CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: BASIC CONCEPTS

A. THE WORLD AND ITS COMPONENTS

Many Indian philosophers, among them the Hindu and Buddhist logicians, held the world to be a complex of a number of factors. The complex appeared to them to be a closed unit which possessed a certain structure. Indian philosophers made a great conscious effort in their attempt to describe the structure of the world. A large portion of each Indian philosophical system is occupied by a structural description of the world. Attitudes towards this structural description, however, differ according to schools. The difference in the method of description is fundamentally significant for the history of Indian philosophy.

As the world is composed of various factors, in order to describe the structure of the world it is necessary to determine the kind of relation between the component factors. Usually one expresses relations between component factors in a statement. For example, the determinate knowledge (or conceptualized knowledge) that a pot is blue may be expressed by the statement, 'A pot is blue' (ghato nilaḥ). In this statement two components, a pot, and the color blue, as well as the relation between them, are mentioned. To give another example, the statement 'A pot is falling' (ghato patati) refers to the relation between the pot and the action of falling. Here again two factors and the relation between them are mentioned. One can see that these two statements describe particular aspects of the world. Simple and separate notions, such as ‘pot’ or ‘blue’, give little information about the structure of the world. A statement describing some aspect of the structure of the world should mention at least two components and the relation between them.

B. PROPERTY (DHARMA) AND PROPERTY-POSSESSOR (DHARMIN)

The commonest term for the components of the world is dharma. The term used in this sense means not only things, but also properties, relations, and states insofar as the dharma may be an object of cognition. Even absence or negation (abhāva) is considered as a component of the world and is called a dharma.
CHAPTER I

But the term *dharma* may be used in a limited sense also. In this sense it means a property (or entity) which belongs to an entity. The entity which possesses a property (or entity) (*dharma*) is called the 'property-possessor' (*dharmin*). For example, if there is fire on a mountain, the fire is called the *dharma*; the mountain, the *dharmin*. The mountain here may be considered to be the possessor of fire as it is the locus of fire. Note that fire is found on the mountain through conjunction, not through inherence. To give another example, when there is a blue pot, the color blue can be considered to be inherent in the pot. In this case, the color blue, the property, belongs to the pot, the property-possessor, through inherence, and not through conjunction. Thus, the *dharma-dharmin* relation can be found between two things whether they constitute the relation of conjunction or inherence.¹

C. QUALIFICANS (*VIŚEṢAÑA*) AND QUALIFICAND (*VIŚEṢYA*)

When a pot is blue, the color blue or the property of being blue may be considered to qualify the pot by giving a particular attribute to the pot. Hence, the color blue or the property of being blue is called the 'qualificans' or 'qualifier' (*viśeṣaṇa*), and the pot is the qualificand (*viśeṣya*). Thus one can say that the qualificand is the locus of the qualificans while the qualificans is that which rests on the locus. In other words, the *dharma* acts as the qualificans of the *dharmin* insofar as the former rests on the latter, and the *dharmin* is the qualificand.

D. INDIVIDUAL MANIFESTATION (*VYAKTī*) AND GENERIC CHARACTER (*JĀṬI*)

It is possible to take the statement, 'A pot is an earth substance', to mean that a pot is a member of the class Earth-substance. Generally speaking, one can take 'x is y' to mean 'x is a member of the class y'. Here the subject denotes an individual thing and the predicate, a class. Indian logicians, however, have a tendency not to speak of membership in terms of the relation between a set and its member. Instead, they are apt to consider membership in terms of the relation between an individual manifestation and the generic character residing in it. This way of reasoning is closely connected with the fact that Indian philosophers have not developed the concept of class as a set consisting of members. The most common Sanskrit word for a generic character is 'jāṭi', which seldom means a class in the above sense.² I prefer 'generic character' as its translation.³

No generic character has its own elements or members and nothing can be