INTRODUCTION

In the history of Nyāya philosophy Bhāsarvajña was the first to treat the theory of knowledge (Pramāṇa) as an independent subject and the one who does not accept comparison (Upamāna) as a separate means of knowledge. That his Nyāyasāra enjoyed wide reputation among logicians, especially among Buddhists and JAINAS, is clear from the number of commentaries on his treatise. Hence it is quite natural that this work has influenced the later philosophers of the Nyāya system, for Bhāsarvajña's scheme of treating the subjects was seen adopted as such in later philosophical works on the system of the Hindus which was known by the name of Nyāya-nyāya system. In fact he was the fore-runner of GAÑGEśA in treating the Nyāya as a pure epistemology and divesting the system altogether of metaphysics.\(^1\)

REPUTATION AS BHŪSANAKĀRA

It is observed: "Later Philosophers continually refer to the view of "BHŪSANAKĀRA" or sometimes to a group

\(^1\) D.N. Shastri, The Philosophy of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika (Critique of Indian Realism), Bharatiya Vidyā Prakashan, New Delhi, 1976, p.116
of Naiyāyikas - the "ekadeśins" meaning a section of the school, apparently referring to the followers of the Bhūṣaṇakāra. Since many of the opinions of this school involves throwing out of whole categories of time-honoured importance within the system, it is understandable that Bhāsarvajña's views have supplied the basis for what is perhaps the only serious factional split within the system. And this lasts on and is referred to till the end of our period. Bhāsarvajña's theories may well turn out to have inspired some of the reforms currently attributed to the Navya-Naiyāyika Raghunātha Śiromāṇi for instance.\(^2\)

Even though Nyāyabhūṣaṇa was a commentary on Nyāyasāra, the fact is that the commentary itself turned to be Bhāsarvajña's masterpiece and it is the views of the "Bhūṣaṇakāra" that are identified as the primary basis of the unorthodox notions in the Nyāya system. In it all the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika categories and the theories advanced by both these schools were discussed completely and in an elaborate manner. Hence in later times the commentary got wider reputation and popularity among the scholars and they began to call the views of Bhāsarvajña as the views of "Bhūṣaṇakāra". Thus one can see the views

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\(^2\) Karl H. Potter, The Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies, op.cit., Vol.II, p.6
of Bhāsarvajña discussed in the works of some of the Vaiśeṣikas also such as Varadarāja, Vallabhācārya, Vyomaśiva, Śrīdhera, Udayana, Śivāditya, Vādindra, Keśavamiśra, Maṇiκaṭhamiśra, Gaṅgeśopādhyāya, Raghunāthaśiromani and others.

**Influence on philosophers**

If one is to examine Bhāsarvajña's influence on the later systems one cannot point out a work on logic which has completely followed his doctrines. At the same time one can see that many arguments of Bhāsarvajña were accepted, discussed or opposed by later philosophers. Even though his name is not mentioned, his views are discussed as the tenets of Nyāyaikadeśin's, ekadeśins or Bhūṣaṇamata or as the view of Bhūṣaṇakāra. The reason for the fact that in later days Bhāsarvajña did not acquire much importance among the later philosophers may be due to the speedy development of the Navya-nyāya logical system and the wider circulation it acquired among the scholars. In the Navya-nyāya system, which treated only the pramāṇas one can see a clear deviation from the canonical system which is lacking in Bhāsarvajña's work. Bhāsarvajña had only incidentally treated the prameyas and other topics in his work. Many of his arguments were shaped on the basis of the Buddhist and Jaina logical
theories which were exercising its highest influence in the country.

**Vyomaśīva**

However one can notice some of the views of Bhāsarvajña discussed in the works of later philosophers. Vyomaśīva, one of the contemporaries of Bhāsarvajña, in his work *Vyomavatī*, a commentary on *Praśatapādabhāṣya*, while examining the views of several schools about the nature of mokṣa mentions the views of those which are similar to that of Bhāsarvajña.3 According to him the argument that the state of release is of the nature of the enjoyment of bliss is baseless as there are no means such as body or mind etc., during the state of final release to enable the self to have the enjoyment of bliss. Hence the word bliss is to be taken in the figurative sense to mean the absence of pain.

While discussing the four kinds of fallacious reasons of asiddha as given by Praśastapāda, he says that there are subdivisions of this four kinds of asiddha as well as of other types. It is to be noted that many of the types that he lists can be found in Bhāsarvajña's work.4

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4 ibid., pp.606-607
Śrīdhara

Śrīdhara, another Vaisesika philosopher and the author of the famous commentary on Praśastapādabhāṣya known as Nyāyakandali, seems to refer to the views of Bhāsarvajña when he considers an opposite view of mokṣa as bliss. He rejects the argument asking that whether this bliss is experienced by the liberated soul or not. If not, he says it is non-existent, since the body and senses have disappeared and any effect of the internal organ is transient. If release is essentially blissful then it will be experienced always and not just after liberation.5

Udayana

As stated before, Bhāsarvajña rejects the notion of number as a separate quality. For him unity or oneness means identity of a thing, and diversity such as twoness is the distinctness of the nature of things. Udayana in his famous work Kiraṇāvalī refutes this view saying that identity of a thing is unique to itself, but the notion of unity is found in each different thing at the same time. According to him distinctness is not the same thing as diversity such as twoness or threeness.6

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6 Kiraṇāvalī, Bibliotheca Indica Series, Calcutta, 1956, pp. 441-461
Iti bhāsarvajñamatantarirāsah ... etena svarūpabhedah ekatvam, bhedastu nānātvam dvitvam iti bhūṣanah "pratyākhyātah"
Similarly Bhāsarvajña's view about separateness, that the quality of being separate is identical with difference which is otherwise called mutual absence and his view that disjunction is just the absence of contact and Farness and Nearness (prthaktva and samyoga) should not be regarded as two qualities are rejected by Udayana in his work.

One cannot distinguish the group of twenty four qualities from motion (karma). Bhāsarvajña denies that there is any distinction. But Udayana defends this distinction.

**Vallabhbācārya**

Vallabhbācārya, the author of the well known work Nyāyalilāvatī rejects the view of Bhūṣaṇakāra that numbers two, three etc., are products of enumerative cognition (apekṣābuddhi) on the ground that the so-called enumerative cognition itself presupposes numbers.\(^7\) He also distinguishes the quality separateness (prthaktva) from mutual absence (anyonyabhāva) on the ground that the latter is negative while the former is positive. But he admits a special kind of separateness called separate-

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\(^7\) Nyāyalilāvatī, ed. M.R. Telang, Mīnayasagar Press, Bombay, 1953 (II edn), 1953, pp.39-41
ness of two things such as a cloth and table is separate from the pot.

In all these places Vallabhācārya seems to refer to the views of Bhūṣaṇakāra. Both Udayana and Vallabhācārya consider Bhūṣaṇa as the work which severely criticised the Vaiśeṣika doctrines.

**Varadarāja**

While dealing with the fallacies of reasons Varadarāja in his Tārkikarakṣā gives an elaborate discussion of the fallacious reason called Prakaraṇasama. Enumerating the various views about it he says that some logicians define and explain Prakaraṇasama as a hetu, which, though it possesses the three-fold nature proves both what is sought to be established as well as the opposing view. But Varadarāja rejects this contention saying that this is not possible for one and the same hetu to prove both the opposing as well as proposed views still retaining the three-fold nature of a hetu.8 Here some logicians (ekdāsī naiyāyikas) mentioned by Varadarāja are presumably Bhāsarvajña and his followers.

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8 Tārkikarakṣā, ed. V.P. Drivedin, Niranayasagar Press, Bombay 1899, pp.220-23
Bhāṭṭa Vāḍindra

Bhāṭṭa Vāḍindra, the author of Mahāvidyāvidambana in one of his works known as Rasasara explains the views of Bhāsarvajña and the arguments of Udayana levelled against his theories when he begins his discussion on the quality called separateness. 9

Manikanṭhamiśra

Manikanṭhamiśra in his work Nyāyaratna mentions the views of Bhāsarvajña in many places. Dealing with the subject of Vyāpti he examines eleven definitions of it and refutes each one of them and finally makes a separate mention of the first definition, giving the interpretation of Bhūṣaṇakāra and criticises the definition offered by him. 10 In the commentary of this work viz. Nyāyaratnadyutimālikā written by Nṛsimhayajvan, there is a mention of one of the commentaries on Nyāyabhūṣaṇa, namely Nyāyabhūṣaṇabhūṣaṇa.

Gaṅgeśa

Coming to the Navya-nyāya school of logic one can see in Gaṅgeśopādhyaśya's Tattvacintāmaṇi, mention of

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9 Rasasāra, ed. Gopinatha Kaviraja, Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana Studies, Benares, 1936, pp.65-71
10 Nyāyaratna with comm. Dyutimālikā, Madras Govt. Oriental Series No.CIV, Madras, 1953, p.54
the views of Bhāsarvajñā designated by him as the views of Nyāyaikadeśins. But one cannot see the name of Bhāsarvajñā or his works mentioned anywhere in the work. The reason for this may be that by the time of Gaṅgeśa the views of Bhāsarvajñā must have come to be popularly called as the views of Nyāyaikadeśins. Thus in the Tattvacintāmaṇi also one can see the views of Nyāyaikadeśins mentioned several times. 11 In the commentaries of the work also one notices the views of these ekadesins mentioned. 12 Obviously these views are those of Bhāsarvajñā, He also mentions the name of great teachers of old Nyāya system like Udayana, Jayantabhaṭṭa and Bhāsarvajñā and this is a clear indication of Gaṅgeśa's awareness of Bhāsarvajñā's logical theories.

Raghunātha Śiromāṇi

The great revolution in the doctrines of the Navya-nyāya system starts with Raghunātha Śiromāṇi, the famous commentator of Tattvacintāmaṇi called Dīdhitī. He is also the author of the reputed work Padārthatattva-nirutpana. It is observed: "Bhāsarvajñā's views provide the basis for what is perhaps the only serious factional split within the system, one that lasts on and is referred to till the end of our period. Bhāsarvajñā's theories

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12 ibid., pp.258, 544 and 558
may well turn out to have inspired some of the reforms currently attributed to the Navya-nyāya philosopher Raghunātha Śiromani. In his commentary Tattvacintāmaṇidīdhiti he even differs from the views of his master and establishes his own theories. Apart from that in his Padārthatatvaniṁrūpaṇa he "strikes devastating blows at the whole categorical framework of the old Vaiśeṣika system, eliminating several categories and sub-categories and suggesting new ones."

Many of the arguments put forward by Raghunātha in support of the theories developed by him have their inspiration from Bhāsarvajña's Nyāyabhūṣaṇa. For, in that work Bhāsarvajña has introduced many a revolutionary idea which goes against the traditionally accepted Nyāya system. Moreover, most of the arguments advanced by Raghunātha are almost the same as those of Bhūṣaṇakara.

Other schools

Among the other schools of philosophy also one can see mention being made of Bhāsarvajña's views. Thus in the Mīmāṃsā text called Mānameyodaya of the Kerala

13 Karl H. Potter, Encyclopaedia of Indian philosophies, op.cit., p.6
14 Karl H. Potter, The Padārthatatvaniṁrūpaṇa of Raghunātha Śiromani, Massachusetts, 1957, Introduction, p.3
author Nārāyaṇabhaṭṭa one sees the name of Bhāsarvajña mentioned in connection with the discussion of the definition of technical terms and number of the pramāṇas, hetvābhāsas etc. In the later Buddhist and Jaina works also one can trace the doctrines of Bhāsarvajña discussed even though his name is not very often mentioned. All these show that he got a wide reputation and his works have been studied in the later times by scholars well-versed in almost all the important systems of Indian philosophy.

Further the influence of Vedānta system which emerged as the most influential systems of India caused the Naiyāyikas to direct their attacks on that system and hence it became necessary for them to bestow special attention on that system and shape their arguments on the basis of the Vedāntic concepts. Bhāsarvajña in whose work the main arguments are levelled against the Buddhist and Jaina theories naturally received lesser attention in this context.

However it must be admitted that in a later period his importance dwindled as a result of the emergence

of the Navya-nyāya system. Later Naiyāyikas indulged in
the study of this revolutionary system and showed
enthusiasm in writing commentaries on the texts of the
new system. They wrote many commentaries and sub-comment-
aries explaining the new concepts. As a result the old
system received lesser attention. Bhāsarvajña and such
other eminent philosophers became memories of the past
and their importance in the study of the Nyāya system
gradually faded.

Still one has to admit that Bhāsarvajña remains
as a great logician of the medieval times of Indian philo-
sophy, for he paved the way for a new and highly sophi-
sticated philosophical system which in later days was
vastly studied and appreciated by the scholarly world in
India and abroad.