UNIT 2   *PRAMANAS* - II

Contents

2.0   OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to give details of *pramanas* generally accepted by different schools of Indian philosophy. Each school have their own reasons to uphold different *pramanas* to suit to their metaphysical tenets. As a student of philosophy we make an effort to know them all to some extend, although we do not engage in validity of their arguments for one or the other means of knowledge. On the whole this unit would give a general picture of different means of knowledge accepted in the different schools Indian thought along with the validity and invalidity of knowledge as given in the schools of Indian thought.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The central questions of epistemology include the origin of knowledge, the place of experience in generating knowledge and the place of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and the responsibility of error and changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualisations of the world. All of these issues link with other central concerns of Indian systems. There are four factors involved in any knowledge

    (1) The subject who knows (*pramata*)
    (2) the object of knowledge (*prameya*)
    (3) the means of valid knowledge (*Pramana*)
    (4) the resultant of valid knowledge (*prama*)

Prama is valid knowledge. Knowledge can be valid or invalid, valid knowledge is called *prama* and non-valid knowledge is known as *aprama*. *Pramana* is valid means of knowledge and its important four means include perception (*pratyaksa*), inference (*anumana*), verbal testimony (*sabda*), and comparison (*upamana*). Different schools of Indian thought accept or reject different ones of these methods. All methods are accepted by Mimamsa; only perception, inference and testimony by Yoga; only perception and inference by Buddhism and Vaisesika ; and only perception by Carvaka.

2.2   *ANUMANA* - INFERENCE

Vaisesika recognises only two *Pramana*s- perception and inference and reduces comparison and verbal testimony to inference. But Nyaya system recognises all the four *Pramana*s namely perception, inference, verbal testimony, and comparison.

According to Nyaya philosophy, The term *anumana* literally means after knowledge i.e., knowledge that follows other knowledge. It is mediate and indirect and are arranged through the medium of some mark which is called '*hetu*' and bears the relation of invariable concomitance with the observed feature. The basis of the inference is invariable concomitance. The invariable relation between the *hetu* and the *sadya* is called *Vyapti*. The knowledge of the qualities of the '*paksa*' through the '*hetu*' is called *paramarsa*. Hence inference or *anumana* is said to be

knowledge gained through *paramarsa*, or in other words, the knowledge of the presence of sadhya in the *paksa* through the *linga*, which is in the quality of *paksa* and is invariably related by *Vyapti*.

This may be explained with the help of the typical example of inference, the presence of fire on the perception of smoke. When one sees smoke on distant hill one remembers one's experience of the universal concomitance (*Vyapti*) between smoke and fire and concludes that there is fire on the distant hill. The character which is inferred (fire) is called sadhya; the mark on the strength of which the character is inferred is the *hetu* (smoke); the subject where the character is inferred is *paksa* (hill). The three terms corresponds to the major, minor and the minor terms in the Aristotelian syllogism. The following is a a typical nyaya syllogism.

1. This hill has fire (*pratijna*),
2. Because it has smoke (*hetu*),
3. Whatever has smoke has fire e.g. an oven (*udaharana*),
4. This hill as smoke which is invariably associated with fire (*upanaya*),
5. Therefore this hill has fire (*nigamana*).

The first, the *pratijna*, is the logical statement which is to be proved. The second is *hetu* or reason which states the reason for the establishment of the proposition. The third is *udaharana* which the universal concomitance together with example . the fourth is *upanaya* or application of the universal concomitance to the present case. The fifth is *nigamana* or conclusion drawn from the preceding propositions. These five members of Indian syllogism are called *Avayavas*.

Linga paramarsa: The Nyaya syllogism has five terms. Among them ,middle term works as a bridge between the major and the minor terms. Therefore, the middle term has main responsibility to prove a syllogism valid or invalid. How a middle term is related to major term is *lingaparamarsha*. There are five characteristics of a middle term-

1. It must be present in the minor term (*paksadharmata*); e.g., smoke must be present in the hill.
2. It must be present in all positive instances in which the major terms is present; e.g., smoke must be present in the kitchen where fire exists.(*sapaksasattva*).
3. It must be absent in all negative instances in which the major terms is absent; e.g., smoke must be absent in the lake in which fire does not exist.(*vipaksasattva*).
4. It must be non-incompatible with the minor term; e.g., it must not prove the coolness of fire (*abadhita*).
5. It must be qualified by the absence of counteracting reasons which lead to a contradictory conclusion; e.g., 'the fact of being caused' should not be used to prove the 'eternality' of sound (*aviruddha*).

*Hetvabhasa***:-**In Indian logic a fallacy is called *hetvahasa***.** It means that middle term appears to be a reason but is not a valid reason. All fallacies are material fallacies. We have mentioned the five characteristic of a valid middle term. When this are violated, we have fallacies. Five kinds of fallacies are recognised .

1 . *Assiddha or sadhyasama*- This is the fallacy of unproved middle.
2. *Savyabhicara*- this is the fallacy of irregular middle.
3. *Satpratipaksa*- here the middle term is contradicted by another middle term.
4. *Badhita*- It is the non-inferentially contradicted middle

5. *Viruddha*- It is the contradictory middle.

According to Jainas, *Tarka,* Logic is the knowledge of *Vyapti* between *paksa* and *sadhya*.It depends upon the perception whether two things exist together or not in past, present, and future. *Vyapti* is of two kinds-- *Anavya Vyapti* and *Vyatireka Vyapti*. In the former the concomitance of two tings is established. In the latter *Vyapti* is shown in the absence. 'where there is fire, there is smoke' is an example of Anavaya *Vyapti*. On the other hand.' where there is no fire, there is smoke', exemplifies Vyatireka *Vyapti*. The relationship of universal accompaniment-gradual or concurrent-exists in *Vyapti*. This relationship is ascertained by logic (*Tarka*). Inference (*anumana*)-It is the knowledge of *sadhya* with the help of *hetu*. This inference is either *svarthanumana* or *pararthanumana*. The former is the grasp for one's own self. Hence it needs no amplification. For example, the frequent visibility of fire under smoke together suffices to convince us of their concomitance. Afterwards, when we see smoke, we infer the existence of fire also with the help of *Vyapti*, which is already known to us. It is, *svarthanumana*. In it the place of smoke is *paksa*, smoke is *paksa dharma*. In *svarthanumana* both *Vyapti* and *paksa dharma* are essential. *Pararthanumana* is used for convincing others. So it must be more systematised and vivid. It is five-fold. In five fold *Pararthanumana* an inference is drawn in five sentences. These sentences are called the propositions (*avayava*) of inference, e.g.,

(a) *Pratijna*-The hill is fiery,

(b) *Hetu*-because of smoke,

(c) *Drstanta*- Wherever there is smoke there is fire, such as in the kitchen,

(e) *Upanaya*- The smoke , which does not exist without fire (*Vyapti*visistdhum) is in the hill,

(f) *Nigamana*-Therefore the hill is fiery.

Inference is twofold-(1) Svarth*anumana*-inference for one's own sake and (2) Pararth*anumana*-inference for the sake of others. The former is not expressed in the form of a syllogistic argument. The latter is a syllogism which helps to direct the mind of the listener to think in the required manner.

The validity of inference is rejected by Carvakas. Inference is said to be a mere leap into the dark. We proceed here from the known to the unknown and there is no certainty in this, though some inferences may turn out to be accidently true. A general proposition may be true in unperceived cases. But there is no guarantee that it will hold true in even in unperceived cases. Deductive inferences is vitiated by the fallacy of *petitio principii*. It is merely an argument in circle since the conclusion is already contained in the major premise, the validity of which is not proved. Inductive inference undertakes to prove the validity of the major premise of deductive inference. But induction too is uncertain because it proceeds unwarrantedly from the known to the unknown. In order to distinguish true induction from simple enumeration, it is pointed out that the former, unlike the latter, is based on casual relationship which means invariable association or *Vyapti*. *Vyapti*, therefore is the nerve of all inference. But the Carvaka challenges this universal and invariable relationship of concomitance and regards it a mere guess work. Perception does not prove this *Vyapti*. Nor can it be proved by inference, for inference itself is said to presuppose its validity. Testimony too cannot prove it, for testimony itself is not a valid means knowledge. Secondly, if testimony proves *Vyapti*, inference would become dependent on testimony and then none would be able to infer anything by himself. Hence inference cannot be regarded as a valid source of knowledge. Induction is uncertain and deduction s argument in a circle. The logicians therefore find themselves stuck up in mud of inference.

The Carvaka position has been vehemently criticised by all systems of Indian philosophy all of which have maintained the validity of at least perception and inference. To refuse the validity of inference from the empirical standpoint is to refuse to think and discuss. All thoughts, all discussions, all doctrines, all affirmations and denials, all proofs and disproof are made possible by inference. The Carvaka view that perception is valid and inference is invalid is itself a result of inference. Carvaka Can understand others only through inference and make others understand him only through inference. Thoughts and ideas not being material objects cannot be perceived but can only be inferred.

For Vaibhashikars, inference is of two types: *Svartha* (for the self) and *parartha* (for others).In the former the *linga* is inferential, i. e., in the inference there is fire on the hill, the hill is *linga* and the fire is inferential. In it the *linga* remains in self side (*svapaksa*), just as the kitchen. The *linga* does not remain in the opposite side (*vipaksa*), e.g., a pool of water, etc. According to Sautrantikas they are subject to inference. There are four causes of knowledge.

> (1) *Alamban*-It is the cause of external objects like jug etc, because the form of the knowledge and born due to it.
> (2) *Samanantara*—This is so called because it is only after the previous mental stage that the following stage attains consciousness.
> (3) *Adhipat*—The senses have been called as the *Adhipati Pratyaya* of the knowledge. It is the normative cause. Without the senses there can be no external knowledge even after the presence of the first two causes.
> (4) *Sahkari Pratyaya*—these are the subsidiary conditions necessary for knowledge, e.g., light ,form, etc. Without which knowledge becomes almost impossible.

The knowledge of the external objects becomes possible due to the above mentioned four causes or conditions. The Sautrantikas do not admit that the external objects have no existence and all knowledge is in the consciousness. Nor do they believe like the Vaibhasikas that we know anything by direct perception. As opposed to Vaibhasikas , the Sautrantikas maintain that we have no direct perception of the external objects but only the knowledge of their appearance. It is by the distinction in these appearances which are the basis of the knowledge. Hence they are in the mind itself, though the things which they represent as external objects are not known by their perception, but by the inference based upon the mental modifications aroused by them . This view is known as *Bahayanumeyavad*. It is representationalism or indirect realism.

Vijnanavadins believe that all things external to mind are mental modifications. Thus the knowledge of the external things is impossible. Hence the thing which appears to be external; should be taken as a mental concept. It can be questioned here that if the object is a mere concept of the mind why does it not appear, disappear, and change as desired. To this the Vijnanavadins reply that the mind is a mere stream in which the past experiences remain in the form of expression and whenever there is favourable condition for a certain impression the same impression manifests and results into knowledge. From the multiple point of view Vijnanavadins admit two types of knowledge - *Grahana* and *Adhyavasaya*. *Grahana* is indirect and *Adhyavasaya* direct inference. The Vijnanavadins believe that the proof of things depends on something else. (*Parartah Pramanyavada*). They made two distinctions in the empirical truth – *Paratatra* and *Pari-kalpa*.

Generally, there are varieties of inference recognised . The first is syllogistic inference which is based on perception. The second corresponds to analogical reasoning in modern logic. Such

inference is called *samanyatodrsta*. For e.g., From the observed fact that an effect like a jar requires for its production, an agent like potter, it is concluded that the world also should have been brought into existence by a competent being God.

2.3   *SABDA -* TESTIMONY

Sabda is defined as the statement of a trustworthy person (*aptavakya*)and consists in understanding its meaning. It is based on the words of trustworthy persons, human or divine. A person is trustworthy if he knows the truth and conveys it correctly. *Sabda* is interpreted as *aptavacana*. Testimony is valid if the source is reliable . It may come not only from the scriptures, but also from persons who are trust worthy (*apta*). Testimony is of two kinds- *Vaidika* and secular (*laukika*). The *vaidika* testimony is perfect and infallible because the Vedas are spoken by God. Secular testimony, being the words of human beings who are liable to error and so no infallible.

For the Jainas, *sabda pramana* is called *Agama*. It is the knowledge of a thing through the words of reliable people. A person who knows things in their true form and express his views correctly, is reliable and *apta*. He is free from prejudice. His words befit the object which they are seeking to express. *Agama* is of two kinds-*Laukik* and *Alaukik*.

According to advaita, God is the author of Veda in a special sense. It is not His work in the literal sense. Like everything else, Veda also disappears at the end of the cycle and God repeat it at the beginning of the next cycle. So far as its substance is concerned, it is independent of God, i.e., Apuruscya. According to Nyaya, God is the sole author of Veda and according to Mimamsa, Vedas are self-existent. In advaita, we find a midway position between these two systems.

According to Ramanuja, all knowledge points to a complex or qualifes object. Knowledge never reveals anything as nirguna. According to Ramanuja, nirguna does not mean having no qualities at all but the absence of evil qualities. With respect to *sabda* , there are two points to be noted- (1) all sections of the Veda are equally important. There is no need to distinguish between the ritual portion and the knowledge portion as is done by Sankara.   (2) Ramanuja gives much importance to the Agamas as to the Veda and to the Upanishads.

According to the Nyāya Philosophy, sabda (verbal testimony) is the fourth and last valid source of knowledge. 'Sabda' literally means verbal knowledge. It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or sentence. But all verbal knowledge is not valid. Thus, Nyāyikas expressed that sabda is a pramāna of valid verbal testimony.

Sabda is the instructive assertion of a reliable person. Now a question probably comes to your mind, i.e. who is a reliable person? A reliable person may be a risi, mlechha, arya who is an expert in certain matter and is willing to communicate his/her experience of it.

Example:
Suppose that a lady came to the side of a river to cross the river and can't ascertain depth of water in the river. In this case, she asked a fisherman who is fishing there that 'can I cross the river?' Since the fisherman is a local person over there and has no enmity with her replied that

you can cross the river easily. Here, the word of the fisherman man is to be accepted as a means of right knowledge called verbal testimony.

Types of Sabda

These are two different kinds of Sabda.
a)   i)   Drustārtha
     ii) Adrustārtha

b)   i)   Laukika
     ii) Alaukika

The former classification is made on the basis of objects of meaning and the later classification is based on the origin of words. Sabda deals with perceptible object is called drstārta, e.g. table is brown, grows is green etc. A sabda deals with imperceptible object is called 'adrsta', e.g. Duty is god, Truth is noble, etc.

Laukika sabda is known as secular whereas alukika sabda is known as divine or vaidika. The Vedas are spoken by god. This vaidika testimony is divine and perfect. According to Nyāyikas, since human beings are not perfect only the words of trust worthy person can be considered as laukika sabda.

The verbal testimony is defined as that 'sentence in which the relation among the meaning of words, that is the object of its intention, is not contradicted by any other means of valid knowledge'. According to Advaita, the purport of the scriptures is Attributless Brahman (*Nirguna Brahman*) which is known by scrutinizing the intention of scriptures based on six indicatory marks, they are, Introduction-Conclusion (*upakrama-upasamhara*), Repetition (*abhyasa*), Uniqueness (*apurvata*), Result (*phala*), Eulogy (*arthavada*) and Logical presentation (*upapatti*). A word can reveal its meaning in the primary sense and in cases where primary sense is unfitting, they are known by their secondary sense. Deriving the meaning of a word through its secondary implication is of three kinds, namely, Exclusive (*jahallakshana*), Inclusive (*ajahallakshana*) and Exclusive-Inclusive (*jahalajahallakshana*). The identity statements (*mahavakya*), according to Advaita, reveals the identity meaning by the application of exclusive-inclusive implication.

According to the Mimansa philosophy, testimony is a reliable statement uttered by a trust worthy person similar to Nyaya Philosophy. It is stated that a sentence consists of a group of words, and a word is considered as an entity which has the power to express some meaning. Testimony is a valid knowledge, which is derived form word or sentence. But all words or sentences can't be treated as testimony because all verbal expressions are not necessarily regarded as valid knowledge. So, on the account of Mimansikas, sabda must be based on the verbal assertion of a trust worthy person who knows the truth and desires to speak the truth for the guidance of others. Verbal testimony is used as meaningful words or sentences. The mere combination of letters or the words don't provide a valid knowledge. Therefore, words and sentences must be used in a specific sense whose meaning will be clear, as a result, it would be treated as a valid pramana.
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2.4   COMPARISON (*UPAMANA*)

It is knowledge derived from similarity. It has been defined as the knowledge of the relation between a word and its denotation

According to the Nyāya Philosophy, comparison (upamāna) is the third source of valid knowledge. The expression 'upamāna', is derived from two words, 'upa' and 'māna'. The word 'upa' means similarity or 'sādrusya' and the word 'māna' means 'cognition'. Thus, generally speaking, upamāna as a source of knowledge is derived from the similarity between two things/objects. It is a source of knowledge of the relation between a word and its denotation (what the word refers to).

Example of Upamāna:
A person does not know what a 'squirrel' is? S(he) is told by a forester that it is a small animal like rat, but it has a long fury tail and strips on its body. After some period of time, when s(he) sees such an animal in the forest, s(he) knows that it is a squirrel.
There are four steps involved in acquiring knowledge of an object in comparison (upamāna).

First: We have an authoritative statement that a word denotes objects of a certain description.
Second: When one observes any such objects she/he has the knowledge that it answers to the given description.
Third: There is a recollection of the descriptive statement received from authority.
Four/Finally: There is the resulting knowledge that, this kind of objects are denoted by the word is same.

Here, it is important to note that Buddhism (Buddhist philosophy) does not accept comparison as an independent source of valid knowledge. On their account, comparison can be reduced to perception and testimony. The Sāmkhya and the Vaisesika Philosophy believe that comparison can be reduced to inference.
Upamana is a pramana recognized by the Mimansikas as similar to Nyayikas' views. In upamana, knowledge of an object is determined by comparing it form other similar kinds of objects. Thus roughly it is treated as analogy. For example, assume a situation where a man has not seen a gavaya or a wild cow and doesn't know what it is. A forester told him that a wild cow is an animal like a country cow but she is more furious and has big horn in her forehead. In a later period he comes across a wild cow in a forest and recognizes it as the wild cow by compairing the descriptions made by the forester. This knowledge is possible due to the upamana or comparison. Thus, upamana is the knowledge of the relation between a name and the object it denotes by that name.

2.5   *ARTHAPATHI* (PRESUMPTION)

According to Kumarila Bhatta, valid knowledge is that which provides the experience of an unknown object, that which is not contradicted by other knowledge and which is free from other defects. The Mimamsakas uphold *svatah pramanya vada* or self validity of knowledge. Knowledge is valid by itself. The conditions of freedom from defects and non-contradiction being satisfied, all knowledge arises as self-valid. Coherence and self-consistency is the nature of valid knowledge. Both Prabhakara and Kumarila regard knowledge itself as *Pramana* or means

of knowledge. Jaimini admits three *Pramana*s- perception, inference and testimony. Prabhakara adds two more –comparison and implication. Kumarila further adds non-apprehension.

Prabhakara and Kumarila both, admit *Arthapathi* as an independent means of valid kowledge. Through this *Pramana* we discover a fact as a result of a contradiction between two facts already known to be well established. A common example is- Devadutta does not take his food during day time. Yet he is quite strong and fat. We presume that he must be taking food at night. The assumption of Devadutta eating at night is a postulation . We have never seen him eating his food at night. Hence the knowledge gained by postulation is not perception. This kind of knowledge is a peculiar or unique kind of knowledge and it has to be considered separately. But some Indian logicians bring this *Pramana* under inference-disjunctive inference .

  All fat persons who do not eat during day are persons who eat during night.
  Devadutta is a fat person what does not eat during day
  Therefore Devadutta is a fat person who eats during night.

2.6 POSTULATION (*ARTHAPATI*)

This is a unique source of valid knowledge upholds by the Mimansikas. In other words, the Mimansikas expressed arthapati as a valid method of cognition. The expression "arthapati" is a combination of two words namely 'artha' and 'apatti'. The term artha means fact and apatti means 'kalpana' which is understood as 'supposition' in English. Thus, etymologically speaking, arthapati is that knowledge which resolves the conflict between two facts. It entails a presupposition which solves the problem that occurred between two facts.

Arthapati is the assumption of an unperceived fact in order to reconcile two apparently inconsistent perceived facts. When a known fact can't be accounted without another fact, we have to postulate the existence of third fact. The valid and justified knowledge of the third fact is known as arthapati.

For example, Devadatta is a fat man by fasting in the day. In this proposition we find two facts. One, Devadatta is a human being alive and he is fat. Second, he is not eating in day time. In order to resolve this conflict, i.e. how a person will be fat and not eating anything in day time, we postulate the existence of third fact, i.e. he must be eating in the night. Another example, "John is living and who is not in home". The problem observed here is how John alive and is not found in his home. To resolve this conflict, we postulate the fact, i.e. he may be staying in a rented house outside his home. Thus, postulation or presumption is a valid source of knowledge.

It is presumption of an explanatory fact (*upapadaka*) from knowledge of the thing to be explained (*upapadya*). The knowledge of the thing to be explained is the instrument, and the knowledge of the explanatory fact is the result. This is explained by the well-known example of 'Devadatta'. Devadatta does not eat during the day time, he is fat, these are known facts. If one does not postulate that 'Devadatta eats at night' the seen fact remains unexplained. Postulation, according to Advaita, also proves falsity of the world. The scriptural statement '*the knower of self transcends sorrow*' reveals falsity of world by application of postulation. Here, the word

'sorrow' indicates bondage which can be removed by self-knowledge, since the statement says 'knower of self'; if the falsity of bondage is not postulated then removal of bondage by knowledge cannot be said. Hence, bondage or world as false is known by postulation. In postulation, we presume something present elsewhere; there cannot be anything else to arrive at Brahman by postulation.

2.7   *ANUPALABDHI* (NON-APPREHENSION)

Anupalabdhi is the immediate knowledge of the non-existence of object. Kumarila admits this but Prabhakara rejects it. It is related to the category of *abhava*. For e.g., an umbrella which is expected to be seen in a particular corner of a room is not seen there. We know about the non-existence of the umbrella through a separate *Pramana* , anupalabdhi. Nyaya, though it accepts non-existence as a category has no separate *Pramana* to understand it. According to them, the non-existence of an object can be known by perception itself as in the case of perceiving the bare floor. But according to Mimamsa since there is no sense object contact, we require a new *Pramana* to know the non-existence of an object. This is a unique feature of Mimamsa epistemology.

This is an independent source of valid knowledge subscribed by the Mimansa Philosophy. Non-apprehension is the immediate knowledge of the non-existence of an object. An object doesn't exist in a particular place and a particular time. But it exists elsewhere. To perceive the non-existent of that particular object in a given situation/place is known as anupalabdhi.

For example, 'there is no book on the table". Here, an individual does not perceive the book directly through his/her sense organs. But the knowledge of the absence or non existence of the book on the table arises because of the non-perception of the perceivable object. The absence of an object from the situation in which it should be available is said to be its non-existence. And, to possess the knowledge of non existence of objects in an existence form is called as anupalabdhi.

The means of valid knowledge known as non-apprehension is the extraordinary cause of that apprehension of non-existence which is not due to knowledge as an instrument. A thing can be known by non-apprehension which has the capacity to be apprehended at a different time. For instance, one can understand the absence of a pot in a place, since pot as an object is apprehended previously or at a later period. Here, non-existence of a thing is known and Brahman being ever existent (*Sat*) it is never available for non-apprehension.

2.8   LET US SUM UP

2.9   KEY WORDS

Pramana: Criterion of valid knowledge.

Syllogism: It is the inference of one proposition from two premises.

Fallacy: Any error of reasoning.

2.10   REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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