CHAPTER - VII

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters of the dissertation endeavour has been made to give a comprehensive and critical analysis of perception in the light of the six systems of Indian philosophy. Philosophical views on perception have been discussed by different commentators and modern philosophers as well. However, a detailed study on perception exclusively in the light of six systems of Indian philosophy remain untouched by different scholars. It is, therefore, imperative to study perception in the light of six systems of Indian philosophy. In this dissertation efforts have been made to include diversified views of the modern and the western critics of different schools of Indian philosophy in order to bring out critical analysis of the subject. From the discussion carried out it is revealed that the perception is the most powerful source of valid knowledge and it is universally accepted by all the schools of Indian philosophy. Perceptual verification is thus the final test of all other knowledge and as such perception is the chief of all the sources of human knowledge.
The first chapter of the dissertation, being the introductory one, briefly deals with the nature of philosophy, nature of knowledge and its four basic factors, viz., *pramā, prameya, pramāṇa* and *pramiti*. Moreover, an exhaustive note on perception also has been given in this chapter.

The second chapter deals with comprehensive study of the theories of error or valid knowledge. In Indian philosophical literature the typical theories of error or illusion have been discussed which is known as *khyātivāda*. In the present discussion *khyātivāda* dealing with the concept of error of different schools of Indian philosophy were analysed from the logical, metaphysical and psychological point of view.

The third chapter deals with the theory of perception according to the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy. It is to be noted that among the divisions of the six systems of Indian philosophy, the Nyāya has elaborately discussed the epistemological aspects of philosophy especially perception. Perception is one of the four means of knowledge accepted by old and modern Nyāya system. In fact, it has been accepted as oldest among the four means of knowing on account of the fact that other sources of valid knowledge like inference etc.
are dependent on perception. Hence, the Indian logicians in general and Naiyāyikas in particular have given much emphasis on the theory of perception and its primacy. Considering its importance in Indian epistemology views of different commentators along with their criticism are dealt in this chapter.

There are some difference of opinion among the prācina-Naiyāyikas and Navya-Naiyāyikas on certain points. In the syncretic school of Nyāya, attempt has been made by scholars to reconcile Gautama’s definition of perception with Gaṅgeśa’s definition.

The theory of perception is also dealt in Vaiśeṣika philosophy. In most of the cases the Vaiśeṣika philosophers agree with the doctrines of Nyāya philosophers which are clearly depicted in this chapter.

The fourth chapter deals with the theory of perception given by Sāṅkhya and Yoga philosophy. In this chapter an attempt has been made to extract the different ideas from the Sāṅkhya-Yoga point of view. The discussion of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga has its own tradition of defining perception which was not originally influenced by other systems. It has undergone various changes during its development. The earliest available definition was offered by Vindhyavāsin which
was revised by the followers of Vārṣaganya. The definition of Vārṣaganya was rejected by the later Sāṁkhyas, because it is not applicable to the internal perception as also to the extraordinary perception of yogins. In the Sāṁkhya-karikā, Īśvarakṛṣṇa defines perception in terms of determining an individual object. In this chapter an elaborate discussion on different view points of early Sāṁkhya, traditional Sāṁkhya and classical Sāṁkhya are dealt. The extraordinary perception of Yoga philosophy is also discussed in this chapter. The criticism raised by different logicians against Sāṁkhya-Yoga philosophy and refutation of these arguments are discussed in this chapter.

The fifth chapter deals with the theory of perception as depicted in Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta philosophy. It may be pointed out here that Mīmāṁsā philosophy is mainly divided into two – Prābhākara school and Bhāṭṭa school. The Prābhākaramīmāṁsakas present a peculiar theory of perception called Trīputipratyakṣavāda i.e. the theory of triple perception. Though both the Prābhākara and Bhāṭṭa views are different but there has been some similarity between them. Kumārila Bhāṭṭa agrees with Prabhākara Miśra in holding that perception is never the object of another perception and that it ends in the direct apprehensibility of the object of perception. But Kumārila
Bhaṭṭa says that every act of perception involves a relationship between the perceiver and the perceived, wherein the perceiver behaves as the agent whose activity in grasping the object is known as cognition. This is indeed different from the Prābhākara view, that in one manifestation of knowledge, the knower, the known, and the knowledge are simultaneously illuminated. The Mīmāṁsaka’s theory of perception is closely related to the Naiyāyika’s theory of perception.

In the fifth chapter a clear picture of perception of Vedānta philosophy is revealed. It may be mentioned here that there are various sections on the Vedānta philosophy. Among these sections, Śaṅkara’s Advaita, Rāmānuja’s Viśiṣṭādvaīta, Vallabha’s Śuddhādvaita, Nimbārka’s Dvaitādvaita and Madhva’s Dvaita are main. All the philosophers of Vedānta philosophy except Śaṅkara have analysed the psychology of perception. But in the later age the epistemology of Śaṅkara has been elaborately expressed by Dharmarājadhvarindra in his Vedāntaparibhāṣā.

In the last chapter reviewing all the hypothesis it has been concluded that the theory of perception being the primary and fundamental of all the sources of valid knowledge occupies an important place in Indian philosophy especially in the six schools of Indian philosophy for ascertaining valid knowledge.