

**PRATYAKṢA AND ITS TWO DIMENSIONS :  
ADVAITA VEDĀNTA PERSPECTIVE**

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Classical India presents an interesting record of deep human experience, thoughts, beliefs which have been a source of inspiration for countless generations and we are convinced of its lasting value and relevance to modern men. In this paper by using extensive and for the most part unexplored material with scientific rigor and modern methodology, I hope to stimulate and promote interest and research in a field that needs to be placed in its proper perspective. In general my aim is to render intelligible the Advaita position on pratyakṣa pramāṇa with critical cross reference to the respective views in Nyāya School of Indian thought.

One of the most fascinating phases in the philosophical development of Advaita thought is the prolonged and sustained polemics between the Advaita and the Nyāya Scholars. The differences ranged over a vast variety of issues e.g. sources of knowledge, the nature of reality etc. Amongst other problems that assumed greater importance is the nature of perception and its two aspects as it is laid down in Advaita literature and Philosophy. Practically no enquiry has recently been done on the problem, though unbelievably rich formulations and suggestions are there. *Perception*<sup>1</sup> by Professor B. K. Matilal, is considered to be a significant contribution to modern philosophical concerns, but that too presents the Nyāya view and examines it critically against the Buddhist version over the nature of perception, the criterion of knowledge etc. But, in this article I shall propose for the consideration of my readers problems concerning perception, after Advaita Scholars. My aim here is to understand and share the deeper concern and motivation the Advaita realist had in epistemology of perception. But it is not easy to make a safe transposition of thought from the technical philosophical Sanskrit to its European equivalent. This aspect of the

problem is actually a second instalment of my article, the first instalment of it being already available elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

Advaita view on pratyakṣa and other sources of knowledge, were systematized, well organized in the most elementary text or *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* by Dharmarājā Adhvarindra (Seventeenth Century) where he provides us with a brilliant exposition of the Advaita view under consideration. The founder and the earliest father of the School does not throw any light for an account of Pratyakṣa. Śaṅkarācārya maintains a realist standpoint concerning the empirical world but fails to provide a detailed account of the way through which experience and validation of the knowledge of the outside world are obtained. Ācārya Padmapāda (820 A.D.), his disciple can be said to be the pioneer to attempt a Vedāntic explanation of the process of perception. Padmapāda's superficial attempts were developed further by Prakāśatman (13th Century) and subsequent writers.

One who is well conversant with Nyāya and Advaita epistemology of perception, is aware that while Nyāya makes the sense-object contact, the central point in its definition of Pratyakṣa Advaita deviates from that point. For the Advaita scholars do not consider sense contact as the fundamental characteristic of perception. The cases of perceptual experience without involving sense-contact, e.g. pleasure, pain, other internal perceptions where modes of mind are directly apprehended can be cited in its support. Dharmarājā also subscribes to this view. Hence Advaitins attempt to make a redefinition of pratyakṣa. In Advaita Vedānta, the chief characteristic of pratyakṣa, is the directness of the knowledge acquired through the perceptual process. It can not be denied that perception involves activity of the senses, and the contact of sense with objects but there are other attendant features and functions of perception that are not brought out by the narrow characterization of pratyakṣa in Nyāya.

According to Advaita theory, knowledge owes its perceptual character both to object and to its cognition. On uttering the statement, 'I have seen the cloth', one grasps the meaning that 'cloth' is perceived. Again, we say 'I have perceptual cognition relating to the 'Object jar''. Hence perceptuality may mean 'perceptuality of cognition or of object' i.e. perceptibility and percept. It is an empirical fact that perceptuality may be of both the forms - 'Pratyakṣam Jñānam' 'Pratyakṣa gataḥ'. Since perceptibility of cognition, occurs first. Dharmarājā

was under compulsion to determine jñānagata Pratyakṣa first.<sup>3</sup> It is also interesting to note that Dharmarājā attempts to provide us a more adequate and epistemologically complete account of the perceptual process. Accordingly Dharmarājā, formulates two criteria/conditions or prāyojaka of the two phases of perception, namely Determination of the i) perceptual character of cognition (jñāna pratyakṣatya) and ii) the perceptual character of percept. i.e. (Viśaya Pratyakṣatva).

I shall address myself to this task of formulating, criteria and expounding both the aspects of perception. But this requires to examine the vital role manas plays in the Advaita theory of Pratyakṣa. In fact, the Psychological aspect of the perceptual process is something unique to the Advaita theory.

#### **Antaḥkaraṇa (manas) Qua-sense faculty and Mental Mode**

Our investigation into the problem will remain incomplete unless one is conversant with the vital role manas plays in connection with the emergence of perception. In the perception of external objects, the sense faculty like vision is the instrument. Similarly in the apprehension of sorrow, happiness etc. the internal sense manas is the instrument, as it is conceived by the Nyāya theorist while all the Advaita scholars do not hold one and the same view about the nature and role of manas.

The term manas in Sanskrit is sometimes rendered in English, though wrongly, as mind, as its equivalent. It is thought that there are striking similarities between the two even though there are important differences also. However, the word manas is not used in the same sense by all the schools of Indian Philosophy. For convenience, I shall better retain the Sanskrit term manas than using its foreign equivalent. Here our main concern will be to pursue the nature and function, it does in Advaita tradition.

Manas is an important faculty postulated in Advaitic theory. Manas is not a sense faculty, as it is held by Dharmarājā-adhvarindra, a neo-Vedāntin who points out that, manas is mentioned separately from the other senses in the unpaniśads. The Sponsors of Vivaraṇa School maintain, manas is not a sense-organ but adherents of Bhāmati System plead for the sense organhood of antaḥkaraṇa or manas. Vācaspati Mīśra, the founder of Bhāmati System, argues

the internal mental states like happiness, sorrow etc. are valid since they are produced by the senseorganhood of manas.<sup>4</sup> According to Padmapāda, (Vivaraṇa School) Internal states like happiness, sorrow etc. are generated not through sense, but manifested by witnessing Consciousness. Sākṣibhāṣya.<sup>5</sup>

A Sceptic raises an objection, that the Bhāgavat-Gītā says : The sense-organs with manas as the sixth, and, therefore, it is clear that manas is the sixth sense. To this, Dharmarājā points out, The word "sixth" does not convey the sense that manas is the sixth sense; Since there is no contradiction in the manas making up the number six, even though not, itself a sense faculty. There is no guiding rule that the completion of a number connected with the senses must be only by another sense. Śāṅkara's admission for the sense-organhood of manas is evidenced from his own Bhāṣya on *Brahma Sūtra*. Statements from Upaniṣad can be advanced in support of the thesis. Vācaspati Mīśra has postulated the *indriyatva* character of manas with the traditional code *smṛti*. We can trace the arguments in support of our claim as manas is stated separately from senses in the Upaniṣad.

We are referring to one such instance of Mund. Upaniṣad 'manah sarva-indriyāni ca' Why is it mentioned separately? Vācaspati Mīśra points out, in such case, it is to be understood by means of a logic' the Cattle and the bullocks' (Gobalivardha) or, "the Brāhman and the Paribrājakas" where the latter though included in the former, are separately mentioned only for the sake of special emphasis. Such is the case, here also. Manas is the recipient of past, present and future where as sense-organ being only the recipient or present, is stated separately from the manas.<sup>6</sup> Dharmarājā states a script, text from the Bhāgavat Gītā, "Manah Ṣaṣṭhāni indriyāṇi" and subscribes to the view that this statement does not ascertain the *indriyatva* character of manas whereas the Seventh chap, of *Bhāgavat Gītā* states *indriyānām manaścāmī*" (Among the senses, I am manas) which explicitly states the sense organhood of manas. Ācārya Śāṅkara and his followers accept the implication without putting the text differently. But Dharmarājā avoids this text and creates a new doctrine. What led him to do this? This springs a pleasant surprise.

Dharmarājā seems to approve the *indriyatva* character of manas? But why is it so? The reason is such internal states as pleasure etc. are born by manas and are cognised directly. These are perceived immediately without the mediation

of manas qua sense. And further, anumiti i.e. resulting state of inference is not regarded as sense-produced; rather it is generated by manas. Manas is not an independent reality existing outside the subjective whole. Advaita regards manas to be part of a complex, unified inner organ which is known as antaḥkaraṇa, i.e. 'inner vehicle'. Manas and antaḥkaraṇa are employed interchangeably. Antaḥkaraṇa, is characterised by Madhusudan Saraswati as being composed of five subtle elements (tan-mātras), viz. the Subtle essence of earth, water, fire, air and ākāśa with the predominance of the latter over the former. Antaḥkaraṇa is of light nature and 'having therein at the time the predominance of the Sattva-guṇa (lightness tendency), being extremely clear like a mirror etc., the antaḥkaraṇa is capable of flowing out through the sense, and like the solar light, it is capable of speedily contracting and expanding'. The antaḥkaraṇa, unlike the mind of John Locke, is not a passive recipient of data, it is an active instrument in the process of perception, Dharmarājā points out that the antaḥkaraṇa 'goes out' through the optical sense i.e. eye, pervades the object of attention and transform itself in the form of the object. The transformation or modification of the antaḥkaraṇa is technically termed "vṛtti" or 'mental state'. The specific transformation or modification (antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti) is the apprehending mental mode which makes known the object<sup>7</sup>. But we should not overlook (objective) aim for which antaḥkaraṇa "goes out" and that is to maintain the directness of the presentation of data to the manas for its immediate apprehension.

So we see the postulation of antaḥkaraṇa and the properties attributed to it raise a host of empirical problems. Is there such an organ? Has it the properties attributed to it : Does it exist independently of the body? Is it a brain? Innumerable questions, however, can be raised in this way with which we are not at all concerned. The sense given to antaḥkaraṇa is a functional one, and as such, it can be conveniently accepted to state the perceptual process in Advaita. Thus, we consider it safe and reasonable to accept antaḥkaraṇa, the inner organ, as the instrument through which the subject acquires perceptual knowledge.

### **Presupposition of Brahma-Caitanya**

One unique feature in Advaita theory (of pratyakṣa) is that they had to assume beforehand, some sort of consciousness or intelligence which is the locus of all objects, contents, and details of both the objective and the subjective

components of a knowledge situation in a luminous continuum. This is what Advaitins call "Brahma Caitanya". It is this consciousness that accounts for "the data" that reach the subject, and out of which the perceptual content is configured, and which on the subjective side illumines the perceptual content that results in a cognition. The question, if there is such a consciousness underlying both the objective phenomena and subjective component, is an issue with which we are not concerned here. One is not required to presuppose Brahma-Caitanya now to be anything more than simply light which the object reflects or have the capacity to reflect in normal conditions, and which presumably) persists were the objective phenomena to disappear. In the subjective aspect, Brahma-Caitanya is presupposed to be the flood of light analogous to that employed in a studio to illumine the objects to be photographed. And the antaḥkaraṇa is similar to the negative or film in the Camera, which modifies as light, penetrates through the lens and registers the shape, colour, and so forth of the object focussed upon. This modification of antaḥkaraṇa is called mental, mode or Vṛtti, that corresponds to the form of the object in attention.

According to Advaita epistemology of perception, all determinate knowledge is a self-abnegation, involving as it does a stratification of the pure-consciousness into three forms : Pramāṭṛ caitanya or determinate consciousness, Vṛtti-Caitanya or modes of consciousness and Viśaya caitanya or empirical object. Hence we have in a knowledge situation three major components, each of which is associated with 'light' in some way or another. They are the subject, object and mode of antaḥkaraṇa as the instrument of cognition. We can characterize the pramāṭṛ caitanya, as subject-consciousness, viśaya-caitanya as object consciousness and pramāṇa caitanya as the instrument of knowledge. In jñānagata pratyakṣa, the unity or coincidence of viśaya caitanya and pramāṇa caitanya, is the criterion. The object, so determined in this type of perception is the defeniundum (lakṣya) of Viśayagata pratyakṣa or the perception of object qua object. Hence Dharmarājā attempts to determine perceptuality of cognition first, but for which perceptual character of object may not be determined.

### **Perceptuality of Cognition**

According to Advaita Vedānta, antaḥkaraṇa or manas is fiery, transparent and is devoid of any shape of its own. The manas or antaḥkaraṇa (exactly like

a light) functions as a transparent transmitter of the light of consciousness which, projecting it on the object, removes the veil of nescience i.e. the object which was so long unknown, has come within the purview of the respective sense-organ. Some sort of relation called conjunction, occurs between the manas that streams out through the respective sense-faculty and the object attended to. The analogy of water in a tank and its going out is given by Dharmarājā.<sup>8</sup> When water is preserved in a tank, it assumes the form of the tank and the same water passing through drain occupies a field and assumes the form of the field. Hence the antaḥkaraṇa streaming out of the cakṣu assumes the form of the object like pitcher, monastery etc. There occurs an identification of consciousness qualified with antaḥkaraṇa Vṛtti' with the consciousness qualified by the object.<sup>9</sup> So there occurs non-difference (provided, if everything goes well, i.e. the light in the mental state corresponds one to one with the light of the object between the mental state and object related in their epistemic relation.

The pitcher (object) and the mental state (antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti) in the form of pitcher are brought together in one and the same place outside, hence the consciousness limited by the object and the respective mental state, are one and the same, even though the object and the mental state wrought division of consciousness. Consequently this non-difference of the mental state with the object, gives rise to the origin of Vṛtti-jñāna or cognition in the form 'This is a Jar.<sup>10</sup> This criterion (Coincidence of both the consciousness limited by mental mode and that by viṣaya) of the perception of object is bound to vitiate an inference 'The mountain has fire because it has smoke' by the defect of over-coverage, for it appears unduly to the subject of an inference. But this objection is welcome for Advaitin endorses the view that an inference involves two types of cognition- perceptuality in so far as the subject 'mountain' is concerned and inferential in the Sādhyā or Probandum. The Sādhyā or Probandum, say 'fire, is inferred in an inference like 'Parvato Vanhimān dhūmāt' since the condition of perceptibility i.e., coincidence of Vṛtti Caitanya and viṣaya Caitanya or empirical object is satisfied. In inference, the manas only indulges in thinking of the inferred object but does not go out to meet it. The distinction is practically drawn in modern psychology, only viewed from the point of view of the self's spontaneity i.e., in perception the given element and its interpretation are welded together in a unity, while in inference, they are kept distinct. In perception, the self as invested with the mental mode becomes further

materialised into the particular function of the sense faculty excited by the stimulus and this might be regarded as a maturation of its karma. In inference, the self just expects to be realised, it descends from the plane to a lower plane, but not to the lowest. Sometimes the tension is so great that it discharges itself in the waking plane. In other words, inference lapses into a percept, as in 'I see my brother'.

How can knowledge of two opposite characters (direct and indirect knowledge) occur in a cognition of the form 'Inferring fire on the mountain'? This seems to contradict our experience. A Vedāntin may plead that the Nyāya realists also recognise the occurrence of two opposite characters in one and the same knowledge. We may try to explain the Nyāya position here with the help of an analogy. 'The pitcher is something that causes happiness'<sup>11</sup> The pitcher is in sense contact and hence it is perceptible but what about the 'predicate'? It is not under the purview of sense contact but the Nyāya scholar admit, the apprehension of 'happiness' etc. as a case of *alaukika pratyakṣa*. As viewed by them, the happiness is cognised by means of *Jñānalakṣaṇa Sannikarṣa*. Hence the Nyāya scholars recognise both 'laukikatva' and 'alaukikatva' characters in such a cognition and the same logic the Vedāntins demand to apply in a cognition having perceptuality in one part and inferentiality in another.

Dharmarājā points out, in perceiving an object like 'This is pitcher, the *antaḥkaraṇa*, moves towards the object through the sense orifices and assumes the form of it. Then the coincidence of both consciousness limited by object and that by *antaḥkaraṇa*, occurs, and the veil of nescience that keeps both the adjuncts separate, vanishes resulting in the identity of both the types of consciousness limited by *Viṣaya* and *antaḥkaraṇa*. But the required criterion of identity between 'consciousness specified by *antaḥkaraṇa*' and 'consciousness specified by content' fails to cover the apprehension of happiness etc. in the form 'I am happy'. The reason is very simple. Happiness is an internal state and hence no *vṛtti* can emerge. The Vedāntins tide over the difficulty by pointing out that happiness etc. are born directly in the *antaḥkaraṇa* and hence the genesis of *vṛtti* (of happiness, sorrow etc.) is possible without the participation of senses. If the criteria for the perceptual character of cognition is said to be the identification of the reflected light of the mental state with that of the object, then the said criteria will unduly cover the case of the recollection of happiness as occurring



in the past. In recollecting happiness in the form 'I was happy' one is required to admit vṛtti of happiness etc. occurred in the past. Hence the perceptuality criteria should be amended by adding 'ekakālinatva' with the other character 'ekadeśatva. In fact, Dharmarājā points out that the alleged defect of over-coverage can be averted by characterising the said criteria with a host of adjectives 'ekakālinatva', 'ekadeśatva' and 'vartamānatva' in order to, determine specifically the perceptual cognition. The implication of it is, both the adjectives 'ekakālinatva' and 'ekadeśatva' are to be inserted as criteria of perceptual cognition i.e. happiness and mental mode of it though occurring in the same locus but they belong to different times for an object of memory occurring in the past, happiness is a past event but the mental mode of it is characterised by 'recency' (vartamāṅkālina). Hence there cannot be coincidence of both the adjuncts occurring in the present and that occurred in the past. Dharmarājā points out the criteria of non-difference as 'occurring in the same locus' be given, then the fallacy of over-coverage, cannot be averted. For it unduly extends to the case of happiness as occurring in the past in the form 'I was happy'. This necessitates the insertion of the adjective 'recency' (vartamānatva)<sup>12</sup>.

The other important point for the successful arising of perception is that the object toward which the manas is directed has to be an appropriate object for perception. This character of the object is 'Yogyatā', 'fitness' or 'competency for perception'. This qualification rules out such ideas as dharma, right, conduct, natural laws and a host of other salient features of reality. These are entities that are not directly presentable to the mind qua objects of perception. The significance of it is that the scope of perception may not be as wide as would be desirable for this is the only method of common sense that makes the object of the search directly presentable to the mind. Hence this gives rise to a perceptual cognition of the object concerned. Further the fire that is inferred at the sight of smoke is a cognition lacking perceptuality. For it is mediately and not immediately given to the mind.

The criteria of perceptuality of cognition extends unduly to the cases like 'he is righteous', 'he is unrighteous' etc. known through language. For there occurs the concurrence of consciousness specified by vṛtti and consciousness specified by contents which is present. Hence there is no difference between the mental state and the object contacted in their epistemic relation.

Similarly, the criteria of perceptual cognition applies unduly to inferential cognition in the form '*aham adṛṣṭavān bhogavatvāt*'. (I am fortunate because I enjoy) The *vṛtti* and its object (dharma, adharma) assume coincidence. This identification of consciousness causes the over-coverage of perception to anumiti. This necessitates the insertion of the word '*yogyatva*' so that knowledge derived through language or inferential cognition cannot allegedly be perceptual. But happiness, sorrow like dharma, adharma etc. are the properties of manas and so have no competency for being the object of perception. What should be the determining criteria of competency of being the object of perception? In fact, nature of object serves as its evidence i.e. '*Yogyatva*' character of object is ascertained empirically. It is not determined by figment of some one's fond imagination. That some are capable of being perceived while others are not, though they are equally attributes of the manas. This is an issue that can be explained only with reference to the inherent nature of things which we must assume on the basis of the actual results. According to Advaitins, dharma, adharma, sukha, dukha etc. are properties of self but only sukha, dukha are capable of being perceived while other two properties do not possess *yogyatā* of being perceived. It is due to the unique nature of the object as the vedāntins preach. The Nyāya position is exactly alike in this respect.

Philosophers of all shade and colour will subscribe to the view that knowledge derived through language e.g., 'That art thou' 'you are happy' etc are not caused by sense and can never be perceptual. But according to Advaita epistemological scheme they can acquire perceptuality if characters like 'competency' 'presentativeness' etc. pertaining to object are added. One of the unique characters of Advaita doctrine is that they admit *aparokṣānubhūti* or immediacy of knowledge derived through language.

In the case of judgement in which the subject is perceived but the predicate is inferred e.g. in the inference of 'a mountain is fiery because it is smoky', having its subject 'mountain' in sense contact may turn out to be perceptual, for *vṛtti* assumes the form of the object. This change cannot be averted. For we had to admit *vṛtti* of the subject 'mountain' (occurring in an inference of this form), in sense contact. Hence the mountain (object) and the mental state (*vṛtti*) in the form of object are brought together in one and the same place outside, so the consciousness associated by them (object and the

mental state) are one and the same. Since *manas* does not go out to form a state, in case of fire, there is difference i.e. 'consciousness associated with fire' and the 'consciousness of the mental state' do not coincide. Consequent upon, this identification there is (i) perceptuality in so far as the mountain is concerned but (ii) inferentiality with regard to fire since no mental mode can be produced. The object (fire) is not in sense contact. Thus we have knowledge in the form 'I see the mountain but infer the fire'.

But the present epistemic situation invites the most important question : when do knowledge of different kinds require separate sources? In other words, the question is this, what is the principle(s) of classification of knowledge into such different kinds as correspond to different source of knowledge? certain answer to this question is always assumed. However, given a knowledge, which kind of knowledge it is, is ascertained in a subsequent and second order act of perception (*anuvyavasāya*). But what makes this knowledge different from the knowledge of other kinds is to be found, say, among its causal conditions. Thus distinct causes make different kinds of knowledge of this kind and make it different and these distinct generating conditions or causes are the sources of knowledge. Difference of kinds of knowledge is thus causally based on the difference of sources of knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

The philosophical implication of the above argument is that an inference involves *pakṣa*, *sādhya* and *hetu*, Inference of 'sādhya' fire '(probandum) is possible only when the locus (mountain' characterised by a proban 'smoke' is cognised. An inferential knowledge of the form 'the mountain has fire' must be preceded by a perceptual cognition of smoke, occurring on the mountain. Since perception is the most basic kind of knowledge and an inference depends on it for its genesis. The Nyāya realist adhered to the view that (i) *pakṣadharmatājñāna* (ii) *Vyāpti śmaraṇa* (iii) *parāmarśa jñāna* separately are the necessary conditions but they together constitute the sufficient conditions, required to be fulfilled for the origin of inference. We express ourselves as 'inferring fire on the mountain' (*parvate vanhim anumini* etc. as *anuvyavasāya*).

The Nyāya will object to the Advaita argument pleading perceptuality in so far as 'mountain' is concerned and inferentiality in the other part 'fire'. The entire piece of knowledge 'parvato vanhimān' is inferential, as the Nyāya points out.

Further, the perceptual criterion as it is formulated will attract the charge of over-coverage. Since perceptuality will cover the case of fragrance like sandalwood. But the predicate 'sandalwood' is 'vartamān' and 'pratyakṣayogyā', the mode in the form of 'fragrance' and there is co-locativity of the adjuncts.

According to Vedāntins, the judgement involving both perceptuality (in the subject) and inferentiality (in the object) is not one state but rather a process from the subject thought to the predicate thought. They might argue that this transformation from the subject to the predicate is a necessary thought of the Union of the terms, but then this does not mean their concrete identity-in-difference;

The perception of a thing so far enquired and explained may not amount to the knowledge of an object qua object. That is to say, knowledge is different from the subject and yet connected with it. We can turn our attention now to this aspect of perception, not observed carefully.

### **The perceptuality of percept**

Dharmarājā takes into consideration the second phase of perception that occurs when the consciousness associated with the subject and that with the object coincide.<sup>15</sup> That is to say, the perceptuality in the identification or non-difference of the object from the subject. The significance of it is that the subject through the instrumentality of the *vṛtti* is conveyed of the *vṛttijñāna*. Then subject brings into relation the object corresponding to the contents of *vṛtti-jñāna*, as his cognition. The non-difference of the subject's reflexive awareness of his cognitive state when takes place, he characterises the object to his being conscious of something. The subject thus observes, 'I see a pitcher'. To put the matter in another way. The light of Brahma Chaitanya qualified with the self, further illumines the mental state which is non-different from the object, as portrayed earlier in the first phase. The mental state subsides, and the subject becomes conscious of the object itself. The object is all the more 'given' to the subject in virtue of the double reflection it receives, the first from *cidābhāsa* that streamed out with the *antaḥkāraṇa* and, second, from Brahma Chaitanya that the subject sheds. The cognition is direct and immediate, as sketched in the first phase and if it is true then in the second phase also the resulting perception of

object seems direct and immediate too. The cognition is self-evident to the subject, it is the instrumentality of the cognitive, the object is brought to the immediate awareness of the subject and a "unity" of the subject and object is effected. In this reflective stage, there is assimilation of the mental contents corresponding to the configuration of the object, its qualities, the relation between the two and with familiar or recognised percepts. The perception of the "entire" object presented, occurs when the assimilative function of antaḥkaraṇa is over. The perception of the object by the subject marks the effective role of the second phase of pratyakṣa pramāṇa.

A problem seems to crop up in this connection : if there is a 'unity' or integration of the subjective and objective components (*Viśaya Caitanya - pramāṭr - Caitanyābhinna*) what causes hindrance to the genesis of the cognition e.g. 'I am the pitcher' 'I am the book'? Dharmarājādhvarindra may take up for consideration such as objection. The difficulty can be tide over. As what is signified in the criteria is not the 'identification' for 'unity' as such, but the non-difference of the 'objective reality' from the subjective reality. The under-lying reality of both components according to Advaitins being non-differnet, all that can be present at this stage would be *Brahma-Chaitanya*, thus there would simply be no cognitive configuration. Advaita would have to reinstate the constant presence of the cognitive vṛtti jñāna as the mode or condition which characterises the difference with reference to the subject and the object. The subjective self is not cognised, in the reflective act at least, immediately as Brahma Caitanya, for its own self-illumination in the form of "I" is also characterised by a mental mode of antaḥkaraṇa of that form which results in the reflexive ego- sense of 'Ahrnakāra'. This mode must be given at the second stage and thus the difference between the subejct and the object is noted by the difference of the 'transformation' i.e. the vṛtti to which the two components give rise. But they generate in immediate succession to one another, their awareness is immediate, in their cognitive manifestations; their qualitative difference in resepct of the respective change, the antaḥkaraṇa assumes and the moment that seperates them, may be missed in an introspective analysis, as Dharmarājādhavarindra most probably did in the *Vedānta Paribhāsā*. But the uniqueness and most important point that Dharmarājā attempts to do in *Vedānta Paribhāsā* (which appears to be the nucleus in Advaita epistemology) is that both the subject and the object are brought into a direct relation by means of the

functioning of mode (vṛtti) in the antaḥkaraṇa as its agent. Thus the resulting state, in virtue of a mutual identification of their respective cognitive effects mode and vṛtti, an immediate perception of a thing follows.

In illuminating the object, what notes the 'coming together of the subjective mode and objective' vṛtti? For the cognition of the relation between the subjective and an objective, is it inconceivable that another cognition may be required? Admission of the second cognition would mean another cognition is necessary for its apprehension, and yet another for this and so on? Then this leaves open the possibility of an infinite series of cognitions required to manifest one preceeding the other. To obviate this difficulty (i.e. regressus ad infinitum), and if any theory of perception has to meet this challenge, then there has to be admitted one cognition which is self illumined and does not require to be illumined by any-other cognition. The problem cannot be solved unless a basic self evident cognition is accepted. Perhaps for this reason and in finding a solution to the problem, Advaitins base its solution on the introspective evidence of the reflexive 'I' notion, however, 'consciousness' of the self- illumined mode of the subjective reality would remain. And it is by virtue of the mutual conjunction (Sannikarṣa) of the subjective mode and the vṛtti jñāna that the cognition becomes illumined. The vṛtti in the form of the object impresses itself, as if, it were the mode of the subject itself, and thereby comes to be cognised, as a predicate and not as the pure subject content which is the 'I' notion in the subject's apperception. And the perceptual judgement results in the following form "I see the jar", 'it is big and blue'. But is it pratyakṣa Pramā? Advaita would accept it as a case of veridical perception. For given that appropriate instrument of sources (pramāṇa) in this case, the antaḥkaraṇa operating through the senses is present and is not diseased (free from defects) and given that the external environ is free from befogging obstacles, e.g. dimness of light, smoke in the air and so on, and given that the thing is brought before, then it logically follows that the perception is veridical, as a resulting state of pratyakṣa, follows.

A sceptic doubts whether the basis for the claim to validity still holds true, if the manas was not assumed to "go out". In other words, would the sense faculty give rise to the same vṛtti in the antaḥkaraṇa as is assumed to occur when the antaḥkaraṇa 'goes out' to hold contact with the object? If the 'out going of antaḥkaraṇa' is denied, then the instrumentality of sense faculty would

be needed to effect operative relation with the object, as it is seen in Nyāya theory. Acceptance of the mediacy of sense faculty would mean raising further objection. The sense data received by the antahkaraṇa cannot be considered as immediate, with the consequence that cognitive content loses its 'presentative' nature. Thus the truthfulness of the cognition comes in question.

### **The Paradox**

The Advaitins face an insurmountable difficulty and may not be able to overcome the crisis. The 'outgoing' of antahkaraṇa may not be possible where we see the distant object e.g. star etc. A star is at a great distance from us and if the manas, reaches the object after a long time, there is no certainty that the star exists in the place by the time the light of manas or antahkaraṇa reaches it. The manas could travel to and back very speedily only if it could go almost at the speed of light (which travels 1,86,000 miles per second) to cover the distance immediately. Advaitins point out that the manas is constituted of the sattva guṇa, of the subtle essence of the physical elements, and that when it streams out through the vision it streams out as light tejas - which is the essence of the vision, and thus travels as fast as the light does. Further, we can suppose that light comes from the object, though the object might have gone out of existence, the light that started from it when it was there could impinge on the vision and excite the nerves causing the perception. According to Astronomical information, some stars are at a remote distance and their light takes some 'light years' distance to reach us. We may see a star now but there is no certainty that the same star will continue to exist at the same place and time - the star may have moved away or may have even ceased to exist altogether. So how can the Advaitins explain this event? how can we be sure that manas reaches out to star? The difficulty can be averted if we assume that light emanating from the star reaches the antahkaraṇa (appṛāpyakāritva character)' Likewise, so far as other cognitive acts e.g. hearing, touching etc. are concerned, it would be wise to maintain that impulses or 'sense- data' issuing from different parts of the thing and from outside reaches the manas. But it would be more reasonable to maintain that the manas determines which object or features thereof, the faculty are to focus upon, and that it chooses only such data as may be required for the genesis of specific cognitive act. Advaitins would point out that this is surely a

case for the origin of *pratyakṣa pramā* for the data. We think such a problem pertaining to distant object should not arise at all. Professor P.K. Sundaram and Professor P. Bilimoria have referred to such a difficulty. We believe that the object referred to in this context, should be none other than the empirical object, determined by the subject. Professor Krishnachandra Bhattacharya subscribes to such a view. According to him, the *vṛtti* in relation to which the object exists, for the object is only empirical object is a determination of *pramāṭṛ*. The *vṛtti* then points two ways, towards the self and towards the object. At each moment, the whole of *manas* gets transformed into *vṛtti* (this being *vivarta*, not *pariṇāma*), by the ripening of some *saṅskāra* or *karma* seed, under the stress of the cosmic *karma* organism appearing as stimulus. Professor Bhattacharya points out, 'on the one hand the *saṅskāra* gets materialised into a percept and the percept into a bodily impression; on the other hand, the cosmic stress takes the form of the phenomenal object, giving the sense-stimulus; Thus the *pramāṭṛ* Caitanya rests on the *viśaya* Caitanya in the perception of the object as object.

We think the whole subject-object relationship in consciousness being unintelligible to the Advaitin, where is the propriety of seeking for a satisfactory view of this relation? Turning to the peculiar view of "outgoing psychosis" (*vṛtti*), that reaches to the locality of the object, pervades it and takes on the same form as the object, triangular, quadrangular etc. We are straight-away in the meshes of representationism. Why should a psychosis be like an object? How are we to judge the presence or extent of the likeness? By another psychosis? And does that bear a resemblance to its object and so ad-infinitum? We find ourselves bogged in a morass of logical absurdities since we are interested in the cognitive mechanism.

### NOTES

Dharmarājā-Advarindra, the author of *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* seems to have flourished in the Seventeenth Century and was a reputed scholar of Southern India. The source of our knowledge is the Introduction verses to the *paribhāṣā* and also similar verses by, his son and commentator of the two main branches of the Śaṅkara school of Advāita Vedānta, founded by Padmapādācārya and Ācārya Vācaspatimiśra, respectively; Dharmarājā belonged to the former. He



comes very close to the Navya-Nyāya of Gaṅgeśa-upādhyāya, in his discussion, method and phraseology. The three most famous handbooks produced are the *Pañcadaśī* of Vidyārāya (Fourteenth century), *The Vedānta sāra* of Sādanada (Sixteenth century) and Dharmarājā's *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* (seventeenth century). The last of these is a lot more than merely a handbook : in fact, it is most important, possibly the only, developed treatise of the systematic stage in Advaita. It has a style that is neither expository and commentarial, nor polemical and historical. Rather Dharmarājā's style features intercoolected definitions. Dharmarājā's training was in Navya-Nyāya and he wrote some treatises explicating that school's doctrine. He addresses himself to the smart student who knows some logic of the sort he might have learnt from a Naiyāyika.

I know only one systematic work like Dharmarājā's in Advaita, just as the *Bhāṣāpariccheda* and *Siddhānta Muktāvali* occupy a similar position in Nyāya.

Why did Dharmarājā's work suddenly terminate the systematic development of Advaita?

The possible answers are :

- a) Dharmarājā was a Naiyāyika as much as an Advaitin. His *Vedānta paribhāṣā* may have been a kind of *tour de force* emanating from a "foreign" source viz. Nyāya.
  - b) Dharmarājā was so successful that nothing was left to be done. The critics were silenced. Writers returned to the simple exposition of the truth, realising that nothing more needs to be done along systematic lines. As such Dharmarājā's stature among Advaitins ought to be much higher than it in fact is. The fact is that it is Citsukha and Madhsudana who were regularly held up as the paragons of post-Śaṅkara Advaita scholasticism, not Dharmarājā.
1. *Perception : An Essay on Classical Indian Theories of knowledge*, B.K.Matilal, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1986.
  2. *Vide my paper : 'Pratyakṣa pramā in Advaita Vedānta'*, 'Vol. XIV, No. 1, January-March, 1987, *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Pune. pp. 91-102.
  3. Kim Jñānagatasya Pratyakṣatvasya Prayojakan Prechasi, Kim vā Viśayagatasya? Ādye-Pramāṇa, Caitanyasya Viśayava-cchinna-Caitanya bheda iti brūmah : V. P. edited by P. Śāstri, p. 27.

4. The sense organhood of manas is admitted in Bhāmati Prasthān 'manasastvindriyatve smṛteravagate kvacit indriyebhyo bhedenopadānām govalī vardhanyāyena' or 'Indriyānam vartamānamātra viṣayatevan manasasttu traikālyagocaravāt bhedenabhīdhānam (Bhāmati).
5. In the commentary on *Brahma sūtra*, it is said 'Ta indriya ni tadvyapadesadanyatra śreṣṭhāt' 2.4.17. Sukha, dukha etc. are the unique contents of manas just as colour etc. are the contents of optical sense. Manas is distinctly mentioned as a faculty in Śāṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy. The Nyāya aphorism "Ghrāṇa rasana cakṣstvav śrotṛāni indriyāni bhūtebhyah" i.e. the senses, namely, the olfactory, the gustatory the visual, the cutaneous and the auditory. These originate from material elements. The classical Nyāya Scholars seem to remain silent on this issue but in the *Prāśastapāda Bhāṣya*, manas is enumerated amongst the senses. Hence according to 'Tantra Yuktinyāya, 'manas is admitted in Nyāya system also. I refer to my book '*Sannikarṣavāda*, published from Govt. Sanskrit College, Calcutta, for a detailed account on it.

*Vivaraṇa view :*

Scholars of Vivaraṇa School are reluctant to admit the sense organhood of manas. According to them, scholars who accept sense organhood of manas, its instrumentality for Brahma Sākṣātkara face an opposition concerning śruti and smṛti like 'Kasyaisa Khalvidṛso' Mohimati - indriya bhūtasya'.

'buddhigrāhyamti indriyam' to attain Brahmāsākṣātkāra, manas need not be accepted for it is due to the instrumentality of language and sukhādijñāna is also like witnessing consciousness.

Opposing the instrumentality character of manas so many anumānas can be cited-

Mano na indriyam abhautikatvāt.

Mano na indriyam Vāhya viṣayesu, svatantratvāt etc.

Numerous śrūti, smṛtis can be advanced which oppose the sense organhood of manas.

- i) indriyebhyah parahyārthā arthebhyasca; Param manah (Kathopaniṣad).
- ii) atmeindriyamanoyuktam ... etc. (Katho upaniṣad).
- iii) indriyam manohnam (Gītā).

In fact, all the āchāryas of vivaraṇa school assailed the sense organhood of manas.

6. Vācaspati Miśra States, 'manas stvindriyatve smrteravagate Kvacidindriyebhyo bhedenopādānam govalivardhanyāyena athavā indriyānām vartamāmāna mātra Visayatvān manasastu traikālyā gocaratvād bhedenābhindhā nam' *Bhāmati* - II, 4.17
7. Antaḥkaraṇa, extensively existing in a body, dominated by Satvaguṇa and hence subtle, of Sub-stitutive nature constituted by avidyā, reflective as mirror, comes out through the sense organs, and with the help of them approaches towards the object to be perceived, pervades the whole object and takes up its form as molten coppers do. It can extend or contract itself as sun rays can do while one opens the door or closes it. Being a sāvayava padārtha, this antaḥkaraṇa can run even as long as Sūryaloka, while still existing body and also is capable of collecting knowledge about object existing far or near, part of antaḥkaraṇa existing in body, termed as ahamakar, is known as the subject; part, in between the subject and the object is known as Vṛttijñāna or pramāṇā; part, prevailing over the object and conferring expressibility to it is known as pramiti and, unperceived Brahma Caitanya embodied object is known as prameya. Relevant pure consciousness reflects, consequently over the first three parts helping them to be revealed. Though this relevant consciousness is unitary by nature, is also practised as four fold state of Pramātā, pramāṇa, prameya and pramiti, prameya caitanya, on being known, holds in it the result of knowing, This kind of modification of antaḥkaraṇa is termed as 'antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti' vide *Siddhāntavindu* p. 57-58 Sri Madhusudan Saraswati, edited by Abhyāṅkar, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
8. Tatra Yathā Tarāgodakam. . . . . pariṇamate, V.P. P- 30-31.
9. Pramāṇa Caitanyasya Viśaya-Caitanya bheda iti brūmaḥ, *ibid* P- 28.
10. Ghaṭadeh tadaakar Vṛtteh Ca Vahirektra dese Samava dhanat . . . . . aganakatvat. V.P. P-33.
11. Sukhakar ayam ghaṭāḥ
12. Yadi caikadesaśhatva mātāmupadheya . . . . . visaya viśeṣaṇam deyam V.P. - 52.
13. Vide my paper 'Advaitians on Śabdāparokṣatva' in OUR HERITAGE, Bulletin of the P.G. Training & Research Govt., Sanskrit College, Calcutta Vol. XXXVII, Pt. I, 1989.
14. *Indian Realism* : A Rigorous Descriptive Metaphysics; by Professor P. K. Mukukhopadhyay, K.P. Bagchi & Co. Calcutta May, 1984.

15. Ghatādeh- Viśayasya-Pratyakṣatvam tu pramaṭr abhinnaṭvam. Śikhāmaṇi, a commentary on Ved. Paribhāṣā P-65.
16. Vide my paper "Indian Theory of Prāpyakāritva" in "Our Heritage", 1994, December. Govt. Sanskrit College, Calcutta.
17. This problem is raised actually by Professor P.K. Sundaram in *Advaita Epistemology*, Madras, Madras University 1968.
18. *Studies in Philosophy*, edited by G. Bhattacharya, I tried to adopt the different Vedānta Concepts, at least partially as used by K.C. Bhattacharya who had a deep study of ancient *Indian Philosophy*, particularly of Ad. Vedānta, Pages 71-76 of the book are of primary importance.

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