

Synopsis of the points raised and discussed in the

Introduction

- A) Concept of 'philosophy' as darsana.
- B) Division of schools according to their sources of authority vis-a-vis reason, tarka, yukti etc. (āstika and nāstika school)
- C) Teleological nature of philosophical activity - the concept of mārga in Buddhism.
- D) Buddhist religious sects - Hinayāna or Therāvāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism.
- E) Buddhists philosophical schools - Mādhyamika, Yogācāra, Sautrāntika and Vaibhāṣika schools. An account of their logico-epistemological views, with special reference to Sarvasūnyavāda, Vāhyārthasūnyavāda, Vāhyārthānumeyavāda and Vāhyārthapratyakṣavāda respectively.

INTRODUCTION

SECTION A

The concept of philosophy is itself a philosophical concept in the sense that one's concept of philosophy is determined by one's philosophical convictions and presuppositions. It is also influenced by one's cultural determinants as well.

The term 'Philosophy' is not easily definable. One can of course, notice the family resemblance between the different philosophical views. To philosophize means to argue reasonably and critically. It can go beyond experience, it is to know the reality in its full aspect, to know the truth, the tattva; it is tattva-darsana. The term 'darsana' comes from the Sanskrit root drs - 'to see' i.e. to see the tattva or object as it is¹. This 'seeing'

may be either perceptual observation or conceptual knowledge or intuitional experience or introspection. It is the inspection of facts, logical enquiry or the insight into the soul. Generally darsana means critical expositions, logical surveys or systems. But darsana as spiritual perception is more suitable definition of philosophy. Those who have achieved in themselves a purity of soul, the truth of life is revealed to them. It can be termed as ātma darsana, which may vary from subject to subject, since it is the direct realization of the individual of the truth, the ultimate reality.

Generally speaking, avoidance of pain and attainment of pleasure is said to be the primary motivation behind most of our actions. But what is this happiness which is our main aim to attain. It is not the momentary happiness. The main aim of darsana is to show the route through which we may gain this highest happiness and to remove sorrows from this world. The Sanskrit term for this is Mokṣa. It is liberation from bondages, pain or absolute cessation of suffering². Mokṣa or liberation is the ultimate aim of philosophy. All the Indian classical and medieval thought recognized this dominance of religion over philosophy.

In Western philosophy, no philosopher has discussed this particular point in the way it has been discussed in Indian philosophy. In Hegel's Absolutism though he has

denounced this-worldly life in a sense, but it is not so deep as it has been held in Indian philosophy. The reason is that in Indian philosophy life and the philosophy have not been treated separately. This attitude of the practical application of philosophy to life is found in every school of Indian philosophy. While natural abundance and material property paved the way for the rise of philosophical speculation, philosophy has never been considered a mere intellectual exercise. This close relationship between theory and practice, doctrine and life, has always been outstanding in Indian thought. According to every Indian system the realization of Truth, that is, the ultimate knowledge or parāvidyā shall make men free, because according to them, 'Truth' alone has efficacy as a guide for man in his search for salvation. It is darsana, the intuitional experience or the insight of the soul. Here darsana is the direct intuitive experience of the Reality, the actual realization or perception of Truth.

In this connection, it is essential to describe the term knowledge or vidyā. Vidyā (from the root 'vid' meaning to know, reflect possess, be) denotes wisdom that is gained by intuition or instruction. In upaniṣhad knowledge always means the knowledge of Brahman or the Reality, which is the ultimate truth³. The ultimate knowledge or the parāvidyā is the true knowledge, the divine wisdom, the intuitional

knowledge of Brahman. The lower knowledge is the empirical (aparāvidyā) which is discursive and mediate knowledge. It is the knowledge of everything that tends to it. The higher knowledge or the parāvidyā is more immediate than sensory intuition, for it overcomes the distinction between the knower and the known, which subsists in sense intuition⁴. It is the perfect knowledge, while all other knowledge is incomplete and imperfect in so far as it does not bring about an identification between subject and object. By employing intuitive consciousness we know the object with less distortions and more actuality. We get close to perceiving the thing as it is. We must see the unity underlying the multiplicity of the universe and not merely know it. Seeing is believing and that is why the upaniṣads speak of darsana or spiritual perception in respect of ātman or Brahman. Knowledge reveals the ultimate truth. The highest triumphs of philosophy are possible only to those who have achieved in themselves a purity of soul. From this inner source, the philosophy reveals to us the truth of life, a truth which mere intellect is unable to discover. It is a vision of (darsana) truth.

The seeker after truth must satisfy certain essential conditions before he sets out on his quest. Sankara in his commentary on the first Sutra of the Vedānta Sūtras makes out that four conditions are essential for any student of philosophy. These are -

1. Nityānitya vastu viveka i.e. the knowledge of the distinction between the eternal and the non eternal.
2. Ihāmutrārthabhoḡavirāḡa i.e. the subjugation of the desire for the fruits of action either in the present life or a future one.
3. Śamadamādi sādhana-sampat - One should acquire tranquility (sāma) self-restraint (dama) renunciation (uparati) patience (titikṣā) peace of mind (samādhi) and faith (śradhhā).

Mumuksutvam - i.e. the desire for mokṣa or liberation.

The Indian philosophy has been classified as orthodox and heterodox or unorthodox, according to whether they recognize the validity of the Vedas or not. Of these, Hindu or orthodox scriptural texts, the upaniṣads are the most metaphysical and systematic in style. The Vedas were handed down from mouth to mouth from a period of unknown antiquity and the Hindus generally believe that they were never composed by men (apauruṣeya). The Veda is looked upon as a Divine revelation. The hymns of Vedas are nothing but the seeing with the mind's eye or intuitive seeing. The Veda is also called śruti. The words drṣti and śruti which are the Vedic expressions point out how the Vedic knowledge is not an object of logical demonstrations but an intuitive

SECTION B

It is customary to classify Indian philosophical systems as either āstika or nāstika. By āstika is meant any system which admits the authority of the Vedas as a source of knowledge about transempirical objects and nāstikas are those who do not so admit. Now, this is really a point of contention whether this so called division is justifiable philosophically or not. Whether this division is philosophical or sociological. This manner of dividing schools of thought on the admission of the authority of the Vedas has no parallel in the history of philosophy in the West.

To say that a particular system is nāstika is not to suggest that it is thoroughly sceptical and admits no authority whatsoever. The philosophical convention in India lays it down that the terms āstika, nāstika have only reference to the concept of prāmānya. The terms have, therefore, a descriptive classificatory function.

There is a sense in which the said terms ~~can not~~ connote social acceptability of philosophical systems. In other words, āstika and nāstika may be taken to mark the ideological commitment of the philosophical systems. And in that case, the alleged division may not have anything to

do with the logical value of a system rather with the corresponding weltanschauung (world-view).

This point could be further brought out by considering the fact that a nāstika system need not necessarily imply that it endorses non-existence of a permanent self, validity of inference as a process of knowing etc. A jaina nāstika admits permanent selves while a Buddhist one does not, while both accept inference as a valid cognitive method.

In a stricter sense, one cannot make the distinction between āstika and nāstika as Manu does in his Samhitā. Perhaps this distinction is sociological or rather ideological. His description of a nāstika as veda-ninduka is too naive to be accepted. It applies directly perhaps to the Cārvākas alone. Among the so-called āstikas, the vedic mode of thought is not accepted uncritically. The Sāṃkhya and the Gīta would provide cases in point. The Sāṃkhya does not think that the Vedas provide sufficient proof for the existence of God. (Isvarāsiddhēh -pramāṇābhāvāt)⁵. The Gīta teaches contrary to the import of the Vedic injunctions (traigunya viśayāh vedāh niṣtraigunya bhavārjuna)⁶. One does not have the knowledge of Brahman through the performance of vedic rituals.

For the Buddhists, the rejection of the Vedas implies a primacy of reason and it should not be forgotten that it

was the Buddhists who pioneered the validity of anumāna as against the Cārvākas.

It so appears that the distinction is only between the terms i.e. terminological distinction and not philosophical. The distinction is superficial in the sense that if we refer to Vedic authority in formulating our arguments then people are psychologically conditioned to accept the arguments as valid. In a sense, the distinction is therefore, psychological but of course, not a baseless psychological distinction. Since many examples can be cited from the Vedas which provides a strong ground for their belief. Vedas may be looked upon as a set of a-priori statements. The dogma about their indubitability proceeds from their logical nature. A Vedic-statement is about non-empirical objects and hence metaphysical. Thus it is neither falsifiable nor ascertainable as true. The Nyāya is an āstika school, yet one could say that its acceptance of the Vedas is secondary. The existence of the self, Īsvara and adr̥ṣṭa etc. are independently argued for. Appeal to śruti is chiefly a matter of convention, logically dispensable procedure. The Nyāya only because at the end of their arguments state that the conclusion of their arguments are borne out by Vedic assertions therefore they are categorized as āstika school. From this, the logical emptiness of the custom of appealing to the Vedas can be appreciated. According to the Mīmāṃsakas, the

Vedas are the source of our knowledge of the non-sensuous objects. Knowledge of vidhi-vākya or moral statements can be obtained from the Vedic statements. Since the problems of 'ought' and 'ought not' cannot be had either by perception or by inference, therefore they should take refuge in the Vedic statements.

As has already been stated, Veda is considered as an a-priori source of knowledge. In western world also, we find that Kant considers the 'practical' reason as an a-priori source of our knowledge of obligatory actions. Then what is the ground for justifying the authority of the Vedas when Kant could solve the same problem, the problem of morality without believing in any such source of knowledge at all.

Excepting the cārvākas, each and every system of Indian philosophy, do inculcate the concept of vairāgya. Here we cannot differentiate between the āstika and nāstika, schools, since the adherents of both the schools do believe in this concept of vairāgya or detachment. And among the heterodox schools, Buddhists are the most ardent exponents of the concept of disenchantment with the world.

Similar is the case with the concept of liberation or mukti. Liberation or mukti generally means the freedom from this world of bondage. We see that the same concept,

which is generally used by the āstika school is also used by the heterodox school as well. So the question naturally arises - whether this so-called distinction between the āstika and nāstika school is justifiable or not. It might be contended that the distinction of philosophical system into nāstika and āstika one, is largely extra - philosophical and ideological. It has nothing to do with the philosophical value of systems as such. It might be said of course as against this, that this distinction between āstika and nāstika may not be exactly extra philosophical. It is philosophical with regard to taking into cognisance the Mahāvākyas. Authority of Vedas is not dogmatic which is generally used in religious sense. But it is so in the background of larger epistemological sense. The truth of Vedas is 'sravana', hearing for evolution of knowledge.

SECTION C

Teleological nature of philosophical activity - the concept of mārga in Buddhism.

The Buddhist view of life consisting in the perception of sorrowfulness of all that are diagnosing its cause, and above all, in delineating a mārga for bringing an end

to the existential 'sorrow'. From this, follows the importance of the notion of mārga in Buddhist view of life.

Marga is a teleological concept, it implies an end set in view, it stands relative to the end - nirvāna, the cessation of all suffering.

The concept of mārga in Buddhism is elaborated in an eight-fold manner, and is usually called astāngika-mārga. Among many things, it consists of the right view, which means adopting the right perspective, covering personal identity or discarding metaphysically false notions of self-hood. But this need not detain us here, though this constitutes a major difference between Buddhism and other systems of Indian thought.

A clear-cut distinction should be made between the two concepts - the concepts of mārga and the concept of method. Mārga and the method are not the same thing. The term has been derived from two words - Meta and Hedos. Meta means after and Hedos means path. Therefore 'Method' means laying down the way to attend something; e.g. yoga is a technique, a method which can give us mental peace also. This reference can also be found in the Karmayoga of Gita, where it is stated that - Karmasu Kausalam⁷. In the fourth noble truth, we find dukkha nirodha mārga or the path to liberation; i.e. a path which can reach a

state free from misery. The four noble truths are the basic, they are the first factors of the way, the way is the last truth.

Now, this teleological method of philosophical activity may be taken in the form of a conditional statement. If one agrees with the view that life in the world is full of suffering, that there is a cause of suffering, and that since there is a cause, there is also a cessation of suffering, then one should follow this path, the path stated in the fourth noble truth, i.e. astāngika mārga. The concept of mārga in Buddhism is logically connected with the first three noble truths. Cārvakas admit that there is suffering, but at the same time they do not deny the fact that there is happiness also; i.e. there is happiness admixture with pain. Only that one should know the technique of getting more happiness, here, in this world. Therefore they partially admit the validity of the first noble truth. But Buddhists admit the fact that since life is full of suffering, therefore the happiness which we enjoy is nothing but dukkha in a disguised form. They do not admit that there is at all happiness in this world. Therefore the application of the concept of mārga does not arise in the case of cārvaka ethics.

According to Sāṃkhya also, this world is full of suffering. There are three kinds of dukkha⁸ - ādhyātmika,

ādhibhautika and ādhidaiivika. The first is due to intra-organic causes like bodily disorders and mental affections. It includes both bodily and mental sufferings, such as fever, anger etc. The second is produced by extra-organic natural causes, like men, beast, thorns etc. The third kind of suffering is due to the extra-organic supernatural causes e.g., the pains inflicted by ghosts, demons etc.

All these kind of sufferings can be stopped by following yoga - technique as formulated by Sāṃkhya system. By these technique, all our mental states can also be controlled.

In Buddhism mārga plays an important role. It not only leads to liberation from these worldly sufferings, but it stops all our mental states either happiness or sorrow or any other state. In vedānta, liberation or mokṣa means freedom from this illusory knowledge or māyā and enjoying a state of bliss from the knowledge of Brahman. But that is not the case with Buddhism. Here liberation means cessation of all mental states. Metaphorically, it states that the flame of a lamp has been extinguished by attaining nirvāṇa; i.e. it is the extinction of all misery and of the condition that cause future existence in this world after death.

According to other systems of Indian philosophy, e.g, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, - mārga means the road

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leading to self-realization. But this meaning does not stand with Buddhist's theory, since according to the Buddhists there is nothing called eternal, unchanging self. Therefore, this question of self-realization does not arise in Buddhism. Mārga does not lead to anywhere. It only opens the path towards nirvana.

Everything is interconnected in the doctrines of the Buddha. They form a consistent and organic whole, so that the complete understanding of any part includes the understanding of the whole, of all the other parts.

The teleological nature of philosophical activity is in a sense true to all the systems of Indian philosophy. Indian philosophy does not believe in the knowledge for the sake of knowledge only. There is no sense in saying disinterested knowledge. Knowledge is that which gives liberation. Excepting Cārvākas, all other systems of Indian philosophy do accept the validity of this statement. The knowledge for knowledge's sake or the philosophical thinking is subsidiary to our way of living. It is necessary in order to remove the confusions which may arise in our way of living. All the orthodox systems do believe in the authority of the Vedas. Everything is subsidiary to this. But Buddhists do not accept this. According to them, moral consideration has the primary importance than the philosophical consideration.

SECTION D

After the death of Buddha, Buddhist religion has been divided into two sects. Hinayāna or Therāvāda and Mahāyāna. The Hinayānist believe that the Therāvāda is identical with three pitakas as is existing in Ceylon. The main point of difference between the orthodox and the progressive sections i.e. the Mahāyānas seems to have been on the question of the attainment of Buddhahood. The Sthaviras i.e. the Hinayānists maintain that it was a quality to be acquired by strict observance of the rules of the Vinaya. The progressive i.e. the Mahāyānists maintained that Buddhahood was a quality inborn in every human being and by adequate development it was capable of raising its possessor to the rank of a tathāgata. The Mahāyāna religion was spread mainly in Nepal and China whereas Hinayāna in Ceylon and Burma. The Hinayāna bases itself on the Pāli canon, while many of the Sanskrit works of Buddhism belong to the Mahāyāna. The Hinayāna claims to represent the teaching of Gautama in its original forms, and to preserve the rationalistic, monistic and puritanic elements of his teaching. The Mahāyāna develops the doctrine in a mystical theological and devotional way.

The most important works of the Hinayāna sects are the following - The three pitakas (Suttapitaka, Abhidhamma pitaka and the Vinaya pitaka), Milinda panha (or the Bhiksu

sūtra) and that of the Mahāyāna sects are - Astasahas-
rikaprajñāpāramitā, Gaṇḍavyūha, Dasabhūmisvara, Samādhirāja,
Lankāvatāra, Saddharmapundarīka, Suvarṇaprabhāsa etc.
Hīnayāna or the Sarvāstivādins (all-exists-theories), who
branched off from the school of the elders (Mahāyānists),
maintained that everything including the past and the
future exists. They were realists of an extreme type.
The aim of the whole school of the Sarvāstivādins is to
show that the world exists and is real. The aim of the
Mahāyāna school on the contrary is that we can neither deny
nor affirm its existence (Mādhyamika philosophy). In
Therāvāda there was great emphasis on self-discipline and
individual achievement. The goal was arhatship, which
symbolized the extinction of the fires of lust and craving
in the individual, brought about by his or her own efforts.
In Mahāyāna the goal was to become a Bodhisattva - a being
whose only concern was with helping others extinguish
suffering. The compassion shown by the historical Buddha
was emphasized greatly and as a result there came to be
less reliance on faith in the Buddha and Bodhisattvas who
would provide assistance in overcoming suffering. In time
these two different emphases in Buddhism came to be suppor-
ted by different Metaphysics. The emphases on universal
salvation represented by the Mahāyāna ideal of the
Bodhisattva came to be underwritten by metaphysics or
philosophical scepticism and absolutism. The emphases on

individual salvation represented by the Therāvāda ideal of the arhat came to be underwritten by a metaphysics of realistic flux, as formulated in the doctrine of momentariness.

The term 'yāna' means the path. In Greek religion and Hindu religion we find the term (matavāda) doctrine, but in Buddha religion it is 'pathavāda', which is known as yāna. Thus that which is known as orthodox in Hindu and Greek religion, is known as orthoprex in Buddha religion. In Hināyana or Therāvāda, Buddha as a 'man' is depicted, who had also suffered the birth, old age, sorrow, death like all other human beings. He showed us the path towards knowledge. He once said to his disciple Anand - Tum he hi kichham atappam akkhataso tathāgata. (Dharmapada, 20/26) i.e. each and every one should strive for nirvāna, he is only to lead us. In Hinayāna philosophy the teachings of Buddha was only vyavahārika, He enlightened us with the four noble truths i.e. suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and that there is a path which leads to the cessation of suffering. He did not indulge himself uselessly in any metaphysical discussion i.e. whether the self is immortal or not, or the life after death, or about the creation of the world etc. He talked of nirvāna where there is no place of all these useless metaphysical questions. But his later followers could not

resist themselves in discussing these questions and so they discussed.

In Theravāda or Sthaviravāda, Buddha's teaching was about śīla, samādhi and prajñā i.e. the eightfold mārgas. He had discussed about the soul, not the soul as ordinarily understood in Indian philosophy, the eternal, immortal soul, but the soul which is the combination of five skandhas, rupa, vedanā, samjñā, samskāra, and vijñāna, the soul that is momentary. His all philosophical and religious arguments are based on the doctrine of momentariness which is the main edifice of his whole philosophy, everything is momentary, impermanent, there is no soul, and everything is pratityasamutpanna. Nirvāna can only be attained by following the eight-fold path. The arhat ideal is the distinguishing mark of the Hināyana, which is the highest condition, the state of sainthood, where there is no passion, no karma which will bind us to rebirth. The method to attain arhatship is contemplation (darśana) and meditation (bhāvanā) on the four truths. Sarvāstivādins are divided into two sects - Vaibhāsikas and Sautrāntikas. They allow the worship of Buddha in practice. One section of the Hinayanists called the Lokottaravādins makes Buddha a superhuman being, lokottara, who come down to the world to save mankind for a short time. This section i.e. the Hināyana represents more faithfully the historical traditions of Buddha.

The Mahāyāna sects originated from Mahāsamghika nikāya. Their philosophical attitude is different from that of the Hināyāna schools. They brought a revolution in Buddhist philosophy. Their view is also known as āchariyavāda. It originated mainly in South India in the first century A.D., one of the earliest and most important teacher of this school is Nāgārjuna.

The Mahāyāna Buddhism gives us positive ideas of God, soul and human destiny. They believe in the impersonal nature of Buddha. According to them, prajñā can lead to nirvāna, which has been discussed in detail in the 'Prajñāpāramitā'. They believe in the purity of the mind, i.e. the idealistic theory of philosophy, from which it may be said that the Yogācāra philosophy has been originated.

The Mahāyāna or Great Vessel, is so called by its adherents in contradistinction to the Hinayāna or little Vessel, of primitive Buddhism. The path of Mahāyāna Buddhism is not so hard as that of the Hināyāna school. Unlike the Hināyāna, the Mahāyāna, Buddhism does not require that a man should immediately renounce the world and all the affection of humanity. In the Hinayāna, nirvāna became negatively interpreted as extinction of all being and the negative philosophy of Hinayāna could not become a popular religion. Mahāyāna Buddhism was more catholic than Hinayāna, as the name itself indicates.

According to Mahāyānists, no body can become Buddha in one single birth. In order to obtain Buddhahood, one should have knowledge of the ultimates which is not possible in one single birth. Their ethical ideal is the bodhisattva, as distinct from the arhat of the Hinayāna. Bodhisattva literally means "one whose essence is perfect knowledge". The term was first used by Gautama Buddha, during the period of his search for liberation. It therefore came to mean "a Buddha designate" or a man destined to become a Buddha in this or in some future life. When once nirvāṇa is attained, all earthly relations come to an end. According to the Mahāyāna, a bodhisattva engage himself in the task of leading men into the true way of knowledge as against the Hinayāna ideal of complete absorption or arhattva, an isolated bliss for his own self only. While the Hinayāna made nirvāṇa attainable by a few only through the life of a monk, the Mahāyāna taught that every man could aim at becoming a bodhisattva, and even low caste men could attain salvation by the practice of virtue and devotion to Buddha. This bodhisattva ideal is more positive. No man lives to himself alone. The good or evil of one affects the whole.

SECTION E

Buddha did not write anything. He used critical analysis as the way to truth. He insisted on observation and reasoning. His philosophy contained germs capable of development along different lines. The same thoughts may be interpreted by others in different ways and thus Buddhism resulted in different schools of thought. There are mainly four chief Buddhist schools, of which two belong to Hīnayāna and two to the Mahāyāna. The Hīnayāna schools are the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas, who are realists and sarvāstivādins who believe in the existence of the external world. They also hold an equal terms with other finite things. The Mahāyāna schools are the Yogācāras who are idealists and the Mādhyamikas. The Yogācāras believe only in viññānas or consciousness to be real. According to them thought is self creating and all producing. It is the ultimate principle and even the ultimate type and form of reality. The Mādhyamika philosophy is a negative critical system, formulating the metaphysical background of the Mahāyāna sūtra. The Mādhyamikas are sometimes called sarvāvaināsikas or the nihilists.

Mādhyamika school or sarvāsūnyavāda - Nāgārjuna is the founder of this school. The most important work of Nāgārjuna is the Mādhyamikakārikās. Nāgārjuna wants to show that ultimate reality can not be described either in

positive or negative terms. It cannot have any characteristics, since it is inexpressible in our finite language. Not only ultimate reality, but also the phenomenal world cannot be described, because none of the categories we use in describing the world has its own nature. Thus everything has its own nature or character (sarvam svalakṣaṇam). If everything can be shown to have any relative existence, then which thing can have its own nature. If everything is devoid of its own nature and character, and is therefore void, and there is nothing that is not void, then the absolute reality must be the void. The voidness of everything both subjective and objective was held even before Nāgārjuna (in upaniṣads). But it is he who made the voidness philosophy systematic and comprehensive and turned the void into the Absolute itself. If everything in the world is essentially a void, the world itself is void. What we see then is only an appearance of the void, the Absolute. Appearance is the empirical truth (samvṛtisatya), the void, the ultimate or Absolute (paramārthika satya). So everything that belongs to this world is only an empirical truth. Then Buddha, his law (doctrine), the aggregates, the bases, the elements - in short, everything that the Buddhists accepted so far are not ultimately true. He exploded not only the Buddhists concept but also those of other schools known to Nāgārjuna. If the world is not real it could not have been born and was therefore never

born. This is called the ajativāda. Nothing categorically can be said about this world and the world after. It is devoid of all characterization all determinations. It is the void (sūnya).

How the relation between the world of appearance and the ultimate reality can be explained. It can be said, in logical terms as - 'S is neither P, nor not - P, nor both, nor neither'. It is indescribable, inexplicable. It is Sūnya, In Nāgārjuna's philosophy the three words - sūnya, Māyā, and avidyā - are interchangeable. The Mādhyamikas also recognize that there is an absolute, an unconditioned reality. But they do not try to understand the unconditioned with our worldly language. For them the unconditioned is beyond views, i.e. it is the ultimate truth which cannot be grasped conceptually and which can only be realized by direct insight. As Nāgārjuna says, - 'The teachings of the Buddha are based on two truths., the mundane and the ultimate. Those who do not know the distinction between these two truths do not understand the profound meaning in the teaching of the Buddha'.

Vijñānavāda or Yogācāra school - The school of Vijñānavādā also called Yogācāra is the largest, the most popular and important of the Mahāyāna schools. Like the Mādhyamikas, they also admit that the categories have empirical validity only (samvṛti satya) but it contends that ultimate reality (paramārtha satya) is consciousness

(viññāna) only, but not voidness. The existence of an extra-conscious reality is denied and consciousness alone is maintained to be real. They maintain that whatever is known is known within consciousness, it is not possible to have knowledge of an existing reality except in consciousness. Ultimate reality, they maintain, is known in nirvāna which is beyond misery. But without consciousness, we cannot know that it is beyond misery. According to the Vijñānavādins the original consciousness is the repository of past formative forces (samskāras) and a depository of all the new ones also, it is continuously changing, expanding creating, and it is the common universal ground of everything. This original, pure, absolute consciousness is called Alayaviññāna. Everything in the world is a transformation (parināma) of the Alayaviññāna. The ultimate consciousness is not the consciousness of any individual, but is universal. Therefore, it is not proper to interpret this philosophy as the subjective idealism, though it is so done ordinarily. The distinction that are usually made between subject and object, between things and ideas, between existence and knowledge - these are really only distinctions within consciousness, and never distinctions between what is within consciousness and what is outside of consciousness. That is according to them, whatever is experienced is mind wrought.

Vaibhāsika school - This school belongs to the Sthaviravāda or the Hinayāna sects. They believe in the external as well as the internal reality. They are the natural ~~realists~~ ^{realists} who maintain the independent existence of nature and mind. Epistemologically their theory is a naive realism. The eternal reality is known to us by means of perception i.e. why their theory is also known as vāhya pratyakṣavāda. Through perception and inference, an object is known, and that which is known by perception is only a bare particular, the indefinite, the svalakṣaṇas through inference an object can be known in a definite form, because here kalpanā is added. Therefore it cannot give us the true knowledge but only the sāmānyalakṣaṇam. An inconsistency can be found here. If perception gives us only the indefinite knowledge, then how it can give us knowledge of the reality of things

Sautrāntika school - This school also admits the extra-mental existence of the phenomenal world. Only we do not have a direct perception of it. We have mental presentation through which we infer the existence of external objects. They must exist because there cannot be perception without object of perception. (Ref. Locke's Essay, IV.4.3). Everything is momentary, therefore, the object that which we perceive is also momentary. And the momentary object cannot produce any perceptual knowledge.

Hence we can only conceptualize the object through the representation of the objects. We do not know the ultimate dharmas as it is. Their theory is known as vāhyānumeya vāda.

REFERENCES

1. "Dṛśyate Yathārtha tattvamanena iti darsanam", Sabdakalpadrumah.
2. "Tadatyantavimuktirapavargah", Nyāya-Sūtra, 1.1.22.
and also see "Atha trividhadukhātiantanivṛttiratya-
puruṣārtha", Sāmkhyasūtra, 1/1.
3. "Tameva viditvātīmṛtyumeti nanyah panthā vidyate
yanāya", Śvetāsvataropaniṣad, and also see "Sa ca
jñānaikasādhyah", tr. Pancanan Bhattacharya,
Vedāntaparibhāsa, p.328 and also see "Vidyayā
vindate 'mṛtam", Kenopaniṣad, 2/4.
4. "Vidyaya ātmaviṣayaya vindate-mṛtam amṛtatvam.
Nayamatma valahinena labhyah ityathavarni. Atah
samartho heturamṛtavam hi vindata iti", Samkarabhāṣya
on Kenopaniṣad, 2/4.
5. Sāmkhya-kārikā, III.5.
6. Bhagavad Gitā, II.45.
7. Bhagavad Gitā

(Also see 'yo vamaneyeta mūle hetuśāstrā śrayād dvijah sa sādjuhahir bahiškārya nāstiko vedanindukah', Manusmṛti, II.ii, That is, the rule was laid down that the brahmin who despises the roots of Vedic tradition because of his dependence on the science of reasoning i.e. the hetuśāstra should be cast out by the good brahmin as a nihilist, who scorns the Vedas, e.g. the Baudhdhas).

8. Sāmkhyapṛavacana sūtra VI.6-8; and Yoga sūtra, Ī.15.
 (Also see S.Radhakrishnan - Indian philosophy, Vol.II).
 Āstika-Nāstika distinction - a paper presented by me in Waltaire Congress in Jan. '84 (Indian Philosophical Congress). Some of the points from this paper have been discussed in Section B.