

I. Vaisheshika– The Vedic atomic theory

A. An Analysis of the Aspects of Reality

1. Founder of vaisheshika philosophy is sage Kanada – also known as Uluka
2. Kanada wrote the first systematic work of this philosophy, Vaisheshika-sutra
 - a. This work is divided into 10 cantos, each containing 2 sections
 - b. Prasastapada wrote commentary: Svārtha Dharma Samgraha -- called bhasya, "commentary."
3. In Indian philosophical discourse, whenever bhasya is used by itself, it refers to this commentary
4. Significant feature of system special category of reality called uniqueness (visesa)

B. Vaisheshika is allied to the nyaya system of philosophy

1. Both systems accept liberation of individual self as end goal
2. Both view ignorance as root cause of all pain and misery
3. Both believe liberation is attained only through right knowledge of reality
4. There are two major differences between nyaya and vaisheshika
 - a. 1st Nyaya accepts 4 sources of knowledge: perception, inference, comparison, and testimony
Vaisheshika accepts only 2 -- perception and inference
 - b. 2nd Nyaya maintains that all of reality is comprehended by 16 categories; Vaisheshika only 7
5. Substance is that in which a quality (or action) can exist but which in itself is different from both these
6. Without substance, it cannot be a quality/action because substance is substratum of quality and action

C. The Category of Substance -- Nine Dravyas (substances)

1. First 5 are called physical elements - each possesses specific quality perceived by external sense
2. Each sense composed of elements with distinguishing qualities registered by specific sense receptors
 - a. Smell is particular property of the earth, and it is apprehended by the nostrils
 - b. Taste is the particular property of water, which is perceived by the tongue
 - c. Color is the particular property of fire or light, and it is discerned by the eyes
 - d. Touch is the particular property of air, which is experienced by the skin
 - e. Sound is the particular property of akasa (ether), which is received by the ears
3. The smallest particle of earth, water, fire, air is called Paramanu, or atom - most minute state of matter
4. The existence of atoms are proven by inference -- not perception
5. Akasa (ether), the 5th substance, is substratum of quality of sound; it is not made up of atoms
6. Akasa is unlimited so does not have perceptible dimension; formless, so does not have any color
7. Last four Dravyas (substances)
 - f. Direction
 - g. Time
 - h. Soul
 - i. Mind
8. Direction and time also imperceptible substances and are likewise single, eternal, all pervading
9. Space, direction, time are singular and all-pervading, indivisible and partless
10. Soul or Atman is considered eternal, all-pervading, and is substratum of consciousness
11. Mind is an eternal sense faculty of individual soul and soul's qualities, such as pleasure/pain

12. Like the soul, the mind is atomic and indivisible -- there is one in each body

E. Category of Quality -- 24 Gunas

1. Guna, quality (2nd of the 7 categories of reality) cannot exist by itself but exists only in a substance
2. It cannot, therefore, be constituent or material cause of anything's existence
3. In vaisesika "guna" refers to quality; In sankhya it denotes essential feature of prakrti, nature
4. There are 24 kinds of qualities:

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|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| rupa (color), | rasa (taste), | gandha (smell), | sparsa (touch), |
| sabda (sound), | sankhya (number) | parimana (magnitudes), | prthaktva (distinctness) |
| samyoga (union), | bibhaga (separation), | | paratva (remoteness), |
| aparatva (nearness), | | | |
| buddhi (cognition), | sukha (pleasure), | dukha (pain), | iccha (desire), |
| dvesa (aversion), | prayatna (effort), | gurutva (heaviness), | dravatva (fluidity), |
| sneha (viscosity), | samskara (tendency), | | dharmā (merit), |
| adharma (demerit) | | | |

F. The remaining 5 categories of reality

1. The Category of Action -- Karma
 - a. Karma, action, is viewed in vaisesika as physical movement
 - b. Just like quality (2nd category) action also exists only in a substance and cannot exist by itself
 - c. Quality is static character of things; action is their dynamic character
 - d. 5 kinds of action: upward, downward, inward, outward, and linear

G. The Category of Generality

1. Refers to an abstract characteristic that is singular and eternal and yet pervades many
2. Generality, is essence of common characteristic that unites different entities into one class

H. The Category of Uniqueness

I. The Category of Inherence

1. There are 2 kinds of relationships between things: conjunction (samyoga), and inherence (samavaya)
2. Conjunction/Union is 1 of the 24 qualities (gunas) but inherence is 1 of the 7 categories of reality
3. Conjunction is temporary, noneternal relationship between 2 things that may be separated at any time
4. Inherence is an eternal or permanent relation between two entities

J. The Category of Nonexistence

1. Nonexistence, 7th of reality is negative in contrast to first 6 categories, which are positive
2. Nonexistence is not found in any of the six positive categories
3. Yet according to vaisesika nonexistence exists, just as, for instance, space and direction do
4. There are two kinds of nonexistence:
 - a. Absence of something in something else
 - b. Mutual nonexistence
4. Absence of something in something else is of 3 kinds:
 - a. Antecedent nonexistence
 - b. Nonexistence of a thing after its destruction
 - c. Absolute nonexistence

5. Mutual nonexistence

II. The Concept of the Creation and Annihilation of the World

A. Vaisesika holds to the atomic theory of existence

1. The entire universe is composed of eternal atoms
2. At same time it does not ignore moral & spiritual laws governing process of union & separation of atoms
3. In this way, atomic theory of vaisesika is different from atomic theory of modern science
4. Modern science's theory proposes materialistic philosophy -- explains laws of universe as mechanical
5. Vaisesika: functioning of atoms guided by creative or destructive will of Supreme being
6. Will of Supreme Being directs operation of atoms according to past samskaras of individual beings

B. Vaisesika states that the universe has two aspects, one eternal and one noneternal

1. Eternal constituents of universe are
 - a. 4 kinds of atoms (earth, water, fire, air)
 - b. 5 substances (space, time, direction, mind, and self)
 - c. These are not subject to change, and they can be neither created nor destroyed
2. Other part of universe is noneternal: subject to creation and destruction in particular time & spaces
 - a. In beginning of creation 2 atoms united into dyad (noneternal because can be divided again into 2)
 - b. Dyads and atoms cannot be perceived but are known through inference
 - c. Combination of 3 dyads is called a triad (tryanuka), which is smallest perceptible object
 - d. It is from these triads that other larger compounds develop
 - e. Common elements comprised of eternal atoms are noneternal: they can be broken to smaller units

C. There is no creation or annihilation; but an orderly systematized composition/decomposition of compounds