

## IS SENSE - OBJECT CONTACT ESSENTIAL FOR PERCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE?

TAPAN KUMAR CHAKRABORTY

Perception is usually defined as *indriyārtha sannikarṣotpannam jnānam* – knowledge arising out of contact between sense-organ and object. By sense organ meant any one of the external sense organ like eye, ear, tongue, nose and touch and also internal sense-organ like *manas*. By object is meant external object like jar, cloth etc. and also internal object like pleasure, pain etc. what is to be noted in this connection is that there is a direct contact between an external object and external sense-organ in the case of external perception. But *manas* are also present there because without its participation no knowledge takes place. Again, there must be a contact between *manas* and *ātmā* because knowledge is a quality of *ātmā* or self. In other words, *ātmā-manah-samyoga* is as essential in knowledge as *indriya-manah-samyoga* and *indriya-viśaya-samyoga*. Although these three are essential in perceptual knowledge, only *indriya-viśaya-samyoga* is simply mentioned leaving aside the other two because it is the extra ordinary cause (*asādhārana kāraṇa*) of perceptual knowledge. The truth of the matter is that *ātmā-manah-samyoga* and *manah-indriya-samyoga* are common of every kind of knowledge. Only *indriya – viśaya-samyoga* is the specific cause of perception. Further, the contact that takes place in perception between sense-organ and the object in any one of the six different types like *samyoga*, *samyukta samavāya*, *samyukta-samaveta-samavaya*, *samavāya*, *samaveta samavāya* and *viśeṣa-viśeṣana-bhāva*. In the perception of a substance by means of visual or factual sense organ, we have *samyoga sannikarṣa*. The eyes or hands come in contact with an object, say jar, as a result of which the jar is perceived. But in the perception of quality belonging to a substance, we have a different type of contact. In the perception of a red jar *guṇavisista dravya* for example, our sense-organs, visual or factual – come in contact with the object jar, where *guṇa* is present in the relation of *samavāya*. Similarly, in the perception of *guṇatva*, the contact that takes place is known as *samyukta-samaveta-samavāya*. The sense organ comes in contact with the object where *guṇa* is present in the relation of *samavāya* and *guṇatva* is present in the relation of *samavāya*.

Thus, we have *samyukta-samaveta-sannikarṣa*. Likewise in the perception of sound through ear, we have *samavāya sannikarṣa*. For, sound is a quality of *ākāśa*

which is present in the meatus ear-whole in the relation of *samavāya*. Similarly, in the perception of soundness, we have *samaveta samavāya sannikarṣa*. For, *śabdatva* is present in *śabda* is also present in the ear-whole in the relation of *samavāya*. In the perception of *samavāya* and *abhāva*, *viśeṣya-viśeṣana-bhāva sannikarṣa* is admitted. The sense-organ comes in the contact with the *adhikaraṇa* or locus which stands for *viśeṣa* in this case and *abhāva* which stands for *viśeṣana* characterizes the object under consideration. Two points are worth noticing here. In the first place, those who do not admit the reality of *samavāya* do not accept *sannikarṣa* as six. For them, *sannikarṣa* can be of three different varieties like *samyoga*, *samyukta tādātmya* and *samyukta-tādātmya-tādātmya*. Secondly, those who do not admit the possibility of the perception of *abhāva*, do not accept the possibility of *viśeṣya-viśeṣana-bhāva-sannikarṣa*. Instead they admit the possibility of another *pramāṇa* known as *annupalabdhi* to account for absence or *abhāva*.

But that as it may, some sort of contact is to be admitted in order to account for perception. The Naiyāyikas, the champions of charity in thinking and expression, go to the length of suggesting that this contact in perception may assume two forms – *laukika* and *alaukika*, ordinary and extra-ordinary. The six types of contact mentioned before are ordinary. But some extra-ordinary types of contact are to be taken into consideration for the explanation of *Sāmānyalakṣaṇa*, *jñānalakṣaṇa* and *yogaja* perception. We perceive, for example, all the members of a class through the knowledge of class-property as *sāmānya*. When we perceive a cow, we also perceive cowness which is a class property of cow. Thus, we have ordinary perception. Our visual sense-organs come in conjunction with a cow where the property of cowness is present in the relation of inherence. In short, the *sannikarṣa* that takes place here is *samyukta samavāya*. But we do not stop here. Through the perception of cowness present in a particular cow, we extend the domain of our perception. We perceive all the members of a cow – past, present and future-through the knowledge of cowness for cowness is a property belonging to all the cows. Here the knowledge of *sāmānya* or universal acts as a medium of contact and hence the name. In *jñānalakṣaṇa* perception, a universal contact takes place between the sense-organ and the object. Generally, a particular sense-organ is capable of grasping a particular type of object. For example, visual sense-organ can grasp color, but not sound etc. An auditory sense-organ can grasp sound, but not color etc. That a particular object (called *viśaya*-

*vyavasthā*) is due to the reason that a particular *indriya* which is capable of grasping a particular object is composed of that element of the object. For example, a visual sense-organ can grasp color because it is composed of *teja* (five) which is a property of *rūpa* when this usual contact between the sense-organ and the object is broken and a usual contact between them takes place we have what is called *jñānalakṣaṇa pratyakṣa*. When, for example, we perceive fragrance of sandalwood through visual sense-organ, the unusual contact between fragrance (which is amenable to nose) and visual sense-organ (which is incapable of perceiving fragrance because the latter is not a property of the former) takes place. The reason behind this usual contact is this. When in the past we perceived the fragrance of the sandalwood through nose, we also perceived the color, texture, shape etc. of the sandalwood through eyes. These two perceptions get mixed up and became complicated in such a way that whenever we see the sandalwood the memory of fragrance arises. The memory of the past fragrance get dislocated in time and space and serves as a contact have yielding the visual perception of fragrance of the sandalwood. Similarly, the *yogins* also acquire some extra-ordinary power through the practice of yoga to perceive distant objects, minute objects and the like. What is important to note is that perception cannot take place without some contact, whether ordinary or extra-ordinary.

## II

This theory of sense-object contact in perception as essential is challenged by some outstanding philosophers belonging to Samkhya, Buddha, Advaita and even by although unbelievable, Navya Nyāya camps. The Samkhya philosophers look upon *pramāṇa* as a kind of *Cittavṛtti*. By *Citta* Samkhya understands *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra* and these are all unconscious. The consciousness of *puruṣa* gets reflected in *antahkarana* or *citta*. As a result, *antahkarana* appears so he conscious, though it is really not conscious. This *antahkarana* which is lying inside turns outward towards an object and assumes the form of an object. *Antahkarana* which is formless becomes bound by the object. As a result *antahkarana* turns out to be identical with the object. This identification of the inside *antahkarana* with the outside object is called *pauruṣeya vodha*. Thus *pramāṇa* stands for *pauruṣeya vodha* which is due to the merger of *citta* with its *Vṛtti*, i.e., *Viṣayākār pariṇati*. According to *Sāṃkhya*, this type of *cittavṛtti* may be of three different types. Accordingly, we have three different types of *pramāṇa* known as *dṛṣṭa*, *anumāna* and *āptavacana*. All the other

types of *pramāṇas* recognized in other systems can be successfully reduced to, and explained by, the above three just mentioned. What is important to note is that the *Sāmkhyaites* avoid the use of the word *pratyakṣa*, perhaps because this word has direct reference to *akaṣa* or *indriya*. Instead, they prefer the word *dṛṣṭa* which they define as *prativiṣaya adhyavasāya dṛṣṭam*. Here the word ‘*dṛṣṭam*’ stands for *lakṣa* whereas the rest (i.e. ‘*prativiṣaya adhyavasāya*’) for *lakṣaṇa*. The purpose of definition is to differentiate the *lakṣya vastu* from *alakṣya vastu* and this is done with reference to *asādhāraṇa dharma* which serves as a *lakṣaṇa* or defining character.

Vācaspati Miśra rightly observes that the purpose of *lakṣaṇa* as to distinguish it both from *samānajātiya* and *asamānajātiya*. *Anumāna* etc. are to be viewed as *samānajātiye* with *dṛṣṭa* for all of them are *cittavṛttis*. On the other hand, *viṣaya* like *ghata*, *pata* etc. are to be viewed as *asamānajātiya* with *drsta* because the object themselves are not *cittavṛttis*. So, the *dṛṣṭa cittavṛtti* (which is *lakṣa* here) is to be distinguished both from *anumāna*, *āptavacana* (which are also *cittavṛttis* and stand on the same footing with *dṛṣṭa*, hence *sāmanajātiya*) on the one hand and from object like *ghata*, *pata* etc. (which are not *sāmanajātiya* with *dṛṣṭa*) on the other. It is to be borne in mind that *cittavṛtti* arises out of amalgamation of *citta* with *viṣaya* no doubt. But this *cittavṛtti* is internal as its āśraya or locus is *citta*. But *visaya* in that sense is not a *āntara padārtha* like *cittavṛtti*. However, Vācaspati explains that *dṛṣṭa cittavṛtti* is different from both *anumāna* etc. and *viṣaya* as well. In order to do so, he first of all concentrates on *viṣaya* which is derived from the root ‘*sing*’ with a prefix ‘*Be*’ and a suffix ‘*ach*’ in the nominative case-ending (*Be+sing+ach in katrvācyā*). <sup>1</sup>The root ‘*sing*’ means to bind. Hence the word ‘*Viṣaya*’ means that which binds in a definite way. Thus *viṣaya* binds *viṣayī* which is nothing but *antahkaraṇa -viṣayī-nāmānuvadhnanti*. As *antahkaraṇa* is formless, *viṣaya* binds it in its own form – *svena rūpena nirūpaniyām kurvanti*. It is to be noted that *viṣaya*, may be of different types - external like *ghata* etc. and internal like *sukla* etc. whatever the nature of *viṣaya*, *antahkaraṇa* must get related to *viṣaya* without which no *antahkaranavṛtti* results or takes place. Hence Vācaspati Misra rightly remarks: *Viṣayam viṣayam prati vartate*

<sup>1</sup> *Samanasamanajatiya-vyavacchedo laksanarttah*, p.45 *Samkhyatattvakaumudi*, Ed. By Narayan Chandra Goswami

*iti prativiṣayam*<sup>1</sup>. The term ‘*adhyāvasāya*’ means definite or certain knowledge. Such knowledge arises as a result of direct relationship of *antahkarana*-vṛtti with *viṣaya*. According to Sāṃkhya, such *antahkarana* vṛtti is *acetanā* or unconscious because it is transformation of *antahkarana* in the form of *viṣaya*. *Antahkarana* is unconscious. Yet it assumes the form of consciousness because reflection of conscious *puruṣa* falls upon it. It is to be born in viewed here that reflection of consciousness into *antahkarana* is admitted by Vācaspati. But *vijñānavikṣa* and others speak of double reflection theory – consciousness not only gets reflected in *antahkarana* but *antahkarana* in its turn gets reflected in consciousness as well.

As a result, *katṛtvābhimān* of *puruṣa* along with *caitanyā-bhimān* of *prakṛti* takes place. In truth, *puruṣa* being formless cannot be *kartā* or agent, just *prakṛti* being unconscious in nature cannot be *cetanā* or conscious. Yet *prakṛti* takes himself to be *kartā*. This *ābhimānika jñāna* is due to the double reflection theory. Be that as it may, the word ‘*prati*’ used in the definition of *drṣṭa* democrats it from *anumāna*, no direct relationship is established between *hetu* (say, *dhūma*) and *sādhya* (say, *vahni*). But in the case of *drṣṭa*, direct relationship is established between *viṣaya* and *viṣayi*. Similarly, in the case of *smṛtijñāna*, relationship is established between a past object and a past observer. But in the case of *drṣṭa*, direct relationship between a present object and a present observer is obeyed and question. The significance of the term ‘*viṣaya*’ occurring in the definition of *drṣṭa* is to differentiate it from error (*viparyaya*); for the *viṣaya* of erroneous knowledge is *asat* or unreal, whereas the *viṣaya* of *drṣṭa* is certain (*niścita*). The word ‘*adhyāvasāya*’ is used to defer *samsaya* (doubt) from the domain of *drṣṭa* on the ground that the former is *aniścita* (uncertain) whereas the latter is *niścita* (certain). However, the Sāṃkhya view of *drṣṭa* does not makes any reference to *indriya* or *sannikarṣa*.

### III

The Buddhists also do not subscribe to the view of perception originating from sense-object contact. For them, perception is the immediate knowledge of the object free from imagination and error<sup>2</sup>. By imagination or *kalpanā* they mean employment of words to designate the object perceived. The underlying suggestion is

<sup>1</sup> *Samkhyatattvakaumudi*, p. 46

<sup>2</sup> *Kalpanapodam abhrantam pratyaksam*, *Nyayabindu*.

that when we perceive something ‘blue’, it is directly apprehended without a corresponding expression like ‘it is blue’. Designation by words comes later. An unknown bird or flower is capable of being perceived, although it is not expressible in words. The *Naiyāyikas* seem to agree with this view. For, they also hold that words are not unfailing attendant of the object perceived. Had it been so, perceptual knowledge could not be distinguished from verbal knowledge. What is important to note here is that the *Nyāya* view differs from the Buddha view in two aspects, whenever we perceive the *Naiyāyikas* hold that there is an object of perception and the object is a substance (*dravya*) like *ghata*, *pata* etc. or a qualified substance (*guṇaviśista dravya*) like *nila ghata*, *rakta pata* etc. The Buddhists, on the contrary, believe that we perceive, not a substance but a quality. For them, substance is nothing other than the sum-total of qualities. That is why they claim that what we perceive is blue, red etc. Secondly, the Buddhist believe only in the primary awareness of something without a corresponding name etc. as real or true. This type of perception is known as *nirvikalpaka* or indeterminate perception as there is no *vikalpa* or *kalpanā* associated with it. *Kalpanā*, according to Buddhists, may assume five different forms like *nāma kalpanā*, *dravya kalpanā*, *guṇa kalpanā*, *kriyā kalpanā* and *jāti kalpanā*. *Kalpanā* is defining as *abhilāpa samsargayoga pratibhāsa pratiti*. The first appearance of an object without any qualification by name, universal etc. (*Nāmjātyādi yojana rahita*) is veridical perception. The subsequent mention of the object by name etc. vitiates the true nature of the object. This type of perception is *savikalpaka* as it is designated by words.

This type of perception is not acceptable to the Buddhists as real. The *Naiyāyikas*, however, admit both types of perception – indeterminate which is not-verbal or *aśabda* and determinate which is verbal. Incidentally it may be noted in passing that the grammarians do not admit any perception which is not expressible in words. They believe in *śabda* as eternal and equate it with Brahman or reality. Hence anything falls short of *śabda* is not admissible. The *Sāṃkhya*s, the *Mimāṃsakas*, The *Vedāntins* believe in both forms of perception but their interpretations differ from one another.

It may be noted in this connection that two noted commentators on Buddhists Philosophy differ regarding the exact meaning of *kalpanāpoḍam*. According to Vinitdeb, this epithet means *sangi*, i.e. object named. To designate *pratyakṣa* as

something named or nameable does not reveal the exact nature of *pratyakṣa* which is a name or *sangā*. That is why Dharmottara regards *pratyakṣa* as *uddeśya* or subject and *kalpanāpoḍam* as *Vidheya* or predicate. For, he believes that it is by means of the predicate that the nature of subject is clearly expressed. It may be objected that *kalpanā* being itself a piece of knowledge cannot be added with or bereft of another piece of knowledge. To avoid complication, *kalpanāpoḍam* is to be understood in the sense of *kalpanāsvabhāvarahita*. This means knowledge not affected by any kind of *kalpanā*. However, it is to be borne in mind that *kalpanāpadatva* alone does not make knowledge real. When we go by boat, we see the trees on land as moving. This knowledge is not real as the trees are devoid of any motion. Similarly, some persons suffering from some defects in their eye-sight look upon one moon as two. Their knowledge of double moon is clear although not real. That is why the epithet *abhrānta* is needed besides *kalpanāpoda*. *Abhrānta* means free from error, i.e. correspondence of knowledge with facts, actual state of affairs. The fact, here, is that there are static trees; but we have the fact is that knowledge of moving dynamic trees; there is one moon; yet we have knowledge of double moon.

Thus there arises a discrepancy between knowledge and fact, giving rise to illusion or error. This error occurs, or may occur, due to four reasons, known as *indriyagata*, *viṣayagata*, *sthānagata* and *saviragata*. The perception of double moon is due to defects in eye-sight, known as *timira-roga*. Thus this error occurs due to defects in sense organ. Error due to object occurs when a particular *maśāla* (torch) gives rise to the knowledge of *alatacakra* owing rapid rotation of *maśāla*. The static trees appear as dynamic when viewed from the running boat. This is due to spatial reason. Error arising out of bodily reasons is due to the disability in the body out of the preponderance of *vāyu* or *pitta* or *slesmā* over others. It is not perhaps out of place to mention that Dinnaga is not willing to include *abhrānta* in the definition of *pratyakṣa*. For, he believes that error creeps in knowledge when we add words to it. Moreover he is not prepared to admit any reality to the external object beyond the domain of knowledge. As a result, no question of correspondence between knowledge and external object does appear. In other words, perception must be indeterminate in character and whatever is indeterminate must be free from error. Indeterminate knowledge is knowledge without characterization by language. Hence there is no need to add a redundant epithet ‘*abhrānta*’ to knowledge. Perceptual knowledge

worth the name must be free from error of any kind. It may be asked: why then Dharmakirti does propose the inclusion of *abhrānta* in the definition of perception? Two possible answers may be put forward to account for this. In the first place, Dharmakirti represents the Sautrāntika schools of Buddhism.

The philosophers belonging to this school believe in the external reality of the object along with internal reality of knowledge. As these philosophers are *Sarvāstivavādis*, they want to exclude such conditions in perception which may vitiate perception. Secondly, it may be said that the necessity of using these two epithets rests on refuting the views of opponents-either from the side of the Buddhas or from the side of the non-Buddhas. It should be noted further that if we use the word *abhrānta* in the sense of *avisamvādaka jñāna*, as envisaged by kamalaśīla in his *Tattvasaṅgraha*, then a compromise can be achieved between Dharmakirti and Dinnaga. Any student of Buddha Philosophy knows that *avisamvādaka jñāna* has the properties of *pradarśakatva jñāna* has the properties of *pradarśakatva* (revelation of the object), *pravastakatva* (movement forwards the object) and *prāpakatva* (getting the object) thus every *avisamvādaka jñāna* must be free from error. For it not only reveals the object, but helps us receive the object. If the knowledge which reveals the object does not lead to successful activity i.e., does not help us getting hold of the object it cannot be regarded as *avisamvādaka jñāna*.

#### IV

The most damaging theory criticism of the sense-object-contact theory is perhaps received from the Advaitins. They not only not adhere to the above view cannot escape from twin difficulties of *ativyāpti* and *avyāpti*. If, for example, perception is defined in terms of sense-object contact, then the definitions will subject to *ativyāpti doṣa*. For, in that case other types of knowledge like *anumāna* etc. will come under the purview of *pratyakṣa*. Every knowledge is due to *manas* or *manojanya*. *Anumāna* being a kind of knowledge is also due to the intervention of *manas*. Hence perception will be applicable to *anumāna* also, as the latter is also arising out of contact between *manas* (which is an *indriya*, according to Nyāya) and *viṣaya*. Again, the Nyāya definition of perception is subject to *avyāpti doṣa* as well; for it does not cover the perception of God. It is held in *śruti* that God perceives

everything even though he is devoid of sense-organs<sup>1</sup>. Thus the determinant of *pratyakṣa* cannot be *indriyajanyatva*. The question may naturally arise; if *pratyakṣa* cannot be properly defined in terms of sense-object stimulation, what should be its proper determinant? To such query the Advaitins reply that the use of *pratyakṣatva* centre's round perceptual knowledge or *pratyakṣa pramā*, the instrument of *pratyakṣa* *pramā* known as *pratyakṣa pramāṇa* and the object of *pratyakṣa pramā* known as *prameya* of the three where the term *pratyakṣa* is used a capable of being used – *pramā*, *prameya* and *pramāṇa* – the identity between *pramāṇa* – *caitanya* and *prameya* – *caitanya* gives rise to *jñānagata pratyakṣa*; whereas the identity between *pramāṭr* – *caitanya* and *prameya* – *caitanya* gives rise to *viśayagata pratyakṣa*. Although *caitanya* or consciousness is really one in relation to *upādhi*. Thus we have *pramāṇa-caitanya*, *pramāṭr-caitanya* and *prameya* or *viśaya-caitanya* of the three, the relation of consciousness with objects like *ghata* etc. is known as *viśaya-caitanya* or *prameya-caitanya*.

When consciousness gets associated with *antahkaranavṛtti* we have *pramāṇa-caitanya*. By *vṛtti* is meant *viśayakara parināma*. Just as water is carried to a field through canal and assumes the form of the field, similarly *antahkāraṇa* which is *taijasa* in nature goes out to the object through the *indriyas* and gets united with the object. This *viśayakāra parināma* of *antahkāraṇa* is called *vṛtti*. Beside these two, we have also *pramāṭr-caitanya* arising out of *caitanya* delimited by *antahkāraṇa*, i.e. *antahkāraṇāvacchinna caitanya*. This *antahkāraṇāvacchinna caitanya* is called *pramāṭr-caitanya*. What is important to note here is that in the case of perception *antahkāraṇa* goes out to the object, say *ghata*, and assumes the form of *ghata*, i.e. turns into *ghatādiviśaya caitanya*. As *antahkāraṇa* has no form of its own, it assumes the form of the object to which it is united by going out. According to Advaitins, what happens in such cases, *vṛtti*, *ghata* and *ghatākāra antahkāraṇavṛtti* being placed in the same place, both forms of consciousness (*ghatarūp viśayā vacchinna caitanya* and *vṛttirūp pramāṇāvacchinna caitanya*) get identified. Although *viśaya* and *antahkāraṇavṛtti* are the limiters (*vibhājaka*) of *caitanya*, they are different from each other. Yet by their occupation of the same place they remain identified at that time. In other words, they are not limiters of *caitanya* at that time. This sort of knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Pasyati acaksu, sa sronatra akarna.*

(identity of *ghatāvacchinna caitanya* with *ghatākara-vṛttyā vacchinna caitanya*) is called perception of jar. But in the case of perception of pleasure, pain etc., which are internal objects, the question of *antaḥkāraṇa* going out does not occur at all. In such cases, *sukhādivṛttyā vacchinna caitanya* and *sukhādivṛttyā vacchinna caitanya* remain always in the same place being united with each other. That is why, the knowledge of pleasure etc. is always perceptual. In the case of *parokṣajñāna* like *anumāṇa* etc., *antaḥkāraṇa* does not get a chance to go to *vahni* and get united with it, for the simple reason that the visual sense organ is not related to it. In time, *pratyakṣa* according to Advaitins, is not to be defined in terms of sense-object contact. It is to be defined as *jñānatvam* *pratyakṣatvam*<sup>1</sup>. *Jñāna*, according to Advaitins, is not only revealing the object; it is also revealing itself. This self-revealing character of knowledge needs no proof, as it is self evident. If there be knowledge, it must be related automatically or perceived naturally. *Jñāna* is comparable to light without which everything remains in the dark. That is why, *jñāna* which is like light cannot be said to exist without being perceived. This is the nature of *jñāna*. *Śruti* also describes the nature of knowledge as ‘*sākṣāt*’ and *aparokṣa*. According to Advaitins, consciousness which is eternal, unchangeable, part less and indeterminate is alone real. It is *paramārsha sat* and is always immediate (*aparokṣa*).

Being eternal and part less, consciousness cannot be perceived by means of *indriyas*. It is the object (*viṣaya*) that is perceived or perceivable by *indriyas* only. In the perception of *ghata*, there are two elements – *jñānāṁśa* and *visāṁśa*. The *jñānāṁśa* remains the same in every *viśiṣṭa jñāna*; it is the *viṣayāṁśa* that changes from one knowledge to another. It is the *viṣaya* that gives a form to knowledge which is itself formless. As a result the infinite knowledge appears as finite in the form of object. The object is material, not self-luminous. It is the self-illuminating knowledge that makes the revelation of the object possible. Several points are worth noticing here. The Advaitins admit two types of perception – *jñānagata pratyakṣa* and *viṣayagata pratyakṣa*. But regarding the order of these two types of perceptions Advaitins differ. According to Vācaspati and his followers, the *jñānagata pratyakṣa* precedes *viṣayagata pratyakṣa*. The *vivarāṇa sampradāya*, on the other hand, go to the other extreme claiming the priority of *viṣayagata pratyakṣa* over *jñānagata pratyakṣa*. Dharmaraj in this

<sup>1</sup> *Vedānta Paribhāṣa, Dharmaraj Adhvavindra, p.*

connection follows the time of Vācaspati etc. But he differs from Vācaspati in accepting *manas* as an *indriya*. Dharmaraj argues that *manas* have no definite object to receive like other external sense-organs. Pleasure, pain etc. which are usually spoken of as the object of *manas* are denied by Advaitins. According to them, pleasure, pain etc. are *sākṣivedya*, i.e. objects of direct awareness of *sākṣi*. Moreover, if *manas* were *indriya* in the true sense, it could not have been auxiliary (*sahakāri*) to other senses.

Further, there is no proof for admitting *maṇas* as an *indriya*. To take resort to Gitāvākyā - *maṇah ṣaṣṭāni indriyāni* or *indriyānam maṇaścāsmi* – as proof is not admissible. For, the number six by which *maṇas* is mentioned can be fulfilled by and extended to, that which is not an *indriya*. In other words, *sāṃkhya pūrāṇa* fulfillment of or number does not indicate always that it is to be done within a member of the same class. There is no such hard and fast rule in the expression ‘*yajmān pancamā*’ where the sacrificial *habi* (*iḍā*) is asked to be eaten by *yajmān* along with the four priests (ṛtwika) – *hotā, udgātā, adhvaryu* and *Brahmī*. Here also the *panca sāṃkhya* belonging to ḗtwikas is to be understood as *yajmān* who is external to the list of ḗtwikas. Narrating the different *vādhaka pramāṇas* against *maṇas* as an *indriya*, Dharmaraj finally mentions an *sādhaka pramāṇa* from *śruti* as well – ‘*Indriyebhyah perā’arthā arthebhyaśca param manah*<sup>1</sup>’ or *Indriyaṇi parānyāhuḥ indriyebhyah param manah, Manasastu parā buddhi yo buddheḥ paratastu seh*<sup>2</sup>. Lastly, if *pratyakṣatva* is defined in terms of *jñānatva*, *anumanādi jñāna* seem to come under the purview of *pratyakṣa*, thereby giving rise to *ativyāpti doṣa*. The Advaitins solve this problem in the following manner. In the first place, in inferential knowledge like other pieces of knowledge, there are two parts – *jñānāṁśa* and *viṣayāṁśa*. The earlier part in inference is surely perceptual and no question of *ativyāpti* does arise here. In truth, *caitanya* or *jñāna*, according to Advaita, is *anādi* (eternal). Hence there can be no cause of it, truly speaking. But this external consciousness gets itself manifested in *antahkāraṇavṛtti* which is regarded as the *abhivyanjaka* (medium of manifestation). This *antahkāraṇavṛtti* is *sādi* (i.e. having a beginning) as it is produced by *indriya sannikarṣa* etc. As *cakṣurādi indriyas* are to be admitted as generating

<sup>2</sup> *Gita*, 3/42

*antahkāraṇavṛtti*, they are secondarily designated as *jñāna* and *pramāṇa*. In other words, according to Advaita Vedanta, the perception of eternal consciousness is as good a perception as the perception of jar. The difference between the two lies in the fact that the first one is primary (*mukhya*) while the second one is *gauṇa* (secondary) as it is *āropita* or *upacarita* (superimposed). In the former case there is no applicability or function of *indriyas*. The function of *indriyas* is noticeable only in the case of *gauṇa pratyakṣa*.

## V

The last but not the least discordant note with the sense-object-contact theory is traceable to some Navya Naiyāyikas. They counter successfully the Advaita objection to the sense-object-contact theory, propounded and vindicated by the Ancient Naiyāyikas. They point out quite convincingly that the Nyāya argument of perception arising out of sense-object stimulation is neither subject to *ativyāpti* nor *avyāpti doṣa*. In the first place, every knowledge is *manojanya* no doubt. But the *maṇas* which is present in *anumānādi jñāna* serves not as an *indriya* but as a property of *maṇas*, i.e., *manastva*. In other words, *maṇas* as a property of *indriya*, i.e., *indriyatva* is a *kāraṇa* of perceptual knowledge; but *maṇas* as a property of *indriya*, is not a *kāraṇa* of inferential and other non-perceptual knowledge. Hence the charge of *ativyāpti* brought about by the Advaitins does not pass master critical examination. Secondly, the charge of *avyāpti* is wrongly leveled against the Nyāya view. The Naiyāyikas mention clearly that God's perception is not within the jurisdiction of other definition. This is evident from the explicit use of the word *utpanna* (produced) in the definition of perception as *indriyārtha sannikarṣotpannam jñānam*. God's perception is *nitya* or eternal; but human perception is *jñāna* or non-eternal. However, to get rid of the possibility of the above charges and also the desire to extend the definition of perception to both human and divine cases, Gangeśa, the founder of Navya Nyāya, define perception as *jñānakāraṇa kām jñānam pratyakṣam*. Perception is a kind of knowledge which is not brought about by the instrumentality of any other knowledge to explain. In order to make inferential knowledge possible, we are to depend on three conditions, known as *pakṣadharmatā jñāna* (the presence of *hetu* in the *pakṣa* with certainty), *Vyāptijñāna* (the universal of concomitance of *hetu* with *sādhya*) and *parāmarśa jñāna* (arising out of the above two *jñānas* taken together). So, inferential knowledge is not *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna* but *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna*.

Similarly, *upamiti jñāna* being due to *sādrśyajñāna* and *śabda jñāna* being due to *padajñāna* are examples of *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna*. But perceptual knowledge which arises out of a contact between sense-organs and the object is *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna*; for the sense-organs object and contact are all material or *jaḍa*. In other words, none of them, is of the nature of consciousness, *jñāna-svarūpa*. Thus perception is *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna*, whereas inference etc. are all *jñāna-kāraṇaka-jñāna*.

A little reflection will show that this definition is not acceptable. For, all perpetual knowledge cannot be regarded as *jñāna-akāraṇaka*. *Savikalpaka* perception for example, is determined by *nirvikalpaka* perception. *Savikalpaka* perception is an example of *viśiṣṭa buddhi* where *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa* are related to each other. In the perception like ‘this is a jar’ (*Ayam ghataḥ*), jar stands for *viśeṣya* and jar-ness stands for *viśeṣaṇa* and these two are related to each other by the relation of inference (*samavāya*). *Viśiṣṭa buddhi* presupposes the knowledge of *viśeṣaṇa* which is supplied by *nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa*. Thus *nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa* is essential for understanding and explanation of *savikalpaka pratyakṣa*. This proves that *savikalpaka pratyakṣa* is brought about by *nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa* which is of the nature of *jñāna*. Thus *savikalpaka* is *jñānakāraṇaka* and not *jñāna-akāraṇaka*. It may be argued that though *savikalpaka* is not, *nirvikalpaka* is *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna*. This position is not also tenable. For, *nirvikalpaka jñāna* is not a case of *viśiṣṭa buddhi* and therefore it is not characterizable either as a *pramā* or as an *apramā*. The term ‘*kāraṇa*’ can be significantly used in relation to *pramā* only which *nirvikalpaka* is not. It is argued further that a certain section of the *Naiyāyikas* look upon *nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa* as *pramā* then our reply would be that such knowledge too is brought about by the knowledge and desire of God. *Iswarecchā* and *Iswariya jñāna* are regarded as common causes (*sādhāraṇa kāraṇa*) for all types of knowledge. That is why; *nirvikalpaka jñāna* is also a specimen of *jñāna-kāraṇaka-jñāna*. Furthermore, *hānādibuddhi* is viewed as causes for all type of knowledge. So no knowledge worth the name is possible without *hāna*, *upādana* or *upekṣābuddhi* preceding it. In this sense all knowledge is *jñāna-kāraṇaka* and *nirvikalpaka* being a specimen of knowledge is no exception. Thus the definition of perception as *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna* does not appear as sound. This is the reason why later *Naiyāyikas* like Viswanatha resort to *jātighata lakṣaṇa* of *pratyakṣa*. In his *Muktāvali-saṁgraha* Viswanatha clarifies *Yatkincit pratyakṣadikam ādāya tat vyakti vṛtti anumityavṛtti*

*jātīmattbam pratyakṣātvādikam vāyamiti*<sup>1</sup>. To explain *pratyakṣa* is to be defined as one possessing *pratyakṣattva* (perception-ness) which is a *jāti* (universal) and which is present (*vṛtti*) in all types of *pratyakṣa* and absent (*avṛttia*) in all types of non-perception like *anumiti* etc.

It may not be out of place to mention that Appay Dikshit in his *Vedanta-Kalpataru-Parimal* defines perception as *jñāñajanyajnanatvam jñānaproksyamīti nirvaktavyam*<sup>2</sup>. This means that *pratyakṣa* is not due to any other knowledge. It is to be accepted as *aproksa* or immediate. This definition has got a striking resemblance with the Navya Nyāya definition. But this definition also appears to be defective. When we perceive a person with a stick (*dandipuruṣa*), the stick appears as a *viśeṣana* (adjective). For without the knowledge of ‘*danda*’, *dandi* the person cannot be known or perceived. That is why the perception of *dandi* is arising out of the knowledge of *danda* characterizing the person as *dandi*. So the perception of *dandi* is *jñānājanya-jñāna* and not *jñānājanya jñāna*. In order to remove this defect, it is held that though *dandi* is due to the knowledge of *danda*, yet this *danda* is also a part and parcel of *pratyakṣa*. In other words, *danda* is also an object of *dandi pratyakṣa*. That is why; it is not *svavilṣaya-aviṣayaka*. However, the opinion of Appay Dikshit as directed to counter the view of *Vivarāṇa prasthāna* which we have mentioned earlier. While the follower of Bhāmati proceed from *kāraṇa* to *kārya*, the followers of *Vivarana* go to the opposite direction, proceeding from *kārya* to *kāraṇa*.

## VI

Let us now turn to critical examination of the views which avoid references to sense-object contact. The Sāṃkhya Philosophers use the term ‘*drṣṭa*’ in place of *pratyakṣa*. The reason seems to be this that the word ‘*pratyakṣa*’ is more related to sense-object contact theory than *drṣṭa*. The term ‘*ākṣa*’ which means sense-organ refers to the rival view more directly. Instead, *drṣṭa* means direct apprehension or cognition without referring to sense-organ. But a closer examiner of Sāṃkhya view reminds us that it is not free from traditional view of sense-object contact. The Sāṃkhya Philosophy consciously does not use the terms *indriya* and *sannikāśa*. But they cannot avoid the term *viṣaya* and *drṣṭa*, according to them, it is certain

<sup>1</sup> *Bhasapariccheda*, p. 264-265, Fd. By Pancanan sastri, Nirnayasagar Edition, p. 56

knowledge of the object *prativiṣaya adhya nāśaya*. The term ‘*prativiṣaya*’ occurring in the definition of *dṛṣṭa* is explained by Vacāspati as *viṣayam viṣayam prati vartate iti prativiṣayam*. This means that *prativiṣaya* stands for something which is directed (*vṛtti*) to the object. Thus by *vṛtti* Vacāspati means *sannikarṣa* or contact. *Vṛtiśca sannikarṣah* now this *sannikarṣa* which takes place around every object is not possible without *indriya*. Hence *indriya* turns out to be the real meaning of *prativiṣaya*. ‘*Adhyavasāya*’ means certain knowledge which can take place when there is a contact between the sense-organ and the object. Out of this sort of contact between the two, *antahkāraṇa* assumes the form of the object. This is known *viṣayākār pariṇām* of *antahkāraṇa*. This *antahkāraṇa-vṛtti* which itself is unconscious assumes the form of consciousness owing to the reflection of *puruṣa* on it. This shows that Sāṃkhya cannot altogether overcome the influence of traditional thinkers.

To the Buddhist’s view of perception as *kalpanāpodam* (free from imagination) and *abhrāntam* (free from error), it can be safely held that they are not against sense-object contact. They are simply against employment of words about what is perceived through the contact between the sense-organ and the object. Their aversion to the use of language about what is seen is due to the fact that error creeps in through language. That perception arising out of sense-object contact is admissible to them is evident from the classification of perception into *indriyajñāna*. By *indriyajñāna* is meant *indriyasya jñānam* (knowledge through sense-organ) or *indriyāśṛta jñānam* (i.e., knowledge obtained through sense-organ). Whatever be the meaning, knowledge through sense-organ is not denied. What is denied by them is the description and designation by language of that which is obtained through sense-organ. The Buddhist also accepts another type of perception known as *manovijñāna*. In the ninth *sūtra* of Nyāyabindu, Darmakirti defines *manovijñāna* as *svaviṣayā-anantara viṣayasahakāriṇa-indriyajñānena-samanatara-pratyena janitam tat manovijñānam*. *Manovijñāna* arises after *indriyajñāna* and this is expressed by *Svaviṣaya-anantara*. The second type of perception arises immediately after *indriyajñāna*. But the second type is like the previous one, not identical with it. What happens in such cases is that the first knowledge leaves behind a similar type of knowledge, called *samāntara jñāna* before destruction. Thus a series is formed known as *jñāna-dhārā* or *jñāna-santati*. In this *jñānadhārā*, the preceding knowledge

is the *upādāna* of the subsequent knowledge known as *upadeya*. Thus *indriyajñāna* is taken to be *upādanajñāna* of *manovijñāna*. Hence the characteristics of *manovijñāna* are: (i) it arises out of *indriyajñāna*; (ii) its object is *samānjātiya* (similar, not same) to the object of previous knowledge, i.e. *indriyajñāna* and (iii) they are both specimens of the same stream - *dhāra* or *prabāha*. It follows from the above that *manovijñāna* is not possible without *indriyajñāna* as the former arises out of the latter. Hence sense-object contact is admissible even at the stage of *manovijñāna*. Besides these two types of perception, the Buddhists speak of other two varieties of perception known as *ātmasaṁivedam* and *yogijñāna*. We are not concerned with the elaborations or explanations of these types. What we are concerned with is that any type of perception worth the name must be immediate and direct. That does not mean that there is no sense-object contact there. What is important for them is that this direct cognition is not expressible in words. For Buddhists, every knowledge is momentary and perception is no exception. How can a momentary knowledge be divisible into four varieties is something to be pondered about? Incidentally, the Sāṃkhya Philosophers do not take the trouble of classifying *drṣṭa* at all. Nor any reason is provided. It is for the scholars to give a satisfactory explanation for this silence.

Admitting the Advaita position that *indriya* is not a determinant of *pratyakṣa*, yet the Advaitins cannot deny that empirical perception of jar etc. is due to *indriya* (*indriya-janya*). For, *ghatādi pratyakṣa* is nothing but the limited manifestation of unlimited consciousness. It is true that consciousness is not perceived or perceivable by any one of our sense-organs. But it is also true that without relation to the sense-organ the object is not perceived. We have remarked earlier that it is the object which gives some form (*rūpa*) to the formless consciousness. That is why our perception is to be taken as *sakhaṇḍa abhivyakti* of *akhaṇḍa caitanya*. That is why the Advaitins mentioned that it is the *ajñātasattāvṛtti* which is responsible for the manifestation of object which was not known before. The function of *vṛtti* is to dispel concealment of material object which has got *ajñātasattā*. That which has no *ajñātasattā* (like *antahkāraṇavṛtti* and its *dharma sukhadukha* etc. needs no *vṛtti* to dispel ignorance. The Advaitins believed that the rise and fall of this *vṛtti* account for the rise and fall of consciousness. Thus the two (*vṛtti* and *jñāna*) appear to be inseparably related as

*jñāna* only secondarily<sup>1</sup>. This sort of knowledge to *vṛtti* is *aupacārik* (accidental) and not natural (*svābhāvika*). Admitting this *vṛtti* to be a kind of knowledge *indriyas* etc. are also admitted to be *prameya*, though secondarily. As a matter of fact, the word perception is used and capable of being used in relation to *jñāna* (known as *pramā*), the instrument of knowledge (known as *pramāṇa*) and the object of knowledge (known as *pramāṇa*) and the object of knowledge (known as *prameya*). In other words, the words *pratyakṣa* in our language stands for both *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa*. *Pratyakṣa* as *viśeṣya* means *pratyakṣa jñāna*, whereas the same *pratyakṣa* as *viśeṣaṇa* may mean (1) *pratyakṣajñāna* (*Idam pratyakṣam jñānam*), (2) *pratyakṣa viṣaya* (*Ayam ghataḥ pratyakṣah*) and (3) *pratyakṣa-pramāṇa* (*Idam pratyakṣam pramāṇam*). That is why sometimes object (*ghata*) appears as primary (*mukhya*), sometimes the object of knowledge (*ghata-jñāna*) as primary. Accordingly, we have *viṣayagata pratyakṣa* in the former case and *jñānagata pratyakṣa* in the latter. Whatever be the case, *antahkāraṇavṛtti* cannot occur without the participation of *indriya*. Though *indriya* is not directly related to knowledge, it is directly related to *antahkāraṇavṛtti* which is a direct relation to knowledge. In time, consciousness which is itself formless becomes manifested in the form of *ghata pata* etc. So the *ghata-viṣayaka-caitanya* is *sakhanda* not *akhanda*, *indriya-jñāna*, not *ajñāna*. In other words, in the manifestation of limitless consciousness in the form of finite limited object *caksurādi indriya* can very well be regarded as cause. Further, the Advaitins also admit the direct perpetual knowledge of object arising out of *śabdajñāna* which is usually taken as *parokṣa*, not *pratyakṣa*. In the celebrated example of ‘*Daśamastamasi*’ (you are the tenth), the person counting immediately perceives himself to be the tenth man. Although this knowledge due to the having *arthe* above-mentioned *vākyā*, yet it is not *parokṣa* but *pratyakṣa*; for the tenth man knows himself directly through sense-object-contact. In this case, *vṛttyavacchinna caitanya* and *viṣaya-caitanya* get identified. That is why; it is a case of *pratyakṣa*. This also shows that sense-object reference cannot be altogether ignored.

The Navya Nyāya tactic of replacing sense-object contact by *jñāna-akāraṇaka-jñāna* does not bear scrutiny. We have already shown that *pratyakṣa*

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānāvacchedakatvāt ca vṛttau jñānatvopacārah. Vedanta paribhāsā*, Ed. By Panchanan Sastri, p.

cannot be properly said to be *jñāna-akāraṇaka*. *Savikalpaka pratyakṣa* is explainable only if we admit that some times of *aviśiṣṭa jñāna* logically precede it. Again, no knowledge worth the name can take place without the will and knowledge of God. This explains why *nirvikalpaka jñāna* is also *jñāna-kāraṇaka*. Further, *hānādi buddhi* determines our activity towards perpetual knowledge. Even if, for the sake of respect towards Gangeśa, it is admitted that perceptual knowledge is *jñāna-kāraṇaka*, it cannot be denied that it is *jaḍa-kāraṇaka*. Gangeśa cannot deny that perception of jar takes place when there is a contact between *indriya* and *artha*. Hence, perception is *indriya - artha-sannikarṣa-kāraṇaka*. The sense organ, the object and the contact are all *jaḍa* or material in nature. And they have some hands to play in the generation of perpetual knowledge. It may be reminded that the Navya Naiyāyikas look upon *vyāpāra-viśiṣṭa-kāraṇa* as a *kāraṇa*. *Vyāpāra*, for them, stands for something which being produced produces the effect. In the case of perpetual knowledge (which is the effect), *sannikarṣa* acts as a *vyāpāra* or intervening cause. This *vyāpāra* is due to *indriya* called *vyāpāri* or *vyāpāraviśiṣṭa*. As for the Navya Naiyāyikas *vyāpara-viśiṣṭa-kāraṇa* is *kāraṇa*, the sense-organ is to be regarded as *kāraṇa* of perpetual knowledge. It is evident from the above consideration that the Navya Naiyāyikas cannot set aside the role of sense-organ in the generation of perpetual knowledge.

That Ancient Naiyāyikas accept the roles of *indriya*, *viṣaya* and *sannikarṣa* is beyond question. They, however, differ from the Navya Naiyāyikas regarding the *kāraṇa* of perpetual knowledge. According to them, it is the last in the causal series that has a special claim for the designation of *kāraṇa*. For the production of effect is not delayed after its appearance. That is why the Ancient Naiyāyikas look upon *sannikarṣa* as the *kāraṇa*. It is *phalāyogavyavacchinna kāraṇa* and hence *kāraṇa*. The *phala* or the effect is perception of jar which produced by the co-operation of more than one cause. A positive effect needs at least three causes for its generation. The *indriya* and *viṣaya* must be present along with *sannikarṣa* to give rise to the effect. But the *indriya* and the *viṣaya*, through present, cannot produce the effect. They are thus not directly related to the effect. As soon as contact takes place between *indriya* and *viṣaya*, perception results immediately. Thus *indriya* and *viṣaya* are *phalāyoga*, but *sannikarṣa* which is different (*vyavacchinna*) from the two above, produces the perpetual knowledge of the object. Thus, for the older Naiyāyikas it is the contact or *sannikarṣa* which has something special. That is why *sannikarṣa* is to

be regarded as *kārana* proper. Annambhatta, the author of *Tarkasamgraha*, does not fall in line either with the traditional or modern view. In his *Dipikā*, he defines *asādhārana kārana* as something different from *sādhārana kārana*. *Sādhārana kārana* is defined as one which is present before the production of any effect whatever space, time, *Adṛṣṭa*, *Iṣwarecchā* etc. are viewed as common causes for any effect, and be a jar or a cloth. An *asādhārana kārana*, on the other hand, stands for a cause which is related to a particular type of effect. Jar, for example, is produced out clay; the cloth from threads. They are therefore, *asādhārana kārana* in respect of the effect produced. Jayanta Bhatta, who is known for his originality in thinking, warns us not to accept any one of the causes as *asādhārana*. According to him, *kārana* is *sādhakatama*, i.e. most excellent of the causes. What is the most excellent cause? - asks Jayanta and answers, none in isolation, but all in conglomeration.

To explain, suppose a traveler is passing through a road at dead of night. On a sudden flash of lightning, he perceives women in front of him passing through the road. Now Jayanta asks the question: what should be the most excellent cause in the perception of the women? Certainly we are tempted to answer: it is the flash of lightning that helps the traveler perceive the woman ahead of him. In his mature characteristic witty way he remarks: let them be light, but no woman. Can the traveler still perceive the woman? Certainly not. Let the woman be there and lightning as well, but no traveler who will then perceive the woman? The truth is that the perception of woman cannot take place in the absence of any one of the causes. That is why; no cause in isolation can be regarded as *sādhakatama*. But when all the causes are taken together, the effect is seen to be produced. Hence *sāmagrik* or totality is to be taken as *sādhakatma kārana* or *kārana*. This *sādhakatma kārana* is *pramāṇa* which Jayanta defines as *vodhā-vodhasvabhāva sāmagric pramāṇam*<sup>1</sup>. In other words *sāmagric* is not a cluster of *avodha padārthas* (like *indriya*, *viṣaya*, *sannikarṣa*), nor a totality of *vodha padārthas* (like conscious entities). *Sāmagric* is a mixture of both conscious and unconscious elements - *vodha* and *avodha* taken jointly. Thus, Jayanta makes a compromise as it were between two divergent views. What is important to note is that sense-object reference cannot be dismissed altogether in the generation of perpetual knowledge. All philosophers agree on the

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<sup>1</sup> *Nyayamanjuri*

immediacy (*sāksātkāritva*) of perception but none can avoid mentioning sense-organ object and their contact for the explanation of perception.