

PREFACE

This completed project of research is devoted towards a comparative evaluation of the problem of universals with a special reference to the concepts of svalakṣaṇa and sāmānyalakṣaṇa as encountered in the Buddhists and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools of thought. In all systems of Indian philosophy, the position of the opponents (purva-pakṣa) is generally put forward and carefully refuted, to make the uttarpakṣin's system systematic and firm-footed. Hence in this connection the views of the opponents like the Naiyāyikas etc. have been taken into consideration in order to substantiate the Buddhist position, as the Buddhists thinkers have already done in connection with some problems concerning their theory of perception and inference.

The concepts of svalakṣaṇa and sāmānyalakṣaṇa are unique to the Buddhists philosophical literature.

Svalaksana means the unique particular which exists not more than a moment. And for the Buddhists that which exists momentarily is alone real. It is endowed with arthakriyākāritva or the causal efficacy. Buddhists point out that whatever we know in moments that follow cannot be any more real. But sāmānyalaksana for the Buddhists covers up the perceptual particular with mental constructions. Kalpanā is imposed on the svalaksana. Further it has also been shown why sāmānyalaksana is considered to be constructive and how the svalaksana is kalpanāpodham. What are the sources of knowledge which the Buddhists consider as yielding knowledge about svalaksana and sāmānyalaksana. According to them, pratyaksa and anumāna are the two pramānas.

In the Introduction, some points are made about Buddhism in general. In the following chapter, detailed arguments have been given concerning inference, the Cārvaka scepticism regarding inference and how do the Buddhists react to it. There is also a discussion on tādātmya and tadutpatti. How pratyaksa is related to anumāna is considered of course.

In the chapter II, we have focused on the controversy over the nature of perceptual and inferential knowledge, svalaksana and sāmānyalaksana, with reference to the question how sāmānyalaksana can be the object of inference.

The definition of pratyakṣa is taken up to inquire if svalakṣaṇa could be a case of pratyakṣa and how is sāmānyalakṣaṇa related to savikalpaka. The ontological presuppositions of the Buddhist and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theories of knowledge have been discussed with the view of showing that the concepts of svalakṣaṇa and sāmānyalakṣaṇa are related to the view of momentariness, of existence. If the Buddhists do not accept the theory of momentariness the concepts of svalakṣaṇa and sāmānyalakṣaṇa could become inexplicable. The idea that the acceptance of the theory of momentariness entails the rejection of sāmānya or jāti has been taken proper care of.

In the chapter III, some of the criticisms from the Naiyāyikas have been stated against the Buddhist concepts of svalakṣaṇa and sāmānyalakṣaṇa.

In the chapter IV, the Buddhist view of reality has been argued for while attempting a reply to the Naiyāyikas.

The conclusion evaluates the Buddhist position with regard to ontology.

It is to be pointed out in this connection that some objections which have been raised by the purvapaksins like

Naiyāyikas etc. have not been always answered by the Buddhist logicians. An effort has been made to answer these objections following the line of the Buddhists in order to retain their philosophical position which is followed by some critical and evaluative remarks. How far I am successful in this matter will be judged by the scholars in this field.

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