

## CHAPTER-I

### INTRODUCTION

The term 'darsána' literally means 'seeing', as it originates from the root 'drs'' i.e., to see. Here mere 'seeing' is not Darsána. When an object is seen, it is not called Darsána on account of the fact that at this stage there is no confirmation of the knowledge of an object already seen. Hence, there is necessity of 'subsequent seeing' an object already seen, which is called critical observation. If a theory is given, one should critically ponder (manana) over the theory already given. This 'critical thinking' is the chief characteristic feature of Darsána. This 'seeing' may either be perceptual observation or intuitive experience. The phenomenon which is not experienced through ordinary means may be intuitively realised or intuitively seen, which is also darsána.

Before trying to reach a definite philosophical position it is essential to move towards it through the exchange of ideas or by putting forward a thesis as against its anti-thesis. In order to arrive at certain conclusion the method of argumentation called Vāda is indispensable. A Vāda is a form of debate which is inevitable as soon as the final ascertainment of conclusion is

reached. The Vāda has been accepted by each and every system to determine a tattva (i.e., thatness). For having tattvajñāna i.e., the knowledge of real nature of an object Vāda is to be resorted to. That is why, it is said in an Indian logical maxim - vāde vāde jāyate tattvabodhdhah' (i.e., through vāda - method of argumentation we arrive at truth). For this reason each and every system has introduced the term 'Vāda' to each and every basic theory, e.g., Nirvikalpakavāda, Mokṣavāda, Karmavāda etc. It is to be taken as a common methodology available in all the systems of Indian philosophy.

In each and every system of Indian philosophy the method of critical analysis of a theory already put forth by other systems has been adopted and hence, all the system of Indian philosophy are darśanas in the true sense of the term. In each system there is a Pūrvapakṣa where the opponent's viewpoints are clearly stated. The opponent's standpoint is at first critically adjudged by the Uttarapakṣin. In the Uttarapakṣa a philosopher's own viewpoint is logically substantiated so that it becomes philosophically sound and firmfooted. This is the method adopted by all the classical Indian philosophers. Keeping this method in view the opponent's viewpoints regarding the concepts of pramā (valid cognition), pramāṇa (i.e., the source of having knowledge-proper), various forms of pramāṇas, the theory of anupalabdhi etc. have been taken into account.

All the systems of Indian philosophy accept negation or

accept the existence of a negative fact. So far as negation is concerned, there is no diversity of opinion among the philosophers as to its existence. But regarding the nature of negation there is difference of opinion among the schools. The nature of negation or the interpretation of negation varies from one system to another due to their different metaphysical presuppositions. These presuppositions have also prominent role in determining the means of knowing negation. According to some schools, the absence is known through perception, some believe that it is known through inference and some think that it is known only through a distinct means of knowing called Anupalabdhi, which is discussed in details afterwards.

Let us try to understand the significance of describing negation as a 'negative fact'. It may seem to us contradictory in terms. Because, a fact means 'something positive'. In other words, the reality or fact is understood in terms of positive judgement. But in the case of negative judgement there is no reality or fact reflected in it. In the expression - 'There is a jar on the ground' the presence of a jar on the ground is perceived as a positive fact. But if it is said - 'There is no jar on the ground', we do not find any corresponding object on the ground as the absence of a jar. Hence, the term 'negative fact' may seem to be contradictory in terms.

In reply, it may be said that just as the positive object corresponds to some reality, negative object is also the same. A

negative entity provides an appropriate object for a negative judgement. When there is a feeling of absence (viz., absence of jar, absence of near or clear ones, or absence of money etc.), it is an 'actual feeling' (i.e., it is really a 'feeling'). As this is a 'feeling', it can be described as a fact. Sometimes it happens that the feeling of absence is much more sensitive than that of a positive object. In other words, the feeling of pleasure which is a positive fact is not as much sensitive as in the case of feeling of pain (i.e., absence of pleasure). Here, this negative object makes us 'feel' in a particular situation. Hence, it is also a fact. For this reason the Naiyāyikas and Vaiśeṣikas have accepted absence (abhāva) as a category (padārtha). Their concept of Apavarga i.e., emancipation is negative as this state is nothing but the absolute cessation of suffering.<sup>1</sup> Though they have accepted such a concept, they are not at all pessimistic. In fact, this doctrine of Apavarga or Niḥśreyas points to the fact that absence, according to these systems, is an ultimately real entity (padārtha). This theory is employed in order to elevate abhāva to the status of a category or entity which is a fact.

This non-existence is accepted for carrying to its logical extreme the view of realism that everything is objectively real. If all knowledge points to something outside it, so also

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1. Tadatyantavimukto 'pavargah.

should the knowledge of negation do and imply its existence apart from such knowledge. The absence has to be admitted as the object of the negative form of cognition (nāsti buddhi) which we possess. Without this such cognition cannot be explained. Just as the positive entities that are the contents of the positive forms of cognitions are accepted as objectively real, the negative entities that are the objects of negative cognitions must also be taken as objectively real or fact. Each and every cognition must have a corresponding object. The object remains in the external world even if it is not known by others. The cognition of an object presupposes the existence of the object in the external world. Had there been no object, there would not have been the cognition of the same. In the same way, we can say that, as we have negative forms of cognition, they must have some objects in the forms of negative entities or absence. From this it is admitted that there are, in fact, negative entities in the world. In other words, as there is a negative fact in the world, it can give rise to the cognition of it. We may quote here Dr. Hiriyanna's view in this connection :

"... negative facts are as much objects of knowledge as positive ones, knowledge of absence is not absence of knowledge. That is, the present view explains negative judgements by postulating negative facts as part of objective reality".<sup>2</sup>

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2. Hiriyanna, M., The Indian Philosophical studies, p. 140, Mysore, 1957.

The Bhāṭṭas differ from Nyāya with regard to the method of apprehending negation. They believe that anupalabdhi or negation is the means pramāna for the cognition of a negative fact. Kumārila has refuted the view of those who think that negation is a non-entity (avastu) and without a self-character (niḥsvabhāva). To him abhāva or negation is a 'thing' just like any positive empirical entity. As a realist Kumārila also believes that all cognitions correspond to objects having positive and negative characters. A negative cognition has a relation with a positive cognition. To them each object has a double character. A particular object exists in its own form (i.e., a jar exists itself as a jar) and it does not exist with regard to the form of another object (i.e., a jar does not exist in the form of cloth).

The Prābhākaras and the Buddhists have propounded almost a similar view about a negative fact. They explain a negative fact in the light of the positive factors existing in it. They are reluctant to give an ontological status to abhāva. Because, to them the nonperception of a perceptible object (drśya) is the basis of a negative judgement.<sup>3</sup> In short, negation is the property of exclusively positive things that are known with the help of both negative

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3. drśyādarśanam hi abhāvāvagamakāraṇam.

- Prakaranapañcikā, p. 120, Edited by  
Mukunda Śāstrī, Chowkhamba Sanskrit  
series, Benaras, 1903.

and positive cognitions.

As the Prābhākara and the Buddhists believe in this notion of abhāva, they do not think that there is necessity of accepting a distinct means of knowing called anupalabdhi. That is why, they admit that negation is known through inference, the hetu of which is the nonperception of a perceptible entity (drśyānupalabdhi), which will be discussed in details afterwards.

The realistic approach of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika towards the concept of abhāva accepted as one of the categories has already been discussed. Keeping parity with this notion, they advocate in favour of the perceptuality of a negative fact, for which they have invented a novel type of sense-object-contact (sannikarsa) called viśeṣana-viśeṣya-bhāva, which is not accepted by the other systems like Advaita Vedānta etc.

The Advaitins accept that the negation is known through the distinct means of knowing called anupalabdhi. Because, without accepting this the multiplicity (nānātva) of the phenomenal world cannot be explained. That in Brahman there is the absence of three different types of Bhedas i.e., sajātiya, (homogeneous), vijātiya (heterogeneous) and svagatah (internal) is known through anupalabdhi. An individual can realise Brahman directly which is called Brahma-sāksātkāra or ātmasāksātkāra. Before arriving at this stage some methods like Śravaṇa (hearing of the instruction of the Śāstras), Manana (thinking or pondering on the theories already presented to

us through reasoning) and nididhyāsana (meditation) are to be adopted. In the Manana part we generally try to understand what our Śāstras or treatises on Advaita Vedānta try to say us. At the same time we try to see whether these theories are logically tenable or not. The thinkers on the field of Advaita Vedānta have tried to establish the basic theories of Advaita Vedānta with the help of some logic so that a logical mind can be convinced. The whole Tarkapāda chapter of Samkarabhāṣya is devoted to the substantiation of the Advaita Vedānta-position after refuting the views of other systems. The whole epistemological literature is centred around the establishment of the only one Reality which is Brahman. In order to establish that the whole world is nothing but the manifestation of Brahman the Advaitins have taken recourse to logic which underlies whole epistemological literature also. It is a common maxim - 'Mānādhīnā meyasiddhi' i.e., the substantiation of a metaphysical entity (Prameya) is dependent on the means of knowing (Pramāna). If an individual wants to establish some Reality, he has to forward some proofs in favour of it so that a logical mind can be convinced. The main intention of the Advaitins is to prove that the multiplicity (nānātva) of this is illusory as it is covered by only one Reality i.e., Brahman. In other words, Brahman is Real and the world is illusory. The individual being is nothing but Brahman ("Brahma satyaṃ jagarmithyā, jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ"). In the phenomenal level this truth is not intelligible to ordinary human intellect. For the sake of philosophisation the whole epistemological literature is essential in Advaita Vedānta, which is evidenced from

their theory of perception etc. That Brahman is non-dual i.e., free from three types of difference as mentioned earlier is known through a particular means of knowing called Anupalabdhi. It has been accepted in order to establish the main thesis i.e., nonduality of this world (which is meya or prameya here). To establish this meya some distinct Pramāna is essential. This is not other than Anupalabdhi. This is the metaphysical presupposition of the Advaitins to accept anupalabdhi as a distinct means of knowing i.e., Pramāna.

Indian Philosophers generally advocate in favour of the Law of persimony (Lāghava) for the sake of precision. In this connection some of the systems have tried to show that the knowledge of a negative fact can be known through perception or inference after keeping the theory of Lāghava in view. It is logically cumbrous to accept a separate Pramāna for the explanation of the knowledge of a negative fact. In spite of this there is some logic behind the acceptance of Anupalabdhi as a separate Pramāna. Though it leads us to the longer route or logical cumbrousness, it is highly essential for the explanation of an important epistemological fact i.e., negative fact. In philosophy logical precision is always invited if there is other ways for doing this. At the same time it is also to be noticed that in the name of precision or Lāghava there does not arise any vagueness or incompleteness in the idea or theory under discussion. If Anupalabdhi is not accepted as a separate means of knowing, the knowledge of a negative fact can never be explained. Hence, the Advaitins and Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas are consistent in their positions.