

Block-2 Introduction

In Indian philosophy there are generally six *Pramanas* – means of knowledge accepted, namely, *Pratyaksa*—the knowledge gained by means of the senses, *Anumana*—(Sanskrit: “measuring along some other thing,” or “inference”), the knowledge gained by means of inference, *Upamana*—the knowledge gained by means of analogy, *Upamana* (Sanskrit: “comparison”), a means of having knowledge of something, in which observance of its similarities to another object provides knowledge of the relationship between the two. For example, when the meaning of a word is unknown, for example, *gavaya* (Sanskrit: “wild ox”), the similarity of the name to the word *gaus* (“cow”) will provide knowledge that *gavaya* is in the bovine family.

Unit 1 on *Pramana – I* gives the details of perception, termed as *pratyaksa* in Indian epistemological discourse. Almost all schools of Indian tradition accept it as a valid source of knowledge with differences in their elaboration and types of perception.

In this unit 2 on *Pramana II* a detailed description of all other *Pramanas* excluding perception is given. The generally accepted *pramanas* like inference, testimony, comparison, postulation and non-cognition are detailed in this unit. As different schools of Indian thought accept or reject these *Pramanas* and an elaborate picture of the same is given in this unit.

The unit 3 on Justification – Classical deals with the certitude of knowledge and justifying the beliefs. The Scholastics generally define ‘certitude’ as ‘the firm assent of the mind to the truth, based on evidence’. The unit elaborates on moral, ontological, religious certitude and throws open the discussion on issues in justification.