

Applications of ‘Veridical Cognition’ (*Pramā*) and its validity (*Prāmāṇya*) in real life: An Indian Epistemological overview

Rupa Bal

Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy
Maharaja Manindra Chandra College

Abstract

‘Veridical Cognition’ (*Pramā*) is the fundamental subject-matter of all human-beings for the sake of their existence in the world. We need accurate knowledge or veridical cognition to understand various kinds of information about the world around us. The whole universe would be covered with darkness except the existence of cognition. All worldly usages become in respect of any object. As long as the object remains unknown it would not be usable. Hence, ‘cognition’ (*jñāna*) is the fundamental cause of all usages. ‘Cognition’ is a central component of a well-lived life. It is actually the cornerstone of ‘epistemology’. There are many theories regarding ‘cognition’ in philosophy. However, the present paper mainly has been focused on the *Navya-Nyāya* theory of veridical cognition (*pramā*) and its applications in our real life. Moreover, it has been tried to show the ways of knowing its validity.

Keywords: ‘*Pramā*’, ‘*jñāna*’, ‘*pramātva*’, ‘*adhikaraṇa*’, ‘*asamsarga*’, ‘*lakṣya*’ (defiendum), ‘*lakṣaṇa*’ (definition).

“Wisdom is not a product of schooling but of the life-long attempt to acquire it”.

– Albert Einstein

“If knowledge is not put into practice, it does not benefit one”.

– Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri.

‘Wisdom’ or ‘cognition’ is the paramount wealth of all human-life. Because, we are surprised after perceiving the various events of our surroundings like lightning, storms, rains, clouds, flood and so on. Besides these, we perceive Sun,

Moon, Stars; these are appeared to us wonderfully. These events make interests to know in our minds. Apart from these, the common things like books, tables, chairs, human-beings etc. are also knowable things to us. So, 'knowing' is the crying need to us. Again, we realize as to our life, God or infinite being, integral time, integral space and so on. All those are the objects of our knowledge. The Indian thinkers said in this regard that, "*Na hi jñānena sadṛśam pavitramihavidyate*". But for the existence of 'cognition' (*jñāna*), the whole universe would be dark. Because, all our usages done through cognition. Hence, 'knowledge' or 'cognition' is most of the holy being in the whole universe in accordance with the philosophers. The thinkers of all have given their attention to the problem of cognition for a long time. Their queries are confined to the following: what is the nature of cognition? What is the criterion of the truth of cognition? What are the sources of acquiring it? These epistemological queries lead to the formulation of a theory of cognition.

The whole universe is illuminated with the light of 'cognition' (*jñāna*). Actually, we can feel the existence of cognition. All things may be knowable to us. Though, we become unable to gain veridical cognition for the sake of our ignorance off and on. But, we always go forward to veridical cognition as to anything. It is worth mentioning in this connection that, 'cognition' (*jñāna*) is divided into mainly two categories by the Nyāya thinkers; namely, 'memory' (*smṛti*) and 'apprehension' (*anubhuti*). 'Apprehension' (*anubhuti*) also is of two kinds: 'Valid or veridical cognition' (*pramā*) and 'Invalid or non-veridical cognition' (*apramā*). It may be worth noting to us in this regard that, Indian philosophical system is known as '*vidyāsthāna*'. The term '*vidyā*' means 'knowledge' or 'cognition' (*jñāna*) and '*sthāna*' means 'locus' (*adhikaraṇa*). In this sense, we can say that, 'philosophy' is such scripture which continuously seeks the accurate knowledge as to the absolute truth and also the objects of our ordinary life. In this respect, it may be noted that, 'cognition' or 'wisdom' (*jñāna*) is the central point of philosophy. It is also demandable entity to all common people. Any entity would be knowable to us just like it actually thus; it is technically known as '*tattvajñāna*' in the viewpoint of the Indian philosophers. It is actually 'veridical cognition' (*pramā*).

We will discuss about the nature of veridical cognition (*pramā*) and its extraordinary property (*pramātvā*) in accordance with the Nyāya thinkers refuting the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas' viewpoint. We also will try to look into the ways of knowing the veridical cognition (*pramā*). After that, we will try to establish the applications of veridical cognition in our real life.

I

A Critical study on Indian Epistemological concepts: ‘*Pramā*’ (Veridical cognition) and ‘*Pramātvā*’ (Its validity)

Many thinkers have been pondering and shedding light on the theory of ‘Veridical cognition’ from various perspectives. Let us now turn our attention to the definitions of ‘*pramā*’ in accordance with the Indian thinkers. Amongst the Indian philosophers, Dharmarājā Adharindra stated ‘*pramā*’ in his famous book *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* as: “*Anadhigatabādhitārthaviṣayakajñānatvam*”¹. According to him, there are mainly two features of ‘*pramā*’; these are: ‘something not hitherto known’ (*anadhigata*) and ‘unsublated’ (*avādhita*). Among the commentators on the Nyāya-Sūtras, Vācaspati Mīśra is the earliest who deals with the topic of veridicality and non-veridicality of cognition. Udayana influenced by Vācaspati. Udayana defines ‘*pramā*’ in his *Nyāyakusumāñjali* as ‘proper discernment’ (*samyaka paricchitti*). According to him, veridical cognition is actually independent. From his view point, ‘memory’ (*smṛti*) is not included herein. Because, ‘memory’ (*smṛti*) is not independent cognition, its epistemic object is the same as that of the original perceptual cognition which produced it. To refute the over-coverage fallacy from the definition of ‘*pramā*’ Udayana uses the term ‘*anapekṣa*’ (independent) in his definition.² Sāṃkhya-Yoga standpoint is a little different. In this view, ‘*citta*’ takes the form of external object through the sense-organs of the knower. After the transformation of ‘*citta*’ it becomes reflected into the pure consciousness (*śuddhapuruṣa*); it is called ‘veridical cognition’ (*pramā*) advocated by the Sāṃkhya-yoga philosophers.³ Again, the Prabhakaras define ‘*pramā*’ as ‘apprehension’ (*anubhūti*). Viśvanātha stated in his famous book *Bhāṣāparicceda* as: “*Doṣo’apramāyā janakaḥ pramāyāstu guṇo bhavet*”.⁴ Viśvanātha enunciated that, the cause of veridical cognition (*Pramā*) is ‘quality’ or ‘exactness’ (*guṇa*) and the cause of non-veridical cognition (*apramā*) is ‘blame’ or ‘fault’ (*doṣa*). There are four-fold valid knowledge accepted by the Naiyāyikas; these are: perceptual cognition (*pratyakṣajñāna*), inferential cognition (*anumitijñāna*), cognition of similarity (*upamitijñāna*) and verbal testimonial cognition (*śābdabodha*). The operative relation between the ‘adjunct’ (*viśeṣya*)⁵ which is specified by the ‘qualifying adjunct’ (*viśeṣaṇa*)⁶ and the sense-organs of the knower is called ‘quality’ or ‘exactness’ (*guṇa*) in the perceptual cognition (*pratyakṣapramā*). Again, the specific knowledge of probans pervaded by probandum in the locus of that probandum (*parāmarśajñāna*) is actually ‘quality’ (*guṇa*) in the inferential cognition.⁷

In our traditional Indian Philosophical system, ‘*Nyāya*’ is the systematic study of justice. It is actually a methodology. Especially, the *Navya-Naiyāyika*, *Gangeśa Upādhyāya* is the most thorough-going exponent of realism. The present venture is a discussion regarding the nature of veridical cognition (*Pramā*), its extra-

ordinary property (*Pramātvā*) in accordance with Neo-Naiyāyika Gangeśa Upādhyāy and also the critique of the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas' theory of '*pramā*'. Besides this, it also has been tried in this paper to show the applications of 'veridical cognition' (*pramā*).

Let us try to judge about the nature of veridical cognition (*Pramā*). Etymologically knowing with regard to any subject-matter is very essential in the beginning of any discussion. Our present subject-matter is 'veridical cognition' or 'valid knowledge' (*pramā*). Let us try to examine it. The word '*pramā*' derives from the suffix '*pra*'. The term '*pra*' means 'exact' (*prakṛṣṭa*). The meaning of the root '*mā*' is: 'knowledge' or 'cognition'. So, the complete meaning of the term '*pramā*' is: 'exact knowledge'.

All our discussions have any central object. That is the main subject-matter of the concerned discussion. It is technically known as '*lakṣya*' (defiendum) in the Nyāya philosophical system. The '*lakṣya*' (defiendum) would not be known as the particular name except the existence of that extra-ordinary property or definition (*lakṣaṇa*). The definition (*lakṣaṇa*) or the extra-ordinary property of anything differentiates the particular thing from others. As for example, 'humanity' is the extra-ordinary property of human-beings; it differentiates human-beings from other living-beings. So, 'the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition' (*Pramāttva*) is the definition or extra-ordinary property of 'veridical cognition' (*Pramājñāna*). It differentiates 'veridical cognition' (*pramājñāna*) from other kinds of cognition. So, before embarking straightaway on a study of '*pramā*' (veridical cognition), it should be conversant us as to the nature of '*pramātvā*'.

For convenience of the present discussion we have to consider about some technical terms regarding the present subject-matter; these are: 'defiendum' (*lakṣyapadārtha*), 'extra-ordinary property of defiendum' (*lakṣyatā*) and so on. The main subject-matter of any discussion is called 'defiendum' which is technically known as '*lakṣyapadārtha*' in Indian philosophical system. Our present subject-matter is 'veridical cognition' (*pramā*). So, '*pramā*' is the 'defiendum' (*lakṣyapadārtha*) at present. There are many properties of '*pramā*'. But, '*pramātvā*' is the extra-ordinary property of '*pramā*'; because, it would not be designated by '*pramā*' except '*pramātvā*'. As for example, 'cow' would not be designated by 'cow' except the property like 'cowness'. So, 'cowness' is the extra-ordinary property of 'cow'. Again, 'cowness' differentiates all cows from other animals. In the same manner, '*pramātvā*' differentiates '*pramā*' from other kinds of knowledge. Actually, that is called as 'extra-ordinary property' of anything which remains in all defiendums. The extra-ordinary property would be remained in the whole of defiendum. It would not be remained others except the defiendum. Actually, this '*pramāttva*' has to exist across the whole valid cognitive cases. It would not be remained others except the all valid cognitive

cases. Even, it would not be remained in some portions of the veridical cognition (*Pramā*).⁸

As a consequence, we should be acquainted about the term ‘the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*Pramāttva*) before the discussion with respect to ‘veridical cognition’ (*pramā*).

There are different opinions with regard to the ‘extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*Prāmāṇya*) in Indian Philosophy. At present, we should be conversant as to the technical term ‘*pramāttva*’ versus ‘*pramā*’ in accordance with *Gangeśa Upādhyāya*.

Gangeśa discussed others’ opinions regarding the nature of veridical cognition before the establishment of own. Someone says that, non-sublating property (*avādhitva*) of apprehension is known as ‘the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*pramāttva*). According to them, the determinandum may be sublating if there the certainty (*niścaya*) exists regarding the non-existence of determinans. As for example, the certainty of the veridical cognition of the non-existence of the silverness exists in the shell. For this reason, the shell is the sublating property-possessor in the case of silverness. On the other hand, the determinandum may be non-sublating if there the veridical cognition regarding the non-existence of the determinans doesn’t exist in the determinandum. As for example, the ‘silverness’ is non-sublating property in the case of veridical cognition like ‘this is silver’. So, the silver is actually non-sublating. Consequently, the silverness-oriented cognition is actually veridical cognition (*pramā*).

To refute the above-mentioned argument Gangeśa said that, the extra-ordinary property of non-sublating apprehension may not be known as ‘the extra-ordinary property of non-veridical cognition’. Because, the sublating of any cognition like ‘this is pot’ is actually ‘this is not pot’ or ‘this is cloth and so on’. But, such cognition is actually veridical cognition. It is the opposite veridical cognition of the pot.

II

Nature of *Pramāttva*:

Now, a question naturally arises that, what is the nature of ‘the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*Pramāttva*)?

After the above-mentioned question Gangeśa stated that, “*Atha kiṃ tat prāmāṇyam. Na tāvat jātiḥ yogyavyāktivṛttitvena pratyakṣatve pramāttvasaṃśayānupapatteḥ pramāttvasya anumeyatvācca sāksātvādinā saṃkarāpattesca*”.⁹ Gangeśa enunciated that, ‘the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*pramāttva* or *prāmāṇya*) may not be ‘universal’ (*jāti*) by nature. Because, ‘cowness’ remains in all the cows of the whole world. So,

‘cowness’ is ‘universal’ (*jāti*) property. But, ‘the attribute of veridical cognition’ (*pramātvā*) exists in all kinds of perceptual beings. The perceptual beings are the objects of ‘veridical cognition’. But, we are being doubtful occasionally in connection with such cognitional cases either veridical or non-veridical. If ‘the attribute of veridical cognition’ (*pramātvā*) would be universal (*jāti*) then it would not be dubious about this kind of cognition. If ‘*pramātvā*’ exists in all perceptual cognitional cases as universal then all the perceptual cognitional cases would be known as ‘certain veridical cognition’. But, those perceptual cognitional cases become dubious to us off and on. So, ‘the attribute of veridical cognition’ (*pramātvā*) may not be known as ‘generic character’ or ‘universal category’ (*jāti*).¹⁰

Gangeśa stated in this respect that, “*Kiñca evamapramāyā amśe pramātvam na syāt jāteḥ vyāpyavṛttitānīyamāt. Na ca dṛṣṭāpattiḥ, amśe samvādinī visamvādinī ca samuhālamvane pramātvāpramātvayāḥ anubhuyamānatvena ekaśeṣasya karttum aśakyatvāt*”.¹¹ Suppose, ‘the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*pramātvā*) would be accepted as universal category (*jāti*) then it would be fallacious. Exemplifying it we may apply a statement like ‘this is silver’ (*Idam rajatam*). In this statement, the property-possessor (*dharmī*) is ‘the shell’ (*śukti*). The shell is referred by ‘this’ (*idam*). The shell is known by the knower as ‘the silver’ due to illusion. The ‘silverness’ (*rajatatva*) may not be remained in the shell; nevertheless the shell is appeared like ‘the silver’. So, this cognitive state is fallacious. But, when the shell is known as ‘this’ then that is valid cognition. Because, we know that, the ‘thisness’ actually exists in the shell. For this reason, all kinds of cognition are valid in the part of property-possessor (*dharmī*). But, some kinds of cognition are illusory in the part of qualifying adjunct (*prakāra*). If ‘the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition’ (*pramātvā*) would be accepted as the universal category (*jāti*) then that part like ‘this’ (*idam*) would not be accepted as valid (*pramā*) of the illusory state. Because, ‘universal’ (*jāti*) is such type of category which is an extensive pervasion (*vyāpyavṛtti*) by nature; as for example, ‘cowness’ exists in all cows. The ‘cowness’ occupies all the cows. Hence, the ‘cowness’ is known as universal category (*jāti*). But, ‘the extra-ordinary property of valid cognition’ (*pramātvā*) does not occupy the whole cognitive state in the illusory case. So, it would not be called as universal category (*jāti*).¹²

A question may be raised in this regard that, what is the nature of the extra-ordinary property of veridical cognition (*pramātvā*)?

With regard to this matter, Viśvanātha pointed out in his *Bhāṣāparicceda* that, “*Pratyakṣe tu viśeṣyena viśeṣaṇavatā samam. Sannikarṣo guṇastu syādatha tvanumitau punaḥ. Pakṣe sādhyaviśiṣṭe ca parāmarṣo guṇa bhavet śakye sādṛśyabuddhistu bhavedupamitau guṇaḥ. Sābdavodhe yogyatāyāstātparyasyātha vā pramā. Guṇaḥ syād bhramabhinnantu*

*jñānamātroccate pramā*¹³. The Naiyāyikas enunciated that, there are two objects in ‘*pramā*’ namely, ‘determinandum’ or ‘something that is qualified’ (*viśeṣya*) and ‘determinans’ or ‘qualifying adjunct’ (*viśeṣaṇa* or *prakāra*). While expressing the knowledge of pot (*ghatajñāna*) then the object like ‘something that is qualified’ (*viśeṣya*) is ‘pot’ (*ghat*) and ‘the qualifying adjunct’ (*viśeṣaṇa*) is ‘potness’ (*ghatatva*). The form of such valid knowledge (*pramā*) would be: ‘something that is qualified which is the substratum of potness’ (*ghatatvavadviśeṣyaka*) and ‘the qualifying adjunct is described by potness’ (*ghatatvaprakāraka*). So, there are two properties in ‘*pramā*’; these are: ‘something that is qualifiedness which is the substratum of potness’ (*ghatatvavadviśeṣyakatva*) and ‘the qualifying adjunctness is described by potness’ (*ghatatvaprakāratva*).

The property like ‘the qualifying adjunctness is described by potness’ is limited by the property like ‘something that is qualifiedness which is the substratum of potness’. So, the qualifying adjunctness is described by potness which is limited by something that is qualifiedness which is the substratum of potness is also the property of ‘*pramā*’. Therefore, there are three properties of ‘*pramā*’ namely; ‘something that is qualifiedness which is the substratum of potness’ (*ghatatvavadviśeṣyakatva*), ‘the qualifying adjunctness is described by potness’ (*ghatatvaprakāratva*) and ‘the qualifying adjunctness is described by potness which is limited by something that is qualifiedness which is the substratum of potness’ (*ghatatvavadviśeṣyaktvāvaccinna ghatatvaprakāratva*).

Among them the lastly mentioned property is called ‘*pramātvā*’.¹⁴

III

Critical thinking about the nature of ‘*Pramā*’ and ‘*Pramatva*’:

It is notable that, our traditional Indian philosophers maintained a system to establish their own opinion by dint of opposition of others. Gangeśa’s chief opponent philosophers were the Prābhākara Mimāṃsakas. So, at the outset, it would be pointed out the *Prābhākaras*’ opinion about the nature of valid cognition (*pramā*) in this connection. After that, it would be tried to establish Gangeśa’s opinion about the nature of ‘*pramā*’. We can see in *Tattvacintāmaṇi* with regard to this discussion that, “*Nāpi yathārthāgr̥hitagr̥hitvaṃ lokasiddhapramātvam, dhārāvāhikabuddhyāvyāptef. Na ca pratyakṣasya varttamānārthagr̥hitvena svāśrayakṣaṇaviśiṣṭastambhādigr̥hakatvena agr̥hitagr̥hitvaṃ lokasiddham, anyathā ekasamaye jñānayogapadyaprasaṅga iti vācyam*”.¹⁵ In view of Prābhākara, that is called ‘*pramā*’ where the objects are property (*dharma*) and property-possessor (*dharmī*); but, their disconnection (*asamsarga*) is not grasped. For example, ‘this is silver in the silver’ – the property-possessor (*dharma*) is ‘this’ and property (*dharma*) is ‘the silverness’. Their disconnection (*asamsarga*) is not accepted in this statement. This absence

of knowledge (*agraha*) of non-relation (*asamsarga*) is technically known as '*ekajñāna*'. One- knowledgehood (*ekajñānatva*) would be known as '*pramātvā*' cited by Prabhākara. It would be called as 'valid cognition' (*pramā*). In this shell-silver case, the absence of knowledge (*agraha*) of non-relation (*asambandha*) exists; because, there is no any kind of relation between the property-possessor (*dharmī*) and property (*dharma*), but nevertheless, there the knowledge (*graham*) of non-relation (*asambandha*) also does not remain in this case. If there the knowledge of non-relation exists between the 'this' and 'the silver' then the illusory cognition of 'this is silver' would not be possible. So, this illusory cognition is not the one-knowledge (*ekajñāna*). According to Prabhākara, the part of 'this' (*idam*) is a perceptual cognition and the part of 'silver' is a memorial cognition in the shell-silver erroneous cognitional case. So, those are two kinds of cognition. For this reason, it would not be known as valid cognition.

With reference to this context, we have to know as to the nature of 'the accepting cognition of non-acceptable object of previous cognition' (*agrhitagrāhī jñāna*).

'The accepting cognition of non-acceptable object of previous cognition' (*agrhitajñāna*) is that kind of cognition which is the acceptor (*grāhaka*) of such object which is not the object of the previous cognition of the concerned cognition. As for example, if we say that, 'this is a human-being' – in this case, the object of the previous cognition of the concerned cognition is not 'the human-being'. So, 'the human-being' is actually the non-object of the previous cognition; yet, 'the human-being' (non-object of the previous cognition) is accepted by means of the present cognition. So, the present cognition like 'this is a human-being' is 'the accepting cognition of non-acceptable object of previous cognition' (*agrhitajñāna*). This kind of cognition is valid (*pramā*) in accordance with the Prabhākara.

But, it is not the accurate definition of valid cognition (*pramā*). It should be emphasized about 'incessant perceptual cognition'. Actually, we know that, perception is an acceptor (*grāhaka*) of present object. So, each perception must be the acceptor with regard to the object which is specified by that moment which moment is the shelter-place of the concerned perceptual cognition. In the same way, each perception would be the acceptor of that object which object is specified by each moment which moment is the shelter-place of the concerned perception. Hence, each perception is known as '*agrhitagrāhī jñāna*'.

Someone can say that, 'perception' is the acceptor of the present object. So, each perception is the acceptor of such object which is the object of present time. From this standpoint, 'the accepting cognition of non-acceptable object of previous cognition' (*agrhitagrāhī jñāna*) would be possible in the cases of incessant perceptual cognition.¹⁶

The final definition of valid cognition (*pramā*) given by Gangeśa is as such: “*Yatra yadasti tatra tasyānubhavaḥ pramā. Tadvati tatprakāarakānubhavo vā*”.¹⁷ Apprehension of that object in that locus is known as ‘*pramā*’ which really exists in that locus. The term ‘*yatra*’ means ‘where’. The meaning of the term like ‘*yadasti*’ is: ‘that exists’. Again, ‘*tatra*’ means ‘there’. The term like ‘*tasya*’ means ‘it’s’. ‘*Anubhava*’ means ‘apprehension’. Hence, the complete meaning of the statement is: the apprehension of that object in that locative case would be known as ‘*pramā*’ which really exists in that locus. As for example, if the ‘this’ (*idam*) is “the silver” (*rajat*) in the case like ‘this is silver’ then the ‘silverness’ exists in the ‘this’ (*idam*). So, the apprehension would be valid (*pramā*).

A question may be raised that, what is the nature of the term ‘existence’ (*asti*)? Actually, how existence has been acknowledged? If the term ‘*asti*’ is accepted as the meaning of ‘existencehood’ or ‘locatedhood’ (*ādheyatva*) then it would become too wide in the statement like ‘*Gomān Caitraj*’. ‘The cow’ (*gof*) can’t exist in ‘*Caitra*’. In this case, ‘*Caitra*’ is actually meant by ‘possessor’ and ‘cow’ (*gof*) is meant by ‘possessed’. The relation between them is called ‘*svatva-svāmitva sambandha*’ (ownership-ownership relation) in Navya-Nyāya philosophical system. So, the term ‘*astitva*’ (existencehood) would be accepted by the term like ‘*sambandhitva*’. Hence, the knowledge which is formed by ‘*gomān Caitraj*’ would be known as ‘*pramā*’.

Now, we may cite to the statement like “*tatra tasya anubhavaḥ*”. In this statement, the term ‘*tatra*’ means ‘determinedhood’ (*nirūpitatva*). The total meaning of “*tatra tasya*” is: “there it’s”. So, the total meaning of this definition is: The apprehension of that object in that locus is called ‘*pramā*’ which really exists in the same locus.

But, there the two terms like ‘determinandum’ or ‘something that is qualified’ (*viśeṣya*) and ‘determinans’ or ‘qualifying adjunct’ (*viśeṣaṇa*)— both of those are referred by ‘*yat*’ and ‘*tat*’. As a result, it would not be understandable that, how this cognition would be valid? Actually, which part would be referred by ‘*pramā*’ in this statement? To avoid this problem, Gangeśa gave the other definition like: “*Tadvati tatprakāarakānubhavo vā*”.¹⁸ The term ‘*tadvati*’ means ‘the extraordinary property of determinandum (*viśeṣyakatva*)’. So, it may be analytically defined as: “*Tadvadviśeṣyakatve sati tatprakānubhavaḥ pramā.*” As a matter of fact, that kind of cognition is called ‘*pramā*’ where the two technical terms exist like ‘*tadvadviśeṣyakatva*’ and ‘*tatprakāarakatva*’. Exemplifying it we may apply a statement like: ‘this is tree’. In this statement, the property-possessor (*dharmī*) is ‘this’ and the property (*dharmā*) is ‘treeness’. The ‘this’ which is the locus of treeness is actually the noun of this statement or ‘something that is qualified’. So, this cognitional state is ‘*tadvadviśeṣyaka*’; because, there the ‘determinandum’ is ‘this’ and it also is the locus of treeness. Again, this statement also would be ‘*tatprakāaraka*’; because, there the ‘determinans’ or ‘*prakāra*’ is ‘treeness’.¹⁹ So, the

above-said definition of valid cognition (*pramā*) would be applicable in this statement. It may be acceptable to us as the accurate definition of '*pramā*'.

IV

Discussion about the procedure for gaining the validity of 'cognition' (*pramātvā*)

A question may be raised in this regard that, we can able to know epistemic objects through cognition but how is it possible to know about 'cognition'? And we also have to know that, what is the procedure for gaining the 'validity of cognition' (*pramātvā*)?

With reference to this context, there are mainly two-fold opinions. Someone say that, 'cognition' can reveal when it reveals its epistemic object. It is known as 'self-revealing theory'. This theory is mainly designated by the Prābhākaras. It is also accepted by the *Sāṃkhya*, *Bauddha*, *Jaina*, *Vedānta* philosophers. On the other hand, some philosophers enunciated that, 'cognition' can reveal only its epistemic objects. It can't reveal itself. 'Knowledge' or 'cognition' is revealed by another kind of cognition. This kind of cognition is known as 'cognition of prior cognition' (*anuvyāvasāya*) in accordance with the Naiyāyikas.

Let us now see at a glance the nature of 'cognition of prior cognition' (*anuvyāvasāya*) with regard to this discussion.

'Cognition of prior cognition' (*Anuvyāvasāya*) is an important subject-matter of the *Nyāya* system. The meaning of the term '*anu*' is 'subsequent' or 'following'. A question will be raised in this connection that, 'whose subsequent'? The answer is that, 'the subsequent of *vyāvasāya*'. So, a question also will be raised in this regard that, what is called '*vyāvasāya*'?

The answer is: that is called 'determinate cognition' (*vyāvasāya jñāna*) which is the first step of cognition about anything. We know that, any object is specified by 'determinans' or 'adjective' (*vikalpa*) in cognitive state. It is technically known as '*svavikalpaka jñāna*' or 'determinate cognition' designated by Indian Philosophers. It is also called '*vyāvasāya jñāna*' in Indian Epistemology. It is actually a complete knowledge about anything. But, the knowable objects are appeared to us through this kind of cognition; though it would not be possible to be appeared the 'determinate cognition' itself. Naturally a question may be raised in this regard that, 'how will cognition appear to us?'

We shall exemplify it to clear the concept. If a knower opens his eyes to any pot then the pot, potness and inherence between them – these three-fold objects are the knowable objects; but, these are separately known. These three-fold objects are appeared by those own nature to the knower in this cognitive state. It is the first stepping stone for gaining the knowledge about anything. But, it is the non-specific cognitive state. It is technically known as 'indeterminate cognition'

(*nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa*) in Indian Epistemology. But, we know that, such objects are usable to us which are specifically knowable. After the indeterminate cognitive state, such ‘pot’ is appeared by the knower as ‘determinandum’ or ‘something that is qualified’, the ‘potness’ is appeared as ‘determinans’ or ‘qualifying adjunct’(*viśeṣaṇa*) of ‘something that is qualified’(*viśeṣya*) like pot and the ‘inherence’ is as the relation between them. It is one type of specific cognitive state; it is technically known as ‘determinate cognition’ (*svavikalpaka pratyakṣa*). The objects of such specific cognition would be usable to us. This kind of cognition is also known as ‘determinate cognition’ (*vyāvasāya jñāna*).

The characteristic feature of determinate cognition is: it can appear its objects but, it can’t appear itself. Hence, it would be necessity the existence of any cognition through which the previous determinate cognition (*vyāvasāya jñāna*) would be revealed. In this regard, there is such kind of cognition accepted by the *Naiyāyikas* through which the previous determinate cognition (*vyāvasāya jñāna*) is revealed. It is called ‘subsequent perception’ (*anuvyāvasāya*) recognized by the *Naiyāyikas*. ‘Anu’ means ‘posterior’ or ‘next’. A question may be raised that, ‘whose posterior?’ The answer would be in this connection: The cognition which is posterior of original perceptual cognition’ (*vyāvasāya jñāna*) that is called ‘subsequent perceptual cognition’ (*anuvyāvasāya*). The form of ‘*anuvyāvasāya*’ is as such: ‘I know about the pot’ (*Ghaṭam ahaṃ jānāmi*). It is actually one kind of mental perception in connection with the previous determinate cognition (*vyāvasāya jñāna*).²⁰

Now let us focus whether the property of ‘*pramā*’ or ‘*pramātva*’ (truthfulness) comes to be known from itself (*svataḥ*) or from other sources (*parataḥ*). It is mentionable in this context that, any cognition is revealed by which set of causes that is called ‘a set of conditions of the receptor of cognition’ (*jñānagrāhakaśāmagrī*). Someone says that, ‘the truthfulness of a veridical cognitive state is revealed by every ‘set of conditions’ that reveals the existence of the cognition. It is the unique epistemological theory. It is called the theory of ‘self-validity of cognition’ (*svataḥprāmāṇyavāda*). It is mainly formulated by Prabhākara Mīśra and his followers. According to this view, all cognitions are totally independent. Others say that, the truthfulness of a veridical cognitive state (*jñāna-prāmāṇya*) is to be known from other sources (*parataḥ*). It is called the theory of ‘*parataḥprāmāṇya*’. ‘Cognition reveals its object’ –it is accepted by all. But, there are different opinions regarding the matter that, cognition reveals itself in the same time when it reveals its object. Someone say that, cognition also reveals itself when it reveals its object. So, cognition is self-revealing entity. Actually, at the very heart of the Prābhākaras, the validity (*pramātva*) of cognition is confirmed through the causes which causes are also the sources of that cognition. As for example, ‘this is water’ – in this statement, the cognizer gains the cognition of water through step by step. At first, the eye-sense- organ of the knower is connected with the water; after that, the eye-sense-organ is

connected with the mind of the knower, sunlight etc. In this way, the knower gains the cognition of water. According to Prabhākara and his followers, these causes are also the sources of ‘the certainty of the ‘validity’ (*pramātvā*) of that water-oriented cognition. On the other hand, the Naiyāyikas admit that, the ‘validity’ (*pramātvā*) of the water-oriented cognition is confirmed through the others sources besides the causes which are also the causes of that cognition. According to the Naiyāyikas, the knower gains the cognition like ‘this is water’ at first. After that, the knower goes forward to the wetland. If the knower becomes able to perform the actions like drinking the water etc. then the knower realizes the water-oriented cognition is veridical.²¹

According to the Naiyāyikas, the ‘inherence relation’ (*samavāya sambandha*) between the pot and potness is known as ‘validity’ (*pramātvā*) in the cognitive statement like ‘this is water’. ‘Cognition’ (*Jñāna*) is determined by its objects. The cognitive statement like ‘this is water is a primary cognitive state (*vyāvasāya*). The after perception (*anuvyāvasāya*) of this primary cognitive state is as such: ‘I have the cognition of something as characterized by ‘wateriness’ (*jalatvena jalam na jānāmī*). According to the Naiyāyikas, the after perception (*anuvyāvasāya*) appears the objects of primary cognitive state (*vyāvasāya jñāna*). Through this way, the objects of the primary cognitive state are confirmed. As a result, the non-veridical cognition (*apramā*) becomes known as the veridical cognition (*pramā*). Through this subsequent perception, the knower is seeing the object like silver which exists in front of the knower. Actually, the object is shell which exists in front of the knower. Notwithstanding this situation, the knower does not gain the absence of the silverness-oriented cognition in the shell, but rather the knower gains the silverness-oriented cognition in the shell.

In this way, the ‘truthfulness’ (*pramātvā*) of cognition is appeared through the subsequent perception (*anuvyāvasāya*). Gangeśa said that, the ‘falsity’ (*apramātvā*) of cognition also is appeared through the others in the same manner. According to him, the erroneous person gains the cognition as such: ‘I am seeing the silver in front of me’ in the erroneous cognitive case. But, we know that, the silverness can’t exist in the shell anytime. Actually, the absence of the silverness exists in the shell. ‘The absence of the silverness’ is not appeared in the time of erroneous cognition. But, the erroneous person realizes that, the silver does not exist here after seeing the shell there. Through this kind of sublating cognition the absence of the silverness is appeared in shell. As a result, the falsity (*apramātvā*) is accepted by others. According to this opinion, ‘cognition’ is revealed by another kind of cognition. This other kind of cognition is known as ‘subsequent perceptual cognition’ (*anuvyāvasāya*) in accordance with the Naiyāyikas.

V

CONCLUSION

Let us see that, how will we apply this definition in our real life? Really we can see that, if we know that object as it is then our feelings are justified. We can perceive that, an apprehension would be known as valid when its object is appeared to us being specified by that property which is really specified by that property.

In this concluding section we will basically discuss as to the applications of the epistemological concept like ‘veridical cognition’ (*pramā*) in our real life. Each and every human-being is a judicious being. Any object will have a proper place in our feelings if we know it properly. The jurisprudence of Navya-Nyāya is so subtle and analytical that it is completely rational. So, the way of Navya-Nyāya provides us valid cognition about anything. For this reason, we can apply the concept of ‘*pramā*’ in accordance with the Gangeśa’s definition in our real life.

It is necessary to recall the definition of ‘*pramā*’ given by Gangeśa in this regard. Gangeśa defines ‘*pramā*’ as “*Yatra yadasti tatra tasyānubhavaḥ pramā*”.

In real life, we can realize that, our cognition of the worldly objects being appeared to us step by step. At first, we can see anything just like something. The object first seen is devoid of any ‘qualifying adjunct’ (*viśeṣaṇa*). It would not be known as any specific object. It would not be the object of worldly usages. After that first step of cognition, we can perceive it specifically then it would be the object of worldly usages to us. In this way, we can realize that, objects are appeared by ‘cognition’. But, ‘cognition’ can’t appear itself. In this situation, it would be necessary any other cognition which is able to appear the previous cognition. From this standpoint, the Naiyāyikas realize the importance of another type of cognition to appear any previous cognition. The later cognition is technically known as ‘subsequent perceptual cognition’ (*anuvyāvāsāya*). Actually, ‘inferential cognition’ is the other kind of cognition which can appear the prior cognition in Nyāya philosophy.

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2. Udayana, “*Nyāyakusumāñjali*”, *Stavaka IV, śloka I*
3. Vedāntachanchu, Puṇachandra. “*Pātañjal Darsan*” [Bengali], Kolkata: Pashchim Banga Rajya Pustak Parshad, 2005. p. 19

4. Bhattacharya, Pancanan Sastri Ed. and Trans. “*Bhāṣāparicceda*” with Siddhāntamuktāvali. Kolkata:Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar,1884.p. 262, “*Doṣo ’pramāyā janakaḥ pramāyāstu guṇo bhavet. Pittadratvāvīrūpo doṣo nānāvidhaḥ smṛtaḥ*”..131..
5. Kar, Gangadhar, Nyāyācārya, “*śabdārtha-sambandha-samīkṣā*”. Jadavpur University, Kolkata: Centre of Advanced study in Philosophy, 2001. p.11. “*Guṇādibhistu yadbhedyam tadviśeṣyamudāhṛtam*”.
6. Ibid., p. 11. “*Viśiṣyate pṛthakkriyate yena tad viśeṣaṇam bhedakam*”.
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Sannikarṣo guṇastu syādatha tvanumitou puṇaḥ..132..
Pakṣe sādhyaviśiṣṭe ca parāmarśo guṇo bhavet.
Sakye sādṛśyabuddhistu bhavedupamitou guṇaḥ..133..
8. Bhatta, Annaṁ, “*Tarkasaṁgraha*” with “*Dīpikā*”. Ed. Beng Trans. Goswami, Narayanachandra. Kolkata:Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar, Aswin, 1390 [*Bangābda*].p. 20
9. Upādhyāya, Gangeśa, “*Tattvacintāmaṇi*”. Ed. Beng Trans.Bhattacharya, Biswabandhu “*Tattvacintāmaṇi*”, Golpark,Kolkata:Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture. March, 2000. P. 1, śloka: 1, “*Atha kim tat prāmāṇyam. Na tāvat jātiḥ yodyavyaktivṛttitvena pratyakṣatve pramātvasaṁśayānupapatteḥ pramātvasya anumeyatvācca sākṣātvādinā samkarāpattesca*”..1..
10. Upādhyāya, Gangeśa, “*Tattvacintāmaṇi*”. Ed. Beng Trans. Medhācāitanya, Brahmācārī,*Tattvacintāmaṇi*.Kolkata: Daksineswar Ramakrishna Sangha,1417 [*Bangābda*].pp. 264-265, The extra-ordinary property of anything is generally known as ‘definition’ (*lakṣaṇa*) of it in view of Indian Philosophy. In this sense, we can say that, ‘*pramātvā*’ or ‘*prāmāṇya*’ is the extra-ordinary property of ‘*pramā*’. So, ‘*pramātvā*’ may be known as the definition of ‘*pramā*’. The question may be raised in this connection that, what is the nature of ‘*pramātvā*’? In response Gangeśa has been discussed this matter.
11. Upādhyāya, Gangeśa, “*Tattvacintāmaṇi*”. Ed. Trans. Bhattacharya, Biswabandhu , *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, Golpark,Kolkata:Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, March, 2000.p.6, “*Kiñca evamapramāyā amśe pramātvam na syāt jāteḥ vyāpyavṛttitānīyamāt. Na ca dṛṣṭāpattiḥ, Amśe samvādinī visamvādinī ca samuhālamvane pramātvāpramātvayāḥ anubhuyamānatvena ekaśeṣasya karttum asakyātvāt*”..3..
12. Medhācāitanna, Brahmācārī.”*Tattvacintāmaṇi*”. p. 266
13. “*Bhāṣāparicceda*”, p. 262, “*Pratyakṣe tu viśeṣyena viśeṣaṇavatā samam.*
Sannikarṣo guṇastu syādatha tvanumitou puṇaḥ”..132..
“Pakṣe sādhyaviśiṣṭe ca parāmarśo guṇa bhavet śakye sādṛśyabuddhistu bhavedupamitou guṇaḥ”..133..

“Śābdabodhe yogyatāyāstātparyasyātha vā pramā. Guṇaḥ syād bhramabhinnanyu jñānamatroccate pramā”..134..

14. Ibid. pp. 263-264
15. Bhattacharya, Biswabandhu, *“Tatvvacintāmani”* pp.16-17, *“Nāpi yathārthāgrhītagrāhitvaṃ lokasiddhapramātvam, dhārāvāhikabuddhyāvyāpteh svāśrayakṣaṇaviśiṣṭastambhādigrāhakatvena agrhītagrāhitvaṃ lokasiddham, anyathā ekasamaye jñānayougapadyaprasamga iti vācyam”..10..*
16. Ibid.p.17
17. Ibid. p. 66, *“Uccate. Yatra yadasti tatra tasyānubhavaḥ pramā. Tadvati tatprakārakānubhavo vā”.. 42..*
18. Ibid.,pp: 66-68.
19. Bhatta, Annaṃ, *“Tarkasamgraha”*. p.358
20. Bhattacharya, Biswabandhu, *“Tatvvacintāmani”*. pp. 136-137
21. Ibid. pp.136-141