

Preface

The thesis entitled : " The Nyaya Concept of Pramā : A critical study " is the result of my research on Pramāṇāsāstra (Epistemology in Indian Philosophy). I started work on the thesis from 15th March 1996 as a Junior Research Fellow (UGC). One of the lasting effect in studying Nyāya is the opening of my outlook towards the larger perspective of my teacher, Professor Raghunath Ghosh, Dept of Philosophy, North Bengal University, W.B. He has undertaken serious study of some unique problems of Nyāya system, such as problems of indeterminate cognition (*nirvilāpaka Jñāna*), Some reflections on the Nyāya theory of action, Āhāryajñāna, etc. and has presented novel solutions.

The thesis contains five chapters. The outlook in general, the need of epistemology to present metaphysics in a sound way, the influence of ontological presuppositions for theorisation and the need of valid cognition (*Pramā*) have been discussed in chapter-I.

A number of definitions are found in Nyāya system itself. In the second chapter of my thesis the background of these definitions is given in order to highlight which one of these definitions is more consistent and suitable with the ontological presuppositions of this system.

A comprehensive view on Pramā given by different systems has been presented as opponents (*Pūrvapakṣa*) so that one would get a general idea of the history of the concept. Thereby the view of the Naiyayikas can be further substantiated.

In so far as the classical texts are concerned, the Naiyayikas have not taken the Advaitins as opponents. But Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra presents Advaita view following the Navya-Nyāya logic, and challenges Visvanatha in defining valid cognition (*pramā*). But the Naiyayikas are yet to respond to this challenge. Hence, the Advaitins view with special reference to Dharmaraja Adhvarīndra has been discussed in chapter- III.

There are strong opponents (*Pūrvapakṣa*) of the Naiyayikas in which we find the Buddhist concept of *pramā*, the Mīmāṃsā concept of *pramā*, the Jaina concept of *samyagjñāna* etc. Some of the definitions given by the opponents have been logically rejected by the Naiyayikas. But there are a few more definitions given by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, Dharmakīrtī, Hemchandra etc. which are not taken into account or rejected by the Naiyayikas in the works available so far. All these views are discussed in chapter- IV.

Finally, the specific task of this dissertation is to encounter these problems and reject them with the help of some independent arguments provided by the Nyāya system. By doing this a strong defence of the system is undertaken in the last chapter.

Research work, to my opinion, is the result of the fruitful dialogue with various Research Personnel. I take this occasion to offer my heartfelt thanks to my teacher, Prof. Ghosh, without whose guidance and supervision it would not have been possible for me to write this thesis. In fact, the conclusion is the outcome of a

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