

A critical study in the theory of Atomism of The Naya - Vaisesika philosophy

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ABSTRACT

The Naya - Vaisesika Philosophy proclaims that Paramanus are material cause of the world. Paramanus as atoms are the tiniest things of the world. Atoms or Paramanus are not divisible. They are absolutely undivided partless matter. They are non-conscious things. Though all paramanus are minutest but they are different both in quality and quantity. Each paramanu is compact. No empty space is found in a paramanu or in an atom. Atoms are eternal. They are indestructible. All paramanus are real things. The paramanus or atoms of the Naya-Vaisesika Philosophy are inactive and motionless. Only GOD produces motion in them and then they are combined in motion in creation. Existence of GOD is important in this system for the creation of the world with atoms. This paper shows that a critical study in the theory of Atomism of The Naya-Vaisesika Philosophy. Lastly a conclusion will be derived.

Keywords: Atom, Paramanu, motion, adrista, GOD, matter, energy, substance, guna, knowledge, omnipotent, omniscient, space, time and consciousness.

The Naya-Vaisesika Philosophy describes the world with pluralistic views. They admit that cause and effect are not same kind. Always effects are new kind. In creation of the world, GOD is the efficient cause but paramanus are material cause. GOD produces motion in all inactive atoms or paramanus. Paramanus or atoms are determined and controlled by GOD. Some Naiyayikas and Vaisesikas admit that - adrista are unseen cause which gives motion to motionless paramanus at the beginning of the world. But Adrista is a unconscious thing. An unconscious thing has no power to give motion in all eternally motionless atoms. This very function of the creation of the world is GOD's own activity. He has volition. He is omnipotent and hence only GOD giving motion in all paramanus. That is why all atoms are non-conscious thing but creation of the world is fully spiritual. GOD controls all paramanus in creation.

In Naya-Vaisesika philosophy, Akash, Drk (space), Kal (time), selves and individual minds are eternal and infinite. Out of nine Dravyas (substances), five are eternal, four are infinite and one mind is eternally tiny thing (anupariman). All paramanus of earth, water, fire and air are infinite and eternal. Four substance as Prithivi (earth), Apa (water), Tejas (fire) and Vayu (Air) are four bhutas as composite things. They are transient. Eternally indivisible paramanus of four kinds (earth, water, fire and vayu) unite by GOD's exerting motion. By the combination of atoms, all types of composite things are formed. All such compound things are made of eternally motionless paramanus of earth, water, fire and air.

Thus the Naya-Vaisesika system explain the whole universe with very nine substances (dravyas).

“The dravyas are nine in number, (i) ‘earth’ (prithivi), (ii) ‘Water’ (apa). (3) ‘fire’ (Tejas). (iv) ‘air’ (vayu), (v) akas. (vi) time (kala), (vii) space (dik), (viii) self (atman) and (ix) Manas (man) and they together with their various properties and relation explain the whole universe”¹.

The Naya-Vaisesika philosophy holds that all compound things have their parts according to the causality theory of the system, cause and effect are two new things. Effect is not inherent in its cause.

“Earth, water, fire and air are eternal as atoms and non-eternal as composite products. There are atoms of earth, water, fire and air. They are minutes and indivisible units of physical substances”²

Here it is clear that all things as living and non living things are really composite things are really composite things. To create such living things and non-living things as physical composite things are new things as effects. All effects are produced through theory of causality named Asatkaryavada by GOD as efficient cause and material cause of such four kinds paramanus or atoms.

All living things are produced by GOD with selves, minds, akas, space (dik), Time (kala) and four kinds atoms.

Before creation, GOD, selves, Akas, space (dik), Time (kal), four kinds of eternal paramanus and minds are present at the rest. No motion exists in the universe. The whole universe is at the rest with such nine substances at the beginning of the creation according to the Naya-Vaisesika philosophy.

“The vaisesika maintains that a dyad (dvyanuka) is produced by conjunction of two atoms, which are active or moving. The motion of the atoms is produced by GOD”³.

GOD controls the physical world with his moral order. So mechanical law of atoms are always under control and direction of GOD himself. He governs the universe.

Earlier Vaisesikas introduces the concept of ADRISTA as the “unknown cause” or ‘Unexplained Nature”.

“Adrasta (lit. unseen) stands for “unknown cause” or “unexplained nature” in the earlier Vaisesika writers”⁴

Later Vaisesik writers admit that adrasta is the unconscious agent. So they admit that GOD as the pure consciousness be the efficient cause of the nature.

Udayana admit that GOD is the source of motion as unmoved eternal reality. “GOD is the creator of motion which is the cause of conjunction of the atoms into dyads. A dyad is produced by two atoms, the material cause, their conjunction, the non-inherent cause and the agency of GOD, the efficient cause”⁵.

GOD controls the Adrasta as the unseen cause. Adrasta is also unconscious. Though all atoms are unconscious as material things. But they do not themselves more and unite themselves in bigger magnitude in the creation of the world.

So the omniscient and omnipotent GOD controls all such atoms and Adrasta too. “He is guided by the law of Karma representing the unseen power of merits and demerits. The unseen power is unintelligent and needs GOD as the supervisor and the controller”⁶.

A system for the conjunction of atoms are found in the Naya-Vaisesika. Two unconscious and eternal atoms are joined with the help of GOD. GOD exerts motion in atoms. In this stage, only two paramanus are joined and called as Dvyanuk. Dvyanuk is unperceived. After creating of Dvyanuk, three moving dvyanuks (dyad) are combined and a triad named tryanuk is formed. Tryanuk is perceptible. Caturanuka (a quartard) is formed when four triads (tryanuks) are together combined.

“A quartrad (caturanuk) is produced by the conjunction of four triads, which are active. The quartrads are combined into larger and larger composite substances. The qualities of the composite products are produced by those of component atoms, which are their inheritent cause.”⁷

When matter is devided, its measurement is reduced. The process of division of things ends to paramonus which have parts but not nothingness. So the process of division ends at the atoms, otherwise infinite regress is found. To avoid infinite regress, the Naya-Vaisesika admit that every material things are composed of minutest things which are eternally partless and we call them paramanus. Thus Naiyayikas and Vaisesikas admits the existance of paramanus. They show that all paramanus of a mustard seed is less than the all paramanus of mountain. It is possible due to the existence of partless atoms which are present in them. A master seed is a part of a living plant. It is a body of the living plant. So all bodies of living things are also composed of atom according to the Naya-Vaisesika philosophy. “If all substances were endlessly divisible into an infinite number of parts, the there would be no difference in the magnitude of things. And a mountain and a mustard seed would be of equal dimension. So we must admit that atoms are the minutest parts of composite substances which are partless and indivisible.”⁸

The system holds that all composite things have their parts according to the causality theory of the Naya-Vaisesika philosophy. All compound are made of eternally partless atoms. The features of all compound things are production and destruction. All galaxies, stars planets, living things, non-living things and all components of environment are composed of atoms or paramanus.

The Naya-Vaisesika does not admit completely materialism. The system of Indian philosophy admits spiritualism as the prime guiding principle by which atomism is fully controlled. The Naya-Vaisesika's GOD is the pure consciousness as the absolute knowledge. So GOD is the omniscient. The Naya-Vaisesika's GOD does not create eternal space, eternal time, infinite dik (space), minds selves and all four kinds of paramanus. GOD operates paramanus and produces motion in paramanus to move for the construction of all composite things.

“The Vaisesika Atomism is not materialistic because the vaisesika school admits the reality of the spiritual substances - souls and GOD - and also admits the Law of Karma.”⁹

Vaisesika atomism agrees with Greek atomism of Leucippus and Democritus about atoms having indivisible, partless, imperceptible, material and eternal. They admit that atom are material too. But Greek philosophers admit only quantitative or numerical differences in atoms. But the Naya-Vaisesika hold both quantitative and qualitative differences in atoms. The atoms of earth, water, fire and air possesses different qualities or gunas. The Greek atomists admit that motion is inherent in atoms. But the Naya-Vaisesika admits that no motion is present in atoms. Motion is spiritual according the Naya-Vaisesika system, but Greek atomists and all scientists including physicists admit that motion is material as well as mechanical and physical.

But old Indian philosophy urges that all universe is at rest at the beginning of universe. No motion implies the completely absence of Force, energy, attraction, repulsion and conjunction. In a word, no motion, no creation.

But the Naya-Vaisesika shows that consciousness produces motion for creation. Only consciousness produces motion in atoms.

Now I conclude in the research paper that the efficient cause, GOD is the omnipotent and omniscient. Only GOD's knowledge unite two atoms as dvyanuka or dyad at the beginning creation. GOD also produce motion in motionless atoms to combine dvyanuk which is also unperceived to us. So GOD as the only omnipotent and omniscient gives motion in atoms to combine atoms and He has knowledge only to unite atoms. The omniscient and the omnipotent GOD implies the pure consciousness. The pure consciousness as GOD exerts motion and gives his knowledge to combine atoms. Then the creation begins. To begin the creation of the world, GOD's exerting motion and His knowledge is necessary. Otherwise eternally motionless atoms remains forever without creation. This is logical and unique model of the universe by the Naya-Vaisesika system.

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