
UNIT 1 NYAYA – VAISESIKA

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, the student should be able to:

- Understand the orthodox systems of the Nyaya and Vaisesika.
 - Elucidate the Nyaya theory of knowledge.
 - Discuss the Nyaya theory of causation.
 - Recognize Nyaya conception of God and proofs for the existence of God.
 - Be aware of the categories of Vaisesika.
 - Appreciate the Vaisesika theory of Atomism.
 - Comprehend the Vaisesika concept of Bondage and Liberation.
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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Nyaya is the work of the great philosopher and sage Gautama. It is a realistic philosophy based mainly on logical grounds. It admits four separate sources of true knowledge. Perception (*pratyaksa*), inference (*anumana*), comparison (*upamana*) and testimony (*sabda*) are the sources of true knowledge. Perception is the direct knowledge of objects produced by their relation to our

senses. Inference is the knowledge of objects not through perception but through the apprehension of some mark. Comparison is the knowledge of the relation between a name and things so named on the basis of a given description of their similarity to some familiar object. Testimony is the knowledge about anything derived from the statements of authoritative persons.

The objects of knowledge, according to the Nyaya, are the self, the body, the senses and their objects, cognition (*buddhi*), mind (*manas*), activity (*pravritti*), mental defects (*dosa*) rebirth (*pretyabhava*), the feeling of pleasure and pain (*phala*), suffering (*dukkha*), and freedom from suffering (*apavarga*). The Nyaya seeks to deliver the self from its bondage to the body, the senses and their objects. It says that the self is distinct from the body and the mind. The body is only a composite substance made of matter. The mind is a subtle, indivisible and eternal substance. It serves the soul as an instrument for the perception of psychic qualities like pleasure, pain, etc; it is, therefore, called an internal sense. The self (*atman*) is another substance which is quite distinct from the mind and the body. Liberation (*apavarga*) means the absolute cessation of all pain and suffering brought about by the right knowledge of reality (*tattva jnana*). Liberation is only release from pain. The existence of God is proved by the Nyaya by several arguments. God is the ultimate cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world. Nyaya did not create the world out of nothing, but out of eternal atoms, space, time, ether, minds and souls.

The Vaisesika system was founded by the philosopher and the sage Kanada. The Vaisesika is allied to the Nyaya system and has the same end view, namely, the liberation of the individual self. It brings all objects of knowledge, the whole world, under the seven categories of substance (*dravya*), quality (*guna*), action (*karma*), generality (*samanya*), particularity (*visesa*), the relation of inherence (*samavaya*), and non-existence (*abhava*). A substance is the substratum of qualities and activities, but is different from both. A quality is that which exists in a substance and has itself no quality or activity. An action is a movement. Particularity is the ground of the ultimate differences of things. Inherence is the permanent or eternal relation by which a whole is in its parts; a quality or an action is in a substance; the universal is in the particulars. Non-existence stands for all negative facts. With regard to God and liberation of the individual soul the Vaisesika theory is substantially the same as that of the Nyaya.

1.2 NYAYA AND VAISESIKA

Nyaya is a system of atomic pluralism and logical realism. It is allied to the Vaisesika system which is regarded as 'Samanatantra' or similar philosophy. Vaisesika develops metaphysics and ontology. Nyaya develops logic and epistemology. Both agree in viewing the earthly life as full of suffering, as bondage of the soul; liberation is absolute cessation of suffering as the supreme end of life. Both agree that bondage is due to ignorance of reality and that liberation is due to right knowledge of reality. Vaisesika takes up the exposition of reality and Nyaya mostly accepts the Vaisesika metaphysics. But there are some important points of difference between them which may be noted. Firstly, while the Vaisesika recognizes seven categories and classifies all real under them, the Nyaya recognizes sixteen categories and includes all the seven categories of the Vaisesikas in one of them called *prameya* or the knowable, the second in the sixteen. The first category is *pramana* or the valid means of knowledge. This clearly brings out the predominantly logical and epistemological character of the Nyaya system. Secondly, while the Vaisesika recognizes only two *pramanas*, perception and inference and reduces comparison and verbal authority to inference, the Nyaya recognizes all the four as separate – perception, inference, comparison and verbal authority.

1.3 NYAYA THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge or Cognition is defined as apprehension or consciousness. Nyaya believes that knowledge reveals both the subject and the object; they are quite distinct from knowledge. All knowledge is a revelation or manifestation of objects. Just as a lamp manifests physical things placed before it, so knowledge reveals all objects which come before it. Knowledge may be valid or invalid. Valid knowledge is defined as the right apprehension of an object. It is the manifestation of an object as it is. Nyaya maintains the theory of correspondence (*paratah pramanya*). Knowledge in order to be valid, must correspond to reality. Valid knowledge is produced by the four valid means of knowledge-perception, inference, comparison and testimony. Invalid knowledge includes memory (*smṛti*), doubt (*samshaya*), error (*viparyaya*) and hypothetical reasoning (*tarka*). Memory is not valid because it is not present cognition but a represented one. The object remembered is not directly presented to the soul, but only indirectly recalled. Doubt is uncertainty in cognition. Error is misapprehension as it does not correspond to the real object. Hypothetical reasoning is no real knowledge.

Perception, inference, comparison or analogy and verbal testimony are the four kinds of valid knowledge. Let us consider them one by one. Sage Gotama defines perception as non-erroneous cognition which is produced by the intercourse of the sense-organs with the objects; it is not associated with a name and which is well-defined. Inference is defined as that cognition which presupposes some other cognition. Inference is mediate and indirect. Comparison defined as the knowledge of the relation between a word and its denotation. It is produced by the knowledge of resemblance or similarity. Verbal testimony is defined as the statement of a trustworthy person and consists in understanding its meaning.

1.4 NYAYA THEORY OF CAUSATION

Let us now consider the Nyaya theory of Causation. A cause is defined as an unconditional and invariable antecedent of an effect. The same cause produces the same effect and the same effect is produced by the same cause. Plurality of cause is ruled out. The first essential characteristic of a cause is its antecedence; the fact that it should precede the effect. The second is its invariability; it must invariably precede the effect. The third is its unconditionality or necessity; it must unconditionally precede the effect. Nyaya recognizes five kinds of accidental antecedents which are not real causes. Firstly, the qualities of a cause are mere accidental antecedents. The color of a potter's staff is not the cause of a pot. Secondly, the cause of a cause or a remote cause is not unconditional. The potter's father is not the cause of a pot. Thirdly, the co-effects of a cause are themselves not causally related. The sound produced by the potter's staff is not the cause of a pot, though it may invariably precede the pot. Night and day are not causally related. Fourthly, eternal substances like space are not unconditional antecedents. Fifthly, unnecessary things like the potter's ass are not unconditional antecedents; though the potter's ass may be invariably present when the potter is making a pot, yet it is not the cause of the pot. A cause must be an unconditional and necessary antecedent. Nyaya emphasizes the sequence view of causality. Cause and effect are never simultaneous. Plurality of causes is also wrong because causal relation is reciprocal. The same effect cannot be produced by another cause. Each effect has its distinctive features and has only one specific cause. An effect is defined as the counter-entity of its own prior non-existence. It is the negation of its own prior negation. It comes into being and destroys its prior non-existence. It was non-existent before its production. It did not pre-exist in its cause. It is a fresh beginning, a new creation.

1.5 NYAYA THEORY OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Now we come to the topic of the objects of knowledge. The physical world is constituted by the four physical substances of earth, water, fire and air. The ultimate constituents of these four substances are the eternal and unchanging atoms of earth, water, fire and air. *Akasa* or ether, *kala* or time, and *dik* or space is eternal and infinite substances, each being one single whole. Thus the physical world is the product of the four kinds of atoms of earth, water, fire and air. It contains all the composite products of these atoms, and their qualities and relations, including organic bodies, the senses, and the sensible qualities of things. According to Gautama the objects of knowledge are the self, the body, the senses and their objects, knowledge, mind, activity, the mental imperfections, rebirth, the feelings of pleasure and pain, suffering, absolute freedom from all suffering. All of these knowable are not to be found in the physical world, because it includes only those objects that either physical or somehow belong to the world of physical nature. Thus the self, its attribute of knowledge and *manas* are not at all physical. Time and space are two substances which although different from the physical substances, yet somehow belong to the physical world. *Akasa* is a physical substance which is not a productive cause of anything.

1.6 NYAYA CONCEPT OF GOD

God is the ultimate cause of creation, maintenance and destruction of the world. God is the eternal infinite self who creates, maintains and destroys the world. He does not create the world out of nothing, but out of eternal atoms, space, time, ether, minds and souls. The creation of the world means the ordering of the eternal entities, which are co-existent with God, into a moral world, in which individual selves enjoy and suffer according to the merit and demerit of their actions, and all physical objects serve as means to the moral and spiritual ends of our life. God is thus the creator of the world in the sense of being the first efficient cause of the world and not its material cause. He is also the preserver of the world in so far as the world is kept in existence by the will of God. So also He is the destroyer who lets loose the forces of destruction when the exigencies of the moral world require it. Then, God is one, infinite and eternal, since the world of space and time, minds and souls does not limit him, but is related to Him as a body to the self which resides in it. He is omnipotent, although He is guided in His activities by moral considerations of the merit and demerit of human actions. He is omniscient in so far as He possesses right knowledge of all things and events. He has eternal consciousness as a power of direct and steadfast cognition of all objects. Eternal consciousness is only an inseparable attribute of God, not His very essence, as maintained in the Advaita Vedanta. He possesses to the full all the six perfections and is majestic, almighty, all glorious, infinitely beautiful and possessed of infinite knowledge and perfect freedom from attachment.

Just as God is the efficient cause of the world, so He is the directive cause of the actions of all living beings. Nyaya gives the following arguments to prove the existence of God:

1. The world is an effect and hence it must have an efficient cause. This intelligent agent is God. The order, design, co-ordination between different phenomena comes from God.
2. The atoms being essentially inactive cannot form the different combinations unless God gives motion to them. The Unseen Power, the *Adrsta*, requires the intelligence of God. Without God it cannot supply motion to the atoms.

3. The world is sustained by God's will. Unintelligent *Adrsta* cannot do this. And the world is destroyed by God's will.
4. A word has a meaning and signifies an object. The power of words to signify their objects comes from God.
5. God is the author of the infallible Veda.
6. The Veda testifies to the existence of God.
7. The Vedic sentences deal with moral injunctions and prohibitions. The Vedic commands are the Divine commands. God is the creator and promulgator of the moral laws.
8. According to Nyaya the magnitude of a dyad is not produced by the infinitesimal magnitude of the two atoms each, but by the number of the two atoms. Number 'one' is directly perceived, but other numbers are conceptual creations. Numerical conception is related to the mind of the perceiver. At the time of creation, the souls are unconscious. And the atoms and the unseen Power and space, time, mind are all unconscious. Hence the numerical conception depends upon the Divine Consciousness. So God must exist.
9. We reap the fruits of our own actions. Merit and demerit accrue from our actions and the stock of merit and demerit is called *Adrsta*, the unseen power. But this Unseen Power, being unintelligent, needs the guidance of a supremely intelligent God.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) How many sources of knowledge are accepted by Nyaya? Explain.

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- 2) Explain *asatkarya vada* of Nyaya.

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3. State the arguments of Nyaya for proving the existence of God.

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1.7 VAISESIKA CONCEPT OF PADARTHA OR CATEGORY

The Vaishesika system is regarded as conducive to the study of all systems. Its main purpose is to deal with the categories and to unfold its atomistic pluralism. A category is called *padartha* and the entire universe is reduced to six or seven *padarthas*. *Padartha* literally means the meaning of a word or the object signified by a word. All objects of knowledge or all reals come under *padartha*. *Padartha* means an object which can be thought and named.

Originally the Vaishesika believed in the six categories and the seventh, that of *abhava* or negation was added later on. Though Kanada himself speaks of *abhava*, yet he does not give it the status of a category to which it was raised only by the later Vaishesikas. The Vaishesika divides all existent reals which are all objects of knowledge into two classes; *bhava* or being and *abhava* or non-being. Six categories come under *bhava* and the seventh is *abhava*. All knowledge necessarily points to an object of knowledge and is called a *padartha*. The seven *padarthas* are: 1 substance (*dravya*), 2 quality (*guna*), 3 Activity (*karma*), 4 generality (*samanya*), 5 particularity (*visesa*), 6 inherence (*samavaya*), and 7. non-being (*abhava*).

1. *Dravya* Or Substance

Dravya or substance is defined as the substratum where actions and qualities in here and which is the coexistent material cause of the composite things produce from it. Substance signifies the self-subsistence, the absolute and independent nature of things. The category of substance is the substratum of qualities and actions. The *dravyas* are nine and include material as well as spiritual substances. The Vaishesika philosophy is pluralistic and realistic but not materialistic since it admits spiritual substances. The nine substances are: 1) earth (*prthivi*), 2) Water (*Ap*), 3) Fire (*tejas*), 4) Air (*vayu*), 5) ether (*akasa*), 6) time (*kala*), 7) space (*dik*), 8) spirit (*atman*) and 9) mind (*manas*). Earth, water, fire and air really signify not compound transient objects made out of them, but the ultimate elements, the supersensible eternal partless unique atoms which are individual and infinitesimal. Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five gross elements. These and *manas* are physical. Soul is spiritual. Time and space are objective and not subjective forms of experience. Ether, space, time and soul are all-pervading and eternal. Atoms, minds and souls are infinite in number. Ether, space and time are one each.

2. *Guna* or Quality

The second category is *guna* or quality. Unlike substance, it cannot exist independently by itself and possesses no quality or action. It inheres in a substance and depends for its existence on the substance and is not a constitutive cause of anything. It is called an independent reality because it can be conceived, thought and named independent of a substance where it inheres. The qualities are therefore called objective entities. They are not necessarily eternal. They include both material and mental qualities. They are a static and permanent feature of a substance, while action of a dynamic and transient feature of a substance. A quality, therefore, is different from both substance and action. Qualities include material and spiritual properties. Smell is the quality of earth; taste of water; color of fire; touch of air; and sound of ether. Cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition are the mental qualities which inhere in the self.

3. *Karma* or Action

The third category is *karma* or action. Like quality, it belongs to and inheres in a substance and cannot exist separately from it. But while a quality is a static and permanent feature of a substance, an action is a dynamic and transient feature of it. Unlike a quality, an action is the

cause of conjunction and disjunction. Action is said to be of five kinds: 1) upward movement, 2) downward movement, 3) contraction, 4) expansion, and 5) locomotion.

4. *Samanya* or Generality

The fourth category is *samanya* or generality. *Samanya* is generality. Generality is class-concept, class-essence or universal. It is the common character of the things which fall under the same class. The universals reside in substances, qualities and actions. They are of two kinds, higher and lower. The higher generality is that of 'being'. It includes everything and itself is not included in anything. Every other generality is lower because it covers a limited number of things and cannot cover all things. A universal cannot subsist in another universal; otherwise an individual may be a man, a cow, and a horse at the same time.

5. *Visesa* or Particularity

The fifth category is *Visesa* or particularity. It enables us to perceive things as different from one another. Every individual is a particular, a single and a unique thing different from all others. It has got a unique of its own which constitutes its particularity. It is opposed to generality. Generality is inclusive; particularly is exclusive. Generality forms the basis of assimilation; particularity forms the basis of discrimination. It is very important to remember that the composite objects of this world which we generally call 'particular' objects are not real particular.

6. *Samavaya* or Inherence

The sixth category is *Samavaya* or inseparable relation called 'inherence.' It is different conjunction or *samyoga* which is separable and transient relation and is a quality. *Samavaya* is an independent category. Kanada calls it the relation between cause and effect. *Samvaya* is one and eternal relationship subsisting between two things inseparably connected.

7. *Abhava*

The seventh category is *Abhava* or non-existence. Kanada does not mention it as a separate category. Absence of an object and knowledge of its absence are different. The first six categories are positive. This is negative. The other categories are regarded as absolute, but this category is relative in its conception. Non-existence is of four kinds: 1) antecedent non-existence, 2) subsequent non-existence, 3) mutual non-existence and 4) absolute non-existence.

1.9 VAISESIKA ON ATOMS AND CREATION

According to Vaisesika diversity and not unity is at the root of the universe. Vaisesika says that atom is the minutest particle of matter which may not be further divisible. The indivisible, partless and eternal particle of matter is called an atom (*paramanu*). All physical things are produced by the combination of atoms. Therefore creation means the combination of atoms in different proportions and destruction means the dissolution of such combination. The material cause of the universe is neither produced nor destroyed. It is the eternal atoms.

The atoms are said to be of four kinds; of earth, water, fire and air. Ether or *akasha* is not atomic. It is one and all-pervading and affords the medium for the combinations of the atoms. The atoms

differ from one another both in quantity and in quality. Each has a particularity of its own and exists as a separate reality. During dissolution, they remain inactive. Motion is imparted to them by the unseen power (*adrsta*) of merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*) which resides in the individual souls and wants to fructify in the form of enjoyment or suffering. Atoms are supra-sensible. Atoms increase by multiplication and not by mere addition. When motion is imparted to them by the unseen power, they begin to vibrate and immediately change into dyads. A *dyad* is produced by the combination of two atoms. The atoms are its inherent cause; conjunction is its non-inherent cause; and the Unseen power is its efficient cause. An atom is indivisible, spherical and imperceptible. A *dyad* (*dvyanuka*) is minute (*anu*), short (*hrasva*) and imperceptible.

From the standpoint of ancient Indian philosophy the world including physical nature is a moral stage for the education and emancipation of individual souls. The Vaisheshika atomic theory of the world is guided by spiritual outlook of ancient Indian philosophy.

The atomic theory of the Vaisheshika explains that part of the world which is non-eternal subject to origin and destruction in time. The eternal constituents of the universe, namely, the four kinds of atoms, and the five substances of *akasa*, space, time, mind, and soul, do not come within the purview of their atomic theory, because these can neither be created nor destroyed. On the other hand, all composite objects, beginning with a dyad or the first compound of only two atoms (*dvyanuka*) are non-eternal. So the atomic theory explains the order of creation and destruction of these non-eternal objects. All composite objects are constituted by the combination of atoms and destroyed through their separation. The first combination of two atoms is called a *dvyanuka* or dyad, and a combination of three dyads (*dvyanukas*) is called a *tryanuka* or triad. The *Tryanuka* is also called the *trasarenu* and it is the minimum perceptible object according to the Vaisheshika. The paramanu or atom and the *dvyanuka* or dyad, being smaller than the *tryanuka* or triad, cannot be perceived, but are known through inference.

All the finite objects of the physical world and the physical world itself are composed of the four kinds of atoms in the form of dyads, triads and other larger compounds arise out of these. The world or the universe is a system of physical things and living beings having bodies with senses and possessing mind, intellect and egoism. All these exist and interact with one another, in time, space and *akasa*. Living beings are souls who enjoy or suffer in this world according to their character; wise or ignorant, good or bad, virtuous or vicious. The order of the world is, on the whole, a moral order in which the life and destiny of all individual selves are governed, not only by the physical laws of time and space, but also by the universal moral law of *karma*. In the simplest form this law means 'as you sow, so you reap,' just as the physical law of causation, in its most abstract form, means that there can be no effect without a cause.

Vaisheshika admits the reality of the spiritual substances, souls and God, and also admits the law of *karma*. The atoms are the material cause of the world of which God, assisted by the Unseen power, is the efficient cause. The physical world presupposes the moral order. Evolution is due to the Unseen Power consisting of merits and demerits of the individual souls which want to bear fruits as enjoyments or sufferings to be experienced by the souls. Keeping in view this moral

order of the universe, the Vaisesika explains the process of creation and destruction of the world as follows: The starting-point of the process of creation or destruction is the will of the supreme Lord (*Mahesvara*) who is the ruler of the whole universe. The Lord conceives the will to create a universe in which individual beings may get their proper share of the experience of pleasure and pain according to their deserts. The world being beginningless (*anadi*), we cannot speak of a first creation of the world. In truth, every creation is preceded by some order of creation. To create is to destroy an existing order of things and usher in a new order. Hence it is that God's creative will has reference to the stock of merit and demerit act with souls, endowed with the creative function of *adrsta* that first sets in motion the atoms acquired by individual souls in a previous life lived in some other world. When God thus wills to create a world, the unseen forces of moral deserts in the eternal individual souls begin to function in the direction of creation and the active life of experiences. And it is the content of air. Out of the combination of air-atoms, in the form of dyads and triads, arises the gross physical element of air, and it exists as an incessantly vibrating medium in the eternal *akasa*. Then, in a similar way, there is motion in the atoms of water and the creation of the gross element of water which exists in the air and is moved by it. Next, the atoms of earth are set in motion in a similar way and compose the gross element of earth which exists in the vast expanse of the gross elemental water. Then from the atoms of light arises in a similar way, the gross element of light and exists with its luminosity in the gross water. After this and by the mere thought of God, there appears the embryo of a world out of the atoms of light and earth. God animates that great embryo with Brahma, the world-soul, who is endowed with supreme wisdom, detachment and excellence. To Brahma God entrusts the work of creation in its concrete details and with proper adjustment between merit and demerit on the one hand, and happiness and misery on the other.

The created world runs its course for many years. But it cannot continue to exist and endure for all time to come. Just as after the stress and strain of the day's work God allows us rest at night, so after the trials and tribulations of many lives in one created world. God provides a way of escape from suffering for all living beings for some time. This is done by him through the destruction of the world. So the period of creation is followed by a state of destruction. The process of the world's dissolution is as follows: When in the course of time Brahma, the world-soul, gives up his body like other souls, there appears in *Mahesvara* or the supreme Lord a desire to destroy the world. With this, the creative *adrsta* or unseen moral agency in living beings is counteracted by the corresponding destructive *adrsta* and ceases to function for the active life of experience. It is in contact with such souls, in which the destructive *adrsta* begins to operate, that there is motion in the constituent atoms of their body and senses. On account of this motion there is disjunction of the atoms and consequent disintegration of the body and the senses. The body with the senses being thus destroyed, what remain are only the atoms in their isolation. So also, there is motion in the constituent atoms of the elemental earth, and its consequent destruction through the cessation of their conjunction. In this way there is the destruction of the physical elements of earth, water, light and air, one after the other. Thus these four physical elements and all bodies and sense organs are disintegrated and destroyed. What remain are the four kinds of atoms of earth, water, light and air in their isolation, and the eternal substances of *akasa*, time, *apace*, minds and souls with their stock of merit, demerit and past impressions. It will be observed here that while in the order of destruction, earth compounds come first, then those of water, light and air in succession, in the order of creation, air compounds come first, water compounds next, and then those of the great earth and light appear in succession.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What are the seven categories?

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2) Explain the Atomic theory of Vaisesika.

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1.10 VAISESIKA CONCEPT OF BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

The Vaisesika regards bondage as due to ignorance and liberation as due to knowledge. The soul, due to ignorance, performs actions. Actions lead to merits or demerits. They are due to attachment or aversion and aim at obtaining pleasure or avoiding pain. The merits and demerits of the individual souls make up the unseen moral power, the *adrsta*. According to the law of *Karma*, one has to reap the fruits of actions one has performed whether they are good or bad according to the *karmas* one performed. This *adrsta*, guided by God, imparts motion to the atoms and leads to creation for the sake of enjoyment or suffering of the individual souls. Liberation is cessation of all life, all consciousness, all bliss, together with all pain and all qualities. It is qualityless, indeterminate, pure nature of the individual soul as pure substance devoid of all qualities.

1.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to give central concepts of Nyaya and Vaisesika. Nyaya is a system of logical realism and atomistic pluralism. Nyaya develops logic and epistemology; Vaisesika develops metaphysics and ontology. In this unit we have explained Nyaya theory of knowledge, causation, physical world, God and the proofs for the existence of God. In this unit relating to the orthodox system of Vaisesika, we have discussed Vaisesika categories, atoms, creation, destruction, bondage and liberation. We conclude this unit with the Vaisesika conception that liberation is the real state of the soul free from all qualities and it reduces the soul to a mere nothing.

1.12 KEY WORDS

Perception: Perception is a definite cognition which is produced by sense-object contact and is true and unerring.

Inference: Inference is the cognition which presupposes some other cognition.

Comparison: Comparison is called *upamana*. Comparison is knowledge derived from comparison and roughly corresponds to analogy.

Verbal Testimony: Verbal testimony is defined as the statement of trustworthy person and consists in understanding its meaning.

Cause: Cause is defined as an unconditional and invariable antecedent of an effect and an effect as an unconditional and invariable consequent of a cause.

Padartha: *Padartha* means an object which can be thought and named.

Dravya: *Dravya* is the substance. Substance signifies the self-subsistence, the absolute and independent nature of things. Substance is the basis of qualities and actions, actual or potential, present or future.

1.13 REFERENCE AND SOURCE BOOKS

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UNIT 2 SAMKHYA

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the orthodox system of Samkhya
- Interpret the Samkhya theory of causation
- Explain the Samkhya concept of *Prakrti*
- Discuss the Samkhya concept of *Purusa*
- Know the Samkhya theory of knowledge
- Elucidate the Samkhya concept of bondage and liberation
- Comprehend the Conception of bondage and liberation

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The sage Kapila is the founder of the Samkhya system. The Samkhya must be a very old system of thought. Its antiquity appears from the fact that the Samkhya tendency of thought pervades all the literature of ancient India including the *srutis*, *smrtis* and *puranas*. According to tradition, the first work of the Samkhya School is the *Samkhya-sutra*. Next to Kapila, his disciple Asuri, and Asuri's disciple Pancasikha wrote some books which aimed at a clear and elaborate exposition of the Samkhya system. The Samkhya is a philosophy of dualistic realism. Samkhya admits two ultimate realities namely, *Purusa* and *Prakrti* which are independent of each other in respect of their existence. *Purusa* is an intelligent principle, of which consciousness (*caitanya*) is not an attribute, but the very essence. It is the self which is quite distinct from the body, the senses and

the mind (*manas*). It is beyond the whole world of objects, and is the eternal consciousness which witnesses the changes and activities going on in the world, but does not itself act and change in any way. Physical things like chairs, beds, etc, exist for the enjoyment of beings other than themselves. Therefore, there must be the *Purusa* or the self which is distinct from *Prakrti* or primary matter, but is the enjoyer of the products of *Prakrti*. There are many different selves related to different bodies, for when some men are happy, others are unhappy, some die but others live.

Prakrti is the ultimate cause of the world. It is an eternal unconscious principle which is always changing and has no other end than the satisfaction of the selves. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are three constituents of *Prakrti* which holds them together in a state of rest or equilibrium. The three are called *gunas*. But they are not qualities or attributes in any sense. Rather, they are three substantial elements which constitute *Prakrti* like three cords making up a rope. The existence of the *gunas* is referred from the qualities of pleasure, pain and indifference which we find in all things of the world. The same sweet is liked or disliked or treated with indifference by the same man in different conditions. The same salad is tasteful to one, distasteful to another and insipid to a third. Now the cause and the effect are essentially identical. The effect is the manifested condition of the cause, e.g. oil as an effect manifests what is already contained in the seeds. The things of the world are effects which have the qualities of pleasure, pain and indifference. Therefore, *Prakrti* which is their ultimate cause must have the three elements of *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which respectively possess the natures of pleasure, pain and indifference, and cause manifestation, activity and passivity.

The evolution of the world has its starting point in the association of the *Purusa* with *Prakrti* which disturbs the original equilibrium of the latter and moves it to action. The *Purusa* or the self is neither the cause nor the effect of anything. *Prakrti* is the uncaused cause of all objects. Once we realize the distinction between the self and the non-self including the body and the senses, the mind, the intellect and the ego, our self ceases to be affected by the joys and sorrows, the ups and downs of life. It rests in itself as the dispassionate observer of the show of events in the world without being implicated in them.

2.2 THEORY OF CAUSATION

The Samkhya metaphysics, especially its doctrine of *Prakrti*, rests mainly on its theory of causation which is known as *satkarya-vada*. It is a theory as to the relation of an effect to its material cause. The specific question discussed here is this: Does an effect originally exist in the material cause prior to its production, i.e. appearance as an effect? The Buddhists and the Nyaya-Vaisesikas answer this question in the negative. According to them, the effect cannot be said to exist before it is produced by some cause. If the effect already existed in the material cause prior to its production, there is no sense in our speaking of it as being caused or produced in any way. Further, we cannot explain why the activity of any efficient cause is necessary for the production of the effect. If the pot already existed in the clay, why should the potter exert himself and use his implements to produce it? Moreover, if the effect were already in its material cause, it would logically follow that the effect is indistinguishable from the cause, and that we should use the same name for both the pot and the clay, and also that the same purpose would be served by a pot and a lump of clay. It cannot be said that there is a distinction of form between the effect and its material cause, for then we have to admit that there is something in the effect which is not to

be found in its cause and, therefore the effect does not really exist in the cause. This theory that the effect does not exist in the material cause prior to its production is known as *asatkarya-vada* (i.e. the view that the *karya* or the effect is *asat* or non-existent before its production. It is also called *arambhavada*, i.e. the theory of the beginning of the effect anew.

The Samkhyas repudiate this theory of causation and establish their view of *satkarya-vada*, namely, that the effect exists in the material cause even before it is produced. This view is based on the following grounds:

(1) If the effect were really non-existent in the material cause, then no amount of effort on the part of any agent could bring it into existence. Can any man turn blue into red, or sugar into salt? Hence, when an effect is produced from some material cause, we are to say that it pre-exists in the cause and is only manifested by certain favorable conditions, as when oil is produced by pressing seeds. The activity of efficient causes like the potter and his tools is necessary to manifest the effect, pot, which exists implicitly in the clay.

(2) There is an invariable relation between a material cause and its effect. A material cause can produce only that effect with which it is causally related. It cannot produce an effect which is in no way related to it. But it cannot be related to what does not exist. Hence the effect must exist in the material cause before it is actually produced.

(3) We see that only certain effects can be produced from certain causes. Curd can be got only out of milk and a cloth only out of threads. This shows that the effect somehow exists in the cause. Had it not been so, any effect could be produced from any cause; the potter would not have taken clay to produce pots, instead of taking milk or threads or any other thing.

(4) The fact that only a potent cause can produce a desired effect goes to show that the effect must be potentially contained in the cause. The potent cause of an effect is that which possesses some power that is definitely related to the effect. But the power cannot be related to the effect, if the latter does not exist in some form. This means that effect exists in the cause in an unmanifested form before its production or manifestation.

(5) If the effect be really non-existent in the cause, then we have to say that, when it is produced, the non-existent comes into existence, i.e. something comes out of nothing, which is absurd.

(6) We see that the effect is not different from, but essentially identical with, the material cause. If, therefore, the cause exists, the effect also must exist. In fact, the effect and the cause are the explicit and implicit states of the same substance. A cloth is not really different from the threads, of which it is made; a statue is the same as its material cause, stone, with new shape and form; the weight of a table is the same as that of the pieces of wood used in it. The conclusion drawn by the Samkhya from all this is that the effect exists in the material cause even before its production or appearance. This is the theory of *satkarya-vada* (i.e. the view that the effect is existent before its appearance).

The theory of *satkarya-vada* has got two different forms, namely, *parinama-vada* and *vivarta-vada*. According to the former, when an effect is produced, there is a real transformation (*parinama*) of the cause into the effect, e.g. the production of a pot from clay, or of curd from milk. The Samkhya is in favour of this view as a further specification of the theory of *satkaryavada*. The *vivarta-vada* which is accepted by the Advaita Vedantins, holds that the change of the cause into the effect is merely apparent. When we see a snake in a rope, it is not the case that the rope is only transformed into a snake; what happens is that the rope only appears

as, but is not really a snake. So also, God or Brahman does not become really transformed into the world produced by him, but remains identically the same, while we may wrongly think that He undergoes change and becomes the world.

2.3 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

The Samkhya theory of knowledge follows in the main its dualistic metaphysics. It accepts only three independent sources of valid knowledge (*pramana*). These are perception, inference and scriptural testimony (*śabda*). The other source of knowledge, like comparison, postulation (*arthapatti*) and non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*), are included under these, and not recognized as separate sources of knowledge.

Valid knowledge (*Prama*) is a definite and an unerring cognition of some object through the modification of *buddhi* or the intellect which reflects the consciousness of the self in it. What we call the mind or the intellect is an unconscious material entity in the Samkhya philosophy. Consciousness or intelligence (*caitanya*) really belongs to the self. But the self cannot immediately apprehend the objects of the world. If it could, we should always know all objects, since the self in us is not finite and limited, but all pervading. The self knows objects through the intellect, the *manas*, and the senses. We have a true knowledge of objects when, through the activity of the senses and the *manas*, their forms are impressed on the intellect which, in its turn, reflects the light or consciousness of the self.

In all valid knowledge there are three factors, namely, the subject (*pramata*), the object (*prameya*), and the ground or source of knowledge (*pramana*). The subject being a conscious principle is no other than the self as pure consciousness (*suddha cetana*). The modification (*vrtti*) of the intellect, through which the self knows an object, is called *pramana*. The object presented to the self through this modification is *prameya*. *Prama* or valid knowledge is the reflection of the self in the intellect as modified into the form of the object, because without the self's consciousness the unconscious intellect cannot cognize anything.

Perception is the direct cognition of an object through its contact with some sense. When an object like the table comes within the range of your vision, there is contact between the table and your eyes. The table produces certain impressions or modifications in the sense organ, which are analyzed and synthesized by *manas* or the mind. Through the activity of the senses and the mind, *buddhi* or the intellect becomes modified and transformed into the shape of the table. The intellect, however, being an unconscious material principle, cannot by itself know the object, although the form of the object is present in it. But as the intellect has an excess of *Sattva*, it reflects, like transparent mirror, the consciousness of the self (*Purusa*). With the reflection of the self's consciousness in it, the unconscious modification of the intellect into the form of the table becomes illumined into a conscious state of perception. Just as mirror reflects the light of a lamp and thereby manifests other things, so the material principle of *buddhi*, being transparent and bright (*sattvika*), reflects the consciousness of the self and illuminates or cognizes the objects of knowledge.

There are two kinds of perception, namely, *nirvikalpaka* or the indeterminate and *savikalpaka* or the determinate. The first arises at the first moment of contact between a sense and its object, and is antecedent to all mental analysis and synthesis of the sense-data. It is accordingly called *alocana* or a mere sensing of the object. The second kind of perception is the result of the

analysis, synthesis and interpretation of sense-data by *manas* or the mind. So it is called *vivecana* or a judgement of the object it is the determinate cognition of an object as a particular kind of thing having certain qualities and standing in certain relations to other things.

Inference is the knowledge of one term of a relation, which is not perceived, through the other which is perceived and known to be invariably related to the first. In it what is perceived leads us on to the knowledge of what is unperceived through the knowledge of a universal relation between two. Inference is first divided into two kinds, namely, *vita* and *avita*. It is called *vita* or affirmative when it is based on a universal affirmative proposition, and *avita* or negative when based on a universal negative proposition. The third *pramana* is *sabda* or testimony. It is constituted by authoritative statements (*aptavacana*), and gives the knowledge of objects which cannot be known by perception and inference.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What is your understanding of theory of causation?.....

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2) What is the difference between *parinama-vada* and *vivarttha-vada*?

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3) Differentiate between valid knowledge and invalid knowledge.

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The theory that causation means a real transformation of the material cause leads to the concept of *Prakrti* as the root cause of the world of objects. All worldly effects are latent in this uncaused cause, because infinite regress has to be avoided. It is the potentiality of nature, 'the receptacle and nurse of all generation'. As the uncaused root-cause it is called *Prakrti*. As the first principle of this Universe, it is called *Pradhana*. As the unmanifested state of all effects, it is known as *Avyakta*. As the extremely subtle and imperceptible thing which is only inferred from its products, it is called *Anumana*. As the unintelligent and unconscious principle, it is called *Jada*. As the ever-active unlimited power, it is called *shakti*. The products are cause-dependent, relative, many and temporary as they are subject to birth and death or to production and destruction; but *Prakrti* is uncaused, independent, absolute, one and eternal, being beyond production and destruction. The entire world of objects is implicit in the bosom of *Prakrti*, unintelligent, unmanifest, uncaused, ever-active, imperceptible and eternal. *Prakrti* alone is the final source of this world of objects which is implicitly and potentially contained in its bosom.

Samkhya gives five proofs for the existence of *Prakrti* which are as follows:

1. All individual things in this world are limited, dependent, conditional and finite. The finite cannot be the cause of the universe. Logically we have to proceed from the finite to the infinite, from the limited to the unlimited, from the temporary to the permanent, from the many to the one. And it is this infinite, unlimited, eternal and all-pervading *Prakrti* which is the source of this universe.
2. All worldly things possess certain common characteristics by which they are capable of producing pleasure, pain and indifference. Hence there must be a common source composed of three *Gunas*, from which all worldly things arise.
3. All effects arise from the activity of the potent cause. Evolution means the manifestation of the hitherto implicit as the explicit. The activity which generates evolution must be inherent in the world-cause. And this cause is *Prakrti*.
4. The effect differs from the cause and hence the limited effect cannot be regarded as its own cause. The effect is the explicit and the cause is the implicit state of the same process. The effects, therefore, point to a world cause where they are potentially contained.
5. The unity of the universe points to a single cause. And this cause is *Prakrti*.

Prakrti is said to be the unity of the three *Gunas* held in equilibrium. The three *Gunas* are *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. They are the constituents of *Prakrti* and through it of the worldly objects. Being subtle and imperceptible their existence is inferred from their effects - pleasure, pain and indifference respectively. *Sattva* literally means real or existent and is responsible for the manifestation of objects in consciousness. It is called goodness and produces pleasure. It is a light and bright, buoyant and illumining. *Rajas*, which literally means foulness, is the principle of motion. It produces pain. Restless activity, feverish effort and wild stimulation are its results. It is mobile and stimulating. Its color is red. *Tamas*, which literally means darkness, is the principle of inertia. It produces apathy and indifference. Ignorance, sloth, confusion, bewilderment, passivity and negativity are its results.

Purusa is the principle of pure consciousness. *Purusa* is the soul, the self, the spirit, the subject, the knower the brain and not mind or ego or intellect. It is not a substance which possesses the quality of consciousness. Consciousness is its essence. It is itself pure and transcendental consciousness. It is the ultimate knower which is the foundation of all knowledge. It is the pure subject and as such can never become an object of knowledge. It is the silent witness, the emancipated alone, the neutral seer, the peaceful eternal. It is beyond time and space, beyond change and activity. It is self-luminous and self-proved. It is uncaused, eternal and all pervading. It is the indubitable real, the postulate of knowledge, and all doubts and denials pre-suppose its existence.

Samkhya gives the following five proofs for the existence of *Purusa*;

1. All compound objects exist for the sake of the *Purusa*. The body, the senses, the mind and the intellect are all means to realize the end of the *Purusa*. The three *gunas*, the *Prakrti*, the subtle body - all are said to serve the purpose of the self. Evolution is teleological or purposive. *Prakrti* evolves itself in order to serve the *Purusa*'s end This proof is teleological.
2. All objects are composed of the three *gunas* and therefore logically presuppose the existence of the *Purusa* who is the witness of these *gunas* and is himself beyond them. The three *gunas* imply the conception of a *nistraigunya* - that which is beyond them. This proof is logical.
3. There must be a transcendental synthetic unity of pure consciousness to co-ordinate all experiences. All knowledge necessarily presupposes the existence of the self. The self is the foundation, the fundamental postulate of all empirical knowledge. All affirmations and all negations equally presuppose it. Without it, experience would not become experience. This proof is ontological.
4. Non-intelligent *Prakrti* cannot experience its products. So there must be an intelligent principle to experience the worldly products of *Prakrti*. *Prakrti* is the enjoyed and so there must be an enjoyer. All objects of the world have the characteristics of producing pleasure, pain and bewilderment. But pleasure, pain, bewilderment have meaning only when there is a conscious principle to experience them. Hence *Purusa* must exist. This argument is ethical.
5. There are persons who try to attain release from the sufferings of the world. The desire for liberation and emancipation implies the existence of a person who can try for and obtain liberation. Aspiration presupposes the aspirant. This proof is mystical or religious.

2.6 THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

Prakrti is the fundamental substance out of which the world evolves. *Prakrti* is regarded as essentially dynamic. It is always changing. Even in dissolution there is homogeneous change. Evolution starts when there is heterogeneous change in the *gunas* and one predominates over the other two. When *rajas*, the principle of activity vibrates and makes the other two vibrate, the process of creation begins. There is neither creation nor destruction of *gunas*. Production is only a manifestation or evolution and destruction is non-manifestation and concealment. Evolution is cyclic – alternative periods of evolution(*sarga*) and dissolution (*pralaya*). *Prakrti* evolves the

world of objects when it comes in contact with the *purusa*. Even though *prakrti* and *purusa* are diametrically opposed to each other in their nature they come together just as a blind man and lame man can co-operate in order to get out of a forest; so the non-intelligent *prakrti* and the inactive *purusa* combine and co-operate to serve their respective interests. *Prakrti* needs the presence of *purusa* in order to be known or appreciated by someone(*darsanartham*) and *purusa* requires the help of *prakrti* in order to discriminate itself from the latter and thereby attain liberation(*kaivalyartham*).

Purusa is reflected in the intellect (*buddhi*) and wrongly identifies himself with his own reflection in the *buddhi*. It is the reflection of *purusa* which comes into contact with *prakrti* and not the *purusa* himself. *Samkhyakarika* simply assumes from the beginning that *purusa* and *prakrti* are together, and its analysis includes only a description of the mutual interaction of the principles together with the description of the means to attain freedom. The Process of Evolution: As evolution begins there is gradual differentiation and integration of the three *gunas*; and as a result of their combination in different proportions the various objects of the world originate: *Mahat* (the great) is the first product of the evolution of *prakrti*. It is the basis of intelligence(*buddhi*) of the individual. *Buddhi* emerges when *sattva* predominates over *rajas* and *tamas*. The special functions of *Buddhi* are ascertainment and decision-making. *Mahat* produces *ahamkara*. It is the principle of individuation. It produces the notion of 'I' and 'mine'. *Ahamkara* is bifurcated into the subjective series and the objective series. *Ahamkara* in its *sattva* aspect evolves into *manas*, the five sense organs(organs of perception) and the five motor organs (senses of action). The 5 sense organs (*jnanendriyas*): functions of sight, smell, taste, touch and sound. The 5 senses of action (*karmendriyas*): functions of speech, apprehension, movement, excretion and reproduction. *Ahamkara* in its *tamas* aspect evolves into the 5 subtle essences (*tanmatras*): the essences of sight, smell, taste, touch and sound. *Ahamkara* in its *rajasa* aspect plays its part in both. The 5 subtle essences evolve into the five gross elements of earth, water, light, air and ether by a predomination of *tamas* (*mahabhutas*). Thus the process of evolution of the universe includes the operation of 24 principles, of which *prakrti* is the first, the 5 gross elements are the last and 10 organs and 5 *tanmatras* are the intermediate ones. All the same it is not complete in itself because it has a necessary reference to the world of selves as the witness and enjoyers. The evolution is purposive. The evolution of *prakrti* into the world of objects makes it possible for the selves to enjoy or suffer the consequences of their good or bad actions (merits and demerits). The ultimate end of evolution of *prakrti*, therefore, is the freedom (*mukti*) of *purusa*.

2.7 BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

The earthly life is full of three kinds of pain. The first kind, called *adhyamika*, is due to intra-organic psychophysical causes and includes all mental, and bodily sufferings. The second *adhibhutika*, is due to extra-organic natural causes like men, beasts, birds, thorns, etc. The third, *adhidaivika*, is due to supernatural causes like the planets, elemental agencies, ghosts, demons etc. Wherever there are *gunas* there are pains. Even the so-called pleasures lead to pain. Even the life in heaven is subject to the *gunas*. The end of man is to get rid of these three kinds of pain and sufferings. Liberation means complete cessation of all sufferings which is the *summum bonum*,

the highest end of life. *Purusa* is free and pure consciousness. It is inactive, indifferent and possesses no attributes. It is above time and space, merit and demerit, bondage and liberation. It is only when it mistakes its reflection in the *buddhi* for itself and identifies itself wrongly with the internal organ - the intellect, the ego and the mind, that it is said to be bound. It is the ego, and not the *Purusa*, which is bound. When the *Purusa* realizes its own pure nature, it gets liberated which in fact it always was. Hence bondage is due to ignorance or non-discrimination between the self and the non-self. Liberation cannot obtain by means of actions. *Karma*, good or bad or indifferent, is the function of the *gunas* and leads to bondage and not to liberation. Good actions may lead to heaven and bad actions to hell but heaven and hell alike, like this worldly life, are subject to pain. It is only knowledge which leads to liberation because bondage is due to ignorance or ignorance can be removed only by knowledge. The *jiva* has to realize itself as the pure *Purusa* through discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakrti*. Actions and fruits, merits and demerits, pleasure and pain all belong to the non-self. The knowledge that 'I am not (the non-self), that' nothing is mine', that 'ego is unreal', when constantly meditated upon, becomes pure, incontrovertible and absolute and leads to liberation. Samkhya believes that bondage and liberation are only phenomenal. The bondage of the *Purusa* is a fiction. It is only the ego, the product of *Prakrti*, which is bound. And consequently it is only the ego which is liberated. *Purusa*, in its complete isolation, is untouched by bondage and liberation. Ishvarakrsna says, that *Purusa* is really neither bound nor is it liberated nor does it transmigrate; bondage, liberation and transmigration belong to *Prakrti* in its manifold forms.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What is *Prakrti* and what are the justifications given by Samkhya?

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2. What are the arguments for the proofs of *Purusa*?

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3. Explain the Samkhya concept of liberation.

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2.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to give clear ideas about the central concepts of Samkhya. The Samkhya metaphysics, especially its doctrine of *prakrti*, rests mainly on its theory of causation, which is known as *satkarya vada*. It is a theory as to the relation of an effect to its material cause. *Prakrti* is the ultimate cause of the world of objects. The *Purusa* is an indubitable reality. *Purusa* or self is pure, eternal and all pervading consciousness. Samkhya accepts only three independent sources of valid knowledge. These are perception, inference and scriptural testimony. The other sources of knowledge like comparison, postulation and non-cognition are included under these three, and not recognized as separate sources of knowledge. Finally we conclude the unit with the expression that in the Samkhya system, Liberation is just the absolute and complete cessation of all pain without a possibility of return.

2.9 KEYWORDS

Prakrti: *Prakrti* is the ultimate cause of the world of objects. *Prakrti* is constituted by three *gunas* called *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

Purusa: *Purusa* is an indubitable reality. *Purusa* is pure, eternal and all pervading consciousness.

Bondage: Bondage is non-discrimination between self and non-self. Bondage is ignorance.

Liberation: Liberation is the absolute cessation of all pain.

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UNIT 3 YOGA

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- 3.0. Objectives
- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. Modifications of *Chitta*
- 3.3. *Chitta Bhumi*
- 3.4. Kinds of *Klesas*
- 3.5. *Ashtanga* Yoga
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3.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to give a description of Yoga as a philosophy associated with the school of Samkhya as the practical method for achieving the understanding of the self. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the discipline necessary for the pure subject to recognize itself, and separate itself from the empirical reality with which it is confused. In this unit we shall try to give you the meaning of the word 'Yoga'. Since Yoga is defined as the cessation of the modification of *chitta*, this unit also covers *chitta* and its *vruttis*. Again, Yoga also advocates control over the body, the senses and the mind. This involves eight stages and the same is explained in the unit as *Ashtanga* yoga. Finally, it gives a brief study on the theism or the place of God in Yoga. Thus by the end of the unit you should be able :

- To have sufficient understanding of Yoga and its meaning;
- To know about the five kinds of modifications of the *chitta*;
- To interpret eight stages or *Ashtanga* marga of Yoga;
- To comprehend the place and nature of God in Yoga;

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'Yoga' literally means 'union', i.e., spiritual union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul and is used in this sense in the Vedanta. Bhagavad Gita defines Yoga as that state than which there is nothing higher or worth realising and firmly rooted in which a person is free

from all pains and misery. But according to Patanjali, who is the traditional founder of the Yoga system, Yoga does not mean union but spiritual effort to attain perfection through the control of the body, senses and mind and through right discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakrti*. The Yoga-sutra of Patanjali is divided into four parts. The first is called *samadhi-pada* which deals with the nature and aim of concentration. The second, *sadhanapada*, explains the means to realize this end. The third, *vibhutipada*, deals with the supra-normal powers which can be acquired through Yoga. The fourth, *kaivalyapada*, describes the nature of liberation and the reality of the transcendental self.

Yoga is the practical path of realisation of the theoretical ideals of Samkhya Philosophy. The Samkhya Philosophy emphasises the attainment of knowledge by means of study, concentration and meditation. The Yoga presents a practical path for the realisation of the self. It tells us the way by following which the self can be realised. Yoga admits all the three *pramanas* accepted by Samkhya, i.e, perception, inference and scripture. The *Sadhana* of Yoga is necessary for the study of Samkhya Philosophy. Thus Yoga system of Patanjali, is a complement of Samkhya. Its epistemological theories are based on the ground of Samkhya's metaphysics. Hence, it is rightly said that the Yoga system is the natural complement of practical discipline to achieve the Samkhya ideal of *kaivalya*. Yoga includes moral restraints, and spiritual imperatives, as well as the exercises (*asanas*) designed to withdraw consciousness from the senses, focus the mind and ultimately achieve meditation in which the self is completely and transparently understood. The total and absolute restraint of the mental functions constitutes the Yogic trance. With this restraint the mind empties itself of all contents, it becomes still. The senses then do not receive the messages coming from the external world. In the 21st century the philosophy and practice of Yoga is becoming increasingly popular in the West also.

3.2. MODIFICATIONS OF CHITTA

As has been already pointed out the *chitta*, inspite of being material, seems to be like living due to the reflection of self in it. It is these changes in the *chitta* which are known as its *vrittis* or modifications. These modifications are due to ignorance and their result is the bondage. These modifications are five types which are as follows. i) *Pramana*: By being outside, through the sensation, the *chitta* attains the form of objects, this is known as *pramana*. ii) *Viparyaya*: The false knowledge of any thing is known as *Viparyaya* like that of rope-snake. iii) *Vikalpa*: This is the knowledge in which the object which is known does not exist like that of a hare's horn. iv) *Nidra*: The modification of the *chitta* which is the substratum of knowledge of absence of anything is known as *nidra*. But this stage should not be conceived as the total absence of knowledge because after arising from sleep the person has consciousness that he slept well. Hence sleep is also a modification. v) *Smriti*: *Smriti* or memory is the recollection of past experience through the impressions left behind.

3.3. CHITTA BHUMI

There are five levels of mental life (*chitta bhumi*). The difference in the levels are due to the predominance of different *gunas*. i) *Ksipta*: The lowest level is called *ksipta* or restless, because the mind here is restless due to the excess of *rajas* and is tossed about like a shuttle cock between different sense-objects. ii) *Mudha* or torpid: The mind here has the predominance of *tamas* and tends towards ignorance, sleep and lethargy. iii) *Vikshipta* or distracted: Here *sattva* predominates,

but *rajas* also asserts itself at times. This differs from *ksipta* stages because due to the preponderance of *sattva* sometimes there is temporary ceasing of the modification of *chitta* in this stage. iv) *Ekagra* or concentrated: The stages of *chitta* when it is fixed on one subject. The mind here is entirely dominated by *sattva* and *rajas* and *tamas* are subsided. v) *Niruddha* or restricted: The fifth and the highest level is called *Niruddha*. Here the mental modifications are arrested, though their latent impressions remain. The first three levels are not at all conducive to Yogic life. Only the last two are.

3.4. KINDS OF KLESAS

In fact the *Purusa* is the eternally pure and transcendental consciousness. It is the *chitta* with the reflection of the *Purusa* in it or the *Purusa* as reflected in the *chitta*, which is the phenomenal ego or *jiva*, which is subject to birth and death and to all painful or pleasurable experiences. There are five kinds of sufferings (*klesa*) to which it is subject. These are: 1.ignorance (*avidya*) 2. egoism (*asmita*) 3.attachment (*raga*) 4.aversion (*dvesa*) 5.clinging to life and instinctive fear of death (*abhinivesa*). The bondage of the self is due to its wrong identification with the mental modifications and liberation. Therefore means to end this wrong identification is through proper discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakrti* and the consequent cessation of mental modifications. It is the aim of Yoga to bring about this result.

3.5. ASHTANGA YOGA

Yoga advocates control over the body, the senses and the mind. It does not want to kill the body; on the other hand, it recommends its perfection. A sound mind needs a sound body. Sensual attachment and passions distract body as well as the mind. They must be conquered. To overcome them, Yoga gives us the Eightfold Path of Discipline or the *Ashtanga* Yoga. The prescribed eight *sadhanas* to control *chitta* are the following; 1.*Yama*, 2.*Niyama*, 3.*Asana*, 4.*Pranayama*, 5.*Prathyahara*, 6.*Dharana*, 7.*Dhyana*, 8.*Samadhi*.

1. *Yama* (Self-restrained)

Yama is the control of the body,speech and mind. It means abstention . The *Yamas* are five which are as follows. i) Non-violence (*ahimsa*): It is abstention from injury through thoughts, words and deeds. ii) Truth (*satya*): Truth is to be exact in mind and speech, ie; to speak things as they are and to remember exactly as seen, heard and imagined. Thus it is abstention from falsehood. iii) Non-stealing (*asteya*): It is abstention from stealing. It includes both not taking or stealing another's property and have even a desire for it. iv) Celibacy (*brahmacarya*): It is abstention from passions and lust. *Brahmacarya* is the control of attachment in the enjoyment of the senses. v) Non-possession (*aparigraha*): *Aparigraha* requires not to accept any unnecessary things or collect it. It is abstention from avarice. All the above mentioned *yamas* are necessary for the concentration of *chitta*.

2. *Niyama* (Positive rules of conduct)

Another important step in Yoga is *Niyama* or following the rules of good conduct. These *Niyamas* are five which are as follows: i) Purity (*sauca*): *Sauca* includes external cleaning through bath, pure diet etc. as well as internal purification through sympathy, friendliness,

detachment etc. ii) Contentment (*santosa*): *Santosa* means satisfaction in whatever is attained by sufficient and suitable efforts. iii) Right aspiration (*tapas*): *Tapas* includes the practice of tolerance of cold and heat. It requires various types of hard practices. iv) Study of Philosophical texts (*svadhyaya*): *Svadhyaya* means reading of religious scriptures. It is very much useful in the spiritual advancement. Hence it is a necessary principle of good conduct in Yoga. v) Devotion to God (*Iswarapranidhana*): The fifth *niyama* in Yoga is to remember God and to surrender oneself to Him. This helps the aspirant in the practice of Yoga.

The Yoga ethics lays stress on a harmonious relationship between the individual and the society. The positive and negative rules together constitute all that is necessary for a perfect moral life. They are known as *Ten Commandments of Yoga*. Through them the moral foundation of Yogic discipline is made. After the moral preparation comes the preliminary training of one's body frame. It consists of three steps- *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*.

3. Asana

The third step in the advancement of yoga is Asana or posture. It means steady and comfortable posture. Asana emphasizes the importance of correct and comfortable bodily posture before one begins meditation. Patanjali mentions that the posture must be firm, pleasant and easy. The idea is that body must be disciplined to assume a posture which is helpful for concentration. This is the discipline of the body.

4. Pranayama

It means control of breath and deals with regulation of inhalation, retention and exhalation of breath. The regulating of breathing process helps considerably to bring the mind under control. The Yogi who systematically practices *pranayama* is in a position to control the movements of the lungs and also of the heart. For the Yogi, there is no involuntary organ in the body. The true Yogi can even stop breathing and restart it at his will. It is highly conducive to the concentration of mind. But it must be performed under expert guidance. Otherwise, it may have bad after-effects.

5. Pratyahara

It is the control of the senses and consists in withdrawing the senses from their objects. Our senses have a natural tendency to go to outward objects and they perceive the facts of *Prakrti*. They can be compared to a mirror which is facing the other way reflecting everything except the image of the person that holds it. They must be checked and directed towards the internal goal. It is the process of introversion. The above five steps are called external aids to Yoga (*bahiranga sadhana*) while the remaining three which follow are called internal aids (*antaranga sadhana*). The last three steps are stages of mind control and therefore they constitute Yoga proper.

6. Dharana

It is fixing of the mind on the object of meditation. Here the mind is steadied by making all our thoughts flow in single unbroken channel. Ordinarily the mind is easily disturbed. It passes from objects to objects in a matter of seconds. The mind is to be tied to a particular object in order that it may become steady and unmoving. Any object like the tip of the nose or the mid point of the eye brows or the image of the deity may be chosen for meditating upon in this stage. The mind must be steadfast like the unflickering flame of a lamp.

7. *Dhyana*

It means meditation and consists in the undisturbed flow of thought round the object of meditation. It is steadfast contemplation without any break. When the process of thought is continuous, it is called *dhyana*. Meditation is always about something. That something gets fixed in the mind through meditation. *Dhyana* culminates in Samadhi.

8. *Samadhi*

It is the final step in Yoga. It means concentration. Here the mind is completely absorbed in the object of meditation. In *dhyana* the act of meditation and object of meditation remain separate. But here they become one. It is the highest means to realize the cessation of mental modifications which is the end. It is the ecstatic state in which the connection with the external world is broken and through which one has to pass before liberation. Here the spirit is lifted above the world process and is restored to its original stage. Samadhi is of two kinds: Conscious or *samaprajnata* and supra-conscious or *asmaprajnata*. In the former consciousness of the object of meditation persists, in the latter it is transcended. The former is *Ekagra* and the latter is *Niruddha*. In the former, the mind remains concentrated on the object of meditation. The meditator and the object of meditation are fused together, yet the consciousness of the object of meditation persists. This state is said to be of four kinds. i) *Savitarka*: When the *chitta* is concentrated on a gross object of meditation like the tip of the nose or the mid-point of eyebrows or the image of the deity. ii) *Savichara*: When the *chitta* is concentrated on a subtler object of meditation like the *tanmatras*. iii) *Sananda*: When the *chitta* is concentrated on a still subtler object of meditation which produces joy, like the senses. iv) *Sasmita*: When *chitta* is concentrated on the ego-substance with which the self is generally identified. Here we have conscious ecstasy where individuality persists.

Asamaprajnata samadhi is the supra-conscious concentration where the meditator and the object of meditation are completely fused together and there is not even consciousness of the object of meditation. Here no new mental modification arise. They are checked (*niruddha*), though the latent impressions may continue. If the fire is restricted to a particular fuel, it burns that fuel alone; but when the fuel has been completely burnt, the fire also lies down. Similarly in conscious concentration, the mind is fixed on the object of meditation alone and modification arises only in respect of this object of meditation. But in supra-conscious concentration, even this modification ceases. It is the highest form of Yoga which is divine madness, perfect mystic ecstasy difficult to describe and more difficult to attain. Even those who attain it cannot retain it longer. Immediately or after very short time, the body breaks and they obtain complete liberation. *Asamprajnata* or *Nirbeeja* (attributeless) *samadhi* is the highest form of *samadhi* in which the distinction between the knower, knowledge and the known, disappears. In it there are no *klesas* or attributes. Hence, it is known as *nirbeeja* or attributeless *samadhi*. This form of *samadhi* is also divided into two subtypes, which are i) *Bhava Pratyaya Samadhi*: *Samadhi* is disturbed due to ignorance. *Bhava* means ignorance. Ignorance means seeing the self as non-self. In this form of *samadhi* only the *samskaras* of the passions remain. Thus the ignorance is not absolutely destroyed at this stage due to which even after the attainment of this stage the beings have to return to the world again. ii) *Upaya Pratyaya*: In this type of *samadhi* the ignorance is absolutely destroyed due to arousal of *prajna*. In it all the *klesas* are annihilated and the *chitta* becomes established in true knowledge. This is the *samadhi* of the Yogis. It breeds the pleasure of the *chitta*, concentration, knowledge etc.

Yoga is the steadiness of the mind, with the annihilation of the mental states, into a particular type of graduated state leading to self realization. Yoga generates certain supra-normal powers. But they should be avoided and attention should be fixed only on the liberation which is the end of human life. The ideal is *Kaivalya*, the absolute independence and eternal and free life of the *Purusa*, free from *Prakrti*.

Check your Progress – I

Note: Use the space for writing the answers.

1. Bring out the nature of the various levels of mental life as expounded by Yoga Philosophy.

2. Explain the eightfold path of the Yoga system. What is its goal?

3.6. PLACE OF GOD IN YOGA

The Samkhya in its original form is atheistic. The difference between the Yoga and Samkhya is that while the former asserts a place to God, the latter does not. The Yoga therefore is described as the Samkhya with God. Yoga accepts the existence of God. Iswara is only one of the many objects on which Yogis can concentrate their mind. The only purpose of Iswara is to do good to his devotees. Thus God in Yoga has only practical importance. The meditation on God or *pranava* helps in the concentration of *chitta*. According to Patanjali, *Iswara pranidhana* helps in the attainment of *samadhi*. Thus in the old Yoga philosophy not much theoretical importance has been attached to God. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has also supported this view. According to him, the God of Yoga is not the *summum bonum* of life. Patanjali himself did not consider God as necessary to solve the problems of the world. But the later Yogis have taken also a theoretical interest in Him and have tried to prove His existence as necessary philosophical speculation. Patanjali defines God as a special kind of *Purusa* who is always free from pains, actions, affects and impressions. He is eternally free and was never bound nor has any possibility of being bound. He is above the law of *karma*. He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is perfection incarnate. He is the purest knowledge.

Devotion to God is one of the surest means of obtaining concentration. Patanjali thus makes devotion to God as one of the aids of Yoga. The proofs advanced for His existence are: (1) the Veda tells us that God exists (2) the law of continuity tells us that there must be the highest limit of knowledge and perfection which is God (3) God is responsible for the association and

dissociation of *Purusa* and *Prakrti* (4) devotion to God is the surest way of obtaining concentration and thereby liberation. By disinterested devotion the yogi becomes eligible for the grace of God. Surrender to God is one of the important principles of Yoga. This conception of God is certainly different from that of the Upanishads. In the Upanishads, God is the *Saguna* Brahman, who is the very social of the entire Universe. But in Samkhya Yoga, God is only a particular Self, *Purusa Visesa*.

God of Yoga is not the creator, preserver or destroyer of this world. He is only a special *Purusa*. He does not reward or punish the souls. Innumerable *Purusas* and *Prakrti*, all eternal and absolutes, are there to limit Him. He cannot grant liberation. He can only remove the obstacles in the upward progress of the devotees. Directly He has nothing to do with the bondage and the liberation of the *Purusas*. Ignorance binds and discrimination between *Prakrti* and *Purusa* liberates. The end of human life is not the union with God, but only the separation of *Purusa* from *Prakrti*. Devotion to God is only a step to this ultimate liberation. Though according to Patanjali, *Iswarapranidhana* is a means to attain *samadhi*, the later yoga philosophers considered it as the best means because God is not only an object of concentration but also he removes the impediments from the path of aspirants and makes the path of yoga easy. By meditating on God with one pointed mind, the intellect is purified and all the impediments are destroyed. The aspirant realises his self through *Iswarapranidhana*.

3.7. EIGHT SIDDHIS

According to Yoga philosophy, the Yogis attain various *siddhis* by the practice of the path of Yoga. These powers are mainly of eight types and hence called *Ashta siddhi* or *Ashta Aisvarya*: (1) *Anima*- This is the power to become small like atom and so to disappear. (2) *Laghima*- This is the power to become light cotton and so to fly away. (3) *Mahima*-This is the power to become big like mountains. (4) *Prapti*-This is the power to secure whatever is desired. (5) *Prakamyā*-This is the power by which all the impediments in the will removed. (6) *Vashitwa*- This is the power by which all the living beings can be conquered. (7) *Eshitwa*- This is the power by which one attains absolute mastery on all physical objects. (8) *Yatramavasayitwa*- This is the power by which all the desires are fulfilled. The above mentioned eight *siddhis* can be used according to the wish of the Yogi. But in the Yoga philosophy the pursuance of the path of the Yoga for the attainment of these powers has been vehemently decried because that results in misleading the aspirant from the path of Yoga. The ultimate end of the Yoga is not the attainment of these powers, but the realisation of *Moksa*. Thus, Yoga is a combination of practical physical development and discipline with a mystical objective which is its ultimate purpose. This co-ordination of a system of thought with a programme of daily life exercises is based on physiological psychology as well as religious philosophy.

3.8. LET US SUM UP

In this Unit our attempt is to provide a clear idea of Patanjali's Yoga system which enables one to attain *Kaivalya*. Since it is the cessation of the modifications of *chitta*, *chitta vrttis* are dealt in detail. The kinds of *klesas* to which *Purusa* is subjected to, are also given. The eight limbs of Yoga or *Ashtanga* Yoga which leads to self-realization is discussed. As this system is attaining more and more importance these days each step of Yoga is given with

detailed explanation. In the concluding part of the unit, the theism of Yoga, i.e., the nature and place of God is also discussed.

Check your Progress – II

Note: Use the space for your answers.

1. What is *Samadhi* according to Patanjali? How can it be attained.?

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2. What is the place and nature of God in Yoga philosophy?

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3.9. KEY WORDS

Kaivalya: Absolute independence and eternal and free life of *Purusa*, free from *Prakrti*.

Chitta vrttis: Modifications of *chitta* or *manas*

Chitta bhumi: Different levels of mental life due to predominance of different *gunas*.

Klesas: Sufferings to which soul is subjected to.

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UNIT 4 MIMAMSA

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

This chapter aims to highlight the contribution of Mimamsa to Indian philosophy. A major interest of this school is interpretation. They can be considered to be the first in India to have embarked on interpreting the Vedas (germ of hermeneutic analysis found). Hence this chapter with varied sections on theory of knowledge and metaphysics aims to bring out this aspect. In fact, the section on theory of knowledge contains such interpretative analysis. Some of the basic features of this chapter are:

- interpreting the Vedas
 - theory of validity of knowledge
 - theory of error
 - theory of reality (realism)
 - theory of God
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4.1 INTRODUCTION

Mimamsa is a philosophical school (advocating realism) in India which developed the ritualistic aspect of the Vedas. It must be noted that the Vedas depict two different aspects – the ritualistic aspect and speculative aspect. Of the 6 orthodox systems of philosophy (*astika darsanas*), - Nyaya, Vaishesika, Samkhya and Yoga developed their philosophies independently though owing allegiance to the Vedas. But Mimamsa and Vedanta are two schools which developed the two different aspects of the Vedas. While Mimamsa developed from the ritualistic side, Vedanta developed from the speculative side of the Vedas. In fact, it is because of this reason that

philosophers are inclined to name them as *purva* Mimamsa (early Mimamsa) and *uttara* Mimamsa (later Mimamsa). They were also known as *karma* Mimamsa and *jnana* Mimamsa respectively.

There are two ways in which Mimamsa is useful to us today:

- (a) Gives a methodology of interpretation with which the complicated vedic injunctions regarding rituals can be understood.
- (b) Provides a philosophical justification of the beliefs on which ritualism depends.

The faith underlying vedic ritualism is substantiated by Mimamsa in the following ways:

- 1. Belief in the existence of a soul which survives death and enjoys the fruits of the rituals in heaven
- 2. Belief in some power or potency which preserves the effects of the rituals performed
- 3. Belief in the infallibility of the Vedas
- 4. Our life and actions are real and not dreams

Jaiminiya sutra is the work that laid down the principles of this school – *purva* Mimamsa. Hence, Jaimini is thought to be the systematiser of this school of thought. Sabaraswami wrote the major commentary (*bhasya*) for this work. There were many more commentators after him. But the two most famous and important commentators are Kumarila Bhatta and Prabhakara Misra who founded the two schools of philosophy named after them – Bhatta school of Mimamsa and Prabhakara school of Mimamsa. The term ‘Mimamsa’ etymologically means ‘solution of some problem by reflection and critical examination’.

4.2 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

As Mimamsa was interested in interpreting the Vedas, they prominently discussed the nature and validity of knowledge, criterion of truth and falsity, sources of valid knowledge etc.

Nature and Sources of knowledge

That knowledge which gives some new information about something, and is not contradicted by another knowledge and which is not generated by defective conditions (like defective sense organ or fallacious argument) is valid knowledge. Mimamsa admits two kinds of valid knowledge – immediate and mediate. Immediate knowledge arises in the soul when the object is in direct contact with both the internal sense organ (mind) and the external 5 sense organs. This perception arises in two stages – when we see an object, there is indeterminate perception of that object – a bare awareness of it (knowing that it is an object but not knowing what object it is). This is indeterminate, immediate knowledge (*nirvikalpaka pratyaksa*). When we come to interpret that object on the basis of our previous knowledge we understand it as something. That is determinate perception (*savikalpaka pratyaksa*) which is expressed in statements like ‘this is a man’ or ‘this is table’ etc. These two stages of perception, no doubt, gives us valid knowledge. However, the objects are not known explicitly in the first stage. Yet, what is known clearly in the second stage is implicitly known in the first stage. This means that the mind only interprets what it sees in the first stage with the help of past experience. It does not ascribe something imaginarily. Hence perception results in valid knowledge.

Now, what we just saw is perceptual knowledge. Are there non-perceptual sources of knowledge? What are they? Mimamsa accepts five more nonperceptual sources of knowledge. They are: inference (*anumana*), comparison (*upamana*), verbal testimony (*sabda*), postulation (*arthapatti*) and nonperception (*anupalabdhi*). The last source of knowledge is accepted only by Kumarila Bhatta's school of Mimamsa and not by Prabhakara's school of Mimamsa.

The Mimamsa understanding of inference is similar to that of Nyaya and hence we need not discuss it here.

Mimamsa understanding of Comparison

After Nyaya, Mimamsa accepts comparison as an independent source of knowledge. According to Nyaya, we get valid knowledge of an object by comparing it with what is already known. That is, we understand the new object through comparing it with what is already known by us. Here, Mimamsa differs from Nyaya school of philosophy. To the Mimamsa, we do not get knowledge of the new object from the knowledge of similarity that exists between this object and the known object but we get the knowledge of similarity that is there between the object that is seen and the remembered object. For example, Nyaya would say that when we see a new object, namely a gavaya (or wild ox), we are told that the wild ox is similar to the domestic cow and that the difference is that the ox is wild. So we derive knowledge of a new object by comparing it with what has already been known. But the same example will be understood by Mimamsa differently. To them, when we compare the ox with the cow that is already known, we derive the knowledge of similarity that exists between the two. This source of knowledge is independent and cannot be classed under perception or inference as done by other schools of philosophy (except Nyaya). The knowledge of similarity is the new cognition here and that is not derived from any other source of knowledge, according to Mimamsa.

Mimamsa understanding of *sabda*

Sabda is knowledge obtained from verbal authority. This source of knowledge is very important for the Mimamsakas. It is with this that they are going to justify the impersonal authority of the Vedas. It was seen that *sabda* is of two kinds – personal and impersonal – that is, knowledge derived from the words spoken or written by an individual or knowledge derived from the Vedas which have not been written or spoken by any individual. Again, authority may either give information on the existence of something or merely give directions for the performance of an action. Mimamsa is interested only in the knowledge from the Vedas and that too, about the injunctions laid down in it regarding the performance of certain actions. In fact, they are of the view that any part of the Veda which does not give information on the performance of rituals but is said to speak about the existence of something (immortality of the soul or existence of god etc) is useless. They just wanted to highlight what is essential for the performance of rituals. Hence their philosophy is referred to as ritualistic pragmatism.

According to most of the schools admitting the authority of the Vedas, it is god who is the author of the Vedas. But for Mimamsa, Vedas are impersonal – not written or spoken by any person.

They come forward with elaborate arguments to suggest the impersonal authority of the Vedas by asking the following questions.

- If the Vedas had any author, then his name would have been known and remembered.
- Even those who say that Vedas are not eternal but produced are not in agreement with each other on the origin of the Vedas. Some say that god is the author of the Vedas while some say that it is PrajaPati or Hiranyagarbha and thus the argument goes on.
- Those people, who regard Vedas to have been written, think vaguely on the basis of the analogy of ordinary books written by human beings and say that even the Veda should have an author.
- The names of certain persons are cited in the Vedas. But they are only seers to whom the Vedas were revealed or the founders of different vedic schools.
- Now, it may be asked that the Vedas are composed of words and that these words are produced and non-eternal. Let us see the reply by the Mimamsakas here. To them, the words are not really the perceived sounds. These sounds are produced by the speaker and heard by the listener, no doubt. But words are really the letters which are partless and uncaused. A letter, like 'k' is uttered and revealed by different persons at different places and times and in different ways. Though these letter-sounds vary, we recognize that the same letter is pronounced. This identity shows that the words are not produced at any time and place, but transcends them. (here, we find a linguistic analysis by the Mimamsakas).

Hence, Mimamsa regards words as letters which are eternal, as having an uncaused existence.

- The Vedas enjoin certain ritual duties which bear fruits like attainment of heaven etc. Now, if the Vedas have been written by anybody, then we have to ask who that person is who has the capacity to know the past, present and future in order to declare the connection between the action and its result.
- If we agree that the Vedas have an author then we might have to agree (with the Carvakas), that this author is a cunning deceiver because of what is contained in the injunctions.
- The Vedas are not vitiated by any defects to which the works of imperfect beings are subject.

Thus, the Mimamsakas hold that the Vedas are impersonal and that they are not the works produced by any person. The applicability of the Vedas to all times itself shows that they are not the products of a particular time, place and individual. The Mimamsakas very clearly state that this knowledge cannot be classified under perception or inference. They assert that the validity of every knowledge is assured by the conditions which generate that knowledge, so the knowledge derived from authority carries with itself such assurance of its own truth.

Mimamsa understanding of postulation (*arthapatti*)

Datta and Chattejee (see *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p. 325) state that “postulation (*arthapatti*) is the necessary supposition of an unperceived fact which alone can explain a phenomenon that demands explanation”. When a given fact cannot be explained without supposing another fact, then this other fact is postulated in order for us to obtain knowledge of

that given fact. For example, when we see a man growing fat but fasting during the day, we cannot explain how this is happening. The two facts of fatness and fasting cannot be reconciled. In order to clarify this we need to postulate that this may be due to heredity or because he eats during night. Unless we postulate this, we cannot explain the fatness of the person. This is postulation. This knowledge cannot be brought under perception or inference. The person eating in the night is not perceived by us; nor is there any inseparable (*vyapti*) relation between eating in the night and becoming fat. Hence this source of knowledge cannot be brought under perception or inference.

Another example that can be given here explains that this source of knowledge is used by us in daily life. When, for example, we go to a friend's house and we see that he is not at home, we postulate that he must be somewhere outside. This is postulation. This postulation alone can help us explain how a person who is alive is not to be found in the place where he is supposed to be found. Hence this kind of knowledge cannot be grouped under perception, inference or testimony. We also say that 'industry is the key to success'. Here, the term 'key' does not denote the real key but suggests its secondary meaning. This is postulation.

Mimamsa understanding of non-perception (*anupalabdhi*)

This source of knowledge is accepted by one of the schools of Mimamsa – namely, Bhatta school of Mimamsa and Advaita Vedanta. To them, nonperception is the source of our immediate knowledge of non-existence of a thing. I say that a jar does not exist here only because I do not perceive it. This is non-perception. That is, we should not conclude that all non-perception leads to the conclusion of non-existence of what is not perceived. We do not perceive a table in the dark; nor do we perceive such supersensible entities as atoms, ether, virtue, vice etc. yet, we do not judge them to be non-existent. Why? This is because, if a thing should have been perceived under certain circumstances, only then its non-perception under those circumstances would give us the knowledge of non-existence of that entity. The supersensible entities are those that are beyond our senses. So we cannot say that they are non-existent when we do not see them.

Validity of Knowledge

Validity of knowledge according to Mimamsa is called *svatah pramanyavada*. Let us see what it is. How is knowledge valid? What are the conditions of a valid knowledge? For example, if I have to see a thing, my eye should be free of defect. If there is defect in my eye, then, I cannot see the thing clearly. Hence, the condition that generates knowledge should be free of defect. Only this will result in valid knowledge. Moreover, this knowledge should be beyond doubt. Mimamsa draws two conclusions from this: (a) the validity of knowledge arises from the very conditions that give rise to that knowledge, and not from any extra conditions (*pramanyam svatah utpadyate*). (b) the validity of knowledge is also believed in or known as soon as the knowledge arises; this belief does not wait for any verification by something else. This Mimamsa view is known as the theory of intrinsic validity (*svatah pramanyavada*).

This means that truth is self-evident. It is not verified by any other conditions. That is, the validity of any knowledge is evident in the conditions that generate that knowledge. Now, what if this knowledge is contradicted by any other knowledge? In such a case, we infer the falsity of knowledge. Thus, while validity of knowledge arises from the conditions from which that knowledge arises, falsity of that knowledge arises due to extraneous conditions. Dr S.Radhakrishnan (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol 2) quotes, “*jñanasya pramanyam svatah, apramanyam paratah*”

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space for your answers.

1. How Mimamsa interpret the Vedas? Explain with their theory of knowledge.

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2. Explain *svatah pramanyavada*.

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4.3 MIMAMSA THEORY OF ERROR

If truth is self-evident and every knowledge is true, then, how does error arise? For example, when we mistake a rope to be a snake we are afraid of the rope as long as we think it to be a snake. Only when we realize that it is not a snake and that it is a rope, we come out of that fear. Now, knowledge of rope as a snake is an error. How does this error arise when all knowledge is valid? There are two answers for this question in the two schools of Mimamsa – Bhatta school and Misra school. Let us look into them now.

According to the Prabhakara Misra school, every knowledge is true, and that nothing false ever appears in error. Their theory of error is known as *akhyativada* or denial of illusory appearance. Let us see that view now with the rope-snake example. When I perceive a rope as a snake, there

is a mixture of two types of knowledge – the perception of a long thing (perceived thing) and our memory of a snake perceived in the past (remembered thing). Here, the distinction between the perceived thing and the remembered thing is not perceived by us. Hence we are afraid of a rope as though it is a snake. Now, our behaviour towards rope is faulty and not our knowledge (because there are two kinds of knowledge here, namely knowledge of a long thing and our memory of a snake without the knowledge of distinction between them). Therefore, we do not erroneously perceive a rope to be a snake but that there is only a cognitive defect coupled with non-discrimination. This is negative, according to the Prabhakara Misra school of Mimamsa but not the same as error. Error is not merely want of knowledge but a positive mental state.

The Bhatta school of Mimamsa does not accept this view. To them, mere nondiscrimination cannot explain error. We cannot deny that sometimes the illusory object appears positively before us. If my eye-ball is pressed while looking at the moon, two moons positively appear before us. The snake illusion is also similar to this. Now, the Bhatta school argues that when we perceive a snake in a rope and judge that it is a snake, both the subject and the predicate are real. The rope is brought under the class of snakes which also exists. Then how does error arise? It is simple. Error consists, however, in relating these two really existing but separate things in the subject-predicate way. Thus error is always wrong relation and is not to be found in the object. The Bhatta theory of error is known as *viparitakyativada*. Thus the Prabhakaras exempt all knowledge from error while the Bhattas admit that error may affect some cognitive relations of objects, though the objects themselves are always correctly perceived. One thing common to both schools is that error affects activity rather than knowledge. Thus error becomes an exceptional case of the falsification of the normal claim that every knowledge makes for truth.

4.4. THEORY OF REALITY

Mimamsa theory of reality is based on their theory of perception. When we perceive, we perceive objects. Moreover, the theory of *svatahpramanvada* (theory of intrinsic validity of knowledge) enables us to understand the reality of objects. Mimamsakas are realists and pluralists. The universe is real and is independent of the mind which perceives it. Thus, the world is eternally there for them (it is neither created nor destroyed). However, they also seem to believe in souls, heaven, hell, deities to whom sacrifice is to be performed in addition to the world that is accepted as real by them. The Mimamsakas too, like the Vaishesikas, believe in the reality of atoms. However, they do not postulate an efficient cause for the arrangement of atoms in order for the emergence of the world. Instead, they believe in the law of karma to have regulated the order or arrangement of atoms. Being realists, they categorise the reality. Prabhakara admits of 8 such categories – substance (*dravya*), quality (*guna*), action (*karma*), generality (*samanya*), inherence (*paratantrata*), force (*sakti*), similarity (*sadrsya*) and number (*samkhya*). Kumarila divides all categories into positive (*bhava*) and negative (*abhava*). Prior, posterior, absolute and mutual are the four kinds of *abhava*. The positive categories (*bhava*) are also four. They are substance, quality, action and generality. He brings force and similarity under substance.

4.5 THEORY OF SOULS

Jaimini does not offer any detailed proof of the reality of soul. However, he seems to accept the arguments of the Vedanta. He distinguishes the self from the understanding and the senses. The self is neither the body, nor the senses nor even the intellect. It is the cogniser. Sabara accepts the reality of a permanent cogniser which is “known by itself and incapable of being seen or shown by others”, says S.Radhakrishnan (*Ibid.*, p. 408). Their interest in interpreting the vedic injunctions as bringing fruits either in this life or in the afterlife has forced them to accept a soul which survives even when the body is destroyed at the time of death. The Mimamsakas accept plurality of selves in order to account for variety of experiences.

4.6 BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

According to Prabhakara, liberation consists in the total disappearance of dharma and *adharma*, whose operation is the cause of rebirth. Another important term that needs mention here is *apurva* (or unseen force or imperceptible antecedent of the fruit of our actions. All acts bear fruits. Of course, not all acts can result in its fructification immediately. Some may effect a result later. Jaimini assumes the existence of such unseen force as *apurva*. It can be considered as the metaphysical link between the action and its result. Now, it is this unseen force that determines whether the soul is in bondage or liberated. Hence Mimamsa prescribes that certain duties as enjoined in the Vedas are to be performed. These duties help man in the right path and thus are responsible for delivering good results. The highest good, according to early Mimamsa, appeared to have been the attainment of heaven or a state of bliss.

However, the later Mimamsa thinkers fall in line with other Indian philosophical schools in holding that the highest good is liberation or freedom from bondage to the body. To them, liberation is an unconscious state, which is free from pleasure and pain. Is Mimamsa atheistic? Mimamsa, we have seen, interprets the ritualistic side of the Vedas. Thus, this school emphasizes the idea of *dharma* – that is, the criteria of discussion here is how man ought to live. Whatever has been said about knowledge, its validity or about error is in relation to this idea of dharma. Now, what is their conception of God? Do they believe in the existence of God? It must be mentioned that the Mimamsakas believe in the authority of the Vedas. But the traditional conception of Mimamsa is atheistic – non-belief in the existence of God. However, authors like Max Mueller finds it difficult to believe that the Mimamsakas, who believe in the authority of the Vedas do not believe in the existence of God (accepted by the Vedas). The Mimamsakas argue that if a creator-God is accepted then He is liable to the charges of cruelty, partiality etc. Therefore, they deny any such creator-God. However, Max Mueller contends that this need not be construed as a case of atheism because, even Advaita Vedanta in India and Spinoza in the West do not accept a creator-God.

However, it must be mentioned that there is no reference to God by the early Mimamsakas while the later Mimamsakas reject the proofs for the existence of God. Thus Mimamsa seems to be atheistic. It might be pointed out that Mimamsa accepts Vedas which talk of a variety of gods – sun, moon, fire etc. These are, at best, deities who are not objects of worship. They are not referred to as existing somewhere bound by space-time continuum; nor are they imaginary entities. Instead, they are eternal and self-manifesting entities described by the eternal, self-revealing Vedas. The Mimamsa was interested mainly in the performance of rituals and these gods were spoken of only in so far as they help man perform the rituals with piety. Thus, we see that “in its great anxiety to maintain the supremacy of the Vedas, the Mimamsa even relegated God to an ambiguous position.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space for your answers.

1. Give the account of Mimamsa understanding of soul.

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2. What is Liberation according to Mimamsa?

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4.7 LET US SUM UP

Mimamsa is an orthodox school of Indian philosophy. It believes in the authority of the Vedas. Realistic (and pluralistic) school of philosophy. However, they are considered to be non-believers in god. Concept of *apurva* is unseen force that delivers the results of our actions. Concept of liberation is attainment of heaven (by earlier thinkers) and freedom from bondage (by later thinkers).

4.8 KEY WORDS

Apurva: unseen force that delivers the results of our actions.

Svatahpramanyavada: theory of intrinsic validity of knowledge.

Viparitakyativada: Bhatta theory of error - Error consists in relating two really existing but separate things in the subject-predicate way. Error is always wrong relation and is not to be found in the object.

4.9 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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