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**SAMANYA – VAISESIK PHILOSOPHY : THE SCIENTIFIC IMPORTANCE****Mr. Tapas Ghosh**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The Vaishesika system is next to Samkhya in origin and is of greater antiquity than the Nyaya. It may be prior to and is certainly not later than Buddhism and Jainism. The word is derived from Vishesa which means particularity or distinguishing feature or distinction. The vaishesika philosophy, therefore, is pluralistic realism which emphasizes that diversity is the soul of the universe. The category of vishesa or particularity is dealt with at length in this system, and is regarded as the essence of things. According to Vaishesika philosophy, quality is that category which subsists in substance but in which no other quality or action can in here. Qualities cannot exist without substance and hence they are said to be other-dependent. As has been stated that only substance can be the material or constitutive cause of action.*

**KEYWORDS:** *phase progress of study , British scholars , Indian origin of Indian art.***INTRODUCTION**

It is of secondary help in the action. In view of the fact all qualities are dependent upon substance; there cannot be any quality of quality. Quality also lacks action or motion. It resides inactively in its substratum, the substance. In this way, it differs from both substance as well as action.

**DISTINCTION OF QUALITY:****There are twenty-four qualities, such as:**

- 1) rupa or colour,
- (2) rasa or taste,
- (3) gandha or smell.
- (4) sparsa or touch,
- (5) sabda or sound,
- (6) samkhya or number,
- (7) parimana or magnitude,
- (8) prthakatva or distinctness,
- (9) samyog or conjunction,
- (10) vibhagaordisjunctoin,
- (11) paratva or remoteness,
- (12) aparatva or nearness,
- (13) bodhi or cognition,
- (14) sukha or reversion,
- (15) dukha or pain,

- (16) iccha or desire,
- (17) dvesa or reversion,
- (18) prayatna or effect,
- (19) gurutva or heaviness,
- (20) dravyatva or fluidity,
- (21) sneha or viscosity,
- (22) samskara or tendency,
- (23) dharma or merit and
- (24) adharma or demerit.

These qualities have been further subdivided, as various tastes such as sweet, sour, saline, bitter, etc., or the sounds such as the articulate and the inarticulate. Magnitude is further divided into very small, medium and very big. Numbers start from one and proceed upwards.

Vaisheshika or Vaiśeṣika is one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy (Vedic systems) from ancient India. In its early stages, the Vaiśeṣika was an independent philosophy with its own metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, and soteriology.<sup>1</sup> Over time, the Vaiśeṣika system became similar in its philosophical procedures, ethical conclusions and soteriology to the Nyāya school of Hinduism, but retained its difference in epistemology and metaphysics. The epistemology of Vaiśeṣika school of Hinduism, like Buddhism, accepted only two reliable means to knowledge: perception and inference.<sup>2,3</sup> Vaiśeṣika school and Buddhism both consider their respective scriptures as indisputable and valid means to knowledge, the difference being that the scriptures held to be a valid and reliable source by Vaiśeṣikas were the Vedas. Vaisheshika school is known for its insights in naturalism,<sup>4,5</sup> it is a form of atomism in natural philosophy.<sup>6</sup> It postulated that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to paramāṇu (atoms), and one's experiences are derived from the interplay of substance (a function of atoms, their number and their spatial arrangements), quality, activity, commonness, particularity and inherence.<sup>7</sup> According to Vaiśeṣika school, knowledge and liberation were achievable by a complete understanding of the world of experience.<sup>7</sup> Vaiśeṣika darshana was founded by Kaṇāda Kashyapa around the 6th to 2nd century BC.<sup>8,9,10</sup>

### CONJUNCTION AND DISJUNCTION:

Conjunction is the noun predicated of the relation of meeting of two substances capable of existing apart such as the relation of the hand and the pen.

The causal relation is not a conjunctive relation because the separate existence of the cause of the effect is not-possible. Disjunction is the name of the ending of conjunction or separation, such as happens when the pen falls from the hand.

In vaishesika philosophy, three kinds of conjunctions are accepted, such as:

- (1) Anyatarkarmaj** – Where one substance comes and meets or conjoins another.
- (2) UbhayaKarmaj** – Where the conjunction takes place as the result of activity on the part of both the substances such as when two wrestlers meet.
- (3) Samyogaj** – Where one conjunction takes place through the medium of another conjunction, such as, the hand and paper are in conjunction when the hand touches the pen and the pen the paper. This is called samyogajamyog.

Disjunction has been subdivided into three, on-the same basis as conjunction. Such as –

- (1) **AnyatarKarmaj** – Where the action of one of the substances leads to disjunction as when the leaf falls from the tree.
- (2) **UbhayaKarmaj** – Where the disjunction of the two takes place through activity in both the substances as when two wrestlers break apart.
- (3) **Vibhagaj** – Where one disjunction leads to another as when the conjunction between the hand and the paper is ended when the pen which is the link between the two, is put down.

**Remoteness and Nearness** also have two distinctions – spatial and temporal. Temporal remoteness implies oldness while nearness indicates modernity. In the same way, spatial remoteness is indicative of great distance while spatial nearness denotes proximity.

#### **FLUIDITY AND VISCOSITY:**

The cause of liquid substances flowing is their fluidity, such as is possessed by water. Similarly, substances like butter have the tendency to conjoin and form lumps, the tendency being named viscosity or sneha.

#### **Samskara or tendency also has three distinctions:**

- (1) Vega or Velocity – by virtue of which an object possesses motion,
- (2) Bhavana or feeling – due to which there is memory of recognition of some subject,
- (3) SthitSthapakatva or Oscillation by means of which some substance returns from a long distance to its original position such as a rubber ball.

Merit is a virtue which leads to proper activities and results in pleasure. Demerit is sin which leads to improper activities and causes pain.

If all these distinctions of the various qualities were to be counted, their total number would be well nigh stupendous, but in these twenty four qualities only the basic qualities have been counted. The other qualities are only the distinctions of these and are included therein. In this way these twenty four qualities are fundamental and it is by their conjunction that the other compound qualities are formed.

#### **KARMA OR ACTION:**

Action or Karma is the commonly used name of the fundamental dynamic qualities of substance. The inactive manifestation of substance is quality and its active manifestation is action or mobility.

Substances combine and separate because of action. Action has no quality. Quality is dependent upon substance. Action cannot subsist in all pervading substances because in them there is no change of position. Hence, the basis of action can only be material substances like the earth, air, fire and mind.

#### **DISTINCTIONS OF KARMA:**

##### **There are five distinctions of karma:**

- (1) Utksepna or throwing upwards. In this way, due to action the conjunction takes place with the higher plane.
- (2) avakespna or throwing downwards in which action leads to conjunction with the lower plane.
- (3) akunchana or contraction, which activity is designed to create conjunction in an ever nearer sphere such as twisting the hand.
- (4) Prasarana or expansion.
- (5) Gamana or locomotion.

Actions other than the first four are comprehended by locomotion. The activity of substances such as earth, water, fire, etc. is perceptible but the activity of an imperceptible entity like the mind cannot be known by perception.

#### **Samanya or Generality:**

Generality is that category by virtue of which various different individual beings are enumerated in one class and called by a common name. Just as all beings are called by a word or term indicating class S the examples of which are man, horse, cow etc. These have some general or common quality which is to be found in the entire class and is its characteristic. Objects or individuals possess similarity because of the general quality.

**In the consideration of the general quality, Indian philosophers have subscribed to one of the following three opinions:**

**Three Different Opinions Concerning Generality:**

**(1) Nominalism:**

According to this school of thought generality is no essential quality but merely a name which gives similarity to the beings belonging to its class and distinguishes it from other classes only by virtue of this name. The general has no individual or separate existence.

Among the Indian philosophies it is the Buddhist philosophy which has accepted this view.

**(2) Conceptualism:**

The second view concerning generality is conceptualism. According to this view, the general quality has no existence apart from the individuals and neither does it come from outside and enter into the individual. The individual and the general cannot be separated from each other. It is the essential quality or the eternal form of general individuals which is apprehended by our mind or intellect. This point is to be found in the Jaina and Advaita Vedanta system of Indian philosophy.

**(3) Realism:**

The third view of generality is realism. According to it the general is neither a mental thought or concept nor merely a name but has its own individual existence. The generals are eternal categories which, although separate from the individual, still pervade them.

In this way, the general is included or mixed in individuals. It is only because of the general that there is any similarity between different individuals. It subsists in substance, quality and action. It is because of general that they are called by the same name or are said to belong to the same class. This view is propounded by the Nyaya-vaisheshika among the systems of Indian philosophy.

**DISTINCTIONS OF GENERALITY:**

From the point of view of pervasion generality is of three kinds – para, apara and parapara. 'Para' is the most comprehensive, such as existence. 'Apara' is the name given to the least comprehensive such as potness. The third distinction, 'parapara' is between para and apara, an example of it being fluidity. With relation to existence it is apara, and with relation to potness it is para.

**PADARTHA OR CATEGORIES:**

Just as the Nyaya philosophy is devoted to the almost exclusive study of the sources of valid knowledge, vaisheshika philosophy devotes itself to metaphysical reflections. According to it, all the objects of the universe can be divided into seven categories or padarthas, the latter term denoting those objects which are known through the medium of a word. In this way these seven categories of reality comprehend all those objects in the world which can be named. These seven categories are- (1) Dravya or substance, (2) Guna or quality, (3) Karma or action, (4) Samanya or generality, (5) Visesa or particularity, (6) Samavaya or inherence and (7) Abhava or non-existence. In these seven categories there are two distinctions – (1) have Padartha, and (2) AbhavaPadartha. The first distinction denotes those categories which have an existence, or those which are present. The first relates to being. The second distinction, non-being, is a later addition to the Vaisheshika philosophy by later commentators and is not originally discussed. The other six categories, with the exception of bhava, are all existent and are included in being. According to the vaisheshika view, dravya or substance is the substratum of action and qualities, and the material or constitutive cause of composite things produced from it, just as the cotton fibre is the cause of cotton cloth produced from it. Even though being different from quality and action substance is their substratum. Without it, quality and action can have no existence. Substances are of nine kinds – (1) earth or prithvi, (2) water or jal, (3) fire or tej, (4) air or vayu, (5) ether or akasa (6) time or kala, (7) space or idk, (8) self or atma, and (9) mind or manas. Among these, the first five are called Panchabhuta. In each of these there is one such specific quality which can be perceived

by one of the external sense organs. The earth has the quality of smell, water that of taste, fire of form, air of touch and ether that of sound. These are perceived by the nose, tongue; eyes, skin and ears respectively. These sense organs are also believed to have originated in the earth, water, fire, air and ether. With the exception of ether, the other four physical elements are eternal, or nitya, in the form of cause and non-eternal or anitya in the form of effect. Accordingly, the atoms of earth, water, fire and air are beginningless because they are not composite, and consequently are eternal, but all the substances formed by the conjunction of these atoms, which, therefore, are effects are not eternal because their constituent atoms can be separated or even destroyed. The fifth substance, the ether, is the basis of sound. The ether is not perceived because it does not satisfy the conditions of external perception, is not being possessed of either a perceptible dimension or of any color. It is inferred from the perception of sound, and every quality must have a substratum and none of the other, earth, air, water or fire can be its bearer. There are two reasons for this. In the first place the qualities of these substances, smell, taste, form and touch, are not heard whereas sounds of words are heard and are audibly perceived. In the second place, sound is created even where these elements are absent. Sound cannot be the quality of space, time, mind and soul because they continue to exist even when there is no sound. In this way, ether is the basis of sound. Being partless, the ether is one and eternal. It is cosmic, all pervading and infinite because its quality sound is perceived in all directions. Like the ether, space, and time are also not perceptible. They are one, eternal and all pervading. Space is inferred by knowledge of concepts such as here, there, near, far etc. Time is inferred on the basis of concepts such as past, future, present, old and ancient. In this way, then, the earth, space and time are qualities differ, and even their parts appear to be different.

The opinion of the vaishesika philosophers is the same as that of the Naiyayikas on the subjects of soul. The soul is the basis of the phenomenon of consciousness, and it is eternal and all pervading. It is perceived by the mind and is thus known. The souls in different bodies are also different. In this way there are many souls. Besides the soul of human beings called the Jiva the other form of the soul is the paramatma who is one and the creator of the universe.

#### **MIND OR MANA:**

The existence of the mind can be external from the following two factors – (1) As in the case of external substance of the universe, for the perception of which external sense organs are required, so is an internal sense organ required to perceive the internal categories composed of knowledge, desire, pain, pleasure, etc., and this internal sense is the mind. (2) In spite of there being contact between the object and the external sense organ knowledge does not occur without a mind. And even when all the five senses come into contact with their respective qualities in different objects simultaneously, there is knowledge of only one in one particular moment. In this way, this not only proves the existence of the mind, it also proves that the mind is atomic and partless. Had the mind not been an infinitesimal and atomic entity, it was possible for its various parts to come into contact with different sense organs simultaneously and for many perceptions to manifest themselves at the same time. But we find in practice that this does not occur. Hence, it follows that the mind is a partless or atomic form and is that internal sense of perception. The soul receives its knowledge of the objects through the medium of mind.

#### **VISESA OR PARTICULARITY:**

Visesa is the very opposite of generality. Visesa is the term indicating the unique or specific particularity or individuality of eternal substances which have no part. These substances are – space, time, ether, mind, soul and the atoms of the four elements. It is because of particularity that individuals are distinguished from each other and the atoms of the same substance considered separately. Particulars are those forms of substances by means of which they are known distinct from each other. Particulars are needed to distinguish between composite and non-eternal objects, which are effects, such as chair table etc. The particular is in partless and eternal substances which are innumerable. Hence the particulars are also

eternal, partless and innumerable. They are themselves recognizable. There can be no perceptual cognition of them because like the atom, they too are invisible.

### **SAMAVAYA OR INHERENCE:**

According to prasatpad, inherence is that relation which exists in invariably conjoined objects, between which there is the relation of subsisting and substratum elements, and which is the middle term of the concept that is in them. In this way, objects connected by inherence are soconjoined that they are inseparable. The following are conjunctions of inherence- quality and substratum, action and the doer, individual and class, particular and eternal, element and substance, part and whole . In this way, there is cloth in cotton fibres, smell in the flower, motion in water, humanity in human being, and these are due to samavaya.

### **Inherence and conjunction:**

Vaisesika has accepted two types of relationship inherence and conjunction. These two differ from each other in the following respects.

- Conjunction is momentary and non-eternal, while inherence is an eternal relationship.
- Conjunction is the relationship which results from the connection of two substances. Inherence does not results from the conjunction of substances.
- Conjunction results from the activity of elements or two objects. Inherence is always present in substances. The relation of conjoined substance is mutual.
- Conjunction is an relation whereas inherence is an internal relation. Conjoined substance are capable of existing apart. But substance related by inherence cannot exist separated. The part and the whole cannot remain apart.

### **Atomism in Vaisesika Philosophy:**

According to the Vaisesika thinkers, all composite objects of the universe are composed of the atoms of earth, water, air and fire. Hence the view of the Vaisesika concerning creation is called atomism or paramanuvada. Atomism postulates the cycle of creation and destruction of the non-eternal or temporary substances of the universe. The eternal categories or substances of the universe namely, ether, space, time, mind, earth and physical elements are neither created nor destroyed.

### **Creation and God:**

The Vaisesika atomism is spiritual. God is the one who directs the motion of atoms. God is the guiding principle controlling the motion of atoms. He creates motions in the material particles in order that the living beings may be rewarded or punished according to their past tendencies. Creation and destruction of the universe takes place in agreement with the wishes of God. Maheswara is the ruler and owner of the entire universe which is all he surveys. This cycle of creation and destruction is continuing over entire time.

### **CREATION OF ATOMS:**

Creation is the name given to phenomenon where by the old order is destroyed and the new created. Upon God deciding to create the universe, the bodies and external substances appear as the means of rewarding the past tendencies of the living being and they are even formed according to these past tendencies of the souls. These past tendencies then start instigating the souls in those directions. All these are the result of the universe, its four substances which are effects, the daid, the trade and its various conjunctions. Atoms combine because of their motion. This motion is due to adrsta or past tendency and the activity of the adrsta is inspired by God. The combination or conjunction of two atoms is inferred. Being microscopic or infinitesimal it cannot be perceived. The triad or the trianuka is the smallest particle of matter that can be perceived. It is formed by the conjunction of three diads. Then, in this sametime period, the elements have their origin. The elements formed out of these atoms are air, water, earth and fire.

Once air is created it starts flowing in the external ether. Water is also mixed with the air and starts flowing. In the same way, earth and fire live in water. In this way, the entire universe comes into existence by the mere thought process of the God. It is the seed form of the material and fiery atoms. This universe is guided by Brahman or the World Soul, who is 'the very manifestation of knowledge, detachment and expedience. Brahman guides the creation in such a manner that the individual souls continue to experience pain and pleasure according to their previous action. All this vast machinery is put into action by the desire of God.

#### **DESTRUCTION:**

The circle of creation and destruction has no beginning. The souls get rest and space in destruction only after they have passed through many births and deaths, continually experiencing pain and pleasure. One creation between two destruction is called 'Kalpa'. When the time is ripe, the World soul also relinquishes its body like the common souls. God desires to bring destruction on the universe. The moment Maheswara so desires the past tendencies of the souls vanish for some time and their bodies break up into their composite atoms. Similarly, the physical elements also vanish when their composing atoms are dispersed. In the residuum are the atoms of the four elements, five eternal substances and tendencies created by the meritorious or notorious activities of the souls. They form the constitutive elements of the following creation. The NyanaVaisesikas are asatkaryavadins and their view is also called the arambhavada or ParamanuKaranavada.

#### **VAISESIKA AND GREEK ATOMISM:**

The Vaisesikas are agreed with the Greek atomism of Leucippus and Democritus that the atom is indivisible partless, imperceptible, ultimate and eternal and it is the material cause of this physical universe. But further the two views differ in the following respects: According to the Greek atomism, the atoms are similar in quality, but they differ in respect of quantity or number. The Vaisesikas attribute a difference of both quantity and quality in the atoms. Greek atomists do not attribute any secondary qualities to atoms but the Vaisesikas accept these qualities in the atoms. The Greek atomists believe that atoms are by their nature dynamic but the Vaisesikas accept them as static by nature. According to the Greek view, souls are composed of these atoms but according to the Vaisesikas souls and atoms are different and both are individually but equally eternal and independent.

#### **CRITICISM OF ATOMISM:**

Samkara has criticised the Vaisesika atomism in the following manner: If there is qualitative difference in the atoms there should also be some difference in their weights. If the atoms have qualitative, then how can they be eternal? If the qualities of atoms are also eternal then how can it be accepted that there were no qualities in free souls and substances etc.? If the qualities of the cause are transferred to the effect then why is it that the spherical nature of the atom is not transferred to the dyad and the minuteness and destructibility of the dyad is not transferred to the triad? If the effect is not in the cause then anything should be caused by anything else and not by some particular cause? Atoms are neither active nor inactive nor both nor neither. If they are active then creation will become permanent. If they are inactive creation will be impossible. They cannot be both active as well as inactive since these qualities are mutually contradictory and cannot stay together, as is the case with light and darkness. If atoms are neither active nor inactive, then motion or activity should be introduced by some external cause. Now is this external cause past tendency (drsta) or present tendency (adrsta)? If it is past tendency then it cannot have existed before creation. If it is present tendency then it will always accompany the atoms and creation will become permanent, and if the atoms are not postulated to be in close proximity with past tendency creation becomes impossible. In this way, it is impossible for there to be creation with atoms in any manner. The Jaina conception of the atom, like that of the Greeks and the Vaisesika, regards it as one, eternal and indivisible unit of the material elements. But it differs from the Vaisesika view and agrees with the Greek view in that it



maintains no qualitative differences among the atoms. The atoms are all homogeneous and become differentiated into heterogeneous elements by different combinations. More ever the Jainas do not regard the qualities of the atoms as permanent, while the Vaisesika does.

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