

CHAPTER II

PHILOSOPHICAL DEFINITIONS OF PERCEPTION

2.1. Introduction

The term 'Pratyakṣa' is derived from two words viz. 'Prati' + 'Akṣa'. The literal meaning of the term 'Pratyakṣa' (perception) is that which is before the eyes. There are many sense-organs (indriyas) besides eyes (cakṣu), and by all these sense-organs we can have Pratyakṣajñānaṃ or perceptual knowledge. In this chapter I will discuss the views of different schools of Indian Philosophy as regards the nature of perception.

2.2. Nyāya definition of Perception

The knowledge arising from the contact between sense (indriya) and object (viṣaya) is called Pratyakṣa

(perception)¹. If "being caused by sense-organ only", be taken to be the defining characteristic (lakṣaṇa) of pratyakṣa, then the definition becomes fallacious being too wide. For it applies to colour (rūpa) which is also caused by sense-organ although it is not cognition on the basis simply of sense-organness. For a person bereft of eyes is incapable of perceiving colour although his sense-organ called 'mind' is intact. So pratyakṣa is defined as 'Indriyajanyaṁjñānaṁ'. On the other hand, if we define perception only by knowledge-hood. (Jñānatva), then it will also be too wide because this definition would apply to inference, etc. So for perception's definition 'indriyajanyaṁjñānatva' and 'jñānatva' are required.

But the definition of perception as given above i.e. perceptual cognition caused by sense-object contact, is not considered valid. If this definition is taken to be valid, it will be too wide being applicable in the case of inferential knowledge also. According to Naiyāyikas, mind is also a sense-organ and it is the condition of all knowledge. Hence, as inferential cognitions are knowledge, there is also a relation between inferential knowledge (anumiti) and mind. So the definition becomes too wide.

In order to do away with this defect Viśvanātha defines perception as follows :- Perceptual knowledge is that knowledge which is caused by sense-object contact and is

delimited by sense-organness. The significance of this definition is that mind is the condition of all knowledge (jñāna Kāranatva) but is not limited by one attribute (dharma). Sometimes mind produces knowledge by its capacity as mind (manattva) and sometimes it produces knowledge functioning as a sense-organ. Whenever the instrumentality of mind is limited by sensehood, then it (mind) produces perceptual knowledge. In the case of inferential knowledge instrumentality of mind (Karanatā of manas) is limited by mindhood. So there cannot be fallacy of too wide definition in the case of inference. A question may be raised that this definition is vitiated by the defect of too narrow definition in the case of the perception of God, because the divine perception is not due to sense-object contact. In reply to this, it may be pointed out that the aim of the definition of perception is not to include 'Iśvara Pratyakṣa' within its range, but it is applicable only in the case of noneternal 'Jiva pratyakṣam'.

Whatever the case may be, in order to dispel the confusion, Visvanātha takes another definition of perception which is free from defects and confusion. According to him, perceptual knowledge is such knowledge which cannot have another knowledge as its cause². Here, we find a defect-free way of definition of perception. Positively perception can be defined as immediate knowledge³. Thus we find that the Naiyāyikas have defined perception both positively

and negatively, and the definition of Visvanātha is free from defect and, hence, it can be taken as valid definition of perception. From this definition we can say that Pratyakṣajñāna is not defined through the instrumentality of another cognition. Anumiti is due to cognition of vyāpti, Upamiti is due to knowledge of similarity and for this reason the definition is not too wide definition in the case of anumiti, etc. Moreover, we do not find it to be too narrow definition in the case of perception of God.

Perception is due to respective sense-contact with the object. Perception is of six kinds, viz. (a) olfactory perception, (b) auditory perception, (c) tactual perception, (d) taste/gustatory perception, (e) visual perception and (f) mental perception. Every object of sense must be perceivable. The Nyāya Philosophers have admitted six senses. Gautama, the founder of Nyāya system of Indian Philosophy, has clearly pointed out that perceptual knowledge is valid and certain. It is also free from doubt (saṃśaya) and confusion (viparyaya)⁴.

Perception has been defined by Annambhaṭṭa as follows :

Perceptual cognition is the cognition which results from contact of sense-organ with the object⁵. This definition, if accepted without qualification, gives rise to a number of problems. First, it fails to account for Divine perception. For God does not possess any sense-organ.

Secondly, it fails to exclude inferential cognition as inferential cognition depends on mind's contact with soul. And mind, according to Naiyāyikas, is a kind of sense-organ. Thirdly, cognition involves Prakāratā or morphic identity with the objects. But this account fails to square with the admission of Nisprakāraḥ Jñānaḥ or amorphous cognition.

It is not out of place in this connection to mention here that the definition of perceptual cognition as given by Viswanātha, a neo-Naiyāyika, in his Bhasapariśeṣa is more in accord with the flawless purity as demanded by the canons of logic. His definition runs as follows :-

Cognition the cause of which is not another cognition, is perceptual cognition. This definition defines perceptual cognition in terms of Karaṇa (cause par excellence) and not in terms of sense-object contact. And thus it avoids the question of the ascription of the status of perceptual cognition to God's super-sensuous knowledge. Secondly, it avoids the over-coverage (ativyāpti) to which Annambhaṭṭa's definition is committed. Thirdly, it also avoids the vexed question of dividing perceptual cognition into amorphous cognition (Nisprakāraḥ Jñānaḥ) and morphous (Sapprakāraḥ Jñānaḥ) cognition which admits of prakāratā or morphe as the condition sine qua non of every cognition with a validity claim.

2.3. Advaita definition of perception

Almost all the thinkers of Indian Philosophy have accepted the definition of perception of Nyāya Philosophy according to which perception is such knowledge which is not due to any other knowledge. According to Advaita vedānta, Brahman is attributeless (nirguṇa), indeterminate (nirviśeṣa) reality. Indeterminate Brahman cannot be known by means of external or internal sense. Through the destruction of ignorance by the manifestation of proper knowledge, the perception of the indeterminate Brahman is possible. According to Dharmarājadhvarindra, an exponent of Advaita view, a cognition is not perceptual simply because it is sense-generated. If sense generatedness were the essential mark of perception, then the memory and inferential cognition would also be so because these are due to mind which is a sense-organ according to Nyāya. Further, on this view divine perception will not be possible because God is not endowed with any sense-organ.

In order to do away with these defects the Naiyāyikas have given one other definition of perception as cognition not mediated by any other cognition. But according to Advaita thinkers, even this definition of perception by Nyāya is not unobjectionable. The reason is that it is too wide still in so far as it includes memory. Memory knowledge is not caused by any other cognition. The immediate cause

of memory is not another cognition but latent impressions or trace and trace is not of the nature of cognition.

The valid definition of Pratyakṣa, according to Dharmarājadhvarindra, is consciousness as manifested by mode of internalisation (antahkaraṇa vṛtti). That is consciousness reflected in the mode of internalization or antahkaraṇa is valid knowledge or pramā in the laukika or vyavahārika sense of the term. Pure consciousness in the sense of sāksīcāitanya, as it does not negate ajñāna or ignorance, is not pramā or valid knowledge in ordinary sense of the term.

Any particular knowledge which has a beginning cannot be God's knowledge and every sensory knowledge is a knowledge with a beginning. Hence, divine knowledge cannot be taken to be a sensory knowledge. According to Advaitin, knowledgehood is perceptionhood (Jñānatvaṃ Pratyakṣatvaṃ). Knowledge, according to Advaitin, is non-different from Brahman who is of the nature of consciousness and is bereft of all changes, svagata or internal, svajātiya or similar, and vijātiya or dissimilar. Brahman is unchangeable or aparināmi, Jiva or self being non-different from Brahman, is also unchangeable or aparināmi. Brahman which is non-different from Jiva and is of the nature of consciousness which is knowledge is undifferentiated and infinite. Hence, the question arises : How are we to account for the creation and destruction of

knowledge in the Vyavahārika or empirical sense of the term. In reply to this question, the Advaitin says that knowledge which is infinite Brahman, when superimposed by ajñāna which is of the nature of positive nescience, appears as finite and limited having beginning and end. Such knowledge has, as it were, the parts viz. knowledge part and the object part, and the object part being non-different from knowledge part because of superimposition it makes the infinite Brahman appear as finite and limited knowledge of object. Thus, the undifferenced Brahman which is of the nature of knowledge appears, because of superimposition of ajñāna, as object-consciousness (viṣayacaitanya) knower-consciousness (pramātr̥cāitanya) and instrumental consciousness (Pramāna-caitanya). And instrumental consciousness or pramāna-caitanya being non-different from sākṣicaitanya or witnessing consciousness which never remains covered or āvr̥ta by nescience or ajñāna, ensures the value and validity of viṣayacaitanya or object - consciousness and pramātr̥cāitanya or knower-consciousness which are also non-different from sākṣi-caitanya. This approach is made in the Bhāmāti by Vācaspati Miśra and his followers and is known as Bhāmāti-prasthāna or the approach of Bhāmāti school. This approach follows implicitly the Nyāya line by accepting the Nyāya epistemic doctrine 'mānādhinameyasiddhiḥ' or establishment of the object of knowledge is dependent on the establishment of the instrument of knowledge. This approach is rejected

outright by the author of Vivaraṇa Prameya saṃgraha and his followers. According to Vivaraṇa school, object of knowledge is non-different from knowledge because of superimposition by nescience and as such, so far as knowledge part is concerned, it is always valid and does not require to be established by the prior establishment of the instrumental consciousness of Pramāṇacaitanya.

The mode of internalization which takes on the form of the object which is capable of being grasped by sense-organ, when non-different from the present object so grasped, is perceptual knowledge⁶. Pramā in the empirical sense is different from faulty perception as it negates or removes the veil of ignorance which covers the object.

The faulty perception, although does not negate the veil of ignorance, is still capable like veridical perception of producing the desire to reach or avoid the object of perception and so is knowledge or perception by courtesy and this really is pseudo-perception.

Lastly I am quoting a few lines from Karl H. Potter's book which runs thus :

"Advaita places lot of emphasis on direct realisation, on the immediacy of Self-knowledge. Perception, among the pramāṇas, is regularly identified as providing direct knowledge, and one might suppose that it would ultimately

be perception that delivers the immediate awareness that constitutes liberation"⁷.

2.4. Viśiṣṭādvaitins Definition of Perception

The Viśiṣṭādvaitins have recognised three Pramānas, viz. perception, inference, and verbal testimony⁸. According to Venkatanātha, an exponent of Viśiṣṭādvaita, perception is direct knowledge⁹. If perception is defined merely as "Pramā Pratyakṣam" then knowledge by inference and knowledge by testimony will also have to be treated as perceptual knowledge. Hence, the term 'Sakṣātkāri' has been added to the definition. Again, if only the term 'Sakṣātkāri' is used omitting 'pramā', then the definition will be too wide incorporating in its fold the cases of illusion because illusory cognition is also immediate cognition. Hence, the term 'pramā' is added in the definition of perception. In this context a question naturally arises in our mind : what speciality or asādhāranatva does pratyakṣa possess which differentiates perceptual knowledge from other types of knowledge. In reply Venkatanātha and Śrinivāsa assert that perception has got a special feature and that feature is self-evidential character of perception. Immediacy which characterises a perceptual object, and the feeling that the subject has to the effect that he has known that object directly, are accounted for by this feature of

self-evidence. Self-revelation is the distinguishing mark of perception.

If we define perception as "Indriyajanya jñānatvaṃ Prayakṣam" then the definition will be too narrow excluding the case of Yogic perception and also the case of perception of 'Íśvara', because the perceptions of Yogins and Íśvara are not due to sense-object contact.

Hence, while according to Visvanātha, perceptual knowledge is not due to any kind of knowledge, the Rāmānujists have taken the definition of perception as given by Venkatanātha. In the Premeya Samgraha, we get the definition of perception as 'direct awareness' (Sākṣadanābhavah Pratyakṣam). The Viśiṣṭādvaitins have accepted the view expounded in Nyāya parisuddhi of Venkatanātha regarding the definition of perception. Varadavisṇu says that clearness and distinction of pramā is Pratyakṣatā (Perceptibility). The object of perception is more clear and vivid than the object of other kinds of cognitions. Absence of clearness and distinction of knowledge of objects in the case of inference and testimony distinguishes those modes of knowledge from perceptual knowledge.

Viśiṣṭādvaitin's view of perception differs from the views of Nyāya on the one hand and Advaita view on the other hand. According to the Naiyāyikas, (1) Knowledge is

a quality or attribute of self, (2) It is not a self-revealing quality or attribute of self, and (3) It is an adventitious and not an essential quality of the self. But Rāmānujists go with the Naiyāyikas only to the extent of admitting that knowledge is an attribute of the self. They differ from the Naiyāyikas by admitting this attribute to be self-revealing and essential. On the other hand, according to the Advaita, knowledge is not at all a quality or attribute, rather it is the very nature of the self as consciousness. Hence, it may not be out of place to mention here that there is similarity between Prabhākara Mimānsakas and Viśistādvaitin so far the self-revelatory character of knowledge as a quality of the ātman or self is concerned.

2.5. Mimānsaka definition of perception (Prabhākara)

Perception, according to Prabhākara, is direct awareness¹⁰. According to Prābhākaras, there are five kinds of knowledge, viz. Pratyakṣa (perception), anumāna (inference), Upamāna (comparison), Śabda (testimony), and arthāpatti (Presumption). The first kind of knowledge is perception. It has been defined by them in this way : Direct awareness is perception. The direct awareness of an object is called 'Sākṣātpratiti'. The knowledge achieved through other sources of knowledge is less clear and distinct. As by this source of knowledge, we

have clear and distinct awareness, so it (Perception) is called 'visadābhāsa'.

According to Prābhākaras, in every knowledge ātman is present as the locus of knowledge and it is expressed by the word 'Asmad'. Ātman or soul possesses different qualities, viz. Sukha (Pleasure), dukha (sorrow), dvesa (aversion), icchhā (desire), dharma (merit), adharma (demerit), etc. In accordance with the view of this school, perception of ātman or soul is not possible because if it be so, then a contradiction will arise between subject and object (Karma katṛ virodha). Ātman is of the nature of substance and samvit (intelligibility) is the quality of it. Samvit is self-manifest and because of this the Prābhākaras do admit 'anṅuvyavasāya'. Moreover, they point out that in every knowledge, knowledge, locus of knowledge (ātman) and object (viśaya) are manifested. For this reason the Prābhākaras are known as 'Triputi-Pratyakṣavādins or proponents of the doctrine of triple perception.

2.6. Mimānsaka Definition of Perception (BHĀṬṬA)

In addition to the Pramānas of the Prābhākara, Bhāṭṭa Mimānsakas include anupalabdhi (non-apprehension). The Prābhākaras and Bhāṭṭas admit two kinds of knowledge viz. (a) direct knowledge and (b) indirect knowledge. Both the

schools hold that perception is direct knowledge. A proper study will enable us to know that the definition of perception of Bhāṭṭa Mimāṃsakas is almost like the definition of Naiyāyikas. The Bhāṭṭa Mimāṃsaka's definition of perception is that perception is due to the contact between sense and object¹¹. This definition has been rejected by the Neo-Naiyāyikas pointing out its defect. According to the Bhāṭṭa, there is need of sense-object contact which is bereft of all defects giving rise to valid perceptual knowledge in the puruṣa or knower. Thus, the definition of perception as given by the Bhāṭṭas steers clear of the difficulties which hunt the Nyāya definition. The Naiyāyikas are to admit a kind of perception which is neither valid nor invalid, viz. the nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa. Nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa is neither valid nor invalid because validity of perception depends on the conformity of Prakāra with the object and nirvikalpa pratyakṣa is bereft of all prakāras. So the question of validity and invalidity in its case simply does not arise. But by admitting nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa Nyāya sins against the Principle of lāghava or parsimony and over populated the world of epistemology by admitting the existence of questionable epistemic entity. Bhāṭṭas also are facing the difficulties with regard to the knowledge of God as they do not admit the existence of God. Nyāya in this regard is in an unenviable position. How can God possess perceptual knowledge of all objects-past,

present and future, near and distant - without sense-object -contact is an enigma and not a palatable enigma at that. In this respect also the Bhāṭṭas are in a better position.

2.7. The Bauddha Definition of Perception

The Bauddha Philosophers have admitted two sources of knowledge, viz. (a) perception and (b) inference. The Bauddhas deny the authority ^{of} vedas and śruti. Like other philosophers of different schools of Indian philosophy, they have also dealt with the nature of the two sources of knowledge. Here, we propose to enunciate the definition of perception as propounded by the Buddhists. Dinnāga, a Buddhist logician defines perception in his Pramanasamuccaya. To him a perception is free from the taints of imagination and it is not connected with the name, genus, etc¹². According to Dinnāga, "perception relates to objective reality but stops short at it because it cannot classify or even name its objects. These (real) objects are just unclassified particulars"¹³.

Dharmakīrti, the student of Dinnāga and another famous Buddhist logician, has defined perception in the following manner :-

Perception is such experience which is free from error and which is only generated by objects without involving

any name or relation. From this definition, it follows that perceptual knowledge can never be invalid because if we pay sufficient attention to an object which is present before the sense or senses there is simply no scope of its being invalid. Following this definition of perception we can know that the perceptual knowledge can never be associated with imagination (Kalpanā). The reason of dissociating perceptual knowledge from names is that the Buddhist philosophers intend to show the atomic independence of every unit of perceptual knowledge from any taint of imagination or concept. The definition of perception given above cannot help us to know the distinct nature of perceptual experience but it only points out the conditions of valid perception. Perception, according to the Buddhists, is unique (svalakṣaṇa) i.e. refers to its own object alone. They have done away with the names and universal concepts from perception on the ground that these involve imagination (vikalpa).

The definitions of perception of Dinnāga and Dharmakīrti show that perception is different from the other sources and the Buddhists' definition of perception is different from the definition of perception given by other schools of Indian Philosophy.

The Buddhists definition of perception pre-supposes their commitment of the philosophy of momentariness. Whatever is momentary must be, for that very reason, Svalakṣaṇa

or unique i.e. uncommon; and naming, relating and classification, presuppose the existence of the common in a totality every member of which is uncommon. And to search and find out the common from among the uncommon is to falsify the nature of the uncommon as uncommon.

2.8. Sāṅkhya Definition of Perception

Sāṅkhya defines perception as a mode of cognition (a modification of Vṛtti which is of the nature of 'I know') which is the resultant of the operations of organs of apprehension when they are in contact with their appropriate objects in their general and specific aspects the later being prominent¹⁴. The mode of cognition is a mode of citṭa or mind which is a product of Prakṛti and as such it is basically unconscious in its nature. Like other products of Prakṛti it consists of three guṇas - sattva, rajas, and tamas. To be acquainted as to the meaning of perception given by Bijñānabhikṣu I like to mention the following quotation.

"Perception, then, according to vijñānabhikṣu, is primarily a result of the interaction of intellect/will and the sense capacities. Mind, as a result, plays a very minor role in Sūtra-Sāṅkhya"¹⁵.

In the case of buddhi sattva guṇa which is of the nature of manifestation, is prominent. Being sāttvika or manifesting, it (buddhi) becomes non-different from unmodifiable and self-illuminous Puruṣa and as such appears as the knower without really being so. According to Iśvara-Kṛṣṇa, perception is a clear and distinct image of its corresponding object. But this definition is not acceptable, because it is applicable to an inference also.

It should be noted that in 'Sāṅkhya kārikā' despite the use of the term, 'Pratyakṣa, (it has also used the term 'Dṛṣṭa' or 'seen' and this has definite significance). There is no mention of sense-object contact separately. The question arises : are all the cases of immediate experience due to sense-object contact ? The answer will be in the negative because there is no need of sense-organ and manas in the case of introspection, and also in the case of dream experience, e.g., 'I am happy' or 'I am unhappy'. In order to cover the expressed introspective propositions there is need of 'Dṛṣṭa' or 'seen' not of perception, for in the case of introspection intervention of sense as an instrument is not required.

From a perusal of the Sāṅkhya account of perception as a mode of valid knowledge, it transpires that sāṅkhya tries to reconcile the aspects of knowledge, the private aspects of knowledge i.e. knowledge must be knowledge of somebody

and it is related to somebody in an inalienable non-transferable sense, and the public aspect of knowledge i.e. knowledge to be knowledge must be the same to each and every cognizer i.e. knowledge must be universal. Knowledge, according to Sāṅkhya, must be somebody's knowledge. Knowledge which is owned by no one is no knowledge. This ownership of knowledge is to be understood in a particular sense. I know the table, you also know the table. Both of us know the table at one and the same time. Yet my knowledge of the table is numerically different from your knowledge of the table and your knowledge of the table is numerically different from my knowledge of the table. Again, I have the book, also I have knowledge. But you can take away my book or I can give you my book and book becomes yours. But I cannot give you my knowledge in the same sense in which I can give you my book. This is the private aspect of knowledge which Sāṅkhya has taken into account and this is, we believe, is the real reason for the Sāṅkhya to admit the existence of many puruṣas. On the other hand, knowledge must possess universonality i.e. it must be true in the same sense to all the knowers. This is the minimum condition of knowledge. Sāṅkhya has taken care of this aspect of knowledge also and this is, we believe, is the reason behind the admission of one complex Prakṛti as the background and the pith and marrow of one enjoyable world of experience. We may explain the Sāṅkhya view with the help

of a simile. In a circle there is one centre consisting of one point and a circumference consisting of infinite number of points. If we take each of the infinite number of points in the circumference as a knowing puruṣa or consciousness and the one point at the centre as the prakṛti, we can visualize in a way the Sāṅkhya account of knowledge.

2.9. A Comparative Study Between Indian Philosophy and Greek Philosophy Regarding Perception.

We have defined perception or Pratyakṣa as enumerated by different schools of Indian Philosophy. Now, we intend to discuss the problem from the perspective of Ancient Western Philosophy and Philosophers.

When the Naiyāyikas were framing their theory of knowledge in general and theory of perceptual knowledge by vision in particular the Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle in Greece were also engaged in similar task. Hence, it will, we hope, conduce to a better understanding of the Indian account of perceptual knowledge if it is seen in the background of the theory of perception as propounded by these Greek Philosophers.

Cornford states, "Plato's theory of vision involves three kinds of fire or light, (i) daylight, a body of pure fire diffused in the air by the sun, (ii) the visual

current or 'vision' a pure fire similar to daylight, contained in the eyeball and capable of issuing out in a stream directed towards the object seen, (iii) the colour of external object, 'a flame streaming off from everybody, having particles proportioned to those of the visual current, so as to yield sensation' when the two streams meet and coalesce (Timaeus 45 B, 67 C)"¹⁶.

Now, from the above it is found that platonic account of vision involves three sorts of fire provided by the sun to make visual knowledge possible. (i) Fire provided by sun which is known as daylight, and this is the necessary condition of visibility; (ii) fire in the eye-ball provided by the sun which issues out to meet the object in the case of visual perception, and (iii) fire in the object provided by the sun which issues out in the case of visual perception of the object to meet and coalesce with the fire that issues from our eye-ball. Each one of these conditions is necessary condition of vision. Jointly they are sufficient condition of vision or visual perception.

In Indian Philosophy in general and in Nyāya Philosophy in particular, perception has been accorded the primary place as an instrument of cognition. Of all the perceptual cognition vision has been accorded the most important status as a source of valid cognition. In visual perception of an object there is tejas or fire in the eye-ball which goes

out to the place where the object is supposed to be and assumes or takes on the appearance of the object, and the visual knowledge results. Hence, besides the tejas or fire provided by the sun constituting visibility, the tejas or fire in the eye-ball which is required to go out, in the case of visual perception, to the place where the object is supposed to be, is also a necessary condition. But the idea of fire or tejas coming out of the object and meeting in the case of visual perception, the fire or tejas issuing out of eyeball has not been subscribed by the Naiyāyikas and other Indian Philosophers. So for those Indian Philosophers the aforesaid two conditions are severally necessary and jointly sufficient for the production of pratyakṣa or perceptual cognition.

Aristotle also subscribed to Platonic account of visual perception with the difference that we could know, according to Aristotle, the universal unchangable essence which is an object of knowledge in and through the perception of an object which exemplifies the universal essence which never exists apart from it.

That we could know this universal unchangable essence in and through the perishable object of perception has been attested by the fact of recognition of the object of perception on a later occasion as the object of that class which one previously perceived. So the world of sense has not been totally dissociated from the intelligible world in the Philosophy of Aristotle. His robust empiricism and

scientific temper prevented him from building ivory tower of philosophy without any foundation in sense-experience.

In the Mediaeval Period the philosophers did not distrust senses for they believed that not only the intellect but also the senses are adequate to reveal external reality to us. In other words, they believed that senses do not deceive us. They presented to us objects as they are in themselves without any distortion. This ancient faith in the adequacy of our sense-perception to reveal to us the object as they are in themselves was thrown overboard by the precursor of Modern Science, viz. Galileo and such other philosopher-cum-scientist as Descartes. This distrust of sense Galileo and Descartes inherited from some Mediaeval philosophers, e.g., Anselm and Okham. Anselm believed that God's existence could be proved solely by pure reason without any help from sense-experience and Okham believed that sense-experience gave us only variability and untruth thereby bestowing on the results of the experimental sciences which are based on sense-experiences only probability and not eternal truth.

As regards visual perception the Platonic-Aristotle theory of visual perception exhibits a striking resemblance to that of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. According to Nyāya, we visually perceive the object because the visual appearance or Rupas

of the object is constituted by Teja Paramānus or Fire atoms and light or teja atoms which emanate from sense-organ called the eye coincides with the Teja atoms of the object in the field of visibility constituted by the Teja atoms from Sun. Moreover, while perceiving the perishable object of perception such as the 'Ghata' we also visually perceive in the same act the non-perishable Ghatatva or universal of Ghata. On the other hand, Buddhist, like Okham and other Mediaeval Nominalists, believed that all real existence are particulars which are exclusive of each other. So, all knowledge demanding common characteristics gets the demand fulfilled by means of falsification by intellect which generates common characteristics which in fact do not exist. Advaitins, on the other hand, like Anselm, believed that Absolute or Brahman could be proved to exist by pure reason alone. It is perhaps not out of place to take into account at this point Kant's contention regarding perception. Perceptual knowledge, being knowledge of object, involves, according to Kant, contribution from sense and understanding. The spatio-temporal characters of the object arise from the contribution of sense while the unity, reciprocity etc. of the object arise from the contribution of the categories of the understanding. The object 'block' for example, possesses spatio-temporal characters as well as categorial features at once. As a spatio-temporal entity it is a whole which admits of being divided into parts. As

an entity having categorical features it is the object of a particular kind different from other kinds and also from other objects of the same kind. The Naiyāyikas also account for these features and characters of the object but not in the way in which Kant did it. Their categorical framework is different from that of Kant and this accounts for the said difference.

Modern Empiricism, as advocated by A.J. Ayer, approaches the problems of perception from the point of view of justification by means of linguistic analysis. In the hand of Ayer empiricism has been converted into phenomenalism. In this respect Ayer is a true successor of Berkeley with the difference that unlike Berkeley he did not try to base theism on phenomenalism. According to Ayer, the sentences which we make about material objects in our day to day life can be translated, without remainder, into sentences which refer exclusively to sense data. It is said that this reduction is not admissible in view of the fact that no set of statements about sense data is equivalent to a statement about a material object and also in view of the fact that while material object statements are, sense data statements are not, corrigible. Ayer admits the cogency of the objection but denies its force. From the absence of equivalence, Ayer holds, absence of the same referent does not follow. In other words, Ayer claims that with regard to our knowledge of material object and perceptual knowledge of object

we can move back and forth by way of translation between the material mode of language and formal mode of language. This has a very little relevance to the theories of perception as developed by the ancient Indian Philosophers. For Ayerean view of perception and the language in which it is to be expressed presuppose, to a very great extent, the physiological theory of the structure and function of sense-organs of perception as well as the structures and function of human nervous system together with the theory used in developing instrumental aids for augmenting the range of these sense-organs in such a way as to make objects perceptible which were never perceived before in ancient time.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the French Phenomenologist -Existentialist, was dissatisfied with both whetting of the analytic knife by the practitioners of analytic philosophy in Great Britain and America and spontaneous picture painting of authentic self-living by the practitioners of French Existentialism. Following Husserl he gave the Clarion call 'back to perception'. He believed that only by restoring the primacy which naturally belongs to perception we can do justice to the situation as it really is, for man is essentially a being-in-the-world. He is not an unrelated point-instant-atomic-existence which lives in and through its exclusiveness from all other such atomic existences.

Man is a being who is immersed in the world and cannot be cut out and dissected in the propositions of sensedatum language. We are to recapture the lived experience (labenwelt) and to do it we are to go back to the world as the subject encounters it in perception. Sensation is a myth and we begin with perception. Sensation is only a by-product of analysis and as there are different types of analysis so there are different accounts of what sensation is and different accounts of the propositions of sensation language in which they can be expressed. And in this battle of bloodless categories of different versions of sense-datum language avoiding category-mistakes in their foot-steps we are spectators in a world of shadows and are not in the world of full blooded living reality.

The phenomenological-cum-Existential account is typically a product of 20th Century Western mind benumbed by the impact of horrors of two world wars and as such is furthest remove from any theory of perception propounded by any ancient Indian thinkers. To attempt to compare such a theory with, say, the theory of perception of Nyāya -Vaiśeṣika is like comparing a modern tank with all its gadgets and sophisticated electronic devices with the chariot of, say, Sātyaki or Arjuna in respect of their efficiency as war-machines.

So, a few words regarding desirability or otherwise as well as the extent of comparative study of different

theories taken from different cultural milieu are not out of place here. Products of two different cultures can be successfully compared if and only if the two cultures are not totally different nor are they in their development so apart as to render any attempt at comparison insignificant and meaningless. That is why the ancient Indian theories of perception could be fruitfully compared to the theories of perception of the Greek Philosophers and the Philosophers of the Mediaeval Western Philosophy. This is so because the culture of the Greek as well as the Mediaeval Philosophers were not much different from that of Indian Philosophers. But the culture and civilisation of Western men of the present day are far removed from those of ancient Indian thinkers and any attempted comparison of the theories of ancient Indian thinkers with those of modern philosophers and psychologists of the West will inevitably render the theories of Ancient Indian thinkers a laughing stock.

C.W.K.Mundle is a phenomenologist and he had realistic tendency and for his realistic tendency we like to make a comparative study of his philosophy with the Philosophy of Nyāya which is also basically a realistic philosophy. According to him, "... These tenets may be summarized as claims about perceptible physical objects, namely that these

- (1) are located in physical space,
- (2) are accessible to different sense-organs,

- (3) are immediately presented to sight,
- (4) are immediately presented to touch,
- (5) are accessible to different observers,
- (6) have a continuous existence,
- (7) retain their perceptible properties when not being perceived,
- (8) possess casual powers"¹⁷.

The Naiyayikas also have admitted the eight tenets mentioned above. Hence, a similarity is found between the Nyāya and Mundle's view. But we find, if studied minutely, that the Nyāya admits something more which are not admitted by Mundle's account of perception from the point of view of realistic phenomenology. For example, Nyāya admits perception as a species of knowledge and also admits this species of knowledge, as knowledge, to be an adventitious quality of the self-substance which is born only when the self-substance is in contact with another material substance called mind or manas. Therefore, subscribing to the realistic tenets as enunciated by Mundle is enough for Nyāya theory of perception.

Notes and References

1. Indriyajanyaṃ jñānaṃ Pratyakṣaṃ - Bhāsāpariccheda.
2. Jñānākaraṇakaṃ Jñānaṃ Pratyakṣaṃ - Bhāsāpariccheda.
3. Pratyakṣasya sāksātkāritvaṃ lakṣaṇaṃ - Tattvacintāmani, Sannikarsavāda - rahasyaṃ.
4. Indriyārtha Sannikarsotpannaṃ jñānaṃ avyapyadesyaṃ avyabhicāri vyavasāyatmakam jñānaṃ pratyakṣaṃ - Nyāyasūtra 1.1.4.
5. Indriyārtha Sannikarsa-janyaṃ jñānaṃ, pratyakṣaṃ -Tarkasaṃgraha-46 ; Translated by Gopinath Bhattacharya.
6. Vedānta Paribhāṣā - Translated by Sri Sarat Chandra Ghosal - p.35.
7. Introduction to the Philosophy of Advaita vedānta - (Karl H.Potter) published in Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy - Vol.III edited by Karl H.Potter - p.97.
8. Tāni Pramāṇāni pratyakṣānumāna śabdavyāni Trinyeva -Yatindramata Dipikā - By Srinivāsa Dāsa - Translated by Svāmi Adidevānanda - p.8.

9. Sākṣātkaṛapramākaranaṃ pratyakṣaṃ - Yatindramata Dipikā - by Śrīnivāsa Dāsa - Translated by Svāmi Adidevānanda - p.8.
10. Sākṣāt Pratitih Pratyakṣaṃ - Prakaraṇa - Pancikā.
11. Indriyasannikarsajam pramānam pratyakṣam-Mānameyodaya - An elementary Treatise on the Mimānsā by Nārāyan edited by C.Kunhan Rājā & S.S.Suryanārāyan Śāstri (1933) - p.8.
12. Kalpanāpodhaṃabhrāntaṃ jñānaṃ - Pramānasamuccaya of Dinnāga as mentioned by Dr. Susil Kumar Maitra in Fundamental questions of Indian Metaphysics and Logic - p.168.
13. Outlines of Indian Philosophy - A.K.Warder - p.182.
14. Jñānendriya-Pranādikayā yascaitti-Kovodhastāt Pratyakṣaṃ - Sāṅkhyatattvāloka - 28.
15. Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies Vol.IV - edited by Gerald Janes Larson and Ram Sankar Bhattacharya - p.38.
16. The Republic of Plato - Translated with introduction and notes by Francis Macdonald Cornford - p.219.
17. Perception :
Facts and Theories - C.W.K.Mundle - p.75.