some metaphysical system or other. The Nagarjunian critique was that this style of philosophizing is at best a distortion and at worst an illusion. For it assumes more than what is warranted by pure experience. The force of such arguments was to persuade us to recognize our philosophic activity, our *pramana* doctrine, for what it is, a fabrication, a convenient myth-making or make-believe, the inherent value of which lies only in making day-to-day life work smoothly and rendering inter-subjective communication successful. In short, the sceptic says that the *pramana* theorist either begs the question (while talking about 'evidence' or

'ways' or 'means' of knowing, such as perception and inference) by using a very questionable criterion to establish the standard for what should count as true, or he regresses to infinity to find out another criterion for this criterion and so on.

The sceptic's argumentation, through constant practice, is supposed to lead one to an insight into the nature of what is ultimately real (prajana). This transition from radical scepticism to some sort of mysticism (where the truth is supposed to dawn upon the person if he can rid himself of all false or unwarranted beliefs) is very pronounced in the Indian tradition, and it seems to be somewhat marginal in the Western tradition. Srihara claims that his Brahman does not need to be established through any means, for the eternal truth will illuminate and show itself as soon as the fabricated walls of misconceptions and false beliefs are destroyed, and dialectics only help to destroy them. Jayarasi, however, does not say anything about how the truth will come to light. For him all philosophic questions remain open, and in practical life he recommends common sense and normal behaviour. He says that those who understand the ultimate purpose recommend that we follow ordinary worldly behaviour (laukika marga), for with regard to ordinary behaviour the wise resembles the fool or the child. Sextus own commendation is not very far from it: 'We live in accordance with the normal rules of life, undogmatically, seeing that we cannot remain wholly inactive.'

13.5 LETS SUM UP

Even the 'sudden illumination' theory of the Indian sceptic-mystic is matched by another comment of Sextus. He compares the sceptic with Apelles, court-painter of Alexander the Great. Once Apelles was painting a horse and wanted to paint the horse's foam. Being unsuccessful several times, in despair he flung a sponge at the picture and, lo and behold, the foam was automatically painted by the throwing of the sponge. Sceptics get their ataraxia in this way all of a sudden. A Buddhist Zen master would have loved this analogy.

13.6 KEY WORDS

svatah prasiddhi : self-evident or self supporting.

Anavastha: infinite regress

13.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Bring out the arguments of Nagarjuna's critique of pramans

13.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT-14 THE SPECIAL ROLE OF SABDAPRAMANA.

STRUCTURE

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Nyaya View
- 14.3 Buddhist View
- 14.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 14.5 Keywords
- 14.6 Questions for review
- 14.7 Suggested Readings
- 14.8 Answer to Check your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about verbal testimony
- know the critical analysis of Verbal testimony

14.1 INTRODUCTION

ONE of the most important topics that have drawn the attention of Indian epistemologists from time to time is sabda-jnana or knowledge arrived at through linguistic means. The Nyaya as well as the Mimamsa systems of Indian thought made very sophisticated and detailed analyses of the notion of sabda- pramana or testimony as a means of valid cognition in order to provide rational - arguments for accepting the authenticity of the Sruti. The Buddhists, on the other hand, in their insistence on admitting only two pramanas found no need to accept sabda- pramana or information obtained through words as an independent source of valid cognition, but reduced it to inference. Accordingly, our proposed walk

along the paths of Buddhist epistemology would remain incomplete if we do not take a look at the Buddhist response regarding sabda- pramana.

14.2 NYAYA VIEW

To understand the Buddhist position, let us first state the position of the Nyaya school on sabda-pramana in brief. Sabda or testimony has been defined by Gautama in his Nyaya-Satra as aptopadesasabda; that is, testimony is the instruction of a reliable person. This definition has two implications. The first one is that the reliability of the statement or instruction depends on the reliability of the person who is making the statement. The second implication is that not simply any statement would be pramana but only those that contain true information in the form of valid instruction are pramanas. Thus the whole question of the validity of the sabda- pramana that is whether a sabda can be regarded as a pramana or not, centres round the question of the reliability or authenticity of the person who is giving the instruction. Accordingly, the Naiyayikas proceed to explain the notion of "reliability" of the instructor thus: "A reliable person is one who has direct acquaintance of the dharma, i.e. righteousness or the moral order of the cosmos and who is urged by a desire to describe the object as he has seen. Reliability or trustworthiness consists in the direct acquaintance of the object and he who acts with such reliability is called a reliable person. Such reliability can be the common characteristic of a sage, an honourable man (that is one who leads an orthodox way of life following the Vedas) and the barbarians (that is, one who does not lead such an orthodox life). And it is a well-known fact that the activities of all beings in their practical life are carried out on the basis of such reliable knowledge. This description thus highlights the fact that a reliable person must be saksatkṛta-dharma, that is, he must have immediate experience of the true nature of things. He must be non-deceiving. He must not be guided by any intention to deceive his hearers, rather must have the desire to describe the object of his immediate experience truly to them. In the Nyaya-Sutra it has further

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been pointed out that such reliable statements or sabda can be of two kinds according to whether the object it refers to is something manifest to the senses or not. While enumerating what is meant by the word artha the commentator explicitly remarks that it should not be held that the instruction of a reliable person is a pramana only with regard to the visible/manifest objects as they are apprehended through the senses directly; it is also a pramana even with regard to the un-manifest invisible objects since such objects can be apprehended by inference. With regard to the second kind of reliable words, the truth of the statement is completely dependent upon the trustworthiness of the speaker whereas the truth of the first statement is verifiable by direct perception.

According to the thinkers who accept the validity of testimony as a means of valid cognition, this testimony is admitted as different from sense perception since the object apprehended by it is beyond the reach of the senses. Nor can it be regarded as a case of inference, since it does not satisfy the three conditions prescribed for a valid probans. In the case of inference the object to be inferred (anumeya) is the subject as characterized by the probandum (sadhya). Such an inference is possible only when the probans is known to exist definitely in the locus. This condition known as pakasadharmata is not possible in the case of testimony. In the case of testimony, the subject (locus) itself is the object to be proved, since that is what is expressed by the word. And unless the subject is established, how can there be any definite cognition of the probans as existing in such a subject/locus? Secondly, in the case of testimony, there is no possibility of concomitance between the probans, namely the word and the probandum, namely the object, since often the object spoken of does not exist at the place or at the time when the word exists. Hence we cannot think of any concomitance between words and the objects denoted by them, which is very much essential if we are to treat testimony as a variety of inference. On the basis of such arguments the advocates of the testimony thesis argue that testimony cannot be considered as a variety of either sense-perception or of inference. But the cognition that is generated by testimony with regard to such object as

agnihotra, svarga, etc. is free from all sorts of doubt, and hence is valid. Therefore, we have to admit testimony as a separate means of valid cognition.

14.3 BUDDHIST VIEW

The Buddhists, however, do not accept testimony as a separate means of valid cognition or as pramana. In the Pramanavarttika as also in his auto-commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Dharmakirti discusses the Nyaya and Mimamsa theories on testimony. Dharmakirti thinks that there is no real connection between a word and its object; that is, no word can give us any information as regards a real object. Accordingly, testimony does not communicate a reality. But he, as also Dinnga, have regarded Lord Buddha as pramanabhata (he who is a means of valid cognition), and considered his words to be trustworthy even with regard to a thing beyond our control. This seems to be a dilemma - refuting the authenticity of testimony and at the same time admitting the words of Lord Buddha as authentic. Accordingly, the views of the Buddhists with regard to testimony seem to be very interesting and deserve mention in any treatise on Buddhist epistemology.

Let us first state the Buddhist critique of the Nyaya and Mimamsa theories. Dharmakirti in his Pramanavarttika starts the discussion by holding that "since words do not have any inseparable relation (nantariyakatva) with the objects, so the words cannot establish the existence of the objects. They are only expressive of the intention of the speaker." His point is that words are not just as the things are, for if that were so, on the basis of the words, the nature of the objects could be ascertained. The force of the argument lies in the basic thesis of his epistemology, namely that we can prove the existence of an object on the basis of something only when there exists the svabhava pratibandha relation between the latter and the former. The svabhava pratibandha or inevitable relation, which has been renamed here as nantarryakata is the force which can establish the connection of a sign with an object. In the case of agama, the sign is the word, and there is no inevitable

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necessary connection between the word and the object. The absence of such necessary connection is proved by the fact that if there were such a connection, the nature of the object could have been ascertained from the word. But that is not the case. From the word "fire" simply we cannot ascertain the nature of fire. Here the existence of the object cannot be proved from words. In other words, testimony or agama is not a *pramāṇa* with regard to the actual real object. From this, however, it would be wrong to conclude that agama or testimony does not have any worth. The worth of testimony lies, according to Dharmakīrti, in expressing the intention of the speaker. These words are produced on the basis of the intention (*avivaks*) of the speaker. Since there is a causal relation between the words and the intention of the speaker, there is a necessary relation between the two. Thus being inseparably connected with the intention of the speaker, words can make only this intention known.

But not every will of a person which is the basis of his intention corresponds to a reality as it is. In that case the speaker's intention which is based on such will, even when they are made known through words, would not be faithful to the real thing itself. After all, basically a thing, namely the word, being not connected by nature with another object, namely the reality, is not able to make the latter known. Therefore, words even though they form an agama fundamentally do not inform of a real thing.

In the second chapter of the *Pramāṇavarttika*, Dharmakīrti elucidates this point. According to him, words by themselves do not express a thing; it is on the strength of a particular linguistic convention that denotative words put in a meaningful sentence are made to express certain intentions or denote real objects by the speakers who use these words. The intentions of the speaker are meaningful constructions made out of concepts which are mentally derived from perceived real objects, momentary particulars (*svalaksana*). These concepts according to the Buddhists are "unreal"; they are not as real as the particulars from which they are derived. But these "unreal" concepts are very useful tools when they can impart information about real objects that produce useful

effects. Such information is correct insofar as the hearer, on the basis of it, strives for and really acquires the desired effect-producing (arthakriyakari) objects.

Apparently the view of Dharmakirti that words do not reveal any real object, seems to be inconsistent with the observation made by the master logician Dinnaga in his *Pramanasamuccayah*. In that text he regarded agama or testimony as a pramana. His statement goes thus aptavada visamvada- samanyad anumana. Since the words of a reliable person generally do not disagree with reality, the knowledge based on such words is an inference. Again as inference is accepted as a pramana by the Buddhists, it follows that Dinnaga has regarded the knowledge based on the words of a reliable person to be an inference on the ground that both inference and testimony (knowledge based on the words of a reliable person) are avisamvadaka, that is, do not disagree with reality.

This means that for Dinnaga agama is a pramana though it is not different from inference. But Dharmakirti, as we have seen, has said that the words do not depict the nature of the object. So an inconsistency seems to occur between the views admitted by the two Buddhist logicians, Dinnaga and Dharmakirti.

Dharmakirti himself resolves this inconsistency with reference to our practical behaviour. When Dinnaga considered agama to be an anumilna, his intention was not to describe the real authoritativeness of the agamas but to highlight the fact that human behaviours are often dependent on the guidance of the agama. A person in this world cannot live without depending on the authoritativeness of the sacred tradition. This is because from the agama he comes to know about the great blessings and the great misfortunes which result or do not result when one performs or does not perform some act, the consequences of which acts are not within the reach of one's present experience. At the same time the person has the conviction that the agama is right, on the basis of the fact that we do not see a contradiction to this statement regarding acts and their future consequences, when a person actually is in a state of great blessing or great misfortune. So, when an act, positive or negative, has to be done, it will be better that the individual performs the act in a manner as

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prescribed by the agama. By taking such practical considerations into account the teacher Dinnaga regarded agama to be a pramana that is an anumana. The upshot of the entire discussion is summed up by Dharmakirti in the following verse:

aptavadavisamvadasamnyad anumanata |
buddheragatyabhihita parokse 'pasya gocare ||

- PV, vs. 2019

Because the words of a reliable person generally do not disagree with our experience, the cognition based on agama is considered by Dinnaga as inference, even in those cases where the object of such agama is beyond the range of any other means of knowledge; since in those cases there is no other possibility to explain it.

Before proceeding to present the justifications for viewing agama as a type of inference, Dharmakirti states the general properties of an agama statement in the following verse:

sambaddhanugunopayam purusarthabhidhayakam |
pariksadhikrtam vakyam ato 'nadhikrtam param ||

- PV, vs. 217

That is, an agama or a reliable statement is one (1) whose words are coherent, (2) for which there are means that are appropriate for attaining the desired end, and (3) which expresses what is useful to a human being. Such a reliable statement alone is made the subject of investigation as to whether it can be considered as a pramana or not. A sentence, which does not possess these three characteristics, is not made the subject of investigation. Dharmakirti also has explained wherein lies the trustworthiness of such agama statements. According to him, the trustworthiness of such sentences about perceptible objects and imperceptible ones can be determined through the two pramanas, perception and inference, on the basis of the fact that the information contained in such sentences is neither contradicted by perception nor by the twofold inference later on. This twofold inference has been explained by commentator Karnakagomin as inference that operates through the power of a perceived real thing and inference that is based on

tradition. In other words, for an agama statement to be reliable or trustworthy two conditions must be fulfilled - first the information of the statement must have been obtained by the speaker through perception and inference, and secondly the information must not be contradicted by the subsequent perception and inference of the hearer.

Let us now have a look at the reasons why the Buddhist logician Dinnaga regarded agama as a type of inference. Dharmakirti offered two arguments in support of it. Insofar as a statement of a trustworthy person (like Buddha, etc.) or in general (as in directly verifiable cases) is reliable and thus reveals an object in an indirect manner as does inference, Dinnaga considers the knowledge generated by such statement, to be of inferential nature even in the case when the statement of the reliable person refers to an object which is not directly verifiable. So long as in the latter case no contrary results are perceived, there is no reason to deviate from the rule that the statement of a reliable person is like an inference. This first justification of Dharmakirti may be stated in the form of an inference:

- 1) The non-disagreement of a cognition is inferred even with regard to an object inaccessible to perception or inference.
2. Since the cognition is based on the words of a reliable person like other cognitions concerning objects accessible to either perception or inference.

Therefore, this cognition of inaccessible objects though is produced by the words of a reliable person does not only inform us of the intention of the speaker rather informs us about the nature of reality. Accordingly, such cognition by virtue of its character of non-disagreement with reality is regarded as inference and not on account of its natural character of being composed of words.

This first justification for considering the agama as a sort of inference rests on the fact that the character of non-disagreement with object (avisamvada) is shared in common by the statement as a pramana and inference as a pramana.

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The second justification that Dharmakirti offers regarding testimony's being a variety of inference is as follows. We have known through our own power of perception and inference the correctness of the truth concerning the thing to be abandoned (i.e. suffering) and of the truth concerning the thing to be attained (viz. the avoidance of suffering) along with the causes of both, namely the causes of suffering and the causes for the removal of suffering or the eightfold path. All of these are the teachings of agama. We see that these statements are true since they do not disagree with reality. So it can be concluded that the cognition originating from agama with regard to other things beyond our control is an inference:

heyopadeyatattvasya sopayasya prasiddhitah |
pradhanarthavisamvadad anumanam paratra va ||

PV, vs. 220

To state it elaborately, the fact that what is to be avoided, namely suffering, and what is to be attained, namely the removal of suffering, as also the causes of both suffering and its removal, have all been taught to us by a reliable person, namely Lord Buddha; and these are not contrary to perception and inference of the hearer. Accordingly, the non-contrary character of such knowledge constitutes the trustworthiness of these objects. Since the above-mentioned main things taught by agama serve the purpose of attainment of human end, they are worth utilizing. Again, since they are non-disagreeing with experience we will not be disappointed when we take it for granted that agama or testimony is of such a quality even with regard to other objects beyond our knowledge. Moreover, such a trustworthy testimony has no defect and the author being so credible, does not intend to gain anything for himself by telling useless and untrue things with regard to an object beyond our cognition. Thus with the help of the above two different arguments Dharmakirti tries to present justification in support of Dinnaga's statement that agama is a variety of anumana. It may be noted that here anumana means an inferential source (anumanakarana) like *linga*. Karnakagomin, for example elucidates that we should understand that agama is an inferential source on account of its being the cause of an inferential cognition

(anumanakaranatvat anumanam iti drastavyam). As it is impossible to explain in any other manner the authoritativeness of the agama by considering our ordinary knowledge, when some act is going to be done it has to be admitted that it is certainly better to act according to our agama. However, there is a word of caution. Since words do not have any inseparable connection with reality, in the context of agama as inference the possibility of error cannot be eliminated. The authenticity of the agama variety of inference depends on the authenticity of the speaker.

Though the Buddhists are ready to admit agama as a variety of inference or as included in inference, they do not accept the nature of agama as presented by the Naiyayikas. According to the Naiyayikas, a person endowed with such merits as the perception of an object as it is (yatharthadarsana), etc. is a reliable person. The words of such a person is considered as sabda or testimony and is regarded as pramana. In other words, for the Naiyayikas the authenticity of testimony follows from the superior quality (atisaya) of the aptapurusa (reliable person). The Buddhists reject this notion of the apta advocated by the Nyaya philosophers on the ground that it is impossible for men to cognize him as being such a person who has the superior quality within, and so the examination of that person as apta is impossible. Though the Buddhists are rejecting the Nyaya conception of aptapurusa, they do not disagree with the fact that ordinary people act with regard to an object beyond their control by depending on agama. They at the same time admit the existence of a credible/trustworthy person who tells the truth and they try to prove his existence on the basis of the following arguments:

1. Ordinary human beings are possessed of virtues (guna) as well as faults (dosa) which determine the rightness and wrongness of their behaviour.
2. All things which are sometimes inferior and sometimes superior, must have an opposite.
3. The faults have the quality of becoming inferior and superior (nihrasa and atisaya)

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4. Therefore, there is an increase and decrease (utkarsa and apakarsa) of the faults by the influence from the opposite thing.
5. The faults are produced from ideas (vikalpa).
6. Therefore, even if a person has the material cause of all faults, these faults are decreased by means of the repeated practice of a certain virtue (which forms the vipaksa) in the mind.
7. When this virtue attains a maximum, the faults are bound to be completely destroyed.
8. Therefore, it is quite possible that a person free from faults exists.

The question then naturally arises, how can we describe the person to be "free from faults" at all; for, even though his nature at present is free from all sorts of faults, is it not possible that these faults/defects might occur again? The Buddhists answer this question in the negative. Their point is that -

The essential nature of mind which is beyond disturbance and has the truth as its objects cannot be removed by the opposing things even if the person has made efforts to remove it. It is because his mind is completely leaning toward such virtue.

To state precisely, it is not possible for the person consisting of the opposite of faults to have faults because he is beyond all disturbances. First he has given up all the faults, secondly, he is free from the suffering which is connected with the actual occurrence of anger, etc. or with future existence, and thirdly, he does not shrink from the taste of felicity in the perfect calmness. Moreover, all kinds of faults originate from satkaya darsana or the conception of "I," "min," etc. This is nothing but nescience or avidya. So long as such nescience exists in human beings there is attachment to the self and mind; and from this attachment, hatred and other types of defects occur in the mind. Accordingly, in some scriptures delusion or moha is described as the root cause of all faults and in some other, the satkaya darsana is regarded as the cause. When these two, namely moha and satkaya darsana are destroyed, the faults will disappear. The person who has apprehended the truth, knows that -It is not "I," "It is not mine" and becomes free from afflictions.

Accordingly, for such a person no hatred or other defects can occur. Since moha or satkaya darsana is considered as the root cause, for the person who has been able to set himself free from these defects originating out of satkaya darsana through the repeated practice of the theory of no-self nairatmyavada there is no possibility that these defects will arise once again to him. Hence the contention of the opponents regarding the impossibility of a person's being free from defects or faults in future stands refuted.

With this discussion on the agama pramana in background, let us now discuss the views of the Buddhists on the words of Lord Buddha. In a half-verse of the text *Pramanasamuccaya*, Dinnaga shows his respect to Lord Buddha by regarding him as a pramanabhuta (as a means of valid cognition) along with other epithets like striving for the welfare of the world, being teacher, being well-gone as well as being the saviour - *pramanabhutaya jagadhita sine pranamyasasre sugataya tayine*. In this verse Dinnaga tells us that Buddha is a pramana on the ground that he possesses four other virtues. In the commentary Dinnaga briefly explains the reason why he regards Buddha to be a pramana, an authoritative speaker on religious matters. It seems that Dinnaga is using the word pramana in two different senses, the first one in a purely epistemological sense meaning the source of valid knowledge, and the second sense has a more general connotation where authority means right measure. If pramana in both the senses is predicated of Buddha, it would mean that he has become an expert or authority on religious questions of ultimate concern to mankind and that his statements on religious matters could certainly be regarded as valid like the knowledge derived from perception and inference. According to Dinnaga, Lord Buddha is a means of valid cognition or religious authority through his perfection in cause and effect, in order to produce reverence. The perfection in cause (hetu) and effect (phala) makes the Buddha, the religious authority that he is, makes him a pramana. Here cause refers to the Buddha's striving for the welfare of the world (jagadhita sine) and his being the teacher (sastri) while effect refers to the Buddha's being the well-gone (sugata) and his being the saviour (tayin). Thus according to Dinnaga, the last

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four qualities serve the purpose of describing the nature of Buddha's religious authority. The Buddha has perfected and saved himself, but he also saves others by teaching them the road to ultimate salvation, a road which he has travelled himself. This constitutes, according to Dinnaga, the condition for Buddha's being a pramana. Dharmakirti in the first few verses of the second chapter of his PV deals specifically with the issue, in what sense Buddha can be regarded as a pramana. In PV (11.1-6), Dharmakirti deals with the definition of the term pramana and in verse 7, the results of this discussion are applied to the doctrines of Lord Buddha to show that they are also pramana.

Check your Progress

Buddhist Critique of Sabda

As discussed earlier, for Dharmakirti sabda or knowledge conveyed by words, refers to words used in a coherent, meaningful sentence which teaches suitable means and expresses what is useful to man. Coherently formulated sentences which refer to practicable methods to gain something and which, moreover, discloses a desirable human goal, can really communicate practical knowledge about real objects to the hearer, even though such statements do not reveal particular objects themselves as direct perception does. The trustworthiness of a meaningful statement is tested only afterwards when the hearer really perceives and acquires for himself the effect of the particular that was described in the statement. In the context of Lord Buddha, we find that the teachings of the Buddha constitute trustworthy knowledge and reveal to the hearer facts that were not known before him. Lord Buddha has pointed out to others the useful things that are to be realized and informed them of the truths which were so far unknown to them. Further Lord Buddha does not deceive others (avisamvadayati) with regard to the ultimate goals of human aspiration. Since Buddha's words are avisamvadaka and ajnatarthaprakasaka, he can be considered as a means of valid

knowledge. The trustworthiness of Buddha is proved by the extent to which a person really acquires for himself the objects taught by the Buddha. The teachings of Lord Buddha are found to be trustworthy when the hearer finds the objects which constantly produce desired useful effects (arthakriyasthiti). This is the trustworthiness with regard to visible objects, objects that are accessible to perception and inference of the hearer. The trustworthiness of Buddha regarding imperceptible objects can be inferred from his trustworthiness regarding perceptible, visible matters.

In verses II.145 of PV, Dharmakirti summarizes the religious and epistemological authority of Lord Buddha thus:

tayah svadrstamargoktir vaiphalyad vakti nanrtam |
dayalutvat parartham ca sarvarambhabhiyogatah ||

The Buddha has realized for himself the Supreme goal; he teaches the way to attain this goal in a reliable manner because he would not gain anything by making false statements, since there is not anything for him to attain. This disinterestedness is caused by his great compassion (dayalutva) and it is out of this compassion that the Buddha acts, lives and teaches (sarvarambhabhiyoga) in order to promote the supreme welfare to the whole world (parartham).

This analysis of Dharmakirti reminds us of a similar statement made by the Nyaya philosopher Paksilasvami while describing the characterizing features of an apta speaker (kim punar aptanam pramanayam saksatkrtadharmata - bhutadaya yathabhutarthacikhyapayisyati) namely, having directly perceived the true state of affairs (saksatkrtadharmata), compassion on living beings (bhutadaya) and the desire to communicate the thing as it is (yathabhutarthacikhyapayisa). Both of them have regarded compassion to be the criterion of validity. Dharmakirti more or less followed these three criteria stated by Paksilasvami but has given compassion priority over the other two in order to emphasize the speciality of the authority of Lord Buddha. For according to Dharmakirti the first cause and the driving force behind Buddha's religious and epistemological authority is his compassion. Paksilasvami, on the other hand, emphasizes a temporal order of the criteria. The authoritative

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speaker first has perceived a thing or fact himself, then he is compassionate and out of compassion he seeks to correctly describe the thing or fact to others.

The real difference between Paksilasvami and Dharmakirti seems to lie elsewhere. In Paksilasvami we do not get any explanation as to how or why the authoritative person has perceived the true state of affairs (saksatkrtdharma). The apta simply has acquired his direct experience of higher things. Out of compassion, he relates his experience and knowledge to others and therefore his reliable statements are regarded as pramana. Dharmakirti, on the other hand, spells out the reason as regards how and why the apta par excellence, the Buddha, has acquired his direct experiences of important religious facts. The Buddha was moved by compassion and therefore exerted himself to attain the state of complete cessation of suffering in order to teach others the way to the same goal. Before Buddha had reached the same goal himself, he had heard from the reliable tradition about the cause of suffering for the sake of teaching others the way to it.

The question immediately arises - how can the admission of testimony be harmonized with the general epistemological outlook of the Buddhists, specially of Dinnaga and Dharmakirti, which has its orientation towards vastubala- pravrttanumana. This problem is solved by the epistemological school in introducing three different types of objects, perceptible (pratyaksa), imperceptible (paroksa), and radically inaccessible (atyanta-paroksa). The first sort consists of those things which are accessible to direct perception, like jar, book, etc. and the second group consists of things like impermanence, selflessness, etc. which can be proven through the usual vastubala variety of inference. To the third group, however, belong objects such as the different heavens (svarga) or the details of the law of karma which are inaccessible to direct perception and which cannot also be proved by citing some other state of affairs as probans. In short, it might be said that these objects are beyond the limits of ordinary rationality. It might be noted at this point that in the first two chapters of his Pramanavarttika, Dharmakirti often uses the term paroksa ambiguously to signify both the imperceptible and

radically inaccessible variety though from what he speaks of in certain passages of the later chapters of the same text it is quite clear that Dharmakirti himself did explicitly accept this threefold division of objects.

Thus, Dharmakirti limits the scope of scripturally based inferences to cases where the objects are radically inaccessible and hence beyond the range of ordinary ratiocination. By such limitation he is able to preserve his theory of inferences being objectively grounded and at the same time maintain a distance from the Mimamsa and Samkhya schools who cite scriptural passages as a means of proof even in the context of ordinary properties like the impermanence of sound, etc. which can and should be decided by vastubalapravrttanumana since they are not beyond the scope of ordinary ratiocination.

2. Check your Progress

1. Sabda as a Pramana

14.4 LETS SUM UP

To wind up, testimony or agama or scriptural argumentation as applied to radically inaccessible object (atyantaparoksa) can be considered as an inference - there is no need to postulate an additional pramana called sabda as admitted by certain orthodox schools. It is, however, a rather special indirect case of inference because of the fact that it turns on inductive generalization which presupposes the use and correctness of direct perception and vastubalapravrttanumana. The Buddhist view regarding testimony comes closer to the Nyaya view rather than to the Mimamsa school. They do not admit testimony to be formed by eternal sentences like the Vedas, rather will be ready to admit that testimony consists in the words of a reliable person. Even in formulating the characterizing features that make a person reliable, the Buddhist logician follows the view of the Nyaya logician Paksilasvami. The important

feature of the Buddhist account of testimony consists in its emphasis on the intention of the speaker. In the case of Lord Buddha, the intention was to help other people engulfed in the world of suffering, by showing a way out, and as he had no other bad intention to deceive people in this regard, the Buddhists do not find any inconsistency in accepting the words of Buddha as a pramana. This analysis of the Buddhist logician Dharmakirti is a clear exposition of linking epistemology with their religious beliefs in a consistent and scientific manner. Herein lies the speciality of Buddhist epistemology - though it has a religious bias/ orientation, it does not give up its scientific spirit.

14.5 KEY WORDS

Apta, reliable person

Nyaya, one of Indian schools of thought

Dinnaga, 5th century Buddhist logician

Dharmakirti, 7th century Buddhist logician

14.6 QUESTION FOR REVIEW

1. Buddhist Critique of Sabda Pramana
2. Nyaya defense of Sabda Pramana

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14.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- Dharmakirti thinks that there is no real connection between a word and its object;
- that is, no word can give us any information as regards a real object.

Accordingly, testimony does not communicate a reality

2. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- Sabda or testimony has been defined by Gautama in his *Nyaya-Satra* as *aptopadesasabda*; that is, testimony is the instruction of a reliable person.
- This definition has two implications. The first one is that the reliability of the statement or instruction depends on the reliability of the person who is making the statement.

- The second implication is that not simply any statement would be pramana but only those that contain true information in the form of valid instruction are pramanas