Chapter 4

TARKA AS APRAMĀ
4.1. LAKṢAṆA (DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS) OF TARKA (HYPOTHETICAL ARGUMENT) EXPLAINED:

Tarka which is usually rendered into English as 'hypothetical argument' is a form of deliberation (ūha) for determining the specific nature of 'an object whose real nature is yet to be known' (a-vijñāta-tattve arthe) by pointing out the real grounds for it.¹ It is a type of implicative argument by which we may test the truth or falsity of the conclusion of any reasoning or soundness of judgement. Here it may be asked: whether any contradiction would follow if the given conclusion be accepted as true or rejected as false. If there is any contradiction in accepting it as true, we have no doubt that it is invalid. But if in rejecting it as false, we are involved in a contradiction, there can be no doubt that the conclusion must have been valid. Hence, the lakṣaṇa (defining characteristics) of tarka in the Nyāya-sūtra goes as an act of deliberation or really a dialectical act which is meant for the determination of truth by adducing logical grounds in favour of one of the alternative possibilities when the reality is not known in its proper character.

Some philosophers are quite sceptical about the independence of tarka and prefer not to distinguish it from that of doubt. In other words, for them, tarka does not in any way differ from doubt (saṁśaya) and definite

¹ Avijñāta-tattve arthe kāraṇa-upapattitaḥ tattvajñānārtham āhaḥ tarkaḥ — Nyāya-sūtra - 1.1.40.
conclusion (nirṇaya), and so should not have been separately mentioned. But according to Uddyotakara, these persons have been misled by the statement that tarka applies to things whose real character is not well known (avijñāta-tattva). They forget that the cognition of the nature of samsāya (doubt) is uncertain, 'Is it so or so?', and the cognition of the nature of nirṇaya (definite conclusion) is definite or certain. Samsāya (doubt) is a cognition in which the mind wavers between two alternatives both being claimants to truth to the same extent and the alternatives remain unresolved. But tarka is a process of thought which, on the strength of logical grounds, aims at resolving the alternatives and making the acceptance of one possible. The Vaiṣeṣika-sūtra and Prasastapādabhāṣya do not admit any such 'padārtha' as 'tarka'. Udayana, in his Kīraṇāvali, places 'tarka' under the class of viparyaya (erroneous knowledge). But the Māṁsakas and the Buddhists included it within the fold of inference. According to Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, 'tarka' serves to produce a strong presumption in support of the probandum (sādhyā) and thus diminishes the probability of the opposite alternative. Tarka is generally classed under two heads, viz., (a) that which clarifies the issue, (b) that which is conducive to the knowledge of the universal concomitance between the probans and the probandum. The first variety of


tarka sponsored by the Naiyāyikas from Vātsyāyana onwards is rejected by Śrīvallabha. He maintains that tarka has no bearing upon the object of the pramāṇas by means of eliminating doubt.

Tarka is the third non-veridical anubhava (apramā). In its ordinary sense, 'tarka' means 'argument', but here it has been employed in a highly technical sense. Gautama in his Nyāya-sūtra, referred tarka as one of the sixteen padārthas for proving the validity of arguments. But it is not a pramāṇa by itself. 'Tarka' is a kind of 'fictitious' or designedly false cognition. It is the 'knowingly false cognition' (āropa) of something 'x' as due to the 'knowingly false cognition' (āropa) of some other thing 'y'. Here both 'x' and 'y' are known to be unreal and yet a relation between them is asserted. This sort of cognition is expressed as a hypothetical proposition with an antecedent and a consequent which are not merely false as a matter of fact but are also known to be so. It is thus a kind of knowingly false 'anubhava' and is in this respect quite unlike a bonafide error or illusion of our common experience. The latter is known to be false not when it actually takes place but only at a subsequent time and may be described as an unwittingly false cognition, the former is known to be false when it actually occurs and is thus an intentionally false cognition. When on seeing smoke at some place, a person infers the


presence of fire there, the Rule of Invariable Unconditional Concomitance (vyāpti) functioning in such a situation like - 'wherever there is smoke, there is fire'. The rule is based on uncontradicted experience of the association of fire with smoke. If in spite of such experience, there arises a doubt about the admissibility of the rule it can be removed only if the person making the above inference has a conviction like 'If there were no fire here, there would not be any smoke issuing from the place' or like 'If there were no fire here, then smoke need not be due to fire'. Such a conviction may be based on the knowledge of a causal relation obtaining between 'fire' and 'smoke', and in that case the Rule of Concomitance in question would be vindicated by the indirect argument expressed by the proposition 'If there were no fire, there would be no smoke'. According to Annambhaṭṭa, it is precisely such a proposition that constitutes what is technically known as 'Tarka'.

The word 'tarka' is used in various senses. According to some, e.g., the Vaiśeṣikas and the Buddhists — it is a form of inference. However, as one of the sixteen categories enumerated by Gautama, it carries a technical sense. It means a form of deliberation (ūha) which acts as an accessory to a pramāṇa, but not a pramāṇa by itself. The purpose of such a deliberation

6. Ibid. P.352
is the attainment of 'the right knowledge of an object' (tattva-jñāna). How can it lead to such a knowledge? Because it points to the real grounds or proofs in favour of the knowledge. But what is the nature of the object for which such a deliberation is appropriate? It has relevance for an object which is known in general but whose specific nature is not yet known. The question of such a deliberation does not arise in case of an object which is completely unknown or the specific nature of which is already determined.

Vātsyāyana begins with a reference to the situation that calls for 'tarka'. First, there arises an enquiry into the exact nature of an object. This is followed by a doubt provoked by the possibility of contradictory possibilities as to its real nature. Tarka dispels this doubt by way of pointing to the ground in favour of one of these alternatives. However, Vācaspati points out that generally speaking an enquiry into the exact nature of an object takes place after there is a doubt as to its exact nature, though there are cases of doubt following the enquiry, in which cases alone, tarka has its efficacy. "Accordingly, Vātsyāyana says that enquiry is followed by doubt, which is settled by tarka".⁹ He next explains and illustrates how tarka dispels the doubt and helps the attainment of right knowledge. Though tarka by itself does not produce certain knowledge, it enhances the efficacy of the instruments of valid knowledge and by way of dispelling the possibility of

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⁹ D.P. Chattopadhyaya and M. K. Gangopadhyaya, Ibid., P.123
doubt helps the instrument of valid knowledge to have uneffected efficacy in ascertaining the true nature of an object. However, Udayana defined ‘tarka’ as anisṭaprasaṅga, literally an admission of the ‘illogical’ (anisṭa). The illogical or anisṭa may be either the rejection of what is well-proved or the acceptance of the unproved. Thus, e.g., if one asserts that water can not quench thirst, it will be objected that no thirsty person should drink water. But this will be an admission of the illogical, because the quenching of thirst by water is well-proved. Again, if one asserts that water causes internal burning, it will be objected that by drinking water I should also suffer from internal burning. But this will be an admission of the illogical, because the possibility of water producing internal burning is unproved. But the followers of Navya-Nyāya explains ‘tarka’ in strict inferential terminology. According to them, tarka is the wrong attribution of the pervader (vyāpaka) resulting from the wrong attribution of the pervaded (vyāpya) in an object where the absence of the pervader is already established. Let us explain it with the well-known example of fire-smoke relation. In such a case, fire is pervader and smoke is pervaded and it is well-established that fire does not exist in water. However, if somebody wrongly attributes smoke to water, the following tarka could be posed against him: If the water contains smoke, it should as well contain fire. The function of such tarka is two-fold. First, it helps to ‘ascertain the right nature of an object’ (viṣaya-parisodhaka), e.g., the absence of smoke in water. Secondly, it helps to ‘ascertain the invariable relation between two terms’ (vyāpti-grāhaka).
by negating the possibility of any doubt about it, e.g., the possible doubt about the universal relation existing between smoke and fire is dispelled by the *tarka* that if there is no such universal relation between the two, then there should be between them no casual connection either.\(^{10}\)

In this connection, we may compare, *tarka* with *prasaṅga* of Nāgārjuna. *Prasaṅga* is a dialectical method of realising Šūnyatā. In the *Vigrahavyāvartani*, Nāgārjuna uses *prasaṅgavākyas* in order to advance his brilliant criticism of the *pramanās*, to show the absurdities of the objections against Šūnyatā. According to Nāgārjuna, *prasaṅga* or dialectical method of philosophising corrects the dogmatic assertions and helps us in realising the relative as relative, the Absolute as the Absolute and the Absolute as the ground of the relative. He believes that as soon as our mind becomes clear and free from dogmatism, the vision of non-dual *prajñā* would be realised.

There are three phases of *prasaṅga* according to Nāgārjuna. These three phases of *prasaṅga* are 'drsti, Šūnyatā and *prajñā*'. In the first place, a dogmatic theory arises, because of the conceptualization of the real. It is called *drsti* or dogmatism. In the second place, a critical survey shows the inherent contradiction of the different theories which are devoid of any self-essence. This is called Šūnyatā. After rejecting the metaphysical theories, there emerge the intuition of the non-dual Reality. This is verily termed as *prajñā*.

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The main purpose of Nāgārjuna's dialectical method (prasaṅga) is to demolish by turning every thesis against itself, though his method is not an end in itself, but an instrument to disclose the true nature of phenomenal objects and the reality underlying phenomena. He cautions us not to confuse his dialectical method with a philosophical thesis (pratijñā) or a metaphysical assertion (dṛsti) about the world and reality. He advances neither any thesis nor any pramāṇa (instrument of valid knowledge) to establish his thesis. Nāgārjuna's dialectical method claims to reveal the relative nature of phenomenal objects and non-conceptual nature of the Absolute. "Nāgārjuna's rejection of other views by prasaṅga vākya is not a 'logical negation', where to negate one thesis, it is necessary to advance a counter thesis. Such an assumption opines Nāgārjuna is even irrelevant and defeating the very purpose for which it is done. Nāgārjuna's prasaṅga, is thus "a commitmentless denial, prasajya pratisedhaḥ". But it is to be noted that the language uses by Nāgārjuna is not another language used for day to day purposes but a metalanguage on which the limits of our ordinary language can be conceived. When Nāgārjuna uses prasaṅga vākya, it is not merely language as employed in descriptive metaphysics that is at fault or error, it is rather language as such. His philosophy thus hints to a mystical tunning where truth is supposed to be drawn upon person who can get rid of all false beliefs (dṛstis).

Nāgārjuna's philosophy prajñā supplements and transcends intellects' scepticism.

Dilip Kumar Mohanta summed up the Nāgārjuna's position thus, "Nāgārjuna is a dialectician who uses prasaṅga in order to clarify his concept of Śūnyatā. He is faithful to Buddhist tradition with a zeal in his heart to act as a reformer. By series of reductio-ad-absurdum arguments Nāgārjuna shows that all the metaphysical theories involve self-contradictions and they are faulty accounts of Reality and therefore, to be rejected. In the mundane level, prasaṅga shows that all objects are conditionally originated and as such they are called śūnya. The Absolute Reality which is unconditional ground of the conditional reality (saṁvṛti) is beyond the reach of empirical categories and in this sense it is called śūnya. But the difference between saṁsāra and nirvāna is not absolute. Nāgārjuna advocates no theory of his own and his rejection of other views is not a logical negation but a "commitmentless denial" which excludes all possibilities to accept or advance a counter thesis in the act of refutation of any theory or view. In a logical negation, if I negate 'P' as a false theory or view, it implies that I accept 'not-P', the counter thesis, as true. Being adherent to the 'catuskoti vinirmukta' position Nāgārjuna is not committed to any view which is in fact 'thought construction'. Any metaphysical theory which arises out of the illegitimate transference of the empirical categories to Reality, is bound to be false, and if critically considered, each metaphysical theory reveals its inner
contradiction. Nāgārjunian *tetralemma* (*catuskoti* technique) is a method for deconstructing the distorting philosophical viewpoints that are responsible for so many theories about Reality through 'subject-predicate filtering'. Had Nāgārjuna been acquainted with the technique of Derrida, he might have said that the aim of his philosophizing is the deconstruction of illusions of permanence that our empirical concepts construct and the theorists of speculative metaphysics have 'super-imposed on language'. Nāgārjuna's philosophical method (*prasaṅga*) is mainly an 'indicator' or a pointer to reality, but not an assertion or a theory about it. To adopt an Wittgensteinian epigram, Nāgārjuna's *prasaṅga* merely "shows" the structure of reality, but does not "say" or assert anything about it. 12

But in the Philosophy of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, *tarka* means reasoning or rational thinking in general. In the *Nyāya-sūtra*, it is defined as an act of deliberation or a dialectical act, which is meant for the determination of truth by adducing logical grounds in favour of one of the alternative possibilities when the reality is not known in its proper character. When two contradictory alternatives present themselves before us as equally possible with regard to a thing the mind oscillates between them whether the thing could be this or that. The consideration of reasons in support of one of the alternatives helps to dispel the doubt by eliminating one of the alternatives. Hence, *tarka* helps

us to illuminate doubt or establishing truth. It is an auxiliary to pramāṇa but not a pramāṇa by itself. There is a fundamental difference between Nāgārjuna's prasaṅga and the Nyāya view of tarka. Nāgārjuna's prasaṅga is that movement of thought which examines both "the pros and cons of a question, brings about a clear consciousness of the antinomies into which reason gets bogged up, and hints at a way out of the impasse by rising to a plane higher than reason". Clearly the user of prasaṅga vākya does not have intention to defend or establish any of the thesis either pro or contra. On the contrary, the motive works in case the use of tarka is to prove indirectly the counter-thesis in question. This role of tarka would be more clear when we give an exhaustive elucidation of the various types of tarka generally admitted in the philosophical analysis of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika thinkers.

4.2. CLASSIFICATION OF TARKA :

Udayana classified tarka under five heads. They are (1) ātmāśraya or self-dependence, (2) anyonyāśraya or reciprocal dependence, (3) cakrakāśraya or vicious circle, (4) anavasthā or infinite regress and (5) anistaprasaṅga or the acceptance of the illogical. Varadaraja, by following Udayana, also says, "ātmāśraya dībhedaḥ tarkaḥ pañcavidhah smitaḥ".


14. Phanibhūṣana Tarkavāgīśa, Ibid., P. 355
In all of them the logical form and character of the argument is the same, and they serve the same purpose of testing the validity of some reasoning or judgement. Ātmāśraya is an argument that brings out the inconsistency involved in a reasoning which seeks to prove that anything is dependent on itself in respect of its origin or duration or cognition. The argument may be stated in this form: 'If A is the cause of A, it must be different from itself, because the cause is different from the effect.' Anyonyāśraya is an argument which brings out the contradiction involved in the judgement that two things are reciprocally dependant on each other. The argument may be stated thus: 'If A depends on B, and B depends on A, A can not depend on B'. To say that 'B depends on A' is virtually to deny that 'A depends on B'. The idea of reciprocal dependence, which is so much favoured by some western thinkers, is rejected by the ancient Indian thinkers as self-contradictory and absurd. The third type of tärka is called cakraka. It consists in exposing the fallacy of a reasoning in which a thing is made to explain the pre-supposition of its own pre-supposition (tadapeksyapeksyapeksitva). If A is pre-supposed in B and B is pre-supposed in C, then to explain A by C is to reason in a circle, because C by its inherent limitations leads us back to A. Starting from A, we are referred to C as the ground of its explanation, but to explain C we are brought back to A as its ultimate ground or basis. Here the curve of explanation makes a complete circle in so far as our thought returns to its own starting-point though two or more intermediaries. Thus if we admit that
perception is pre-supposed in inference and the latter is pre-supposed in testimony, then to prove perception by testimony is to commit the fallacy of circular reasoning. This may well be exposed by a 'tarka' like the following: 'If perception depends on testimony, it must be independent of sense-object contact'. The fourth type of tarka is called anavasthā. It is an argument which brings out the absurdity of an indiscriminate extension of the fallacy of undue assumption. Here we expose the fallacy involved in the indefinite regress of thought from point to point without any final resting ground (avyavasthita-paramparāropā). This is an infinite regress of thought (anavasthā) when in an explanation we make use of an indefinite number of principles, each of which pre-supposes its next. Thus if we explain A by B, B by C, C by D, and so on ad infinitum, we donot really explain anything. Or, if we try to deduce the ground of inference from inference we are logically committed to the fallacy of infinite regress. The fallacy may be exposed by a tarka like this: 'If inference depends on inference for its ground, no inference is possible. The last type of tarka is called tadanyabādhitarthaprāsaṅga or pramāṇabādhitarthaprāsaṅga. It is an argument which indirectly proves the validity of a reasoning by showing that the contradictory of its conclusion is absurd. Take for example, the inference: 'whatever is smoky is fiery, this object is smoky, therefore this object is fiery'. If this conclusion be false, then its contradictory, 'this object is not fiery' should be true. But the latter proposition is found to be absurd by the following 'tarka': 'If in the case of
this object, smoke is not related to fire, then it cannot be an effect of fire. But it must be due either to fire or to not-fire. There is no third alternative here. We do not find it to arise out of not-fire. Hence, if it is not due to fire, it must be either an uncaused effect or a non-existent phenomenon. This first alternative contradicts the Law of Universal Causation and is, therefore, untenable. The second alternative becomes self-contradictory, since it commits us to the proposition that the smoky object is smokeless'. In view of such absurdities involved in the contradictory of the original conclusion we must reject it as false and accept the original conclusion as true and as based on a valid inference.

However, Viśvanātha has mentioned other varieties of 'tarka' as propounded by other logicians though he himself does not accept these as genuine cases of tarka. These are (1) prathamopasthitava, initial presentation, (2) utsarga, general rule (3) Vinigamanāviraha, absence of decisive proof, (4) lāghava, parsimony or simplicity, (5) gaurava, complexity or clumsiness. Viśvanātha does not accept these as genuine cases of 'tarka' in as much as they do not enforce an undesirable consequence, which is an essential characteristic of 'tarka'. Tarka has been used as the symbol of the number six, and the expression sat-tarkī (six-fold tarka) which is widely current in philosophical parlance is also an indication of the six-fold classification of tarka. So there must be a sixth variety of tarka, though it is not mentioned by Udayana. We find this sixth variety in Śrīharṣa's
Khandanakhandakhadya, viz., pratibandi and vyāghāta is mentioned there instead of anīṣṭaprasanga. This is not an original formulation of Śrīharṣa’s but only a restatement of that of some adherent of the Nyāya school who perhaps existed some time after Udayana.

We donot find any sort of classification of tarka in Nyāya-sūtra, Bhāṣya, Vārtika and Tātparya-tīkā. Udayana seems to speak of the five-fold classification for the first time in his Ātmatattvaviveka. It may be mentioned that though anīṣṭapraśaṅga (reductio-ad-absurdum) has been mentioned by Udayana as a variety of tarka, this is not logically justifiable as the urging of an undesirable consequence is the general character of ‘tarka’ and so should not be regarded as a special variety of it. Śrīharṣa has therefore, stated the first four varieties mentioned by Udayana and completed the list by adding two other varieties, viz., vyāghāta and pratibandi. Śrīharṣa has referred to five other varieties of ‘tarka’ in addition to the six mentioned above. These are (1) avinigama (absence of decisive proof), (2) utsarga, (3) kalpanā-gaurava (complexity of hypothesis), (4) kalpanā-lāghava (parsimony of hypothesis), (5) anaucitya (impartinence). He seems to regard these as having the same status as ātmāśraya and the rest, because they


have the general character of 'tarka', viz., reductio-ad-absurdum and because they can not included under any of these recognised varieties on account of difference of content. Thus Śrīharṣa has given eleven varieties of tarka. Śāṅkara Miśra in his commentary on the Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya states that these are regarded as additional varieties as they are tarkaprātirūpaka (simulators of tarka) and not as orthodox instances. Logicians are trying to somehow accommodate lāghava, gaurava, etc. which were employed in standard works as principles of dialectical criticism within the logical framework of topic. The Sarvadārśana-saṁgraha gives an additional variety, viz., apohvāda (exception), but this does not find corroboration in any of the text-books of logic and is not explained in the Sarvadārśana-saṁgraha itself. But it may also be observed that apohvāda (exception) is mentioned alongside with utsarga (general rule) as its contrary. We also find atipraśaṅga (absurd over-extension) very frequently employed in works of a dialectical character.

Vyāghāta (contradiction) consists in the admission of two mutually opposed attributes in one entity at one time. For example, 'My mother is barren'. Vyāghāta is classified under three heads: (1) Svavacana-vyāghāta,
contradiction in language, e.g., 'My mother is barren', (ii) Svākriyā - virodha, contradiction in action, e.g., saying, 'I am dumb', (iii) Svajñāna-vyāghāta, contradiction in thought, e.g., 'I do not know this jar'. It indicates direct knowledge of it and so the assertion of ignorance of it is clearly a case of self-contradiction in thought. Pratibhandi arises when the arguer does not refute the objection pertaining to an undesired contingency raised by the opponent but ascribe the same consequence to the opponent. For instance, suppose the Kevalādvaitin proves the unreality of the world and the opponent without refuting the Vedāntin's argument urges that if the world is unreal, Brahman also would be unreal. This is a case of pratibandi. The opponent almost admits the validity of the Vedāntin's argument. Avinigama or vinigamanāviraha is an absence of decisive proof. When more than one alternative are possible and the balance of evidence is equally distributed between them, the acceptance of one of them to the rejection of the other is open to the charge of avinigama. For instance, it is an important problem in the Vaiśeṣika Philosophy, whether 'bhūtatva' and 'mūrtatva' can be regarded as jāti or sāmānya. Independently they are claimants to the status of jāti as they are found to occur in a number of things — the former belongs to earth, water, fire, air, eather and the latter also belongs to a number of substances.

20. svābhuyupagatadoṣa-tulyatā pratibandi, P. 706.
21. vikalpenānvayāvagamayoge ekasminabhuyupagate tadekadesānvaya-nyāma-nirdhāranāśakyatvam avinigamaḥ, P. 718.
including the first four elements and the mind which is regarded as atomic by the Vaiśeṣika School. But the Vaiśeṣika holds that two universals can co-exist only if they are related as genus and species or as more extensive and less extensive. If two generic attributes are not related as higher and lower in the sense of genus and species, they are not regarded as universal in the true sense of the term. On this ground bhūtatva and mūrtatva are not regarded as universal because they are not related as higher and lower.

_Ütsarga_ is an empirical induction.\(^2\) Gaurava is a complexity and lāghava is a simplicity.\(^3\) When between the alternative hypothesis one involves complexity as such is difficult to understand and the other is simple and as such easily intelligible, the former is liable to condemnation and the latter is entitled to preference. The ground of condemnation lies in its complexity and that of preference in simplicity. A theory can not be condemned merely on the ground of its complexity, if this complexity is entitled by logical necessity. Similarly, a theory is not to be condemned only on the ground of its simplicity, unless the theory even though simple establishes itself reasonably. Gaurava (complexity) and lāghava (simplicity) may be due to qualitative and quantitative considerations. The Naiyāyikas have distinguished three varieties of lāghava

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22. bāhulyadṛ ṣṭam apekṣya bāhulyadṛ ṣṭalayā durbalasyā nupagamāḥhatotsargaḥ, — _Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā_, P. 719.

23. sugamāṣugamayor asugamadurbalatvam kalpanā gauravam ...... dūsanānukūlam idam tadvyatirekena kalpanālāghavam sādhanānukūlam — _Khaṇḍana- khaṇḍakhādyā_, P. 721.
from the corresponding ones of gaurava. Lāghava and gaurava may be (a) in respect of form (śarirakṛtam), (b) in respect of presentation (upasthitikṛtam) and (c) in respect of relation (sambandhakṛtam).²⁴ 

Prathamopasthitatva or initial presentation which was regarded as a variety of tarka by some logicians as can be seen from the statement of Viśvanātha in his Nyāyasūtraṭīti 1.1.40., seems to be the same as upasthitikṛta-lāghava though it might have been more general in character. It is an accepted convention that we should not reject what presents itself first unless there is sufficient evidence against it. It is based on the truth that nothing should be condemned unless there is adequate reason for it.

Now comes the case of Vaiyātya (impudence) or Anaucitya (impertinence):²⁵ It consists in saying something which is not endorsed by logical proof and is not capable of being justified or refuted on account of its absurdity, that is to say, in saying something which does not deserve to be answered. Samavacana (equalisation) is similar to pratibandi with this difference that whereas pratibandi consists in the allegation of the same or similar fault in the opponent’s position as has been urged by the latter against the proponent, samavacana rests on the claim of a similar advantage. Thus,

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²⁴ laghutvaḥ caśarirakṛtam upasthitikṛtam sambandhakṛtam ca, — Dīnakāri, P. 121. on Siddhānta-Muktavali.

it is urged that if the reality of the *Absolute Brahman* is accepted on the ground of its being supported by logical proofs, the reality of the phenomenal world also ought to be accepted on similar grounds of logical evidence. *Samavacana* acts here as a *tarka* or *reductio-ad-absurdum* because it establishes the untenability of the monist's contention that the world is an unreal appearance. *Atiprasāṅga* or absurdity or over extension arises when our opponent does not recognise any deciding criterion or determining factor for his view, in which case anything could occur anywhere. For instance, the Sāmkhya contends that if the effect were not latently present in its cause even before its origination or manifestation, anything could emerge from just anything, which is *atiprasāṅga* (absurdity of over extension). With this general introductory analysis, let us venture to the detailed text based arguments of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers in defence of the extrinsic validity of knowledge.

### 4.3. A DEFENCE OF PARATAḤ-PRĀMĀṆYAVĀDA (THEORY OF EXTRINSIC VALIDITY)

The importance of *tarka* in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system would be felt indirectly in an exhaustive way if we consider its role in the Nyāya view of validity of cognition. There are two main views regarding the validity of knowledge, viz., *Svataḥprāmāṇyavāda* (the theory of intrinsic validity) and *Parataḥprāmāṇyavāda* (the theory of extrinsic validity) in the different systems of Indian Philosophy. These two theories claim to be diametrically opposed.
to each other. The theory advocated by the former group of philosophers lays down that the validity of knowledge is intrinsic both in respect of its *utpatti* and *pratipatti* (*jnāpti*). The theory advocated by the latter group lays down, on the other hand, that the validity of knowledge is extrinsic both in respect of its *utpatti* and *pratipatti*. Corresponding to the theory of *svataḥprāmāṇya* there is also the theory of *svataḥ-aprāmāṇya* and corresponding to the theory of *parataḥprāmāṇya* there is also theory of *parataḥ-aprāmāṇya*. A particular theory of the validity of knowledge may be confined with one or other theory of the invalidity of knowledge.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas who are the propounder of the theory of *asatkāryavāda*, reject both the theories of *svataḥprāmāṇya* and *svataḥ-aprāmāṇya* as maintained by the Sāṃkhyas. They argue that if the cause or causes which generate knowledge as such also generate its validity or invalidity, there would be no distinction between valid knowledge and invalid knowledge, since in both the cases the cause or causes of knowledge as such are equally present. Since true knowledge and false knowledge are different as effects, their causes can not be the same but must be different. The validity or invalidity of knowledge must therefore be extrinsic or *parataḥ* in respect of its generation and also in respect of its certification.

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26. In Indian epistemological tradition *pratipatti* means the same as *jnāpti*. 
According to Naiyāyikas, "the validity of knowledge is due to the efficiency of the conditions of knowledge (kāraṇaguna), while its invalidity is due to some deficiency in those conditions (kāraṇadosa)". Both efficiency and deficiency stand for certain special positive conditions which modify the general conditions of knowledge and make it true and false respectively. In fact, the specific character of an effect is to be explained by some specific character of the cause. Truth as a specific character of some knowledge and falsity as another specific character of some other knowledge must therefore be due to different specific characters of the general conditions of knowledge. Thus the contact of a sense organ with an object is the general condition of perception. But its validity depends on such special conditions as the health of the sense organ, nearness of the object, sufficient light and sense-object contact. On the contrary, perception is invalid when its general conditions are modified or vitiated by such other special conditions as disease, distance, darkness etc. Similar is the case with inference and other kinds of knowledge. Hence, both validity and invalidity of knowledge are conditioned by extrinsic conditions other than the conditions of knowledge itself.

The theory of svataḥpramāṇa holds that the mode of cognition which cognises a cognition as such also cognises its validity. The Prābhākara


28. S.C. Chatterjee, Ibid.
Mimāmsakas and the Advaita Vedāntists are the main advocates of this theory. According to the Sāmkhya view, both truth and falsity are intrinsic to knowledge whereas according to the Mimāmsakas and the Advaita Vedāntists, truth is intrinsic to knowledge while falsity is due to the operation of certain external factors. But the Naiyāyikas reject the Mīmāṃsā theory that knowledge is both made valid and known to be valid by its own intrinsic conditions. The validity of knowledge can not be due to the conditions of knowledge as such. If that were so, there could not be any invalid knowledge since even invalid knowledge arises from the conditions of knowledge. Again, if all knowledge being intrinsically valid, the distinction between truth and falsehood becomes insignificant. On the Bhaṭṭa view, a cognition is not immediately cognised, but is known mediately by inference. If so, the validity of knowledge can not be immediately known by itself. Nor can we say that with every cognition there follows immediately another cognition which cognises the validity of the first. If we accept the Prābhākara view that knowledge is self-revealing and guarantees its own truth without reference to anything else, we do not see how there can be doubt and suspicion, or how there can be any failure of practical activity. Since, validity is inherent and self-evident in knowledge, every knowledge must carry in it an assurance of its truth and we should have no doubt. But doubt and disappointments are very common experience of life. If it be said that doubt arises out of contradiction between two cognitions and is resolved by a third cognition, we are forced to give up the idea of self-
validity of knowledge. Hence, the validity of knowledge must be known from external conditions. In other words, it is very much pertinent to ask: How knowledge is known? The problem is relevant. For we have sometimes doubt about the validity of our own knowledge of objects. Such doubt results from the fact that we have erroneous knowledge of object.

4.3.1. **ANUVYAVASĀYAVĀDA:**

When we know or are conscious of something, are we conscious of the object merely or of the consciousness of object along with the object too? Kant thinks that all knowledge is accompanied by a knowledge of the knowledge of object and it has the form 'I know X'. Yet, any knowledge is expressed in the form 'This is X'. Kant says, this is so as the form 'I know' is present in any cognitive situation, this is not mentioned overtly. A 'close reading' of the responses to the question 'how knowledge is known?' in Indian Philosophy leads us to two different theories. Firstly, when we know an object, we know it alone; secondly, we know the knowledge of the object along with the object. One is known as paraprakāśatavādin and the other as svaprakāśatavādin. We shall here take up for discussion the Nyāya anuvyavasāyavāda. Before doing so, we shall discuss the Nyāya critique of the svaprakāśatvavāda as propounded by the Prābhākaras.29

29. In *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, Gaṅgeśa follows this method.
4.3.1.A. PRABHĀKARA'S SVAPRAKĀŚATĀVĀDA :

'Svapraṃśatva' has been defined by Prabhākaras as 'svavyavahāra', 'svaviṣayatva', 'svapraṃśatā' or self luminosity is the property of not being dependent on any knowledge for being an object of use (abhilāpa). The term 'vyavahāra' of anything means here 'abhilāpa' or 'being referred to by suitable word'. [The word 'vyavahāra' may also mean 'grahaṇa' (acceptance) or 'varjana' (rejection) of the thing known]. This 'use' may be covert (in mind) or overt-in articulate language. Hence, 'vyavahāra' means 'vyavahārayogyatva' or 'the capability of being referred to by suitable word'. 'Vyavahāra' implies 'arthakriyākāritva' (practical efficacy). 'Vyavahārayogyatva' of knowledge as 'This is knowledge of X' or 'I know X', is admitted by all. 'Arthakriyākāritva' of one thing differs from another. This is due to the difference of nature or essence of things. The peculiar and specific arthakriyākāritva of knowledge is grounded in its specific essence, viz., luminosity. 'Arthakriyākāritva' (specific function) of knowledge consists in revealing some object. And, the specific essence of anything gets revealed while the specific function is performed. This is true of any object as well as of knowledge. Hence, the specific essence of knowledge, viz., luminosity gets revealed when an object is revealed through it.

But, in being an object of 'use', knowledge differs from any other thing. For, any thing, for being an object of use (abhilāpa) depends for
getting revealed through something other than itself, i.e., knowledge. But, knowledge does not depend for being an object of use on any other knowledge. This is due to the specific and distinctive essence of knowledge. Knowledge is essentially luminous while nothing else is so. If this is not admitted and knowledge is considered to be as much dependent on some other knowledge for its use like anything else, then, knowledge has to be regarded as being essentially non-luminous. In that case, everything would remain unknown.

4.3.1.B. NYĀYA CRITIQUE OF THE PRABHĀKARA SVAPRAKĀŚATĀVĀDA:

(a) Prabhākara's svaprapāṣatāvāda is vitiated by ananugama doṣa, viz., the fallacy of explaining causal situations of the same kind, i.e., revelation of object and revelation of knowledge in two different ways. The Prabhākaras, though aware of the unalterable causal relation of knowledge and vyavahāra of its object, does not regard this to be true of knowledge in so far as it is used (known and spoken of). On the other hand, Nyāya is consistent in holding that the causal relation is the same in the case of knowledge and any object. What is true of any object must be equally true of knowledge in so far as they are objects of use. Knowledge, therefore, has to depend for its revelation and use on some other knowledge. This is anuvyavasāya.
The same point may be presented in a different way. The revelation and use of knowledge and of any object cannot be due to different relations. For, knowledge is as much a phenomenon that may be a cognitum as any other object. The causal relations of the perception of knowledge and of any object are said to be due to some sort of contact (sannikarṣa). But, the Prabhākaraśa wrongly argue that such contact is not required in the perception of knowledge of knowledge. Prabhākaras contend that perceptual knowledge of an external object is due to sense-object contact. But, this contact is not considered to be the cause of the perceptual knowledge of knowledge.

Nyāya argues that knowledge enjoys no unique position. Hence, the perception of knowledge cannot be said to be independent of the cause, viz., sense-object contact. Nyāya thinks that knowledge (vyavasāya) inheres in the self as its quality. The mind comes in contact with the self and then there is the perceptual knowledge of knowledge. [This sense object contact is, in the language of Nyāya, saṁyukta-samavāya sannikarṣa (relation of conjunction with the self in which the quality, viz., vyavasāya inheres.)

(b) Prabhākaras' theory involves the fallacy of circularity:

Prabhākaras argue that the admission of the svaprakāśatva of all knowledge means the admission of any knowledge to have the form 'I know it', again, the Prabhākaras contend that the admission of all knowledge to
have the form 'I know it' necessitates the admission of the svapramatva of knowledge.

(c) The Nyāya contends that knowledge does not always cause the vyavahāra of itself along with its object. Hence, Prābhākaras' definition of svapramatva as 'svavyavahāre svavatva' is not tenable. When I know a thing, it is always so that I also know my knowledge as 'I know X'. Generally, when anything is known, it has the form 'This is X'. Linguistic usage as 'This is X' that follows vyavasāya confirms anuvyavasāyavāda instead of svapramatvāda.

(d) Prābhākaras' definition of svapramatva involves the fallacy of karmakatvirodha, i.e., making the same thing subject and object. For, the term 'svavatva' that is inculcated in the explanatory statement of svapramatva as 'svavyavahāre svavatva', means 'being an object of itself'.

(e) Prābhākaras' definition of svapramatva renders knowledge fictitious from Nyāya point of view. The fictitious is never an object of knowledge. If knowledge is said to be svapramat as alleged by the Prābhākaras, then it is never an object of knowledge. Hence, knowledge can be considered as fictitious.

(f) Naiyāyikas argue that if 'viṣyatā' (property of being a cognitum or viṣaya of knowledge) is the property of being the substrate of the result
of being known and the result is other than the act of knowing, then the Prabhakaras' alleged svaprakāśatva (as 'svavyavahāre svaviśayatva — 'being an object of itself for being spoken of') cannot be true of knowledge. For, Prabhakaras' definition of svaprakāśatva implies that knowledge cannot be, unlike material objects, the substrate of the result of being known by some knowledge other than itself. It follows then from Prabhakaras' definition that 'viṣayatā', in any sense, i.e., being the cognitum of itself (sva) or of some other knowledge (para), is not true of knowledge.

(g) Prabhakaras' triputiprakāśavāda (theory that all the three factors of cognitive situation, viz., knowledge, knowing self and known gets revealed simultaneously when a vyavasāya takes place) is untenable. For, if the vyavasāya is considered to be svaprakāśa, then, the other two factors, viz., knowing self and known of vyavasāya should also be treated as svaprakāśa. This is preportenous consequence of triputiprakāśavāda.

(h) The Nyāya contends that a knowledge, e.g., 'I know pot' is the knowledge of knowing self-determined (viśīṭa) by the 'knowledge of pot' (vyavasāya). Such knowledge of the knowing self (viśeṣya : substantive) as determined by knowledge (viśeṣana : determinant) must be preceded by a knowledge of the determinant, viz., vyavasāya. Prabhakaras' triputiprakāśavāda leads to the absurdity that the determination (vaiśiṣṭya) of vyavasāya gets revealed by itself. Nyāya argues that a determination
cannot be known unless and until that in which it inheres, is known before. The antecedent occurrence of vyavasāya is a necessary pre-condition for the occurrence of a knowledge like 'I know pot'. This knowledge, being posterior to vyavasāya, is called by Nyāya, anuvyavasāya.

4.3.1.C. NYĀYA REPUDIATION OF THE CONTENTION THAT ANUVYAVASĀYA IS NOT POSSIBLE AND IT IS NOT PERCEPTUAL:

Prābhākaras argue that anuvyavasāya is impossible even from Nyāya point of view. The Nyāya contends that anuvyavasāya is an act of inner perception. This inner perception, being a knowledge determined by knowledge-hood, is a determinate knowledge. Hence, this inner perception (like any determinate knowledge) logically presupposes a prior knowledge of the determinant, viz., 'knowledge-hood' and the determinate, viz., vyavasāya. Nyāya argues that vyavasāya occurs in the first moment and knowledge-hood is known through indeterminate perception in the second moment. Prābhākaras argue from Nyāya point of view that vyavasāya (the determinate: viśeṣya) is destroyed in the third moment when the alleged anuvyavasāya is supposed to take place. Hence anuvyavasāya cannot take place at all. Object of any perceptual knowledge must be contemporary to it.
In response to the above criticism, the Nyāya can offer the following arguments:

(i) Pratyabhijña is perceptual and such knowledge confirms that the object of perceptual knowledge need not necessarily be present at the moment of its occurrence.

(ii) Prābhākaras are right in arguing that the 'present moment' is revealed in the knowledge 'I am knowing X'. But, Nyāya contends that this alleged 'present moment' is not an indivisible subtle moment. It is the gross moment, e.g., minute, hour etc., that may be known by the sense-organ, viz., mind. The 'indivisible moment' is supersensuous and hence, imperceptible. Perceptual knowledge is always grounded in sense-object contact ['Indriyārthasannikataḥsatpannam' etc.]. Vyavasāya may be known through anuvyavasāya. For, the previously existent vyavasāya inheres in the knowing self. Thus, its anuvyavasāya may occur. Nyāya says, 'the present moment' that is revealed in the anuvyavasāya 'I am knowing pot', is gross and sensible. This 'moment' may be inclusive of several individual moments. Here another important question may arise. Is anuvyavasāya not a case of memory?

It may be objected that anuvyavasāya is memory. It is not perceptual. For, anuvyavasāya has, for its object, vyavasāya. Hence, object of vyavasāya becomes the object of anuvyavasāya too. Anuvyavasāya,
being thus a knowledge of something previously known. It should, therefore, be treated as memory.

In reply to this allegation, we can say from the Nyāya standpoint that the object of vyavasāya is not known as the determinant of anuvyavasāya. Vyavasāya is the determinant of anuvyavasāya. The Nyāya argues that anuvyavasāya does not reveal the object of vyavasāya in the way the object gets revealed in vyavasāya. Hence, anuvyavasāya is perceptual. Moreover, if the critic yet insists on his contention on anuvyavasāya, says Nyāya, may at best be considered as recognition and recognition is not memory, but perceptual.

Anuvyavasāya is not caused merely by the impression resulting from the antecedent vyavasāya. Nyāya argues that the 'impression' does not cover the entire ground of anuvyavasāya. Sarhyuktasamavāya sannikarśa along with the impression, is the ground of anuvyavasāya. For, in anuvyavasāya, the mind is conjunctively related to the knowing self in which vyavasāya inheres. It may be argued in the same manner that anuvyavasāya is not knowledge resulting from any other pramāṇa.

Naiyāyikas contends that anuvyavasāya like 'I know pot' occurs immediately after the vyavasāya 'This is pot'. There is no time for the occurrence of vyāptijñāna in between the two.
4.3.1.D. KNOWLEDGE IS NOT ANALOGOUS TO LAMP:

It is an well known fact that the svaprakāśatvavādin compares knowledge to lamp that reveals itself as well as objects simultaneously. Here, Nyāya argues that knowledge is not analogous to 'lamp'. When a lamp that reveals object, the knowledges occur in the forms — 'This is an object' and 'This is a lamp'. Nyāya contends that when an object is known, it has always the form 'this is object' and the form 'This is knowledge' does not arise. It is wrong to argue that knowledge, being like a lamp in being essentially luminous, is self-revealing. For, if 'being essentially luminous' means 'the capacity to reveal something', then, says the Nyāya, eye or any sense-organ should be treated as essentially luminous (hence self-revealing). But, no sense-organ is spoken of or being 'essentially luminous'. Nor can 'being essentially luminous' be said to mean 'revelation itself'. For, knowledge is not revealed when an object gets revealed through it. Any knowledge of object (for Nyāya, knowledge is always 'of' something — saviṣaya) takes the form 'This is X and never 'This is knowledge of X' or 'I know X'.

It is admitted by all realists that knowledge and object are different. Hence, the knowledge that reveals knowledge can not be identical with the knowledge that reveals object. Knowledge may, like any object, may exist or occur, and yet may remain unknown (as any object). The grounds of
the occurrences and revelations of object and of knowledge can not be identical. Mere occurrence of knowledge is sufficient reason for the revelation of object. Knowledge of an object occurs when the grounds of the occurrence, viz., sense-object contact, light, object, light-object contact etc., are present. Likewise, knowledge of knowledge takes place when the grounds of such occurrence, viz., vyavaṣāya, jijñāsā (inquisition) regarding knowledge, doubt about the validity of knowledge etc., are present. Mere absence of negative conditions (prativandhaka) does not cause the revelation of knowledge. Knowledge gets revealed when, along with the absence of negative conditions, the positive conditions are present. In other words, vyavasāya and anuvyavasāya are different; the latter logically presupposes the former. An anuvyavasāya must be preceded by vyavasāya. A subject (kartā) is the inherent cause of effort (prayatna), viz., action (kriyā) and performing (kṛti). An object (karma) is that being associated with which an instrumental cause produces its action or affair (vyāpaka). An object is the viṣaya (cognitum) of knowledge. For, knowledge, is an act and it produces its action, i.e., revelation of object in the knowing self (kartā). An object (viṣaya) is, in other words, known through an act of knowledge. An act, i.e., vyavasāya that reveals an object, can not simultaneously reveal the act of knowing or the subject of the act. No act can perform more than one affair at one time. Again, the contact of the sense with object is the cause of vyavasāya. The object of vyavasāya is the substrate
of the sense-object contact that causes the occurrence of vyavasāya. The object and the knowing self are the substrate of the contact in vyavasāya. Merely an object is revealed in vyavasāya. But, there is, in it, no awareness of the viṣayata of an object. Awareness of the viṣayata means the knowledge that the object is the object of such knowledge. So, awareness of viṣayata implies knowledge of knowledge as 'I know X'. In an anuvyavasāya, the 'I' (knowing self), knowledge and object get revealed as subject, act and viṣaya. Vyavasāya has to be considered as the cause of the revelation of the knowing self as its (vyavasāya) subject, knowledge as its kriyā and object as its viṣaya. These three factors can not get revealed as subject, act and viṣaya until the vyavasāya occurs. Hence, anuvyavasāya (revelation of knowledge, knowing self and object as subject, act and viṣaya of vyavasāya) logically presupposes the occurrence of vyavasāya.

4.3.1.E. ANUVYAVASĀYAVĀDA IS NOT VITIATED BY THE FALLACY OF ANAVASTHĀ (REGRESSUS AD INFINITUM).

A vyavasāya need not necessarily be known. It may reveal the object without itself being known. Likewise, an anuvyavasāya need not be known necessarily in order to perform its function, viz., revealing vyavasāya. Its function ends as soon as it performs its function. But, if one is desirous to know his anuvyavasāya, then, alone, the question of
knowing it by a further knowledge (another *anuvyavasāya* having for its object the previous *anuvyavasāya*), becomes relevant. The alleged charge of infinite regress does not, therefore, stand against *anuvyavasāyavāda*.

It may be noted here how Vātsyāyana tries to meet an almost similar charge of infinite regress in the context of *pramāṇa*. According to him, when we prove A by B and B by C, it does not invite the blemish of infinite regress, because at certain level the further question of validity becomes irrelevant. Without query, there can not be any necessity of searching for a ground. According to the Nyāya, the psychological factor is satisfied by pragmatic success, whereas, logical factor for the validity of cognition is to be satisfied by introducing justificatory grounds namely, *pramāṇas*.

It is interesting to note in the passing that in western philosophy, the correspondence, the coherence, and the pragmatic theories of truth all can be clubed under the class of extrinsic validity. In each of them truth of knowledge is made to depend on certain external conditions other than the knowledge itself. The Nyāya theory of truth combines the correspondence, the coherence and the pragmatic theories with certain modifications. According to it, the truth of knowledge consists in its correspondence with objective facts, while coherence and practical utility are the tests of truth in such cases in which we require a test. It defines the truth of all knowledge as
a correspondence of relations. To know a thing is to judge it as having such and such a character. This knowledge of the thing will be true if the thing has really such and such a character; if not, it will be false. The Nyāya goes further and accepts practical utility (pravṛttisāmarthatva) also as a test of truth. Thus the validity of the perception of water may be known from correspondence and coherence but it may be further known from the satisfaction of our practical needs or the fulfilment of our practical purposes in relation to water, such as drinking, bathing etc. But the Nyāya never admits the pragmatist contention that the truth of any knowledge is constituted by its utility or serviceableness. Knowledge is made true by its correspondence to some reality. It is true not because it is useful, but it is useful because it is true. Hence, truth consists in correspondence and is tested by coherence and practical efficiency. In case of test of validity of cognition due to lack of practical feasibility, doubt can not continue indefinitely. To silence the opponent the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika scholars suggest the use of tarka with its different varieties. Tarka plays indirectly an important role even in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika treatment of the concept of anuvyavasāya and this gives a strong support to their theory of extrinsic validity of cognition.