CHAPTER – II

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

'Epistemology' or theory of knowledge is considered as an important part in Indian Philosophy. In the course of the development of the Indian Philosophical system, interest in 'Epistemology' gradually increased and it began to claim a large share in philosophical discussions of almost every systems. From the very beginning of the different philosophical systems until recent times discussions on the problems of knowledge have taken an important part of philosophy. In this context it can be said that all the philosophical systems regard ignorance as the root-cause of human sufferings and sorrows. So, they try to discover the means and processes of true knowledge by means of which reality can be known. They believe that through this process human being can overcome miseries or can minimize sufferings. In this connection Vātsyāyana commenting upon the first śūtra of Gautama, says that the study of the source of knowledge (pramāṇa) is necessary, because through it we can know the reality and thereby guide our actions to attain desirable ends and sufferings.

Philosophy has three parts- i) Epistemology, ii) Ontology and iii) Axiology. Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, ontology is the theory of reality and axiology is the theory of values. Epistemology is closely connected with ontology or metaphysics. Epistemology enquires into the origin, nature, validity and extent of knowledge. It is concerned with the conditions of the validity of knowledge.
The term ‘epistemology’ has been derived from the word ‘episteme’ meaning knowledge and ‘logos’ meaning science of theory. Accordingly, ‘epistemology’ means ‘the theory or science of knowledge.’ It inquires into the nature, origin, range and conditions of knowledge. Further, the theory of knowledge specially concerned with the conditions of the validity of knowledge.

The theory of knowledge is an important province of philosophical theory. It is doctrine of man’s ability to cognize reality, on the sources, forms and methods of cognitions, the truth and the ways of attaining it. The term ‘epistemology’ is dealt with the study and generalization of the origin and development of knowledge and transition from non-knowledge to knowledge. Knowledge in general is analyzable into ideas – ideas about the things of the external world, about men and about one’s own self. But it is well-mentioned that all ideas are not of the same value and validity. Some ideas are true and some others are false. The awareness of such a distinction between true and false knowledge, which is also termed as valid and invalid presupposes an enquiry into the origin and validity of all knowledge. The study whose concern is a systematic reflection about knowledge, a reflection which is solely centered round knowledge itself is ‘epistemology’.

**NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE**

Knowledge is the basis of all practical activities. The function of knowledge is to illuminate things other than itself. Knowledge inherently refers to an object that is known and it always belongs to a subject that knows. There can be no knowledge existing independently by itself without

1. pratītiḥ vastantaraprakāśasvabhāvāḥ. NR on SV, Nirālambanavāda, 44.
implying a knower and a thing known. Knowledge is a self transcending property of the self. Knowledge is also the revelation of the objective world to a subject. It is termed as understanding (buddhi), apprehension (upalabdhi), concepts, judgment, awareness and cognition or cognizance which are synonymous to each other. Just as the light of the lamp shows physical things so knowledge illuminates the objects that come before it.

In Indian philosophy different systems have adopted divergent attitude towards the theory of knowledge. According to Sāṅkhya- Yoga, knowledge is a mode of buddhi which transforms itself into the shape of the object that it cognizes. They regard that though puruṣa is inactive due to the indiscrimination and intelligence of buddhi, activising of puruṣa takes place and the phenomena of cognition arises as a result. Further Sāṅkhya-Yoga philosophy says that knowledge is of the nature of light or illumination and it does not require anything to manifest it. The view of Sāṅkhya-Yoga about knowledge is supported by Prābhākara-Mīmāṃsakas and Advaita-Vedāntins. They also say that knowledge is never an object of knowledge nor known by another knowledge. They argue that if knowledge is known as an object, then each individual knowledge may require another knowledge to know it, and so on ad infinitum (without limit). The Advaita-Vedānta further admits that knowledge is the very stuff of the self and there is no difference between the self and knowledge. According to Naiyāyikas knowledge is an accidental quality of the self and there is a complete difference between the self and its knowledge. According to them knowledge is the manifestation of objects. Knowledge is revelatory of reality. According

2. buddhirupalabdhir jñānaṁ ityanarthāntaraṁ. NS, 1.1.5.
to Annambhatta *buddhi* is knowledge itself and not an instrument of knowledge. Vaiśeṣika system admits that *padārtha* is an object of valid knowledge. Kaṇāda enlists *buddhi* amongst the qualities. Knowledge is known not by itself but by another knowledge known as *anuvyavasāya*—this idea is accepted by Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṃsaka. They opine that knowledge is like the eyes which illuminates everything but itself remain in curtain. Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṃsakas admit that there is a certain relation between the knower and the known, which involves some activity on the part of the knower.

All knowledge is not necessarily correct. The correct or true knowledge is called *yathārtha* and the false knowledge is called *ayathārtha*. *Yathārtha* knowledge is valid knowledge and *ayathārtha* knowledge is invalid knowledge. Valid knowledge (i) is a true and definite knowledge of some new fact, (ii) is the apprehension which agrees with the real character of the object apprehended, (iii) is the certain and unerring presentation of the object, (iv) is the knowledge of an object as endowed with qualities which really exists in the object. When one apprehends a jar with the quality of jarness, one’s knowledge is valid. If any knowledge lacks in definiteness or certitude or does not convey any new information or does not represent things as they really are, it is invalid.

Different schools of Indian philosophy sprang up out of an urge for the enquiry of reality. These schools are busy not only in deducing conclusions but also in determining the methods of arriving at them. Because of such an approach, Indian epistemology comes to involve four basic factors. They are: *pramā*, *prameya*, *pramāṇa* and *pramātā*. 
pramā or pramiti – the valid knowledge of the object.

prameya – the knowable, the object to be known, the object of valid knowledge.

pramāṇa – the chief instrument or organ of knowing the source of valid knowledge.

pramātā – the knower or the cognizer of valid knowledge.

In Indian epistemology, two words are used to mean knowledge, true or false. When reality reveals true knowledge it is called pramā or valid knowledge and when this revelation is false it is called apramā. The term pramā is used only in the sense of true knowledge or yathārthajñāna which is distinct from false knowledge. The word pramā means true knowledge in the logical sense which is able to recognize an object with its real nature and character. The word pramā is derived from the root ‘mā’ with a prefix ‘pra’ and ‘tāp’ which means valid knowledge.

The special source of valid knowledge is called pramāṇa. The term pramāṇa derivatively means the instrument of valid knowledge (pramāyāḥ karaṇam). So, it can be said that pramāṇa is the means or source of right knowledge. In reality, pramāṇa gives valid knowledge and only valid knowledge of objects. So, it has been said, ‘there can not be any right understanding of things except by means of pramāṇa’. A subject arrives at the valid knowledge of objects by means of pramāṇa, for the existence and nature of objects are to be ascertained only by such cognitions as are based on pramāṇa.3 Pramāṇa has a real correspondence with objects in the sense that ‘the nature and attributes of objects, as revealed by pramāṇa,

3. pramāṇato’rthapratipattau pravṛttaśamarthyādarthavatpramāṇaṁ.
NBh,1.1.1.
uncontradictorily true of them, despite all variations in time, place and other conditions.'

The term 'pramāṇa' consists in the root 'mā' with a prefix 'pra' and suffix 'lyut'. Pramāṇa is defined as the karaṇa or the extraordinary cause of a pramā or right knowledge. A cause has been defined as the invariable and unconditional antecedent of an effect. Conversely, an effect is the invariable and unconditional consequent.

Though all the schools of Indian Philosophy accept pramāṇa as the karaṇa or the extraordinary means of pramā, yet they are not unanimous in their choice of the pramāṇas. The philosophers have different views regarding the definition of pramāṇa.

THE NUMBERS OF PRAMĀṇA ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT SYSTEMS

In the matter of recognizing different pramāṇas, different schools of Indian Philosophy adopted divergent schemes. The number of pramāṇas accepted by them vary from one to eight. The Cārvākas accept pratyakṣa (perception) only as a single means of knowledge. The Vaiśeṣikas and the Buddhists recognize two – pratyakṣa (perception) and anumāna

4. NVTT, 1.1.1.
5. pratyakṣamekarin cārvākā kaṇādasugatau punaḥ / anumānāṇca taccātha sārṅkhyaḥ sabdāṇcate api / nyāyaikadesinoapyevamupamāṇāṇca kecana / arthāpatyā sahāiténi catvāryāhoḥ prābhākaraḥ // abhāva śaṣṭhānyetāni bhāḍṭā vedāntinastathā / sambhvaityayuktāni tāni paurāṇikā jaguḥ // TR, p. 56.
(inference). Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Viśiṣṭādwaita, Dvaita, Śuddhādvaita and Dvaitādvaita schools of Uttara-Mīmāṁsā recognize pratyakṣa (perception), anumāna (inference) and śabda or āgama (verbal testimony) as the three means of knowledge. The Naiyāyikas recognize the above three with an addition, upamāna (comparison) as fourth. Arthāpatti is added to it by the Prābhakara school of Purvamīmāṁsā. The Bhāṭṭa school of Purvamīmāṁsā and the Advaita school of Uttramīmāṁsā recognize the above with the addition of abhāva (negation or non-apprehension). Paurāṇikas accept the above six with the addition of sambhava (probability) and aitithyā (tradition or rumour). Some Tāntrikas recognize cesta (indication) also in addition to the above as the source of valid knowledge. Others add pratibhā (vivid imagination) as a source of valid knowledge to the above list and thus total numbers of pramāṇas are ten in number.

A brief note on the different pramāṇas is given below:

1. Pratyakṣa (perception): It is noteworthy that all the schools of Indian philosophy both āstika and nāstika are unanimous about perception or pratyakṣa pramāṇa as the first and foremost of all the pramāṇas.6 Perception is the primary and fundamental of all the sources of valid knowledge and it is universally recognized. Perception is the most powerful among the means of valid knowledge, because it gives a direct or immediate knowledge of reality of object and, therefore, is the root of all other pramāṇas. Perception is the basis on which we have a knowledge of other truths by inference as well as by comparison and testimony. Perception is the final test of all knowledge. Perceptual verification is thus the final test of

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6. pratyakṣasya pramāṇeṣu jyeṣṭhatvāditi. VP, p. 6.
all other knowledge and as such, perception is the chief of all the sources of human knowledge.\(^7\) It is widely accepted by all the philosophical systems since all the systems have to support their theories through perception in the arena of epistemological investigation.

The knowledge which is produced by the contact of a sense-organ with an object is known as perception. Perception gives a direct knowledge of reality, because by it we directly apprehend the reality, whereas other means give only an indirect knowledge. For example, when a jar directly comes in contact with the sense-organ, i.e. eye, there arises a perceptual knowledge of jar. Etymologically the word *pratyakṣa* indicates the functioning or operation of the sense-organs in relation to its particular object. The very simple but correct definition of perception has been given by Śālikanātha Miśra as he says that perception is the direct apprehension.\(^8\)

2. *Anumāṇa* (inference): All the systems of Indian philosophy except the Cārvākas hold that *anumāṇa* (inference) is a distinct means of valid knowledge, and, hence every system has tried to discuss it in the light of its own metaphysical background. *Anumāṇa* literary means such knowledge that follows some other knowledge. It is the knowledge of an object due to a previous knowledge of some sign or mark.\(^9\) The previous knowledge is the knowledge of the *liṅga* or as having a universal relation with the *sādhyā* or major term and as being present in the *pakṣa* or minor term.\(^10\) Hence, *anumāṇa* has been defined in the Nyāya school as the knowledge of an

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7. sa ceyam pramitih pratyaksaparā. NBh, 1.1.3.
8. sākṣatpratītiḥ. Prpn, V.125.
9. mitena liṅgena liṅgino’rthaśya paścānmananumānaṁ. NBh,1.1.3.
10. vyāptiviśṭapakṣadharmaṭajñānajanyāṁ. TCM, II., p.2.
object, not by direct observation, but by means of the knowledge of a 
liṅga or sign and that of its universal relation with the inferred object.\textsuperscript{11} 
Anumāna as a pramāṇa is, therefore, the source of our knowledge through 
the medium of a sign or mark that a thing has a certain character. It leads to 
the knowledge of a thing as possessing a character, say fire, because of its 
having another character, smoke, which we apprehend and which we know 
to be always connected with it. Thus in anumāna we arrive at the knowledge 
of an object through the medium of two acts of knowledge or propositions.

3. Šabda (verbal testimony): Etymologically, the word šabda means 
sound (dhvani).\textsuperscript{12} It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or 
sentences. In the domain of linguistics again, the word šabda is found to 
be used to signify a pada (word). The word šabda again is technically 
used in the school of Nyāya in the sense of pramāṇavākya.

Epistemologically šabda refers to a source of knowledge namely 
verbal testimony (šabda pramāṇa). It consists in the assertion of a 
trustworthy person.\textsuperscript{13} All verbal knowledge, however, is not valid. A verbal 
statement is valid when it comes from a person who knows the truth and 
speaks the truth about anything for the guidance of other persons. But it is 
a matter of common observation that a sentence or a statement is not 
sufficient to denote any knowledge of things. Nor the mere perception of 
words of a sentence does give any knowledge about objects. It is only 
when one perceives the words and understands their meanings that he

\textsuperscript{11} parokṣe liṅgini jñānamanumānāṁ pracakṣate. NM, p.101.
\textsuperscript{12} kastrhi śabdaḥ ........ tasmād dhvaniḥ śabdaḥ. MB,1.1.1.
\textsuperscript{13} āptopadeśaḥ śabda. NS, 1.1.7.
acquires the knowledge of verbal statement. Hence śabda or testimony as a source of valid knowledge consists in understanding the meaning of the statement of a trustworthy person.\textsuperscript{14} It is, however, in the context of verbal testimony that śabda has aroused a long discussion in the domain of Indian philosophy.

4. \textit{Upamāna} (comparison): \textit{Upamāna} is the source of knowledge of the relation between a name and things so named. The knowledge which arises from the presence of some common factors in a thing which was experienced previously in another thing. For example, a man who does not know what a \textit{gavaya} or wild cow is, may be told by a forester that it is an animal like the cow. If subsequently he happens to meet with such an animal in the forest and ascertains it as a \textit{gavaya}, then his knowledge will be due to \textit{Upamāna}.

5. \textit{Arthāpatti} (postulation): \textit{Arthāpatti} is the presumption of something for the explanation of a known fact. When one notices apparent contradiction in various forms of knowledge he presumes to remove the apparent contradiction in it. As for example, from the knowledge of Devadatta being alive and he is not at home one imagines that he is staying outside.

6. \textit{Anupalabdhi} (non-apprehension): \textit{Anupalabdhi} is the source of immediate cognition of the non-existence of one object, e.g. absence of rainfall indicates that the connection of cloud and the wind has not happened.

7. \textit{Sambhava} (probability): The Paurāṇikas recognize the \textit{sambhava} as an independent means of knowledge. For example, if one says that he has a hundred rupees in his pocket, listening this the listeners

\textsuperscript{14} vākyārthajñānāṁ śabdajñānāṁ. TSam, p.73.
remark that it is highly probable that he has ten rupee note in his pocket. The Paurāṇikas call this process of knowledge as sambhava.

8. Aitihya (tradition): Aitihya is recognized as an independent means of knowledge by the Paurāṇikas. ‘There is a ghost in this tree’ is an example provided to explain the nature of aitihya.

9. Cestā (indication): Some Tāntrikas recognize cestā also in addition to the above as the source of valid knowledge. Thus by the movement of the hand one can make understand another ‘to go’ or ‘to come’.

10. Pratibhā (vivid imagination): Some thinkers consider pratibhā as one of the valid means of knowledge. One who has repeatedly experienced the particular objects as giving rise to pleasure, fear etc the knowledge of that object arises merely through the utterance of the word denoting that object even without the presence of that object. This is imagination. For example, when it is stated that a tiger lives here, the action as sweating and trembling body takes place merely through the earlier practice, even without the presence of external objects. Again some thinkers consider pratibhā as the power of immediate understanding of something without conscious reasoning or study.
PRAMĀ AND PRAMĀṆA ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The philosophers attempted in their own way to analyse valid knowledge and the means of valid knowledge. They forwarded different opinions with regard to the nature of pramā and pramāṇa.

THE VIEW OF SĀṂKHYA-YOGA:

According to Sāṁkhya-Yoga philosophy the validity of knowledge consists in certainty, correspondence to object and novelty. Vācaspati Miśra defines pramā as the cittavṛtti (modification of citta) which apprehends an object that is undoubted and unknown.15 Prof. D.M. Datta views that pramā is generally defined as a cognition having the two-fold characteristics of truth and novelty (abādhītatva and anadhisatvatva) and as that regards the first characteristics ‘truth’ all schools of Indian Philosophy are unanimous.16 Sāṁkhya further says that buddhi or cognition assumes the form of the object. Valid knowledge has correspondence to its object in the sense in which a true copy has it to its original. Sāṁkhya-Yoga philosophy admits novelty as an essential part of differentia of valid knowledge.

Īśvarkṛṣṇa, the author of Sāṁkhyakārikā uses the term pramāṇa, but he does not define pramāṇa explicitly in his book. He defines buddhi as an ascertainment of an object.17 Perception is defined by Īśvarkṛṣṇa as ascertainment of an object brought about by sense-object contact.18 If the two definitions are co-related, it can be deduced that pramāṇa according

15. taccāsandigdhāviparitāndhisattāsa cāttāvṛttāḥ. STK under SK, k. 5.
17. adhyātasāyo buddhiḥ. SK, k.23.
18. prātivisayādhyāvasāya daśṭāṁ, SK, k. 5.
to Īśvākṛṣṇa is ascertainment of an object which is nothing but a characteristic function of buddhi not different from buddhi itself. Vācaspati Miśra accepts pramāṇa as the means of valid knowledge. He defines pramāṇa as modification of buddhi, the object which is not doubtful, contradictory and the like.¹⁹ The Śāmkhya-Sūtra defines pramāṇa as that which is most conducive to the prama which is again defined as the determination of an object which is not previously cognized by either of the two.²⁰ Aniruddha defines pramāṇa as cognition of an uncognised object. Patañjali admits pramāṇa as the function of citta.²¹ Patañjali, however, shows the superiority of yogic practices and consequently the yogic perception acquired through them over the ordinary means of knowledge. He says that the buddhi through the discipline of yoga gets truth bearing knowledge (ṛtambhara) having no trace of wrong or perverted knowledge.²² This knowledge comprehends the particularity (viśeṣa) residing in the puruṣa or in the subtle elements, which is not known by any of the worldly means of knowledge.

The Śāmkhya-Yoga philosophy accepts three independent sources of valid knowledge (pramāṇa). These are perception (dṛṣṭa), inference (anumāna) and scriptural testimony (śabda). The other sources of knowledge like, comparison (upamāna), postulation (arthāpatti) and non-cognition (abhāva) are included under these three, and not recognized as

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¹⁹. op.cit. fn. 15.
²⁰. dvayorekatarasya vāpyasannikṛṣṭārthaparicchittih pramā tatsādhakatamaiṁ yat tat trvidhaṁ pramāṇaṁ. SS, 1.87.
²¹. pramāṇeviparyayevikalpanidṛṣṭārtyayoh. YS, 1.6.
²². ṛtambhara tatra prajñā. ibid., 1.48.
separate sources of knowledge.

The *Sāmkhya-Sūtra* defines perception as that discernment which being is conjunction of an object portrays the form thereof. A popular definition of perception as the ‘operation of cognitive organs, ears and the rest’ is ascribed to the followers of Vārṣaganyā. In the *Sāmkhyakārikā* Īśvarkṛṣṇa defines perception as determinate knowledge of an object due to its intercourse with a sense-organ. The Sāṁkhya school accepts indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*) and determinate (*savikalpa*) as the two stages of perception. According to Sāṁkhya, indeterminate perception is the function of the external sense-organs of knowledge and determinate perception is the function of the internal organ, *manas*.

Inference is defined by Īśvarkṛṣṇa as the knowledge which is preceded by the knowledge of the sign (*liṅga*) and signate (*liṅgin*). The *Sāmkhya-Sūtra* defines *anumāna* as knowledge of invariability associated through the knowledge of invariable association. Various divisions of *anumāna* based on various principles are found in the system of Sāṁkhya. The *Sāmkhyakārikā* refers to three kinds of *anumāna*: 1. *Pūrvavat*, 2. *Śeṣavat* and 3. *Sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*. In addition to the above, Aniruddha mentions other three kinds, viz, *kevalānvayī*, *kevalavyatīreki* and *anvayavyatīreki*

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23. yat sambaddhāṁ sat tadākārōlekhī vijñānaṁ tat pratyakṣaṁ. SS, 1.89.
24. śraturādi-vṛttīḥ pratyakṣaṁ. YD, 5.
25. prativiṣayādhyavāsaśyo drṣṭaṁ. SK, k.5.
26. prativiṣayādhyavāsaśyo drṣṭaṁ trividhamanumānamākhyātaṁ / tallīṅgaliṅgipūrvvakāṁ āptaśrutirāptavacanantu// ibid., k.5.
27. pratividhānatṛṣaḥ pratibaddhajñānamanumānaṁ. SS, 1.100.
28. trividhamanumānamākhyātaṁ ...... SK, k.5.
raising the number of kinds of *anumāna* to six.\(^{29}\)

The *Sāmkhyakārikā* defines verbal testimony (*śabda*) as the statement of the reliable (*āpta*).\(^{30}\) According to Sāmkhyists the persons who are free and never go against the views of the Vedas are *āptas* and *śruti* means the authoritative source of knowledge.

In the Yoga system of Patanjali, there is no definition of *pratyakṣa_. Vyāsadeva the *bhāṣyakāra* on the *Yogasūtra* defines perception as the mental mode which apprehends a real object possessing generic and specific characters, which particularly apprehends its specific properties, when *buddhi* goes out to an external object through the channel of the external sense-organs and is modified into form.\(^{31}\) The Yoga system holds that perception apprehends an object identical with its generic and specific qualities. There is no relation of inherence between the qualities and the substance. There is identity between them. Inference (*anumāna*) is defined by Vyāsa in his *Yogabhāṣya* as modification of *citta* brought about by the relation which exists in objects of homogeneous nature and does not exist in objects of heterogeneous nature, and ascertains chiefly the generic nature of an object.\(^{32}\) According to Yoga system the hearer’s knowledge of the object derived from the words of the instructor is called verbal testimony.

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29. anenaṁnvayi, vyatireki, anavayatyareki, pūrvavat, śeṣavat, sāmānyatodrśṭāfica saṁgrhitāṁ, SSV, 1.100.
30. āptaśrutāptacananantu. SK, k.5.
31. indriyapraṇālikāya cittasya vāhyavastupāragāt tadviśayaḥ sāmānya viśeṣātmano arthasya viśeṣavadhāraṇapradhāna vṛttih pratyakṣaṁ pramāṇaṁ. YB, 1.7.
32. anumeyasya tulya jātiyesu anuvṛttau bhinnajātiyēbhya vyāvṛttataḥ sambandho yastadviśayā sāmānyavadhāraṇa pradhāna vṛttiranumāṇaṁ. ibid., 1.7.
(āgama). The Yoga system uses the term āgama instead of sabda. The instructor must be free from error, inadvertence, fraudulence, inefficiency of the sense-organs and the like defects.

THE VIEW OF NYĀYA:

The Naiyāyikas define valid knowledge as an apprehension of some object (arthopalabdhi), which is definite (asandigdha) and non-erroneous (avyabhicāri). Further Naiyāyikas say that the knowledge which informs the existence of something in a place where it actually exists. It is definite and an assured cognition of an object, which is also true and presentational in character. Pramā excludes all kinds of non-valid knowledge. Such as memory, doubt, error, hypothetical argument etc. In reality, pramā has three characteristics, namely, assuredness, truth and presentativeness.

According to Naiyāyikas, valid knowledge is always connected with a firm belief. It implies something more than a subjective certainty. The Naiyāyikas hold pramāṇa as the unique operative cause (kāraṇa) of right knowledge. The Naiyāyikas explain the term kāraṇa in the sense that is most conducive to the production of the effect. Kāraṇa according to ancient Naiyāyikas is the nature of the substance while according to the modern Naiyāyikas it is the nature of operation (vyāpāra) itself. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa defines pramāṇa as the totality of all the sentiment and non-sentiment factors which lead to the knowledge of an object which is in turn different from illusion.33

The Nyāya philosophy recognizes four pramāṇas, viz. perception

33. avyabhicārīnīmasandigdham arthopalabdhi vidadhāti bodha bodhasvabhā. NM, 1.12.
(pratyakṣa), inference (anumāna), comparison (upamāna) and testimony (śabda) which generate different kinds of valid knowledge.

Perception is defined by Gautama in his Nyāya-Sūtra as the knowledge which is produced by the intercourse of an object with a sense-organ, and is undefinable, determinate and in harmony with its object.34 The sense-organs are directed by manas, which is directed by the self. There are two kinds of perceptions, viz. indeterminate (nirvikalpa) and determinate (savikalpa). Indeterminate perception is the immediate apprehension of an object and its qualifications unrelated to each other. It is devoid of subject-predicate relation. Determinate perception involves analysis and synthesis, assimilation, discrimination and association.

According to Naiyāyikas, anumāna is mediate knowledge of an object derived through the medium of the knowledge of some mark by virtue of a relation of invariable concomitance between the two. It depends upon the perception of a mark and the recollection. Vātsyāyana defines anumāna as the instrument of the knowledge of an unperceived probandum through the apprehension of a probans with five-fold characteristics together with the recollection of the relation of invariable concomitance between the two.35 Gautama mentions three kinds of anumāna, viz. pūrvavat, śeṣavat and sāmānyatodṛṣṭa.36 Further, anumāna is classified in various types by different Naiyāyikas.

The Nyāya philosophy defines comparison (upamāna) as the means

34. sputa vyāsaktamanasāṁ cendriyārthhayoḥ sannikarśānimittatvāt. NS, 2.1.17.
35. liṅgaliṅginoḥ sambandhaya darśanena liṅgaṁśtirāvisambachyate smṛtyā liṅgadarśanena cāpratyakṣorthonumiye. NBh, 1.1.5.
36. atha tatpūrvakāṁ trividhamanumānaṁ pūrvavacchēṣavat sāmānyatodṛṣṭaṁ ca. NS, 1.1.5.
of knowing an unknown object through its resemblance with another well-
known object. A person familiar with a cow in a place learns from a 
reliable forester that a wild cow (gavaya) resembles a cow. He goes to a 
forest, perceives a strange animal resembling a cow, remembers that 
knowledge learnt from the forester and knows the animal to be a wild cow 
through the knowledge of its resemblance with a well-known cow. This 
knowledge of the person is termed as comparison.

According to Gautama, verbal testimony (śabda) is the statement of 
a reliable person. The reliability of person making a statement is a condition 
ensuring the validity of the knowledge derived in this way. Gautama defines 
śabda as āptopadeśa.

THE VIEW OF VAIŚEṢIKA:

Certainly, non-contradictoriness and definiteness are regarded as the 
marks of valid knowledge by the Vaiśesika philosophers. There is no any 
such definition of valid knowledge in the Praśastapādabhāṣya on Vaiśeṣika-
Sūtra, but Praśastapāda distinguishes between vidyā and avidyā. The 
former includes perception, inference, ārṣa and memory and the latter 
includes doubt, illusion, indefinite cognition and dream. Śrīdhara 
commenting on the bhāṣya defines vidyā as firm uncontradicted and definite 
cognition.38 Thus the definition introduces definiteness as a mark of valid 
knowledge. From this definition it is clear that vidyā is valid knowledge and 
avidyā is invalid knowledge and memory is valid knowledge. Further this

37. prasiddhasādharmyāt sādhyasādhanamupamānān. NS, 1.1.6.
38. niḥsandigdhāvādhitādhyavasāyatmikā pratitirvidyā tadviparitā cāvidyeti. 
NK, p. 414.
definition mentions an additional mark of valid knowledge, i.e. \textit{adhyavasayā}. Śrīdhara introduces some inconsistency in the \textit{bhāṣya} view by distinguishing \textit{vidyā} from \textit{pramāṇa}. He opines that memory is \textit{vidyā} or true cognition but it is not \textit{pramāṇa}, because it reveals an object as past and as already known. According to Vaiśeṣika school, \textit{pramāṇa} is the unique operative cause (\textit{kāraṇa}) of both true presentational knowledge and memory.\textsuperscript{39} It would take memory as a distinct \textit{pramāṇa} or method of knowledge like perception and inference. Kaṇāda opines that the general definition of \textit{pramāṇa} should be based on the principle that the cause of cognition should be free from defects.\textsuperscript{40}

The Vaiśeṣika system recognizes two \textit{pramāṇas}, viz. perception and inference. According to Praśastapāda perception is the cognition that is dependent on sense-organs.\textsuperscript{41} Perception is external or internal. Internal perception is due to conjunction of the self with the internal organs. Cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion and volition are apprehended by internal perception. External perception is of five kinds – olfactory, gustatory, visual, tactual and auditory. The Vaiśeṣika admits yogic perception, by which the perceptual cognition of the self (\textit{ātmapratyakṣa}) arises.

Kaṇāda, the founder of the Vaiśeṣika system, defines inference as the knowledge derived from the mark (\textit{liṅga}), from which the existence of the probandum is inferred as its effect or cause, or conjunct, or antagonist or inherent, e.g. from smoke (effect) the existence of a fire (cause) is inferred.


\textsuperscript{40} adustam vidyā, VS, 9.2.12.

\textsuperscript{41} aksamāksaṁpratityotpādyate iti pratyakṣaṁ. VB, (pratyakṣa).
Praśastapāda defines inference as the knowledge which results from the apprehension of a sign (liṅga). He explains liṅga as that which is related to the probandum and which has co-presence and co-absence with the probandum. According to Vaiśeṣika, mark is the means of inference which is based upon the relation of causality, conjunction etc. Praśastapāda regards invariable concomitance (vyāpti) as the ground of inference. Wherever there is the proban (e.g. smoke), there is the probandum (e.g. a fire). Wherever there is the absence of the probandum, there is the absence of the probans. The knowledge of the probans is the pramāṇa or instrument of valid inference. The knowledge of the probandum is pramiti or valid inference. Praśastapāda recognizes five members of an inference for others: i) proposition (pratijñā), ii) reason (apadeśa), iii) example (nidarsana), iv) application (anusandhāna) and v) conclusion (pratyāmnāya). Further, he divides inference into two types: i) drṣṭa and ii) sāmānyatodrṣṭa.

THE VIEW OF MĪMĀṂŚĀ:

The Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṃsakas define valid knowledge as the knowledge of an unknown real object. According to Kumārila, valid knowledge is a firm or assured cognition of objects which does not stand in need of confirmation by other cognition. Pārthasārathi Miśra mentions three distinctive features of valid knowledge, viz. i) its object is not remembered as having been previously known, ii) it conforms to the real nature of its object and iii) there is a feeling of conviction regarding its conformity or agreement with the real object. The Bhāṭṭa school admits two kinds of valid knowledge –

42. pramāṇa cājñāta-tattvārtha-jñānarū. MM, p. 2.
43. tasmādrdṛṣṭaḥ yadutpannārām nāpi samvādamṛcchati / jñānamantrena vijñānārūḥ tat pramāṇārūḥ prattyatāṁ // SV, 2.80.
immediate (aparokṣa) and mediate (parokṣa). The Bhāṭṭa school considers knowledge in its relation to our practical needs. There is no use in knowing what are already known.

According to Prābhākara school of Mīmāṁsā all knowledge is valid. Experience is valid knowledge and knowledge other than memory is experience.44 Prābhākara says that knowledge illuminates three things, namely, the object, its knowledge and the self as knower, just as a lamp lights the things around it, itself and its wick. According to Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṁsakas pramāṇa is that which gives us new knowledge, i.e. a true cognition of objects of which we have no knowledge in the past. They hold that pramāṇa is the means of acquiring knowledge and so must lead to the acquisition of such knowledge as is not yet attained but is still to be acquired. The method of knowledge, therefore, must be concerned in knowing what has not been previously known. The Prābhākara-Mīmāṁsakas state that pramāṇa is an experience which is different from memory.

Jaimini defines perception as the knowledge produced in the self by the right intercourse of the sense-organs with existing objects.45 Commenting on this definition Śabara says that the entire definition is simply a pointer to establish the fact that dharma cannot be known by perception. According to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, perception is a knowledge which is the result of the right functioning of the sense-organs with reference to their objects.

Śabara defines anumāna in his Śabara-Bhāṣya as the knowledge of an unperceived object, which is not present to a sense-organ, from the

44. (a). anubhūti pramāṇaṁ samṛṭer anyā. Prpn., 5.1.
(b). smṛti-vyāṛṛtaṁ pramāṭvaṁ. VP, p. 5.
45. sat samprayoge puruṣasyendriyāṁ buddhi janamataṁ pratyakṣaṁ animittaṁ vidyāmānopalambanāt. MS, 1.1.4.
perception of another object, when a uniform relation has been known to subsist between them.46 Śabara admits two kinds of inferences, viz. pratyakṣatodṛṣṭasambandha and sāmānyatodṛṣṭasambandha. In the former there is the invariable concomitance between objects which are perceptible, as smoke and fire. In the latter there is the invariable concomitance between a perceptible object and an imperceptible object as motion of the sun is inferred from its change of position in the sky.

According to Śabara, Upamāna is the knowledge of similarity subsisting in an unperceived object on the perception of the similar object.47 Pārthasārathi Miśra defines upamāna in his Śāstradīpikā as the knowledge of similarity subsisting in a remembered object with an object perceived.48 Both Prabhākara and Kumārila regard that similarity of a remembered object with a perceived object is known by upamāna. Arthāpatti is defined by Śabara as the assumption of an unperceived object without which inconsistency among perceived facts cannot be reconciled. Pārthasārathi Miśra and Śālikanātha Miśra also follow this definition. Kumārila and Prabhākara differ from each other in their views on arthāpatti. Prabhākara says that—there is an element of doubt in arthāpatti, while Kumārila denies its existence in it. Anupalabdhi is recognized as an independent pramāṇa by Śabara and he defines it as the absence of any means of valid knowledge, which cognizes the non-existence of an object, which is not present to a

46. anumānaṁ jñātasaṁbandhayaikadesādarśaṁād ekadesāntare saṁnikṛṣṭe’rthe buddhiḥ. SBh, p. 90.
47. upamānaṁ sādṛṣyaṁ asaṁnikṛṣṭe’rthe buddhi utpādyati yathā gavayadarśanaṁ gosmaraṇasya. ibid., 1.1.5.
48. pūrvakṛṣṭe smaryamāne’rthe dṛṣyamānārtha sādṛṣyaṁānaṁ upamānaṁ. SD, p.74
sense-organ.\textsuperscript{49} Kumārila opines that \textit{anupalabdhi} is the means of knowing the non-existence of an object, which cannot be known by perception, inference, comparison, presumption and testimony.

Śabara defines \textit{sabda} as the knowledge of an object which is not present to a sense-organ, produced by the knowledge of words.\textsuperscript{50} Kumārila defines testimony as the knowledge of objects, which are supersensible, derived from sentences by comprehending the meanings of the constituent words. The Prābhākara school of Mīmāṁsā, however, takes \textit{sabda} to mean only scriptural testimony about the existence of super sensuous realities.

\textbf{THE VIEW OF ŚAṀKARA:}

According to Advaita-Vedānta \textit{pramāṇa} is the operative cause of \textit{pramā} or the true knowledge. In Advaita-Vedānta \textit{pramā} is defined in two ways. First \textit{pramā} means knowledge that has both the characteristics of novelty and uncontradictoriness. Secondly, \textit{pramā} is taken to mean simply uncontradicted knowledge of objects. In other words, according to Advaita-Vedānta \textit{pramā} gives new information and it is uncontradicted.

Advaita-Vedānta accepts six \textit{pramāṇa}s, viz, perception, inference, comparison, testimony, postulation and negation. In the Advaita-Vedānta, perception as a \textit{pramāṇa} is the unique cause of perception as a form of valid knowledge. In this sense, the sense-organs constitute the \textit{karaṇa} or the unique cause of perceptual cognition. According to Advaita-Vedānta perception is the direct consciousness of objects\textsuperscript{51} obtained generally

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49} \textit{abhāvaḥ pramāṇābhāvaḥ ‘nāsti’–itasyārthasyā samnikṛṣṭasya}. SBh, p.118.
\item \textsuperscript{50} \textit{śāstraṁ sabdavijñāt asannikṛṣte’rthe vijñānaṁ}. ibid., p.105.
\item \textsuperscript{51} \textit{pratyakṣapramāyaḥ karaṇaṁ pratyakṣapramāṇaṁ}. VP, p.15.
\end{itemize}
acquired through the exercises of the senses. It is the knowledge acquired through the operation of *antahkaranavṛtti*, The Advaita-Vedānta classifies perception into two types, viz. indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*) and determinate (*savikalpa*). Indeterminate perception is non-relational apprehension and determinate perception is relational apprehension.

*Anumāna*, according to Advaita-Vedānta, is made by the notion of invariable concomitance between two things, acting through specific past impressions (*saṃskāra*). The notion of concomitance is generated by the perception of two things together when in no case the failure of concomitance is known regarding the subject. Advaita Vedāntins admit that *upamāna* is the means of the knowledge of similarity. A person, who has perceived a cow in a town, goes to a forest and perceives a wild-cow. He has an apprehension 'this animal is similar to a cow' owing to intercourse of his eyes with the animal. This knowledge of similarity of a cow with a wild cow is acquired by comparison. According to Advaita-Vedāntins *sabda* or *āgama* is a source of valid knowledge consists in sentence or prepositions which asserts a certain relation between things that is not contradicted in any way. *Arthāpatti* is defined by Advaita-Vedāntins as the supposition of the premises, reason or cause from the conclusion or effect. It is the assumption (*āpatti*) of a fact (*arthā*) to account for another inexplicable fact. The postulation of a hypothesis to explain the inexplicable fact is called *arthāpatti*.

Non-existence (*abhāva*) is known by non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*). It is the unique *pramāṇa* which cognizes negation or non-existence, e.g. the non-existence of a jar on the ground is known by non-apprehension. When the jar is removed from the ground, we perceive the
ground, the locus of the non-existence of the jar, but we do not perceive the non-existence itself.

THE VIEW OF RĀMĀNUJA:

Rāmānuja, the chief propounder of Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy, recognizes three pramāṇas, viz, perception, inference and testimony. Perception is the means of immediate valid knowledge. Perceptual knowledge is immediate (sākṣātkāra). It is different from inferential knowledge which is mediate. According to Rāmānuja, perception is of two kinds: indeterminate (nirvikalpa) and determinate (savikalpa). Indeterminate perception is perception of the first individual of a class, endowed with qualities and a particular arrangement of parts. Determinate perception is the perception of the second individual and the like, qualified by attributes and particular configuration, which involves recollection. Both apprehend qualified objects (viśiṣṭavisāya). Perception again is sensuous and non-sensuous. Non-sensuous perception is yogic intuition or supra-mundane intuition due to the grace of God. According to Śrīnivāsa, perception of the released souls, the eternally released souls and God are also non-sensuous.52

Rāmānuja admits inference (anumāna) as valid knowledge of a specific instance of the probandum on recollection of the pervasion of the probans by the probandum. A particular fire is inferred from the perception of smoke which is always pervaded by fire. The probans is the reason or the middle term. The probandum is the major term. The middle term is invariably accompanied by the major term. Vyāpti is the invariable concomitance of the middle term with the major term, not vitiated conditions

52. anavarcīnāṁ tu indriyānapekṣāṁ muktantyeśvarajñānāṁ. Yatindradīpikā, p.10.
(upādhi), e.g. wherever there is smoke, there is fire. Rāmānuja recognizes two kinds of inferences, kevalavyatirekī and anavayavyatirekī.

According to Rāmānuja, testimony (śabda) is either secular or scriptural testimony. Secular testimony is knowledge by a sentence uttered by a reliable person. It is not vitiated by the defects of its cause and not sublated by contradictory knowledge. Scriptural testimony is knowledge of supersensible objects, produced by sentences which are not uttered by trustworthy persons. Rāmānuja admits that the Vedas are the only source of our knowledge of supersensible objects. The Smṛtis and the Purāṇas are also the sources of valid knowledge. In this context Śrīnivāsa mentions that the Pānca-rātra Āgama uttered by Vāsudeva is in complete harmony with the Vedas and, therefore, authoritative.53 Both secular testimony and scriptural testimony apprehend qualified objects possessed of distinctions.

THE VIEW OF MADHVA:

According to Madhva, pramāṇa is valid knowledge which is in accord with the real nature of its object. It makes the object known either directly or indirectly through the medium of some other knowledge. Madhva admits two kinds of valid knowledge (pramāṇa), viz, kevalapramāṇa, direct and immediate intuition of objects and anupramāṇa, the instrument or means of valid knowledge. There are four kinds of kevalapramāṇa. i) the knowledge of Lord, ii) the knowledge of Lakṣmī, His consort iii) the knowledge of yogin and iv) the knowledge of an ordinary person. There are three kinds of anupramāṇa, viz, perception, inference and Vedic testimony.

53. Yatindradīpikā, p.10
Perception is the means of the apprehension of an object present here and now, which is proximate and unobstructed. Its range is limited to present time and space. Madhva admits only determinate perception. Perceptual knowledge is direct and immediate knowledge (sāksātkāra). It is of seven kinds: olfactory, gustatory, visual, tactual, auditory, mental perceptions and intuition of the self. Perception is due to the four fold contact of the self with the manas, of the manas with a sense-organ, and of a sense-organ with an object. The sense-organs are the instrumental cause (kāraṇa); the sense-object intercourse is the function or operation (vyāpāra); immediate knowledge is the result (phala) of the process of perception.

Madhva accepts inference as the means of the knowledge of objects which are not proximate and which are past, future, remote and obstructed. Inference is flawless reasoning from a mark of inference to another properly marked by it. The reason of inference is the instrumental cause (kāraṇa). The knowledge of the reason pervaded by the inferable property abiding in the subject of inference is the function (vyāpāra). The indirect knowledge of the property marked by the reason is the result (phala) of the inferential process. According to Madhva inference is of three kinds: i) inference from effects, ii) inference from causes and iii) inference from events which are neither causes nor effects. Inference is again divided into two from another point of view, (i) drṣṭa, inference of a perceivable object, as fire inferred from smoke and (ii) sāmānyatodrṣṭa, inference of an unperceivable object, as the visual organ is inferred from the perception of colours. Again, inference is of two kinds: (i) inference for oneself (svārtha) and (ii) inference
for others (parārtha). The former is the cause of self-conviction and the latter is intended for convincing others.

According to Madhva, testimony (āgama) is flawless verbal knowledge. There are two kinds of testimony: (1) personal (pauruṣeya) and (2) impersonal (apauruṣeya). The personal testimony is created and the impersonal testimony is eternal. The Vedas are uncreated and eternal. They have intrinsic validity. According to Madhva, personal testimony is not reliable. Reason is subordinate to Śruti. It cannot override the authority of the Vedas. It is of some help where Vedic statements appear to be conflicting. Madhva opines that comparison, presumption and non-apprehension are not independent means of valid knowledge.

THE VIEW OF VALLABHA:

Vallabha accepts valid knowledge as determinate apprehension of the real nature of an object which was not known before. He admits three kinds of valid knowledge: perception, inference and Vedic testimony. According to Vallabha perception is immediate knowledge produced by the sense-object intercourse. Vallabha admits only determinate perception. There are two kinds of determinate perception: (i) visiṣṭabuddhi and (ii) samuhavalambana. The former is the determinate apprehension of an object qualified by some properties. It apprehends the relation between the qualified and the qualities. The latter is the determinate apprehension of a collection of objects such as a jar, a cloth and a pillar.

Vallabha accepts inference as the mediate knowledge, which is derived through the medium of some other knowledge. It depends upon the
knowledge of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*). *Vyāpti* is the unconditioned and universal co-presence and co-absence of the reason (*hetu*) and the probandum (*sādhyā*). There are two kinds of inference: (i) *kevalvyatirekī* and (ii) *anvayavyatirekī*.

Regarding the Vedic testimony Vallabha regards that the Vedas are the highest authority. Reason is subordinate to them. Comparison, presumption and non-apprehension are not regarded as independent *pramāṇas* by Vallabha. Comparison can be included in perception and presumption in inference. The so-called non-apprehension is perception of the locus.

**THE VIEW OF ŚAIVASCHOOLS:**

In the schools of Śaivism the discussion on the studies of epistemology or the theory of knowledge is limited. These schools are mainly concerned with metaphysical discussion rather than epistemological studies. However, a brief discussion on epistemology is found in the works dealing with the history of Śaivism.

According to Pāṣupāta-Śaivism consciousness is valid knowledge. Kaunḍinya,54 the author of *Pañcarthabhāṣya*, admits that consciousness, thought or knowledge is the manifestation of *vidyā*; the self is the knower of valid knowledge; effects, sense-organs, union of a self with god, the method of accomplishing the union and release which includes the absolute extinction of pain are the objects of knowledge. Kaunḍinya further admits that knowledge is a quality of self.

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According to the Śaiva-Siddhānta school, knowledge is produced from *sattva guṇa* of *avyakta*. The *sattva guṇa* is transparent. They admit that knowledge is the function of *buddhi*. In other words it can be said that knowledge is due to the pre-dominance of *sattva* in *buddhi*. According to Śaiva-Siddhānta knowledge is of two kinds, viz. valid knowledge and recollection. Valid knowledge is right apprehension. It excludes doubt, illusion, dream and the like. Apprehension excludes recollection. Valid knowledge manifests the self or not-self. Recollection is the exact remembrance of what was apprehended in the past. It is produced by a residual impression produced by a past apprehension. They recognize ignorance as wrong knowledge. Wrong knowledge is of three kinds, viz. illusion, *vikalpa* and sleep. Illusion is false knowledge of an object, e.g. silver in a nacre. *Vikalpa* is the knowledge of a non-existent object, e.g. a ghost, which follows a word alone. Sleep is a mode of *buddhi*, in which *tamas* predominates, and which is devoid of waking cognitions and dreams.

According to Vasugupta, a follower of Pratyabhijñā school of Śaivism, knowledge is food. Kallata, the commentator of Vasugupta’s *Śivasūtra* explains knowledge as a self’s recognition of one’s nature as ‘I’ consciousness, which is its food because it generates complete fulfilledness, and because it is the cause of resting in one’s ātman. Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara, the author of ‘Śivasūtravārttikā’ discusses knowledge as supreme knowledge of Śiva, which is the means of supreme contentment and perfection. The philosophers of Pratyabhijñā school mention knowledge variedly, such as – pure knowledge, impure knowledge, knowledge of non-difference,

55. jñānaṁ anmaṁ. SSu, 2.9.
knowledge of difference. Pure knowledge is perfect, complete and supreme knowledge. When a person acquires the pure knowledge of his identity with the universe, he attains to the status of supreme lordship. Impure knowledge is incomplete, imperfect and inferior knowledge. Utpaladeva regards nescience as the knowledge of non-difference and true knowledge as the knowledge of non-difference or identity.

According to Vīraśaivism, knowledge is an essential quality of self. In Vīraśaivism pramāṇa is generated by the intercourse of the sense-organs with their objects which manifests knowledge, and by the assistance of virtue, vice, manifestation, place, time, a moral imperative or a command of God and the like. God is the inducive cause of pramāṇa produce valid knowledge. The Śaiva philosophers admit that a self is the knower of valid knowledge.

THE VIEW OF ŚRĪPATI:

Śrīpati recognizes three pramāṇas, viz. perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumāna) and testimony (śabda) and he opines that other pramāṇas recognized by Indian philosophical systems can be included in these three pramāṇas. Perception is intuition generated by meditation on Brahman and intuition depends upon the practice of meditation based on scriptural testimony. So, according to Śrīpati, perception is not an independent proof. Śrīpati recognizes two types of perception, viz. indeterminate perception (nirvikalpa pratyakṣa) and determinate perception (savikalpa pratyakṣa). Indeterminate perception apprehends an object endued with some qualities. Determinate perception apprehends an object with its genus, quality, action, name and the like. Regarding the existence of

indeterminate Brahman, Śrīpati argues that it cannot be known by perception, because perception cannot apprehend an object which is devoid of all qualities. Indeterminate Brahman is devoid of all qualities. An entirely unqualified object can never be perceived. Śrīpati admits the existence of determinate Brahman and determinate Brahman is known by perception, inference and scriptural testimony.  

Regarding the definition of anumāṇa and śabda, Śrīpati is silent. But he opines that to know the existence of Brahman inference is a weak and unreliable proof, because inference is unsupported by scriptural testimony. Inference is based on perception. Scriptural testimony is derived from the statement of a reliable person through words. According to Śrīpati, Brahman is knowable through scriptural testimony, because words can express determinate objects alone qualified by some qualities.

Regarding the acceptance of only three pramāṇas, i.e. perception, inference and testimony by Śrīpati, it can be said that, Śrīpati is in unison with that of the three pramāṇas accepted by Manu. Manu in his Samhitā clearly mentions three-fold division of valid sources of knowledge. The Devibhāgavata is also unanimous in this respect. In reality Śrīpati justifies that the unnecessary multiplication of the number of valid sources of knowledge is of no use. Perception has not been disputed by any school of philosophy. Inference though disputed, is unavoidable for the transaction of the worldly affairs.

57. brahmasattve pratyaksānumanāgama pramāṇadarśanāt.
58. pratyaksānumanānaṁ ca śāstraṁ ca vividhāgamaṁ/
trayāṁ suviditaṁ kārya dharmasuddhimabhipṣatā. MS, 12.105.
59. trinyeva hi pramāṇāni pathitāṁ supanditaḥ/
pratyaksāṁ cānumānaṁca śabdāṁcaivaʿṭṭhitāṁ. 1.8.23.
Therefore, inference has got its importance. Verbal testimony cannot be set aside because it is a source of knowledge to a great extent. Therefore, these three sources of knowledge, viz, perception, inference and verbal testimony are indispensable for ascertaining valid knowledge.

**COMPARISON OF ĢRĪPATI’S CONCEPT OF PRAMĀṆAS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS OF ŚAIVISM**

Both the systems of Vīraśaivism of Śrīpati and Pāśupata system admit three means of valid knowledge, viz. perception, inference and testimony. Pāśupata system classifies perception into two kinds – sense-perception and self-perception. Perception of external objects and their qualities is called sense-perception. Sense-perception is acquired through the sense-organs. Colour (ṛūpa), taste (rasa), odour (gandha), touch (sparśa) and sound (śabda) are the qualities of physical substances, and the jars and the like are external substances. Self-perception is acquired through the grace of God. When a self, whose essential nature of consciousness is purified of all stains due to attraction towards physical objects and sense-organs and due to emotions such as love, hate, anger, greed, envy, delusion and the like, it is able to acquire the grace of God. Regarding the classification of perception Śrīpati’s view is something different from Pāśupata’s view. Śrīpati classifies perception into indeterminate perception and determinate perception and these two perceptions apprehend an object which is endowed with quality and the like.

Inference, according to Pāśupata is preceded by perception. It is of two kinds – *drṣṭa* and *sāmānyatodrṣṭa*. *Drṣṭānumāṇa* is of two kinds –
purvavat and sesavat. ‘This is that of the dimension of six fingers’ is an example of purvavat anumāna. ‘This is a cow’; this fact is inferred from the perception of horns and the like. It is an example of sesavat anumāna. The movement of the sun is inferred by sāmānyatodṛṣṭa anumāna from its passing from one place to another in the sky. Śrīpati also admits that inference is based on perception. He does not mention any classification of inference. He further opines that inference is a weak proof to know Brahman. But Pāśupata system mentions that the existence of God is inferred from the world as an effect as its efficient cause.

Regarding the testimony (śabda), both Śrīpati and Pāśupata system agree in this view that testimony is scriptural testimony which is derived from the statement of a reliable person through words. Further, both the system agree in this point that other pramāṇas which are recognized by Indian philosophical systems such as, upamāna, arthāpatti, abhāva, sambhava and aitihya can be included in these three pramāṇas.

The Śaiva-Siddhānta school admits three means of valid knowledge: perception, inference and testimony. This system classifies perception into two types – indeterminate perception and determinate perception. Indeterminate perception is devoid of any reference to a name, genus and the other determinations and manifests an object alone owing to the intercourse of a sense-organ with an object. Determinate perception apprehends an object with its name, genus, substance, quality and action. Determinate perception is classified into five kinds, viz. perception of an object with its name, or substance or genus or quality or action. Again, it is of two kinds – yogic perception and non-yogic perception. Yogic perception
is the immediate perception of past, future, remote and super sensible objects. Non-yogic perception is the immediate perception of sensible objects present ‘here and now’ to the sense-organs. Śrīpati in his Śrīkarabhāṣya mentions two types of perceptions – indeterminate and determinate perception. Both the systems express the same view regarding the nature of determinate perception. But regarding the indeterminate perception their views are something different from each other. Indeterminate perception according to Śaiva-Siddhānta, apprehends an object devoid of any name and other determination. But, Śrīpati admits that indeterminate perception apprehends an object endued with quality. Further, Śaiva-Siddhānta classifies determinate perception into five kinds and then into two kinds, which are not found in Śrīpati’s philosophy.

The view of inference is different in Śaiva-Siddhānta from Śrīpati’s philosophy. Śrīpati does not mention any definition of inference in his bhaṣya. On the other hand, Śaiva-Siddhānta admits that inference is the mediate knowledge of a probandum produced by a probans that is known. Inference is of three kinds, viz. pūrvavat, śeṣavat and sāmānyatodṛṣṭa. Pūrvavat inference infers an effect from a cause, e.g. future rains from specific clouds. Śeṣavat inference infers a cause from an effect, e.g. rainfall in upper hilly region from a flood in a river. Sāmānyatodṛṣṭa inference infers a quality from another quality which invariably accompanies it. It is not based on uniformity of causation but on uniformity of co-existence. Again, inference is classified into two types – inference for oneself and inference for others.

Both Śrīpati and Śaiva-Siddhānta express the same definition of
testimony. Testimony is right knowledge produced by the statement of a reliable authority. But Śaiva-Siddhānta admits two types of testimony, viz. personal and impersonal. The statements made by Manu as found in history, Tantras and Purāṇas are personal. The sentences found in the Vedas are impersonal because they are not uttered by persons. Therefore, these sentences are eternal and revealed to the seers. They are only manifested by utterance and neither produced nor destroyed.

Both the systems agree in this point that besides the above three pramāṇas (perception, inference and testimony), other pramāṇas viz. comparison, presumption, non-apprehension, tradition, gesture and non-contradiction can be included into these three pramāṇas. The Śaiva-Siddhānta gives the following arguments in this connection. According to this system comparison is nothing but testimony, because it is produced by the statement of a reliable person. It can also be said as inference, because the knowledge of a name and an object is nothing but inference. Presumption is also inference, because the existence of Devadatta outside his house can be inferred from his non-existence in his house, because he is known to be alive. Non-apprehension, according to Śaiva-Siddhānta is not a pramāṇa, because there is no negation which is said to be known by it. The negation of a jar on the ground is nothing but the bare ground. If negation exists as different from an entity, it is known by perception, inference or testimony. Inclusion and non-contradiction is inference. Tradition and gesture is nothing but testimony.

Regarding the pramāṇa, Pratyabhijñā system holds that the existence of a thing can be established only by means of right knowledge (pramāṇa).
Abhinavagupta says that due to power of *pramāṇa* the object shines determinately as dependent upon another. The extrovert light (*ābhāsa*), which shines as related to the limited subject and appears every moment in a new form because its facing object, is also called *pramāṇa*, because it operates to bring about cognition. The chief characteristic of *pramāṇa* is its power to produce the determinate knowledge. According to this system the means of right knowledge operates only on an isolated *ābhāsa*, which is very much like a universal thisness and admits of no specification.

The Pratyabhijñā school of Śaivism also admits three means of valid knowledge, viz. perception, inference and testimony (*āgama*). The Pratyabhijñā school of Śaivism classifies perception into two types – determinate perception and indeterminate perception.

According to Pratyabhijñā Śaivism inference (*anumāna*) operates within the limit of that time or place within which the invariable concomitance is well known. The knowledge derived from inference is the knowledge of an object from that of which it (the inferred) is an effect or of which it forms the essential nature. Scriptural authority (*āgama*) is the inner (*antarāṅga*) activity of the Lord, who is essentially nothing else than pure consciousness. *Āgama* is spontaneous thought of one who rises to the transcendental level of complete de-individualisation, which he expresses when he descends to the empirical level. It springs from never changing pure “I”. *Āgama* is the very life of other means of knowledge, such as, direct perception. Therefore, whatever is said in the *āgama* that is undoubtedly so.
Both the systems, Śrīpati’s Viśiṣṭa-viśiṣṭa and Pratyabhijñā Śaivism call śabda pramāṇa as āgama i.e. scriptural authority. Regarding the classification of perception both the systems express the same view. Further they accept śabda or āgama pramāṇa as the very life of other means of knowledge.

**COMPARISON OF ŚRĪPATI’S CONCEPT OF PRAMĀṆAS WITH THAT OF ADVAITA-VEDĀNTA**

Both the philosophers Śrīpati and Śaṅkara wrote their commentaries on Brahma-sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa. But their views are different. Śrīpati wrote his commentary on the view of Viśiṣṭa standpoint and Śaṅkara on Advaita standpoint. Regarding the concept of pramāṇas their views are different. Śrīpati accepts only three means of valid knowledge, viz. perception, inference and testimony and Advaita admits six kinds of pramāṇas, viz. perception, inference, testimony, comparison, postulation and non-apprehension. The definition of perception is different from each other. Śrīpati defines it as intuition generated by meditation on Brahmā and intuition depends upon the practice of meditation on scriptural testimony. Advaita defines perception as the direct consciousness of objects obtained generally through the exercises of the senses. Both the systems classify perception into two types – indeterminate and determinate. Inference and testimony are not defined by Śrīpati. Advaita defines anumāna as the notion of invariable concomitance between two things. Śabda is defined by Advaita as a sentence which asserts a certain relation between two things that is not contradicted in any way. On the other hand, according to Śrīpati testimony
is derived from the statement of reliable person through words. There is no
detail discussion regarding the pramāṇas in the Śrīkarabhasya of Śrīpati.
Actually Śrīpati gives importance mainly on metaphysics. Regarding the
discussion of the existence of Brahman, Śrīpati draws the reference of
pramāṇas. He shows that though determinate Brahman can be known
through the perception, inference and testimony; perception and inference
are weak pramāṇas to know Brahman. He criticizes the view of Advaita
that indeterminate Brahman cannot be known by any means of valid
knowledge. Śrīpati mentions that an entirely unqualified can never be
perceived. Inference is based on perception. Testimony is knowledge derived
from the statement of a reliable person through words. Words can express
determinate objects alone qualified by some qualities. Advaita opines that
indeterminate can be known through testimony alone.

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