IS *UPAMĀNA* A *PRAMĀṆA*? SOME OBSERVATIONS

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This article is dedicated to Prof. Raghunath Ghosh, who is the friend, philosopher and guide not only for me but also for our department. This humble attempt is a token of my gratitude, reverence and admiration to Prof. Ghosh.

Whether *Upamāna* is a *Pramāṇa* or not is a controversial issue in Indian Philosophy. Nyāya, Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta, only these three schools recognize *Upamāna* as a *Pramāṇa* but the rest ones do not. Some schools hold that *Upamāna* is a case of perception; some think that *Upamāna* is a case of verbal testimony; some maintain that it is nothing but a case of recognition; some again observe that *Upamāna* is a case of inference. Besides, the three schools who admit *Upamāna* as a *Pramāṇa* deviate one from another at least on two points - one is *Karaṇa* and another is the resultant knowledge of *Upamāna*. So, it is really very difficult to resolve these controversies. In this paper an attempt has been made to establish that *Upamāna* is neither a case of perception nor a case of inference but a case of separate and independent *Pramāṇa* as it is maintained by the Nyāya school.

The most important position has been accorded to *Upamāna* by the Nyāya school. *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna, Upamāna* and *Śabda,* these four *Pramāṇas* have been admitted by the Nyāya school. In defining *Upamāna*, Goutama, the founder of the Nyāya system, says that *Upamāna* is the instrument of valid knowledge of an object derived through its similarity with a well known object (*Prasidhasādharmātsādhyasādhanam*). No elaborate discussion about *Upamāna* is seen in the *Sūtra* of Goutama. But later on Vātsyāyana, the commentator of *Nyāyaśūtra* explains it elaborately in his *Nyāya Bhāsya.*[1] Vātsyāyana syas that *Upamāna* is definite knowledge (*Prajñāpana*) of the object sought to be definitely known (*Prajñāpaniya*) through its similarity with an object already well-known.[2] From this definition given by Vātsyāyana it is understood that *Upamāna* is the means of knowledge through which the cognition of the denotative relation between a name (*saṁjñā*) and the named (*saṁjñi*) is attained. From the definition it is further understood that the knowledge of the similarity between the thing to be known and the thing previously well-known is one of the leading conditions to establish the resultant knowledge. *Upamāna* has been explained with the help of an example in the following way. Suppose a city-dweller having familiarity with cow intends to know

the animal called *gavaya.* One day he comes across to a reliable forest-dweller who is well familiar with both the cow and the *gavaya.* The forest-dweller tells the city-dweller 'as the cow so the *gavaya*' (*gourevaṁ gavaya*) subsequently, he happens to go to the forest and comes across an animal having the similarity to the cow. Immediately he recollects the statement uttered by the forest-dweller and comes to the conclusion that the animal before him is denoted by the word *gavaya*. This whole method is called *Upamāna* (comparison). More clearly to explain the same Vātsyāyana cites two more examples. A person having no familiarity with the medicinal harp, *Mudgaparṇi* and *Māṣaprṇi* is said by the doctor that *Mudgaparṇi* is like *Mudga* and the *Māṣaparṇi* is like *Māṣa.* Afterward's the person goes to the forest and comes across two herbs resembling *Mudga* and *Māṣa*. Then he remembers the statement of the doctor and concludes that the herbs before him are nothing but *Mudgaparṇi* and *Māṣaparṇi* respectively.

It is important to note that Uddyotkara, the author of *Nyāyavārtika* says that sometimes *Upamāna* is based on the knowledge of dissimilarity (*Vaidharma*). He points out that the term '*sādharma*' in *Śūtra* is symbolic and includes *Vaidharma* as well.[3] In the former cases of *Upamāna* the object is known through the knowledge of similarity of it to well-known object but here the object is known through the knowledge of its dissimilarity to well-known object. Suppose a person having no knowledge of horse asks one having knowledge of the same about the form of horse. In reply the person asked tells him that horse is an animal having the dissimilar hoofs to the cow. Afterward the person happens to come across an animal with the dissimilar hoofs to the cow and recollects the statement of the person met. Then he comes to the conclusion that the animal before him is horse.

So far as our discussion is concerned it is seen that *Upamāna* according to Nyāya school, is a separate and independent *Pramāṇa*. But some other schools observe that *Upamāna* cannot be regarded as a separate and independent *Pramāṇa*, rather it is a case either of perception, or inference or verbal testimony. Let us explain and examine these views one by one.

The Philosophers like Kumarilabhaṭṭa Śrīdhara, Śrinivāsadāsa, Purusottama and so on, think that *Upamāna* is a case of perception. Kumarila says that in the process of *Upamāna* the knowledge of denotative relation is attained through the perception

of similarity accompanied by the remembrance of the authoritative statement. Remembrance, he states, is note valid knowledge. Thus it is easily understood that *Upamāna* is nothing but perception.[4] Any one can understand that here the knowledge of denotative relation is derived through perception only. The arguments produced by Puruṣattama to establish that *Upamāna* is a case of perception is to some extend different from and stronger than that of Kumārilabhaṭṭa. Kumārilabhaṭṭa observes that denotative relation is perceived through the perception of similarity, while Puruṣattama holds that similarity is not perceived, it is remembered, what is perceived is the denoted object itself. Puruṣattama maintains that if *Upamāna* is considered as a case of independent *Pramāṇa* on the ground of the addition of one element of similarity, it would lead to the undesirable contingency of admitting separate means for the cognition of an object which is perceptible but is not perceived at that time.[5] To stand the same Puruṣattama has given another argument based upon *anuvyabasāya* which determines the nature of knowledge. Here, he says, the form of *anuvyabasāya* stands thus 'I know the object as denoted by certain word'.[6] Thus he shows has that here, in the case concerned, the denotative relation is known through mental operation as is the case with the denotative relation of the words like Madhukara. Diṅnāga, a Buddhist Philosopher, also includes *Upamāna* under perception or verbal testimony, as he thinks the knowledge derived through it can be attained either through perception or through verbal testimony. So, it is useless and unjustified to admit *Upamāna* as a distinct means of knowledge.

But this view has been vehemently criticized by the Naiyāyikas. The Naiyāyikas maintain that particularly Diṅnaga hopelessly misunderstands the real purpose of *Upamāna*. Due to this misunderstanding he does not recognize *Upamāna* as a separate and independent means of knowledge. Diṅnāga thinks that what is known through *Upamāna* is either the resemblance to the cow or the existence of *gavaya* as qualified by the resemblance to the cow. But as far as the Nyāya-Veiw of *Upamāna* is concerned none of them is attained through *Upamāna*. The purport of the *Śūtra* of Goutama is that through the instrumentation of *Upamāna* one realizes the denotative relation through well known similarity. Jayantabhaṭṭa in this regard says that opponents consider *Upamāna* as a case of perception only because the similarity of *gavaya* to the cow which stands for *karaṇa* in *Upamāna* is perceived. But they fail to

understand that the perception of the mediate fact does not turn the concerned instrument into perception. To explain this point the case of inference may be cited. We all are well conscious about the fact that in the case of inference the mediate fact is perceived. Say for example, we infer the existence of the unperceived fire in the hill on the basis of the perception of the smoke in it. But here inspite of the perception of the mediate fact (smoke) inference is regarded as an independent and separate means from perception. Likewise, the perception of the similarity of *gavaya* to the cow, the mediate fact of *Upamāna*, does not turn *Upamāna* into perception.[7] The Naiyāyikas have forwarded another argument to stand their view. They hold that there is a basic difference between perception and *Upamāna*. In the case of perception the stress is laid upon the cognition of an object, whereas through *Upamāna* the knowledge of denotative relation is attained in the case of object which was not perceived earlier.

I think some other arguments can be produced to substantiate the *Nyāya* view. The whole process of *Upamāna* consists of some units- 1) verbal statement, 2) perception of similarity, 3) remembrance of the verbal statement and 4) knowledge of the denotative relation. But the process of Perception does not consist of such units. Secondly, though there is a controversy among the philosophers regarding the *Karaṇi* of *Upamiti* but they unanimously agree about the fact that it is either the verbal statement or the perception of similarity. But neither the verbal statement nor even the perception of similarity is treated as *karaṇa* of perception, rather it is either the sense organs (*indriya*) or the contact between the sense organs and the object which is considered as *karaṇa* of the same.

Some philosophers are of the opinion that there is no justification for considering *Upamāna* as a separate *pramāṇa* as it can very well be included under inference, though the grounds of its inclusion under inference sometimes are seen to vary from philosopher to philosopher. Among the Vaiśeṣikas, Praśastapāda says that in the stock example of the Naiyāyikas the cognition of the denotative relation is grounded upon the use of the word *gavaya* in the sense of animal *gavaya*. Śrīdhara also observes that *Upamāna* is nothing but a case of an inference. But the syllogistic form he suggests is something different. This form stands thus: the object (present) is denoted by the word *gavaya*, because the word *gavaya* is used with reference to it.

The word denotes an object in the sense of which it is consistently used. The word *gavaya* also is used so in the sense of an animal *gavaya* by the forest- dweller. So, the animal is denoted by the word *gavaya.*[8] Śālikanātha also holds that *Upamāna* can be reduced to inference and the syllogistic form of it can be shown as: the term *gavaya* denotes the animal *gavaya* because it is used in the sense of the latter. The word denotes an object with reference to which it is used. In this way one knows the denotative relation.[9] Vācaspatimiśra also agrees with the philosophers like Śrīdhara and Śālikanātha in maintaining that *Upamāna* can be reduced to inference but he shows its syllogistic form addressing a new point in the following way: the word *gavaya* denotes the animal *gavaya*, because it is used in the sense of the latter by experienced person when there is no function other than direct denotation. In this case the term used by the experienced person in the sense of a particular object is considered as denoting that object just as the term cow. The word *gavaya* is used in the sense of an object similar to cow. So, it should be accepted as denoting the animal *gavaya.*[10]

Here the Naiyāyikas leave no stone unturned to refute the view that *Upamāna* can be reduced to inference. Shiv Kumar, in his *Upamāna in Indian Philosophy*, beautifully presents the arguments produced by the different Naiyāyikas in this regard. Goutama, the founder of the Nyāya system, says that the philosophers who think that *Upamāna* can be included under inference may argue that like inference in the case of *Upamāna* also an unperceived object is known through the perceived one.[11] But Goutama points out that they fail to understand what actually is known through *Upamāna*. Through *Upamāna* no unperceived object like *gavaya* is known.[12] Vātsyāyana, the commentator of *Nyāyaśūtra*, in refuting their view says that in the case of an inference an unperceived object is known through the perceived one but in the case of *Upamāna* the knowledge of the denotative relation between the term *gavaya* and animal *gavaya* is attained when both the cow and the *gavaya* are perceived. Thus, it can be shown that *Upamāna* can not be a case of inference.[13] Besides this, Vātsyāyana produces some other good arguments to stand his own view. He says that in *Upamāna* the resemblance must be pointed out by some authoratitive person but in inference the ground of *vyāpti* may be attained by one's own experience.[14] Vātsyāyana further says that inference may be both for the sake of one's

own (*svārthānumāna*) and for the sake of others (*parārthānumāna*) but *Upamāna* is necessarily for the sake of others. Another sound argument has been shown by Goutama to refute the view of the opponents.He says that *Upamāna* is always expressed in the form 'as…so…' but inference is never expressed in this form. Therefore, *Upamāna* cannot be identical with inference. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa produces a good argument to show that *Upamāna* cannot be reduced to inference. He says that knowledge derived through inference necessarily presupposes the knowledge of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*). But this is not true in the case of *Upamāna* since the knowledge of denotative relation arising through *Upamāna* does not depend upon the knowledge of *vyāpti* either positive or negative. The invariable concomitance called *vyāpti* between the words and its denotation was not yet ascertained before deducing it through *Upamāna*. Thus it can easily be understood that denotative relation is ascertained through *Upamāna* independently of the knowledge of *Vyāpti*.

I think the view that *Upamāna* is identical with inference can be refuted in deferent way too. In the case of an inference the three deferent terms-subjects (*pakṣa*), probans (*hetu*) and probandum (*sādhya*) as well as the necessary concomitance (*vyāpti*) are necessary pre-requirements. An inference consists of these three terms and here conclusion of the existence of probandum is established on the basis of the knowledge of the necessary concomitance. Keeping these in view let us examine whether *Upamāna* can be treated as a case of an inference. Through *Upamāna* the Naiyāyikas claim to ascertain the knowledge of the denotative relation. So, denotative relation stands for the probandum if *Upamāna* is regarded as a case of an inference. In the case of the stock example of the Nyāya school the denotative relation between the term *gavaya* and the animal *gavaya* is the probandum. But what is about subject term of it? As long as the definition of the subject (*pakṣa)* given by the Nyāya school is concerned subject term is one which is characterisede by thye doubtful existence of the probandum (*Saṅdigdhasādhyabān*). Here both the term *gavaya* and animal *gavaya* are characterized by the doubtful existence of the denotative relation i.e the probandum. As the probandum is a relation it must be held in between two terms. So, here both the term *gavaya* and the animal *gavaya* taken together stand for the subject term. Now let us enquire about the probans. Probans, in an inference, is one which helps to establish the existence of the probandum. This can

be explained with the help of an example usually cited by the Naiyāyikas. 'There is fire in the hill, because there is smoke in it' in this inference hill is the subject, existence of fire is the probandum and smoke is the probans. Here the perceptual knowledge of the smoke helps to establish the existence of the fire in the hill. Keeping this in view it can be understood that in the case of the stock example of *Upamāna* the knowledge of the probandum, i.e. the denotative relation is attained on the basis of the perceptual knowledge of similarity of *gavaya* to the cow accompanied by the statement of the authoritative person 'as the cow so the *gavaya*'. So, here the perceptual knowledge of similarity and the authoritative statement taken together stand for the probans. But what is important to note here is that probans, in an inference, is in a position to establish the existence of the probandum only because it is characterized by the invariable concomitance between it (probans) and the probandum. In the above example of inference the existence of the probandum, fire, is established on the basis of the perceptual knowledge of the probans, smoke, only because here the probans is characterized by the invariable concomitance called in all the cases where there is smoke there is fire. But so far as the *Upamāna* is concerned the probandum is establish on the basis of the probans which is not characterized by the invariable concomitance like 'in all the cases where…' because here one is going to attain the knowledge of the probans and the probandum for the first time. More clearly to say in an inference there are two helping conditions, one is the knowledge of the existence of the probans in the subject (*pakṣadharmatā*) and another is the knowledge of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*), on the basis of which conclusion, the probandum, is drawn. *Upamāna* lacks the second condition of invariable concomitance. Here conclusion is drawn solely upon the probans. Thus, it can be shown the *Upamāna* cannot be identical with inference.

The view that *Upamāna* is nothing but a case of an inference, I think, can be refuted following the definition of *anumiti*, the inferential cognition. The definition of *anumiti*, according to *Nyāya* school, runs as, '*Parāmarśajannaṁ jñānam*' (the knowledge which is produced out of *parāmarśa*). *Parāmarśa* is the knowledge of the existence of the probans in the subject characterized by knowledge of the invariable concomitance (*Vyāptiviśiṣṭa pakṣadharmatā jñānaṁ*). On the basis of our foregoing discussion it can be said that *Upamiti* is a kind of knowledge which is not produced

out of *parāmarśa*, it is produced solely out of the knowledge called *pakṣadharmatā*. Thus it is seen that *Upamiti* is *pakṣadharmatā jannaṁ jñānaṁ*, it is not *parāmarśa jannaṁ jñānaṁ.* So, *Upamāna*, in no way, is a case of an inference.

REFERENCES:

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2. *Vātsyāyana Bhāsya*.
3. *Nyāyavārtika* 2.1.45.
4. *Prak prameyasya sādṛsyaṁ na dharmatvena gṛjhate. Slokavārttika*.
5. *Anyathā yagyānupalabdherapi manantaratbapatteḥ. Prasthānaratnākara*, p.148
6.*Taduttarametatpadabācayatvenainaṁ jānāmityanuvyavasāyena manasā mānasatvaniścayacceti. Ibid*.
7.*Taddindriyajanitamapidhumajñānamiba tadagacaraprameyapramitisādhanātramāṇtaram. Nyāyamañjarī*. Part-I, p.129
8. *Nyāyakandalī.* P.534
9. *Pramāṇapaddhati.* P.271
10. *Sāṁkhyatattvakaumudī.* 5
11. *Pratyakṣeṇpratyakṣasidheḥ. Nyāyasūtra*. 2.1.48
12. *ibid*
13. *Nyāyasūtra*. 2.1.48
14. *Nyāyabhāṣya* 2.1.48