

उपनिषद् - ०

VAISESHIKA PHILOSOPHY

Kanada is the founder of Vaisheshika school. The vaisheshika system is an ontology, in the sense that it is not mainly concerned with logic & epistemology, but with enumeration of the ultimate constituents of the universe.

The vaisheshika attempts a harmony between science & spirituality. in the sense that, they proved that the world is composed of atoms, and that god is the efficient cause of the world.

Nyaya-Vaisheshika → theory of causation, Asatkaryavad

Nyaya-Vaisheshika theory of causation is called Asatkaryavad. Acc. to this effect does not pre-exist in the cause. effect is a new beginning or creation. N.V. defines effect as the concomitancy to its prior-non-existence, i.e. effect is an entity which is not present in the cause, before it comes into being.

ARGUMENTS: ① If effect pre-exists in cause, then it makes no sense, saying that effect is produced.

② If effect already existed in the cause, then why should we require an efficient cause for its production. ex. If pot already existed in clay, we shouldn't need a potter to 'create' it, but we do.

③ Accepting that effect must be designated with same name and they should serve some purpose, but the clay and jar separately designated & serve different purpose.

④ It is alleged that there is only a distinction in form between the cause & effect. Then we must admit that there is something in the effect, which was not present in cause, & thus would be new.

⑤ When effect is produced, the cause is lost or transformed. It ceases to exist in form of cause. When curd is produced, milk is destroyed when cloth as threads anymore.

However, the cause is defined as an invariable & unconditional precedent of the effect, and the effect an unconditional and invariable consequent. Thus, the law of Karma is explained on this basis.

Types of Cause:

N.V. recognizes three type of causes:

SAMUAYI KARAN (Material cause): The substance or stuff out of which the material is produced.

NIMITTAKARAN (efficient cause): The power which helps the material cause to produce effect.

ASAMUAYIKARAN (Non-inherent cause): The cause which inheres in the material cause. It is always an action or quality. For ex: While threads (quality) are the material cause of the cloth, the color of the threads (q) and the conjunction of the threads (action) are non-inherent cause of the cloth.

Theories of Categories (PADARTH):

The vaisheshikas maintain that knowledge of reality is the knowledge of categories. The knowledge is essential for liberation. Vaisheshikas term for category

is PADARTH. It means 'meaning of a word', on the object signified by a word. All existent reals can be classified into Padarths.

Padarth is classified broadly into 2 types

[bhava - being
[abhava - non being.

nameable
knowledge existent

- ① Dravya → substance
- ② Guna → quality
- ③ Karma → Action
- ④ Samanya → universality
- ⑤ Vishesa → particularity
- ⑥ Samanvaya → Inherence
- ⑦ Abhava → Non-being

BHAVA Padarth

Abhava Padarth.

① DRAVYA: (Substance)

Dravya or substance is that in which actions on qualities alone, and is the coexistent material cause of the composite things produced from it (i.e. cause-efficient (Nimitta) Karma)

For example - thread is a dravya, action (interweaves fibres)

quality (color, stiffness etc)

similarly cloth is also a dravya.

Substances are of 2 categories:

- (a) ultimate substances → eternal, simple, partless, independent, either infinite or infinitesimal.
- (b) Compound substance → made by combination of simple substances subject to production & destruction.

There are 9 types of PRAVYA:-

- | | | |
|---------|--|---|
| ① earth | } Physical, atomic, elements
both quantitatively and
qualitatively different
infintesimal | } ground of smell
Touch
color
Taste
sound |
| ② Air | | |
| ③ fire | | |
| ④ water | | |
| ⑤ ether | | |
| ⑥ time | | |
| ⑦ space | | |
| ⑧ mind | | |
| ⑨ soul | | |

First four elements are atomic & these 4 types of atoms are both quantitatively & qualitatively different. They exist in 2 forms-

* simple and eternal . compound & transient

As eternal, they exist in the form of indivisible paramanus (atom) In compound form, all trees, rocks, matter etc. are combination of the and exist as composite substances, which can be produced & destroyed.

ether is not atomic, but infinite, the and eternal. It is the substratum of sound.

Time → One, eternal all pervading. It is the cognition of the past, present & the future.

space → cognition of location.

Soul (Atma) → It is an eternal, all pervading spiritual substance which is the substratum of the quality of consciousness. But consciousness is not the essence of the self.

Mind (manas) → Mind is the internal sense through which the soul gains knowledge. It is partless (atomic), hence imperceptible. As existence is inferred from the way self perceives the internal states of desire, cognition, etc.

② QUALITY / GUNA: That which inheres in a substance, which itself does not possess any quality or action, which does not produce any composite thing, and is not the ground of any disjunction & conjunction (i.e. not action). [Thus, it is a definition of exclusion from definition of Dravya].

Thus, quality cannot exist independently, it exists in the substance though a quality does not have independent existence, it is still a category as it can be thought, named & observed (objective criteria / practical criteria for categorizing)

ex: Thread has quality of color, tautness, etc.

NOTE: Yogacara Vigyanwad do not accept extramental reality or substance as a ground of qualities. Acc. to them, external objects, along with their qualities are all mere ideas.

③ ACTION / KARMA:

That which inheres in a substance and is the ground for conjunction & disjunction, itself devoid of qualities, and is not material cause of any object.

It is the dynamic & transient feature of a substance expansion, contraction, upward movement, downward movement, locomotion, are 5 actions identified by vaishika. All actions cannot be perceived, ex: actions of the mind are imperceptible.

① GENERALLY / SAMANYA:

In Sankhita, it is defined as 'Nityam ekam, Anekamgatam' or eternal one, but residing in many.

It is the universal, class concept i.e. the common character of all things of a particular class residing in every member of the particular class.

It is eternal though the members it resides in are subject to destruction. It is distinguished into (Hierarchical order) → PARA - highest ex. beinghood
→ PARA PARA - intermediate ex. anim
→ A PARA - lowest ex. lowness

Ex: The class essence of man-ness, residing in all men.

vaishika accepts that universal are eternally real, independently existent from human mind. Thus, they are not merely mental constructs as argued by buddhists

SAMANYA → Hierarchical

Different views regarding SAMANYA:

There are 3 views regarding the universal class essence in Indian philosophy -

(A) BUDDHIST : Nominalism

Buddhists deny the reality of samanyā or universal. They admit the reality of individual alone. Acc. to them, universals are only names are not real distinct entities, this is known as Nominalistic view regarding samanyā. [Apohavada is argued to be the method to identify the class of an object in Buddhism].

(B) SAHVA & ADVAITA VEDANTIN : Conceptualism

They maintain that universal is not merely name but unlike the realists, they do not maintain that universal as an objective & independent reality ever above the particulars. It is considered as essential common attribute of different individuals. Hence, universal is not separate from individual but coincident with them. It is the common nature of individuals. [Aristotelian view]

(C) NYAYA - VAISESIKA : Realist

Acc. to them, both the particular & universal are separately real. Universals are separate entities/categories, but inhere particulars. Like plates' idea samanyā is a universal entity which corresponds to a general class. However, unlike Plato, they do not hold that ideas exist in transcendental world but subsist in the substance.

In Nyaya philosophy, to explain samanyā, separate form of perception called samanyā lakshana perception has been accepted. Now, it is through samanyā lakshana perception the knowledge of inference is argued to be gained.

⑤ PARTICULARITY/ VISESA :

It is the opposite of samanya or generality. Visesa or particularity inheres in eternal substances and distinguishes them from one another.

While composite substances like gases, trees, etc. can directly differentiated from one another, it is the eternal, atomic or partless substances, which cannot be perceived, that are differentiated from one another on the basis of particularity. One soul, has a particularity that distinguishes it from another soul.

Particularity is eternal, because it inheres in eternal substance while samanya is the common character of a class inclusive and basis for assimilation; Particularity is the exclusivity of one substance from another within a class, basis for differentiation.

(Exclusively of one substance from another within a class)

⑥ SAMAVAYA/ INHERENCE : (external relation or Ayuta sidha)

Samanya is the inseparable relation between 2 entities in which one is the substratum of the other, while the other is dependent on the first. Things related by samanya are eternally connected and cannot be separated without being destroyed. It is eternal & imperceptible.

Samvaya is different from samyog or conjunction. Samyog is a temporary relation between 2 things, which could eventually be separated. Moreover, samvaya is a category while samyog is a quality (guna).

Things which are connected by samvaya are:

- The part & the whole.
- The quality & the substance.
- The particular and the universal etc.

Sankara's criticism: Distinction between samyog and samvaya cannot be justified as both are relations, even though one is separable while other, 'isnt'.

* Inference, being separate & independent relation from the 2 things it connects, leads to third man fallacy of infinite regress. Moreover, inherence cannot be divided, so does it reside in fit or soul.

⑦ ABHAV / Non-Existence:

Kanada does not accept Abhava as an independent category, however, later vaisesikas accepted it as an independent category to explain negative facts.

Abhava stands for negative fact. That means, it explains the non-existence of something with respect to / in relation to something else. ex This place is categorized by the absence of a pot.

Abhava is accepted as a category because, the basis of category is anything which can be conceived, observed and defined. Moreover, NU use Abhava to support Asatkaryavad because, the effect is Abhava in the cause, acc. to Asatkaryavad liberation is also accepted as Abhava of suffering.

Broadly, it is of 2 kinds:

① Anyonyabhava: It means, one thing is not another (Anyanya-Anyanya-Abhava) thing. S is not P. If this is denied then all things would become identical and indistinguishable.

(b) Samsargabhava: It implies the non-existence of something in something else. It is of 3 types -

i) Pragyabhava: It is the non-existence of a thing before its production, i.e. it is the non-existence of the effect in the cause, before it is produced. This abhava is destroyed after production of the effect. It is beginningless but has an end.

ii) Kradhvansabhava: It is the non-existence of a thing after its destruction, i.e. it is the non-existence of cause after the effect is produced. It has a beginning but is endless.

Atyantabhava: It is the non-existence of something throughout space & time. Absence of relation between 2 things in the past, present & future. It is both beginningless & endless. ex. sky flowers, barren mother etc.

KNOWLEDGE OF ABHAVA:

Nyaya → Perception

Buddhism → Inference

Mīmāṃsā & Vedānta Advaita → Anupalabdhi

cc. to Nyaya, we get knowledge of Abhava by Visheshana Vishesh Bhava Samikars, a special type of perception, in which, we perceive the negative impression of something not being present, along with the positive impressions of objects being present.

However, Vaisheshika argues that knowledge of Abhava is by inference. In the case of Buddhism, they treat Abhava as a separate category. Buddhists consider Abhava as a mental construct.

CRITICISM OF VAISESIKA CATEGORIES: (Pluralism only a dualism) (unorganized dualism)

Vaisesika gives us a mere catalogue of categories without making any effort to synthesize them. Moreover, categories are mere assumptions, if we proceed thus, we consume any no. of categories (No wonder → Nyaya → 16 categories) of the 7 categories:

- Both guna & Karma cannot exist without substance and therefore, depend on it. But then, we cannot raise them to the states of independent category or same as substance.
- Samvaya, vishesha, samanya being necessarily related to concepts depend more on perceiver (thought), rather than having real existence. Hence, they cannot be on equal level of substance.
- Abhava is evidently related to existence itself & so cannot be treated as absolute.

Hence, the only fundamental category that remains is substance.

Further substance has 2 types, ether is only medium for sound. Space & time are institutional, mind is only internal organ. Thus 4 material substances: earth, air, fire, water and spiritual substance: soul. Vaisesika pluralism can thus be reduced to dualism.

CRITICISM OF VAISESIKA THEORY OF CATEGORIES:

Vaisesika lists out 7 categories & considers them ultimate existents. But in reality only the category DAIVA, is a real, existent and independent category. All other categories are either depend or relative. For ex - samanya, guna, karma are

dependent or *akraya* while *alaksana*, *samanya* are relative. Thus, only one of the 7 can actually be accepted as a category while the other 6 only aid or contribute to the one's existence.

Categories of *Vaisesika* are mere assumptions, and if we go by their method, we may assume any number of categories on the basis of national differences. This is exemplified by *Ngaya* philosophy which accepts categories are not 7.