

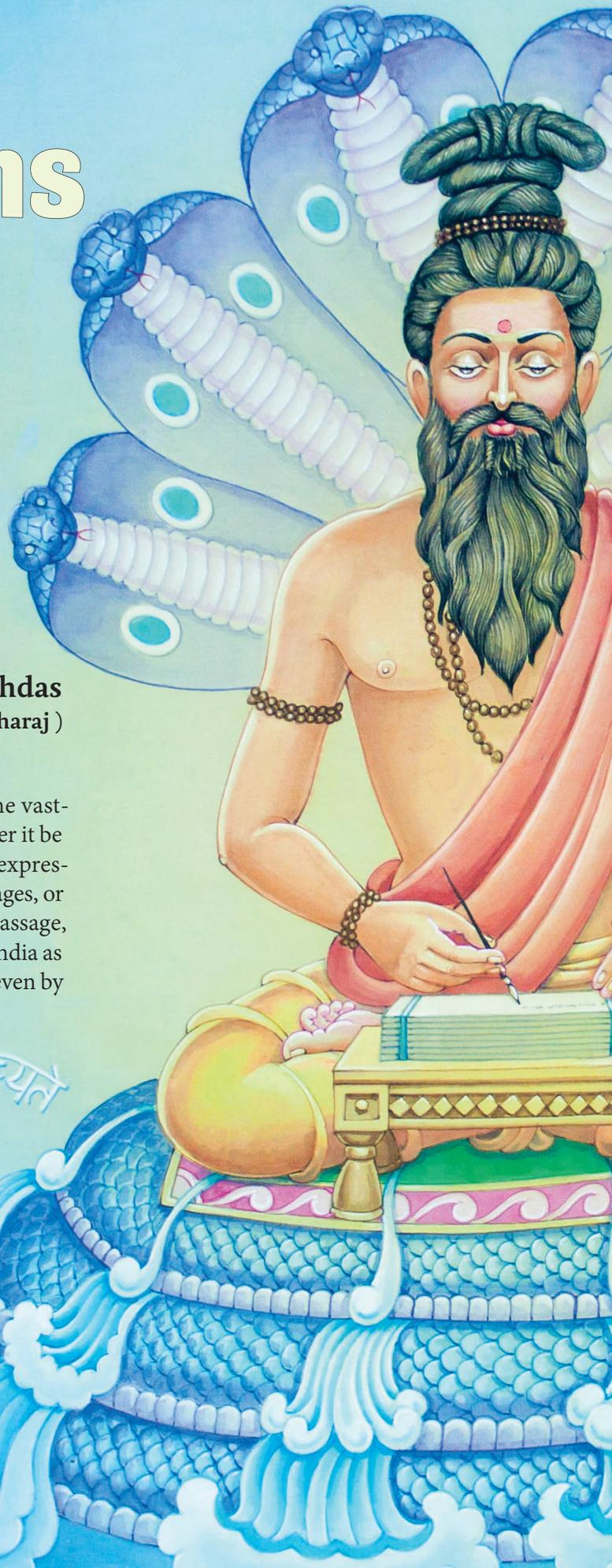
EDUCATIONAL INSIGHT

# Six Streams Of Hindu Philosophy

Ṣaḍdarśana, Celebrating  
Diversity in the Quest for  
Supreme Knowledge

By Mahamahopadhyaya Swami Bhadreshdas  
(Disciple of Guru Pramukh Swami Maharaj)

**T**his article is a celebration of fearless diversity. The world has never failed to be fascinated by the vastness and depth of the Indian experience—whether it be its endearing and timeless culture, vibrant and expressive festivals, ornate ritual performances, articulate languages, or even its luscious cuisines. Mark Twain, in a celebrated passage, attempts to give us a taste of its magnetism. He describes India as “The land that all men desire to see and having seen once, even by



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## Ṣaḍdarśana, Celebrating Diversity in the Quest for Supreme Knowledge

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This article is a celebration of fearless diversity. The world has never failed to be fascinated by the vastness and depth of the Indian experience—whether it be its endearing and timeless culture, vibrant and expressive festivals, ornate ritual performances, articulate languages, or even its luscious cuisines. Mark Twain, in a celebrated passage, attempts to give us a taste of its magnetism. He describes India as “The land that all men desire to see and having seen once, even by



a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of the rest of the globe combined.” Romain Rolland, a French scholar, echoes, “If there is one place on the face of Earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home, from the very earliest days when man began to dream of existence, it is India.” It is a land where the heart finds solace and dreams find realization.

What makes the Indian experience so enchanting is its capacity to embrace diversity. It has always encouraged the freedom to think, to dream and to express—all values that are sought by modern scholarship. Surprisingly, these aspirations are not to be envisioned as dreams of the future, but rather to be recalled from past histories. Ever since antiquity, the celebration of diverse thought has found home in India, a land that exemplified what it means to be truly diverse. The setting that promoted this incessant contemplation, and the subsequent dialogue that proceeded it, gave birth to one of the most priceless contributions of India: the Vedic *ṣaḍdarśana*—the six schools of philosophy based on the *Vedas*.

*Darśana* is the art of seeing. To see is ordinary. Everyone sees, but when a rishi sees, it makes a difference. He reflects on what is seen, questions it, examines it and is also compassionate to observe it from different perspectives. He has the power to challenge faith with reasoning and to establish the need for faith in reason. In this way, by seeing, a rishi knocks at the doors of truth. Indeed, the *ṣaḍdarśanas* are miracles of remarkable sight.

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Pieter Weltevrede’s art depicts a Vedic sage representing the founders of the seminal schools of philosophy. He is seated on the cosmic cobra with six heads, each representing a distinct school of thought. From the Īśa Upaniṣad’s *Pūrṇamada* mantra, represented by an infinite sea of knowledge and being, arise six powerful rivers of knowledge, each sharing the same source but flowing off in different directions.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते  
पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥  
पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥





The term *darśana* stems from the Sanskrit verbal root *drś* meaning “to view.” In Sanskrit, terms that are used to express the act of seeing are also used in a more cognitive sense of attaining knowledge. As such, *darśana* means the attainment of knowledge, experience (*anubhūti*) or system of belief. Within the Indian paradigm, numerous schools of thought arose that offered different perspectives for understanding the world. It was by their gifts of knowledge and experience that these various schools of thought eventually became referred to as *darśana*.

**The Darśanic Lens:** The formation of the *darśanas* transformed the Indian experience. The ideas they presented encouraged one to view the familiar and the ordinary through a broader, more encompassing, philosophical and theological paradigm. Since the teachings of the *darśanas* were ultimately outgrowths of Vedic thought, their creation, although characterized by distinct principles, resulted in a diverse, yet structured understanding of Vedic injunction and revelation. In so arising, they provided perspectives that both enlightened and inspired. The effect was universal. The *darśanas* presented philosophical ideas that had significant bearing on one’s experience of the phenomenological world; they taught one how and to what significance to view the world we live in. They taught what it means to live a meaningful life and how to make life more meaningful. As such, their creation molded the Indian experience through a *darśanic* lens.

**The Darśanic Way of Life:** A study of the Vedic *śāddarśana* has the power to change the way we view and live life. They emerged from honest investigations of everyday, common concerns and strived to provide everlasting solutions for them. Attaining enduring bliss and freedom from misery are universal aspirations; they are desires independent of age, nationality, race and even religious preference. The *śāddarśana* presented thoughts that brought a sense of maturity to intellectual endeavor, and ultimately meaning to life. They demonstrated how it was not only possible, but also instructive, to live among diversity. They taught discernment when joining the visible with the invisible, and declared that there was a life before and will be a life after the present. By exploring these principles, the *darśanas* wove conceptual metaphysics and epistemology into everyday living.

**Six Streams of Wisdom:** The six *darśanas* we will become familiar with in this work are: Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta.<sup>1</sup> They are collectively called the *śāddarśana*. These six *darśanas* often appear as pairs: Sāṅkhya is paired with Yoga, Nyāya with Vaiśeṣika, and Mīmāṃsā with Vedānta. Although each *darśana* is distinct from the others, they are grouped in this way because the pairs share many similar beliefs.

**Similar Yet Distinct:** All of the *śāddarśanas* share several similar concerns. Each acknowledges four endeavors of life: the attainment of righteousness (*dharma*), material attainment (*artha*), the fulfillment of desire (*kāma*), and the attainment of liberation (*mokṣa*). Among these endeavors, all six *darśanas* place great significance on liberation (*mokṣa*) and express a general dissatisfaction with the mere fulfillment of material desire or corporal gratification. This comes as no surprise, as they all believe in the existence of the self (*ātman*) as distinct from the body and in its continued existence after death.

Regarding knowledge, each *darśana* presents a systematic epistemological framework for its acquisition—be it faith in sacred texts or divine instruction, continued reflection on the relationship between the self, the world, and (where applicable) Īśvara or Paramātman. The *śāddarśanas* also concede that ignorance is the cause of bondage, misery and suffering, and that endeavor (*sādhana*) is necessary for attaining liberation.

In addition to this emphasis on reflection, a close relationship between ritual performance and philosophical or theological thought and a belief in both spiritual and worldly consequences of action are found in the schools.

Despite these similarities, each *darśana* has a distinct epistemic, philosophical and theological understanding. This work offers a brief overview of each *darśana*’s contributions by presenting its characteristic fundamental principles, epistemology and notion and means for attaining liberation. We will also explore each *darśana*’s principle contributors and textual works. By doing so, this work seeks to provide insight into the fundamentals of darśanic thought and experience.

<sup>1</sup> The Mīmāṃsā Darśana is also known as Pūrvamīmāṃsā, whereas the Vedānta Darśana is also called Uttaramīmāṃsā.

# A MOUNTAINTOP PERSPECTIVE



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Swami Bhadreshdas is a renowned Sanskrit scholar. He is an ordained sadhu of the Bochasanwasi Akshar-Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) and was initiated



by Pramukh Swami Maharaj. Upon completing multiple masters on the Vedic Śāddarśana, he composed in 2007 a five-volume classical Sanskrit commentary on the *Prasthanatrayi*. Titled the *Swaminarayan Bhashyam*, this text

illuminates the Vedic roots of the Akshar-Purushottama philosophy as it was revealed by Bhagavan Swaminarayan and later by Brahaswarup Shastriji Maharaj. His notable recognitions include the Darsanakesari, Vedantamartanda and Mahamahopadhyaya awards. Swami was also bestowed a D. Litt. for his outstanding contributions in Sanskrit literature. He is the head of BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute, Akshardham, Delhi, and travels as an international lecturer on the Swaminarayan Darshana.

Darśana	Progenitor	Belief in Īśvara/Paramātman	About the Self (ātman)	Valid Means of Knowing (Pramāṇa)	Unique Contributions
<b>Sāṅkhya</b> The School of Complete Knowledge	Maharṣi Kapilamuni	Yes/No	<i>Puruṣa</i> is the <i>ātman</i> (self). It is sentient, eternal, immutable and neither a cause nor an effect of anything.	perception ( <i>pratyakṣa-pramāṇa</i> ) inference ( <i>anumāna-pramāṇa</i> ) verbal testimony ( <i>śabda-pramāṇa</i> )	* The principle of <i>satkāryavāda</i> , the pre-existence of creation * A precise enumeration of entities
<b>Yoga</b> The School of Contemplation	Maharṣi Patañjali	Yes/No	The <i>ātman</i> is bound because of the unsteadiness of <i>chitta</i>	perception ( <i>pratyakṣa-pramāṇa</i> ) inference ( <i>anumāna-pramāṇa</i> ) verbal testimony ( <i>śabda-pramāṇa</i> )	* To embark on the path of yoga, Patañjali advocates an eight-fold path known as <i>aṣṭāṅgayoga</i> * Significance of practice ( <i>abhyāsa</i> ) and detachment ( <i>vairāgya</i> )
<b>Nyāya</b> The School of Logic	Maharṣi Gautama	Yes	The <i>ātman</i> is of two types: the self ( <i>jīvātman</i> ) and Īśvara/Paramātman	perception ( <i>pratyakṣa-pramāṇa</i> ) inference ( <i>anumāna-pramāṇa</i> ) verbal testimony ( <i>śabda-pramāṇa</i> ) comparison ( <i>upamāna-pramāṇa</i> )	* The existence of non-existence ( <i>abhāva</i> ) * Deep contemplation on the nature of inference
<b>Vaiśeṣika</b> The School of Particularity	Maharṣi Kaṇāda	Yes	The <i>ātman</i> is of two types: the self ( <i>jīvātman</i> ) and Īśvara/Paramātman	perception ( <i>pratyakṣa-pramāṇa</i> ) inference ( <i>anumāna-pramāṇa</i> )	* <i>Paramāṇukāraṇavāda</i> : the notion of atoms or particles as building blocks of creation * <i>Asatkāryavāda</i> : the principle that created substances do not previously exist
<b>Mīmāṃsā</b> The School of Vedic Rituals	Maharṣi Jaimini	Yes/No	The <i>ātman</i> is real, sentient, eternal and bound by <i>karma</i> .	perception ( <i>pratyakṣa-pramāṇa</i> ) inference ( <i>anumāna-pramāṇa</i> ) verbal testimony ( <i>śabda-pramāṇa</i> ) comparison ( <i>upamāna-pramāṇa</i> ) postulation ( <i>arthāpatti-pramāṇa</i> ) non-perception ( <i>anupalabdhi-pramāṇa</i> )	* Creation of a universal hermeneutical theory * Deep contemplation on ritual performances such as the <i>yajña</i>
<b>Vedānta</b> The School of Brahavidyā	Maharṣi Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa	Yes	The <i>ātman</i> is sentient and eternal. Schools of Vedānta offer various conceptions of the nature of <i>ātman</i> .	Although all schools of Vedānta accept: perception ( <i>pratyakṣa-pramāṇa</i> ) inference ( <i>anumāna-pramāṇa</i> ) verbal testimony ( <i>śabda-pramāṇa</i> ), some of them are known to accept the others.	* Investigation on the nature of Brahman * A greater significance of verbal testimony ( <i>śabda-pramāṇa</i> ) * The need of a <i>guru</i> for acquiring the knowledge of Brahman



PIETER WELTWERDE

## SĀṆKHYA DARŚĀNA: THE SCHOOL OF COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE

Sāṅkhya is one of the oldest of the *śāddarśana*. Origins of some of its beliefs are often traced to the *Vedas*. It has also been discussed in philosophical texts such as the *Bhagavadgītā* and *purāṇa* texts like the *Bhāgavata*. Kapilamuni is the founder of this school. His teachings are compiled in an aphoristic text named the *Sāṅkhyasūtras*, also called the *Sāṅkhyapravachanasūtra*<sup>1</sup>, which consists of six chapters<sup>2</sup>. The *Sāṅkhyasūtras* are referenced in Vijñānabhikṣu’s 16<sup>th</sup> century text *Sāṅkhyapravachanabhāṣya*<sup>3</sup>. However, instead of Kapila’s *Sāṅkhyasūtras*, *āchāryas* have historically preferred to cite the *Sāṅkhyakārikā*, a 72-verse text written by Īśvarakṛṣṇa.<sup>4</sup> It is considered the earliest authoritative text on classical Sāṅkhya.<sup>5</sup> Several commentaries have been written on it, including the *Mātharavṛtti*, Gauḍapāda’s *Gauḍavādabhāṣya*, and Vāchaspati Miśra’s *Sāṅkhyatattvakaumudī*,<sup>6</sup> all suggesting the text’s significance.

**A Darśana of Complete Knowledge:** The name *Sāṅkhya* is derived in two ways: By joining *sam* (सम्), meaning “complete” with *khyā* (क्या) meaning “knowledge,” the word *Sāṅkhya* is formed to mean “complete knowledge.”<sup>7</sup> Sāṅkhya views the world as divided into two distinct entities: the sentient (*puruṣa*) and insentient (*prakṛti*). For Sāṅkhya, complete knowledge consists of understanding the difference (*vivekajñāna*) between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The title of the *darśana* originates from this emphasis on attaining this complete knowledge. Alternatively, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Matsyapurāṇa* offer that the term *Sāṅkhya* originates from the word *saṅkhyā*, meaning “number.”<sup>8</sup> Since the Sāṅkhya

Darśana presents a precise enumeration of the entities that make up the world,<sup>9</sup> it is also identified as the school of enumeration.

**Prakṛti, the Material Cause of Creation:** *Prakṛti* means “that which exceedingly does.”<sup>10</sup> As such, it is used to refer to the material cause (*upādānakāraṇa*<sup>11</sup>) of creation. It is real, insentient, eternal and imperceptible. It is accepted as being constituted of three qualities: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.<sup>12</sup> *Sattva* is light and bright, *rajas* is exciting and mobile, and *tamas* is heavy and enveloping.<sup>13</sup> They mutually suppress, support, produce and exist, but do not appear alone.<sup>14</sup> In Sanskrit, *guṇa* expresses two meanings: “for others” or “secondary,” and “strands.” *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are identified as *guṇa* because they benefit others by their role in producing variety in creation;<sup>15</sup> their significance is only secondary to a *puruṣa*’s; and, like a rope,<sup>16</sup> they bind the *puruṣa* to the circle of birth and death (*saṃsāra*).

**The Separate Puruṣa:** *Puruṣa* is the self (*ātman*). It is sentient, eternal, immutable and neither a cause or effect of anything. *Puruṣa* is understood as being without parts and all-pervasive. It does not perform any action. It can be analogized with the Moon, whose reflection in turbulent water makes it seem as if it is moving, when in fact it is not. Sāṅkhya claims that there are many such *puruṣas*. It reasons that since beings are born and die at different times and locations, engage in different actions throughout their life, and experience pleasure and misery differently, there cannot be just one *puruṣa*, but must be many.

**Creation from the Sentient and Insentient:** According to Sāṅkhya,

Sage Kapila sits on the earth, with water, fire, air and ether on either side. Eighteen rays represent the other tattvas, or entities of prakṛti. He introduced the gunas, the three qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas, shown here as the yellow, red and blue triangular halos. His right hand is in chin mudra, the insignia of knowledge.

*prakṛti* is with action but insentient; whereas *puruṣa* is sentient but without action. As a result, neither can cause creation alone. Sāṅkhya, therefore, explains that the world is created by the union of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. This mutual dependence is explained using the analogy of a crippled man leading a blind one.<sup>17</sup> One needs eyes to see; whereas the other needs legs to move forward.

At the time of dissolution, *prakṛti* is in a state of equilibrium (*sāmyāvasthā*), with the three *guṇas* equally balanced. However, in the presence of *puruṣa*, this equilibrium becomes disrupted and results in creation.

**Satkāryavāda, Pre-existence of Creation:** Within its creation narrative, the Sāṅkhya Darśana also accepts the principle of *satkāryavāda*—the pre-existence of creation. It believes that the created resides in an unmanifest form in its material cause.<sup>18</sup> For Sāṅkhya, an effect is merely a manifestation of what already existed in its cause. It believes that no new substance ever comes into existence. Rather, that which already existed

becomes manifest. For instance, in the case of a clay pot, it is believed to have existed in an unmanifest form in the clay from which it was made. Creation and dissolution are understood as merely appearance (*āvirbhāva*) and disappearance (*tirobhāva*) of that which already existed.

**Īśvara:** There has been great debate regarding the role of Īśvara in Sāṅkhya. Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *Sāṅkhyakārikā* remains silent on the matter. Because of this, some believe that Sāṅkhya does not advocate the

existence of Īśvara. Others, however, argue that silence does not demonstrate refusal and do not agree with the above inference. Despite this, however, in his *Sāṅkhyapravachanabhāṣya*, Vijñānabhikṣu, who wrote extensively on the Vedānta, Sāṅkhya and Yoga *darśanas*, strongly establishes that Sāṅkhya advocates the existence of Īśvara.<sup>19</sup> Descriptions of Sāṅkhya as *seśvara* (“with Īśvara”) from *purāṇa* texts like the *Bhāgavata*, historical texts like the *Mahābhārata*, philosophical texts like the *Bhagavadgītā*,<sup>20</sup> and Bhagavān Svāmīnārāyaṇa’s description of Sāṅkhya as a means for understanding Paramātman<sup>21</sup> also justify the position that the *darśana* is *seśvara*.

**Epistemology:** The study of knowledge can be roughly divided into investigations of the following four elements: the subject of knowledge (*prameya*), the knower (*pramātā*), the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) and knowledge itself (*pramā*). Among these, *darśanic* epistemology greatly focuses on investigations of *pramāṇa*.

With regards to *pramāṇa*, the Sāṅkhya Darśana accepts three means of knowledge: *pratyakṣa-pramāṇa*, *anumāna-pramāṇa* and *śabda-pramāṇa*. *Pratyakṣa-pramāṇa* utilizes the senses as a means for acquiring knowledge. *Anumāna-pramāṇa* utilizes logical inference. The final, *śabda-pramāṇa*, identifies the speech or words of one who is authoritative and truthful (*āptavaktā*) as a means to knowledge.<sup>22</sup>

**Liberation:** Sāṅkhya believes that liberation is the permanent elimination of misery (*duḥkha*). On this subject, Īśvarakṛṣṇa clearly states that bondage and liberation are not states of the *puruṣa*; but of *prakṛti*.<sup>23</sup> Despite this, the bondage of *prakṛti* that is believed as *puruṣa*’s is caused by a lack of discernment, or *vivekajñāna*: an understanding of the nature and form of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* as distinct.

When a *puruṣa* is liberated, Sāṅkhya describes *prakṛti* as becoming silent. Īśvarakṛṣṇa explains this using an analogy: just as a performer becomes quiet after displaying her form on stage, *prakṛti* becomes dormant having revealed its true nature to the *puruṣa*.<sup>24</sup>

**Liberation Before and After Death:** The Sāṅkhya Darśana describes two types of liberation: *jīvanamukti* and *videhamukti*. In the state of *jīvanamukti*, one experiences liberation while still being alive. In this state, one is not bound by *karma* even when performing action. To explain the continued life of the liberated, the analogy of a potter’s wheel that continues to move for some time, despite the absence of the potter’s applied force, is often offered.<sup>25</sup> The attainment of everlasting liberation after death is known as *videhamukti*. Upon attaining liberation, bondage never reoccurs.

We can thus summarize that the Sāṅkhya Darśana is a school of dualism, pluralism and realism.

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### Footnotes

1 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 5)  
2 (Banerji 315) (Hiriyanna 269)  
3 (Radhakrishnan 256)  
4 (Hiriyanna 269) (Chatterjee and Datta 291–2) (Ishwarkrishna 226)  
5 (Hiriyanna 269) (Chatterjee and Datta 291–2)  
6 (Larson 147) (King 64)  
7 (Bhaṭṭācārya 1269)  
8 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 4) (Brahmadarnadāsa 4) (Taponiṣṭha 51)

(Mahābhārata. 12.294.41–42) (Matsyapurāṇa. 3–29)  
9 (Sharma 4)  
10 प्रकृषेण करोति कार्यमुत्पादयति इति प्रकृतिः ।  
11 There are two types of causes. The *upādānakāraṇa* (the material cause) is the substance from which something is made. For instance, since a clay pot is made from clay, that substance is considered an *upādānakāraṇa*. The *nimittakāraṇa* (instrumental cause) is the means by which

something is made. In the pot example, the potter, the potter’s wheel and the rope that was used to spin the wheel are all considered the *nimittakāraṇa*.  
12 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 16)  
13 (Sāṅkhyakārikā 13) (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 13)  
14 (Sāṅkhyakārikā 12) (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 14)  
15 (Vāchaspati Miśra’s Sāṅkhyatattvakaumudī 12) (Miśra 219)  
16 (Vijñānabhikṣu’s Sāṅkhyapravachanabhāṣya 1.61) (Vijñānabhikṣu 29)

17 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 23)  
18 (Sāṅkhyakārikā 9) (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 10)  
19 (Vijñānabhikṣu)  
20 (Vyāsa 78–102)  
21 (Svāmīnārāyaṇa 327, 624)  
22 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 5)  
23 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 14)  
24 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 52)  
25 (Īśvarakṛṣṇa 60)



PIETER WELTEVREDE

Yogī Patañjali meditates in padmāsana beneath the holy banyan tree (*Ficus bengalensis*), with its roots woven deeply into the earth. Its eight limbs, representing the eight stages of yoga, reach for the sky. The illustration reminds us that a yogī must be grounded to soar from within. A five-headed serpent, symbolizing the kuṇḍalinī power, surrounds him.

The *ātman* is bound because of the unsteadiness of the *chitta*, which is often compared to a fluttering flag. Obtaining this control is not easy. The *Bhagavadgītā* explains that controlling the mind is as difficult as trying to grasp the wind.<sup>4</sup> For this reason Patañjali exceedingly focuses his attention on understanding the *chitta*. He discusses the *chitta*'s five different transformations (*vṛtti*) as: correct knowledge (*pramāṇa*), false knowledge (*viparyaya*), verbal knowledge about something that is non-existent (*vikalpa*), deep sleep (*nidrā*) and recollection (*smṛti*).<sup>5</sup> Whether it is our flowing thoughts, emotional surges, or any other internal proceedings, they are included in one of these five.

The *darśana* also describes five hindrances (*kleśa*): ignorance (*avidyā*), erroneous identification of the self with the intellect (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*) and fear of death (*abhiniveśa*).<sup>6</sup> Yoga provides a means for restraining the mind when it is confronted by these hindrances.

**The Three Stages of a Yogin:** Yoga presents the following three categories of yogic aspirants: *yogarūḍha*, *yuñjana* and *āruruḥṣu*. The highest category is that of the *yogarūḍha*. Through great yogic endeavor (*sādhana*) in their past lives, the *yogarūḍha* have attained great heights of yoga. Those who have progressed significantly toward the yogic aim, but are still attaining the heights of yoga are called *yuñjana*. The lowest category of yogic endeavor is that of the *āruruḥṣu*. These aspirants are beginning on the path of yoga and have yet to engage in yogic endeavor.

**The Eight Parts of Yoga:** Patañjali advocates eight steps of yoga known as *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. It consists of the following:

- 1) *Yama*, moral imperatives, is the introductory step. It involves the practice of nonviolence (*ahiṃsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), avoiding theft (*asteya*), abstinence (*brahmacharya*) and avoiding avarice (*aparigraha*).<sup>7</sup>
- 2) *Niyama*, moral conduct, consists of attaining purity of the mind, body and speech (*saucha*), contentment (*santoṣa*), austerity (*tapas*), study of sacred texts (*svādhyāya*) and an engrossed contemplation of Paramātman (*Īśvarapraṇidhāna*).<sup>8</sup>
- 3) *Āsana*, position, involves assuming a steady, comfortable posture.<sup>9</sup>
- 4) *Prāṇāyāma*, control of breath, is to restrain inhaling and exhaling.<sup>10</sup> Patañjali does not describe in detail the various types of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* in his *Yogasūtras*, but instead places greater emphasis on other yogic endeavors.
- 5) *Pratyāhāra* is the withdrawal of the senses from the outer world.<sup>11</sup>
- 6) *Dhāraṇā*, concentration, consists of binding the *chitta* to a particular location or subject.<sup>12</sup>
- 7) *Dhyāna*, meditation, is the uninterrupted stream of concentration on the object of *dhāraṇā*.<sup>13</sup>

8) *Samādhi*, perfect concentration, or contemplation, is the final stage of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. It is a state of perfect focus in which only the object of concentration shines forth, while the self is understood as absent.<sup>14</sup>

Having described the eight parts of yoga in this way, Maharṣi Patañjali placed greater emphasis on the last three parts of yoga, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*, which mark the various stages of concentration. Within *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, these three are understood as more internal<sup>15</sup> than the first five parts. By *dhāraṇā*, the roving mind is tied first to an object in order that it may become steady. In *dhyāna*, concentration of the object performed in *dhāraṇā* is continued, and in *samādhi* concentration becomes extremely intense, causing one to become submerged in absolute peace.

**Abhyāsa and Vairāgya:** Two universal problems hinder success: the lack of practice and attachment to things that deviate from the goal. To all of us, the Yoga Darśana presents two unique teachings that are beneficial for success in all fields of life: practice (*abhyāsa*) and detachment (*vairāgya*). *Abhyāsa* is continuous practice over an extended period of time, carried out in a respectful and thoughtful manner,<sup>16</sup> and *vairāgya* is the act of subjugating the desire for objects that obstruct the goal. Through *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*, a practitioner attains yoga.

**The Fruit, Complete Liberation:** The primary objective of yoga is to attain complete liberation. Through the practice of yoga, impurity is overcome and discriminative knowledge (*vivekajñāna*) is obtained. By this, ignorance is destroyed and misery comes to an end.

**Īśvara in Yoga:** Unlike the Sāṅkhya Darśana, Patañjali clearly discusses Īśvara in the *Yogasūtras*. He identifies Īśvara as a particular *puruṣa* who is unaffected by afflictions, *karma*, the fruits of *karma* and the resulting latent impressions.<sup>17</sup> He also acknowledges Īśvara as the subject of profound meditation.<sup>18</sup> Despite this, because of the *sūtras'* conceptualization of Īśvara as a *puruṣa* and its mention of Īśvara as an alternative subject of profound meditation, many have found scope for debating Īśvara's existence and significance in yoga.

However, from the theistic descriptions of the *darśana* found in the *Mahābhārata*, *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata*, it seems only appropriate to say that not only is Yoga *seṣvara*, but also that its ultimate goal is not just to concentrate on the self, but to attain *samādhi* in Paramātman. Bhagavān Svāmīnārāyaṇa also advocates the same while explaining the Yoga Darśana. He states, "The principle of the Yoga scriptures is as follows: 'The functioning (*vṛtti*) of the mind should be first stabilized through practice (*abhyāsa*), and then it should be attached to Paramātman."<sup>19</sup>

In this way, the Yoga Darśana offers a comprehensive philosophical understanding along with a detailed description of the means for its realization. This is why Yoga continues, even today, to leave a lasting impression on our hearts.

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**Footnotes**

1 (Patañjali, The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali xiii)  
 2 (Bhagavadgītā 5.4) (Vyāsa 94)  
 3 (Yogasūtra 1.2) (Patañjali, Pātañjalayogasūtrāni 4)  
 4 (Bhagavadgītā 6.34) (Vyāsa 114)  
 5 (Yogasūtra 1.6) (Pātañjalayogasūtrāni 10)  
 6 (Yogasūtra 2.3) (59)  
 7 (Yogasūtra 2.30) (102)  
 8 (Yogasūtra 2.32) (104)  
 9 (Yogasūtra 2.46) (110)  
 10 (Yogasūtra 2.49) (112)  
 11 (Yogasūtra 2.54) (116)  
 12 (Yogasūtra 3.1) (118)  
 13 (Yogasūtra 3.2) (119)  
 14 (Yogasūtra 3.3) (119)  
 15 (Yogasūtra 3.7) (121)  
 16 (Yogasūtra 1.13-4) (17-8)  
 17 (Yogasūtra 1.24) (25-6)  
 18 (Yogasūtra 1.23) (25)  
 19 (Svāmīnārāyaṇa 375)

## YOGA DARŚANA: THE SCHOOL OF CONTEMPLATION

Do you ever fear; are you harassed by incessantly changing thoughts? Do you feel like a victim of anger? You cannot concentrate and feel as if you are smoldering with jealousy and strife. Are you tired, disgruntled and stressed? More importantly, do you wish to free yourself from all of this? If so, the Yoga Darśana will provide much to learn from, including the necessary tools to live a peaceful life.

Most readers will know, to some extent, about the Yoga Darśana. Many view yoga as a solution to the modern concern for health and fitness, and a means for overcoming the anxiety of modern-day living. However, the essential philosophy behind yogic practice lies in something beyond.

Yoga has been put into practice ever since Vedic times. It is also mentioned in the *Purāṇas*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Mahābhārata*. Despite its previous historic practice, Patañjali molded yoga into a systematic school of thought by creating the *Yogasūtras*. Its text consists of 196 aphorisms distributed amongst four chapters (*pāda*):<sup>1</sup>

The first chapter, titled *Samādhipāda*, defines *yoga*, *samādhi* and other relevant terms. The second chapter, called *Sādhana*pāda, focuses on the practice of yoga. Chapter three, named *Vibhūtipāda*, narrates the various fruits of yogic endeavor, while the final chapter, *Kaivalyapāda*, describes liberation and the means for its attainment.

Patañjali's *Yogasūtras* were followed by the creation of significant expository texts on the philosophical and theological tenants of the

Yoga Darśana. Among them, Veda Vyāsa's *Vyāsabhāṣya*, Vāchaspati Miśra's *Tattvavaiśarādī* and Viññānabhikṣu's *Yogavārtika* and *Yogasāra-saṃgraha* are well known.

**Companionship with Sāṅkhya:** The Yoga Darśana is a companion of Sāṅkhya in that it accepts much of the metaphysics, epistemology and soteriology of Sāṅkhya. Despite their similarities, Sāṅkhya places greater emphasis on deliberation, while the Yoga Darśana focuses on spiritual endeavor (*sādhana*). As such, it is not incorrect to say that Yoga is a practical application of the tenants of Sāṅkhya. This companionship is clearly substantiated by the *Bhagavadgītā*, "Children (the unknowledgeable) state that Sāṅkhya and Yoga are distinct, not the wise."<sup>2</sup>

**Yoga, Restraining the Mind:** *Yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit verb *yuj*, meaning "intense absorption" or "contemplation" (*samādhi*), control (*saṃyamana*), or "association" (*sambandha*). Hence, Patañjali defines *yoga* as the restraint of the function or movement of the *chitta* (*cittavṛttinirodha*).<sup>3</sup> Here *chitta* refers to an inner faculty: the faculty by which we think, desire, decide and conduct such cognitive tasks. Physical and mental discomforts, such as stress, anxiety and illness, which we experience in our everyday lives, are the consequences of the *chitta*'s (mind's) unsteadiness. Yoga explains that the *puruṣa* acts, enjoys and suffers through the functions of this *chitta*. These functions create latent inclinations which, in turn, give rise to others; in this way the cycle of *saṃsāra* revolves.

The practice of yoga is the act of establishing control over the *chitta*.



Maharshi Gautama sits under the sacred Ashoka tree (*Saraca indica*) with disciples in front of his thatched forest kutir. He is debating deep philosophical topics with an opponent and has his followers listening and learning. In the sky shines a symbolic sun, whose rays represent the 16 categories to be known for attaining liberation.

cloth.<sup>4</sup> Although some have followed by accepting non-existence as an independent object, others have rejected it and offered substantial arguments against it.

**Epistemology:** The Nyāya Darśana accepts four means for acquiring knowledge: perception (*pratyakṣa-pramāṇa*), inference (*anumāna-pramāṇa*), verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) and comparison (*upamāna-pramāṇa*).<sup>5</sup> Of these, the *darśana's* introduction of comparison is noteworthy. *Upamāna-pramāṇa* is the ability to obtain knowledge about something by its similarity to something else.<sup>6</sup> It is described by the following example. Suppose a man who has never seen a *gavaya* (*Bos frontalis früher*),<sup>7</sup> upon entering a forest, is informed by a forester that a *gavaya* is similar to a cow. When he encounters a creature that looks like a cow but is not, he recalls the statement of the forester and comes to know that it is a *gavaya*. The means by which the knowledge of a *gavaya* is obtained in this case is called *upamāna-pramāṇa*.

Although many other *darśanas* have criticized *upamāna* as a distinct means of knowledge, some Mīmāṃsakas and Vedāntins later accepted it as such.

**From Smoke to Fire:** Of the four means of knowledge, the amount of contemplation Nyāya performed in inference is rarely seen in any of the other *darśana*. Gautama defines *inference* (*anumāna*) as “knowledge which is preceded by perception.” Inference is the act of establishing through reason. For instance, in the inference: “There is fire on that mountain, since there is smoke on it, like in a kitchen,” the knowledge of fire that exists on the mountain is established indirectly through seeing smoke. The following major components make up this inference:

- what is to be established (*sādhyā*): i.e., fire
  - where it is to be established (*pakṣa*): i.e., on the mountain
  - by which it is to be established (*hetu*): i.e., smoke
  - an example used in inference (*udāharaṇa*): i.e., a kitchen
- The Nyāya Darśana uses inference in this way to acquire knowledge.

**Five Steps of Establishment:** Nyāya distinguishes two types of inferences: those that are for oneself (*svārtha*) and those that are for others (*parārtha*). When inference is intentioned for convincing others, Nyāya emphasizes a particular system by which arguments are to be presented. This system helps to effortlessly direct the mind of the listener to think reasonably. The presented argument takes the form of the following five specific types of propositions set forth in the preceding order:

- thesis (*pratijñā*): the statement that is to be examined
- reason (*hetu*): the reason by which the statement is established
- illustration (*udāharaṇa*): an example applicable to the statement and reason
- comparison (*upanayana*): application of the first three elements

• conclusion (*nigamana*): confirmation of the examined statement

The inference given above can be expressed in this sequence as follows: “That mountain is on fire” is the thesis; “Because there is smoke” is the reason; “Like in a kitchen” is the illustration; the application of the above three to establish the conclusion is the comparison; and the confirmation that “The mountain is on fire” is the conclusion.

Because of such particular analysis and its universal application, Nyāya Darśana’s exposition on inference, its commentaries and independent texts on each of the aspects of inference are not only well studied, but also explicated in texts produced by scholars even today.

**Īśvara:** Nyāya is a rational defender of theism. Within Gautama’s *Nyāyasūtras*, we find clear references to the existence of Īśvara. He accepts Īśvara as omniscient, flawless and the cause of the world. He argues that in order to understand the relationship between *karma* and its fruits, it is necessary to accept the existence of an omniscient Īśvara. To establish the existence of Īśvara, the Nyāya Darśana presents a great number of different arguments. For instance, Udayanāchārya, a prominent tenth-century scholar of Nyāya, discusses principle arguments against the existence of Īśvara, refutes them and, in return, presents several justifications for the existence of Īśvara in his *Nyāyakusumāñjali*. In this way, *Naiyāyikas* (followers of Nyāya) are an example of a synthesis of faith in Vedic principles with an adeptness in strong reasoning.

**The Permanent Cessation of Misery:** In the Nyāya Darśana, liberation is the permanent cessation of all types of misery.<sup>8</sup> Gautama presents a sequence by which liberation is attained. He explains that first ignorance (*ajñāna*) is destroyed. Thereafter, faults (*doṣa*) are eliminated, followed by the end of activity (*pravṛtti*). Because of this, rebirth (*janma*) never occurs; leading finally, to everlasting freedom from misery (*duḥkha*).<sup>9</sup> Here, liberation is not about achieving, but rather releasing.

**Birth of Neo-Nyāya:** The early scholars of Nyāya emphasized the expositions of the *darśana's* philosophical principles. However, as time passed and debates arose with other *darśanas*, each became skilled at presenting and defending their own principles. This eventually resulted in the development of a robust methodology for not only constructing rational formulations, but also conducting and evaluating dialogues. As a consequence, Neo-Nyāya took birth. It was a new form of the Nyāya Darśana that focused its investigations predominantly on the nature of knowledge, its analysis and means of acquisition and systematization of the inter-darśanic dialogue.

Among the scholars of Neo-Nyāya, Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya, the author of the famous *Tattvachintāmani*, was a prominent founder of the tradition. Well-known commentaries on his work include Raghunātha Śīromāṇi’s *Dīdhiti* and Mathurānātha’s *Māthuri*.

By utilizing reasoning for the right purposes, providing precise methods of characterization, and structuralizing and fostering both inter-darśanic and intra-darśanic dialogue, without tainting the freedom of expression, the Nyāya Darśana gifted the world with many intellectual achievements.

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**Footnotes**

1 (Fowler vii, 33, 129)  
 2 (Nyāyasūtra 1.1.1) (Basu and Gautama 1)  
 3 (Bhaṭṭa 5)  
 4 (Bhaṭṭa 76–8)  
 5 (Nyāyasūtra 1.1.3) (Basu and Gautama 2)  
 6 (Nyāyasūtra 1.1.6) (3)  
 7 A *gavaya* is a particular species of ox.  
 8 (Nyāyasūtra 1.1.22) (Basu and Gautama 7)  
 9 (Nyāyasūtra 1.1.2) (2)

## NYĀYA DARŚANA: THE SCHOOL OF LOGIC

If you like reasoning, you will enjoy reading the *Nyāyasāstra*. The Nyāya Darśana is known for its precise descriptions, meticulous definitions and systematization of reasoned thought. Rishi Gautama’s creation of the *Nyāyasūtras*,<sup>1</sup> an aphoristic text spanning five chapters, resulted in the systematic representation of the principles of the Nyāya Darśana.

Rishi Gautama is also known as Akṣapāda, hence the Nyaya Darśana is alternatively called Akṣapāda Darśana. The *darśana's* analysis of the nature and source of knowledge and its validity identifies it as also *ānvīkṣikī-vidyā*, meaning “the study of investigation.” The school’s followers are aptly identified as *tārkikas* or *naiyāyikas* because of the *darśana's* great emphasis on logic and reasoning (*tarka*).

After Gautama, these followers of the Nyāya tradition gave extensive elaborations on many of his metaphysical and epistemological principles. Among these commentaries and expositions, Vātsyāyana’s extensive commentary on the *Nyāyasūtras*, Udyotakara’s creation of the *Nyāyavārtika*, Jayanta Bhaṭṭa’s *Nyāyamañjarī* and Vāchaspatimīśra’s *Nyāyavārtikatātparyāyikā* are distinguished.

**Sixteen Categories to be Known:** Gautama, in his *Nyāyasūtras*, enumerates sixteen categories whose knowledge is emphasized for understanding the world and attaining liberation. He lists them as: 1) valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), 2) objects of knowledge (*prameya*), 3) doubt (*śaṃśaya*), 4) purpose (*prayojana*), 5) example (*dṛṣṭānta*), 6) conclusion (*siddhānta*), 7) parts of an argument (*avayava*), 8) hypothetical

reasoning (*tarka*), 9) doubtless settlement (*nirṇaya*), 10) constructive discussion (*vāda*), 11) wrangling (*jalpa*), 12) caviling (*vitandā*), 13) fallacious reason (*hetvābhāsa*), 14) the use of equivocation (*chala*), 15) objection by the use of similarity and distinction (*jāti*) and 16) inadequacies of argument (*nigrahasthāna*).<sup>2</sup>

From this categorization, it becomes clear that Nyāya, in addition to emphasizing a contemplation of entities, also places great significance on the nature and methods of reasoning and dialogue. This emphasis becomes even more evident in its extensive expositions on conducting formal debates. The *darśana's* elaborations on knowledge, the process of argumentation, the fallacy of arguments and the characteristics of sound arguments provide the necessary tools for understanding, explicating and even evaluating the *darśanic* dialogue.

**The Existence of Non-Existence:** Can non-existence exist? Nyāya’s and also Vaiśeṣika’s acceptance of non-existence (*abhāva*) as an independent object is particularly interesting. Both *darśanas* categorize non-existence as four types: prior non-existence (*prāgabhāva*), posterior non-existence (*pradvamśābhāva*), absolute non-existence (*atyantābhāva*) and mutual non-existence (*anyonyābhāva*).<sup>3</sup> In terms of, for example, a pot, prior non-existence is the non-existence of the pot before it was created. Posterior non-existence is its non-existence after it is destroyed. Absolute non-existence is its non-existence in all times and at all places; and mutual non-existence is the rejection of the identity between two things, such as the pot and, for instance, a piece of



Sage Kaṇāda sits beneath the sacred Parijata (Nyctanthes arbortritis) tree, with his texts on naturalism and atomism. His school postulates nine realities, symbolized by the nine particles swirling around him. His stress on understanding nature is indicated by the wide ocean behind and cosmic bodies in the sky above. Mahākāla, great time, reigns just above him.

**Substance** is that in which qualities and action reside. Vaiśeṣika quantifies nine such substances: earth (*prthivī*), water (*āpa*), fire (*tejas*), wind (*vāyu*), ether (*ākāśa*), time (*kāla*), direction (*dik*), the self (*ātman*) and the mind (*mana*).<sup>5</sup>

**Quality** is that which resides in substance. There are twenty-four different types of qualities including color, taste, smell, touch, number, measurement and separateness.<sup>6</sup>

**Action** is movement. This movement resides in substance. It is divided into five types, each of which describes a particular direction in which movement takes place.<sup>7</sup>

**Generality** stands for generic property. For instance, there are many humans; but each has the same, what one would call, humanness that identifies them as humans. This humanness is an example of generality; it is believed to be singular, since there are not two types of humanness.

**Particularity** is that which distinguishes. In Vaiśeṣika, it is used to distinguish one particle (*paramāṇu*) from another.

**Inherence** is the relationship between two entities, one of whose existence cannot be without the other. The relationship between cane syrup and sweetness is one of *samavāya*. The type of relationship between an object and its parts is also known as *samavāya*.

Vaiśeṣika offers that, without understanding these six and their natures, it is difficult to comprehend the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the world, and subsequently the nature of *dharma*.

**Divided to the Undivided:** In addition to the above categorization, one of the more notable contributions of both the Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya *darśanas* was their notion of atoms or particles as building blocks of creation (*paramāṇukāraṇavāda*). They demonstrated the existence of particles based on an inference from the experienced division of visible objects. Followers of Vaiśeṣika argued that although objects can be divided into parts, there must be a limit to which such division can occur. They identified this limit with the particle (*paramāṇu*): the smallest substance that cannot be further divided. They argued, that without accepting indivisibility, a fallacy of infinite regression would arise.

Vaiśeṣika also reasoned that, without acknowledging the particle as indivisible, something as large as a mountain would become the same size as a mustard seed. They reasoned that since the size of a created substance is dependent on the size of its parts and both the mountain and mustard seed would be equally made of an infinite number of infinitely small substances,<sup>8</sup> they would both become identical in size. As a result, they concluded, there must be a limit to which substance can be divided. Based on this conclusion, they argued that the particle can

neither be created nor destroyed. Creation and destruction of a substance, they claimed, requires it to be divisible. Thus, from the indivisibility of a particle, they also concluded that the particle is eternal.

**Particles, the Building Blocks:** Like Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika identifies four substances as having particles: earth (*prthivī*), water (*jala*), light (*tejas*) and wind (*vāyu*). It believes there are an infinite number of such particles and that they come together to create the objects we perceive. It also emphasizes that when these particles come together to create substances, the created substance is not just a collection of particles, but an altogether newly created substance. For example, when a clay pot is created, a new substance, different from the collection of its particles, is created. This newly created substance is called an *avayavin*—that which has parts.

**The Created Never Existed Before:** The significance of this belief lies in both the Naiyāyika and Vaiśeṣika's acceptance of *asatkāryavāda*: the belief that a created substance did not previously exist. As we saw earlier, the Sāṅkhya Darśana believed in *satkāryavāda*: that the created resides in an unmanifest form in its material cause. *Asatkāryavāda* is just the opposite. According to it, an effect does not reside in any form in its cause, but rather is newly created. A pot created from clay did not already exist in the clay, but is distinct from the clay.

**Two-Fold Ātman:** Similar to Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika Darśana also believes the *ātman* to be a substance that is eternal, many, all-pervasive (*vibhu*) and the knower. Here, *ātman* refers to both the *jīvātman* (the self) and Paramātman. Although both are considered *ātman*, the *darśana* offers many differences between the two. It believes that there are many *jīvātman*, each of which is joined with a distinct mind by which it experiences, among other things, pleasure (*sukha*) and misery (*duḥkha*). Desire (*icchā*), aversion (*dvesha*), effort (*prayatna*), righteousness (*dharma*), unrighteousness (*adharmā*) and the faculty of impression (*saṃskāra*) are also all believed to be qualities of this *jīvātman*. The Vaiśeṣika *jīvātman* is also not all-knowing; nor is its knowledge eternal.

Vaiśeṣika describes creation from elemental particles, which are themselves inactive. As a result, an independent cause is required to instigate its first movement. Vaiśeṣika offers Paramātman as this initial cause. Unlike the *jīvātman*, there is also only one Paramātman. This Paramātman is omniscient, and his knowledge is considered to be eternal. Because of these and other differences, Paramātman and the *jīvātman* are recognized as distinct.

**Epistemology:** Unlike Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika categorizes only two means of knowledge: perception (*pratyakṣa-pramāṇa*) and inference (*anumāna-pramāṇa*). Although, they define both as similar to the Naiyāyikas, verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) is understood to be subsumed in inference, since the truthfulness of the spoken or written word is dependent on an inference of the truthfulness or authority of its speaker or writer. Similarly, comparison (*upamāna-pramāṇa*) is believed to be incorporated in verbal testimony or inference.

Although Vaiśeṣika's principles are to some extent different from Nyāya's, the two are greatly comparable and complementary. Hence later scholars have categorized these *darśanas* as similar and often combined their teachings in collective texts, such as *Tarkasamgraha* and *Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvalī*.

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**Footnotes**

1 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.1) (Basu, The Vaiśeṣika Sūtra of Kaṇāda 3)  
 2 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.2) (5)  
 3 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.3) (6)  
 4 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.4) (Bhaṭṭa 2)  
 5 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.5) (Basu, The Vaiśeṣika Sūtra of Kaṇāda 17)  
 6 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.6) (18)  
 7 (Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.1.7) (19)  
 8 (Bhaṭṭācārya 129)

## VAIŚEṢIKA DARŚANA: THE SCHOOL OF PARTICULARITY

The *darśanas* of India are seen to concentrate their attention from the astronomical to the subatomic and at other times from the subtle to the cosmological. They have touched on both spectrums: investigating the most extensive and also exploring the most elemental of substances. As a result, it is not an oversight to state that thoughts on the subatomic are not exclusive to modern science. Ever since antiquity the Indian mind has ventured into the realm of atoms. The Vaiśeṣika Darśana stands as a testament of this journey. Sages trod a path from the atom to its subatomic parts. They described creation as the consequence of particles coming together and defined destruction as the result of their separation. In this light, the Vaiśeṣika Darśana anticipated the modern world's understanding of reality.

The Vaiśeṣika Darśana's name originates from its notion of particularity (*viśeṣa*). Udayanāchārya presents an etymology in his *Kiraṇāvalī*. He explains that the school is recognized as Vaiśeṣika because it offers a narration of *viśeṣa* or distinct entities.

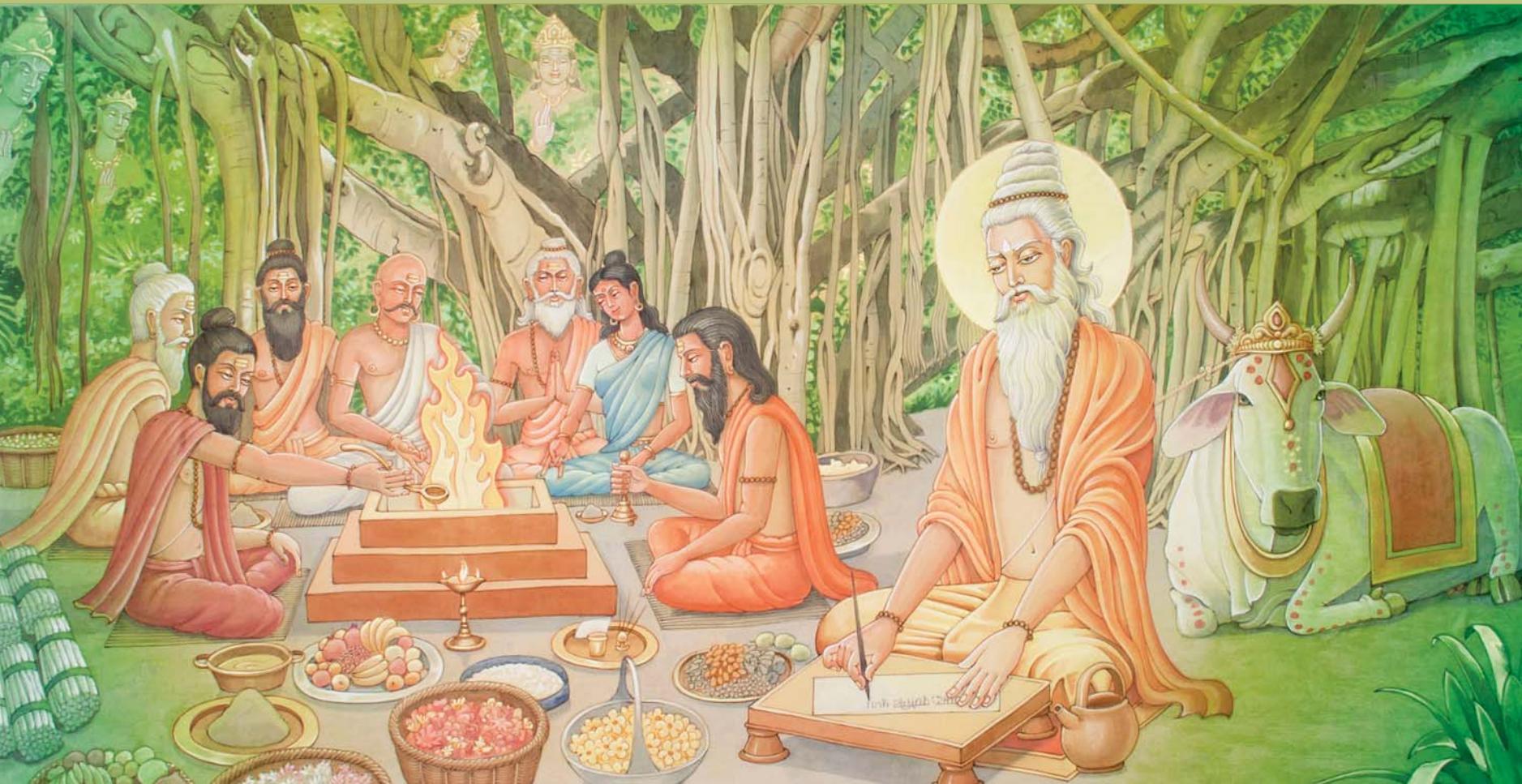
Although this *darśana*'s principles can be traced back to antiquity, Rishi Kaṇāda presented their systematic formulation in the *Vaiśeṣikasūtras*, a text containing 370 aphorisms spread over ten chapters. The creation of this text eventually resulted in the Vaiśeṣika principles taking on the form of a *darśana*.

This form was later molded by many who followed. Among them, Praśastapāda is noteworthy for his creation of the *Padārthadharmasamgraha*, an expository text that later inspired the creation

of many extensive commentaries. Other works including, Śrīdhara's *Nyāyakandalī*, Udayanāchārya's *Kiraṇāvalī*, Śrīvatsa's (also known as Vallabhāchārya) *Nyāyalīlāvati* and Vyomaśivāchārya's *Vyomavatiṭikā* are also well known in the *darśana*. Although these texts were predominantly dedicated to explicating and establishing Vaiśeṣika's principles, much later attempts were also made by many, including Viśvanātha Pañchānana, the author of *Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvalī*, and Annam Bhaṭṭa, the creator of *Tarkasamgraha*, to consolidate both Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika into one comprehensive *darśana*.

**Darśanic Definition of Vedic Dharma:** Kaṇāda makes it very clear from the beginning of his *Vaiśeṣikasūtras* that the purpose of Vaiśeṣika is to investigate *dharma*.<sup>1</sup> The aphorisms then continue by defining *dharma* as not any particular faith system, but rather the means to prosperity and liberation.<sup>2</sup> How is *dharma* to be attained? The *darśana* answers that one must seek guidance of the *Vedas* in order to realize *dharma*.<sup>3</sup> The aphorisms suggest that since the *Vedas* explain the nature of the entities of the world, an investigation of *dharma* is nothing other than to comprehend the nature of these entities. It is in this sense that, to the Vaiśeṣika, the *dhārmika* are understood to be "the learned."

**The World of Six:** Kaṇāda commenced an investigation of *dharma* by partitioning the world into six different entities (*padārthas*):<sup>4</sup> substance (*dravya*), quality (*guṇa*), action (*karma*), generality (*sāmānya*), particularity (*viśeṣa*) and inherence (*samavāya*). He then characterized them in the following way:



Sage Jaimini scribes onto a palm leaf his school's principles on philology and exegesis. Here, the yājmana couple, the purohita and yājñikas conduct a homa with offerings of sandalwood, herbs, fruits, ghee, incense and flowers. Enhanced by the decorated zebu cow, their ritual has the power to move the forces of the universe. The devas have gathered within the temple-like tree to bless and observe.

.....

Mīmāṃsā's primary focus on interpreting Vedic śrutis generated a great need for developing an appropriate method of interpretation. As the fruits of much investigation, Mīmāṃsā developed many robust norms to guide and evaluate the act of interpretation. Among others, they presented the following criteria: (1) Commencement (*upakrama*): the presentation of the principle topic of discussion at the beginning of the text under consideration. (2) Conclusion (*upasamhāra*): the presentation of this topic at the end of the text. (3) Reiteration (*abhyāsa*): repetition of the topic throughout the text. (4) Uniqueness (*apurvatā*): the topic as being unknown by some other source, and hence uniquely found in the present discussion. (5) Fruit (*phala*): the intent or purpose of the topic. (6) Eulogy (*arthavāda*): praise or criticism intended to encourage. (7) Demonstration (*upapatti*): establishment of the main topic through various arguments.

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(1) Obligatory Actions (*nityakarma*): those actions that one is to perform periodically. These include bathing, *sandhyāvandanā*, and the fire ritual (*agnihotra*). (2) Obligatory Actions for Specific Occasions (*naimittikakarma*): These actions include those performed at birth, rites of passage, and other *saṃskāras*. (3) Optional Actions (*kāmyakarma*): those actions performed for the fulfilment of some desire; for instance, the *putreṣṭiyāga*, a sacrifice performed for obtaining a child. (4) Prohibited Actions (*niṣiddhakarma*): actions, such as theft and other crimes. (5) Expiatory Actions (*prāyaścittakarma*): actions undertaken to reduce the effect of performed prohibited actions. *Chāṅdrāyana* and other austerities are considered expiatory actions.

These *karmas* are also alternatively divided into the following three types: (1) Accumulated Actions (*sañcita-karma*): the accumulated actions of one's previous lives. (2) Ripened Actions (*prārabdha-karma*): among the *sañcita-karma*, those actions whose results are destined to come to fruition in the present life. (3) Present Action (*kriyamāṇa-karma*): the actions that one is undergoing at the present moment.

To the Mīmāṃsaka, the significance of *karma* lies its association with liberation and eventual identification with *dharma*. *Nitya* and *naimittika* Vedic *karmas* benefit in attaining liberation. The later Mīmāṃsakas, such as Āyadeva and Laugākṣibhāskara, emphasize that when these *karmas* are offered to Paramātman they result in liberation. In one way, this significance appears to resemble the narration of *karmayoga* presented in the *Bhagavadgītā*.

**Yajña, an Act of Sacrifice:** Among these different *karmas*, Mīmāṃsā gives great significance to *yajña*, the act of sacrifice. Based on Vedic narrations, Mīmāṃsā offers narration on a number of different types of *yajña*, each described in great detail. These *yajña* are considered to be fulfilled only with the successful completion of the many ritual performances that constitute it. The details of these ritual sacrifices explicitly describe the intent with which they are to be performed; the specific order in which its constituent rituals are to be performed; what *mantras* are to be recited; at what time, location, and under what circumstances, by whom and for whom they are to be performed; what austerities are to be undertaken by those enjoined in the sacrifice; and the fruits of successful completion. All of these are described in great detail by Mīmāṃsā. Placing *dhārmika* actions such as *yajña* on the pedestal of inquiry and reflection is one of the most notable contributions of Mīmāṃsā.

**Apūrva, a Necessary Connection:** The Mīmāṃsā concept of *apūrva* is the necessary connection between action and its fruits. It is also referred to as *adr̥ṣṭha*, or "that which is unseen." The Mīmāṃsaka reasons that at the completion of an act, the act itself ceases to exist, yet its fruits come to bear after some time; hence, some association that conjoins future fruits with past ceased action needs to exist. Mīmāṃsā conceives of *apūrva* as fulfilling this need. Whether it is *apūrva* itself or Paramātman who offers the fruits of action, is the subject of great debate within the *darśana*. Many later Mīmāṃsakas acknowledge a theistic intervention in the ascription of fruits.

Mīmāṃsā accepts the *Vedas* to be supremely authoritative. It also harbors great faith in Vedic *dharma* and the principle of *karma* and its fruits; and through reason and logic it establishes the claims of that very same faith. Hence, although Mīmāṃsā may not solely depend upon reason, it does not represent a blind dependence on unexamined and unsupported authority.

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**Footnotes**

1 (Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.1.1) (B. D. Basu 1) 4 (Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.1.4) (2)  
 2 (Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.1.2) (1) 5 (Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.1.6-23) (3-6)  
 3 (Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.1.3) (1)

## PŪRVAMĪMĀṂSĀ DARŚANA: THE SCHOOL OF VEDIC RITUALS

Although the previous *darśanas* are rooted in the *Vedas*, we now commence a study of two schools that have direct relationship with the *Vedas*. *Mīmāṃsā* means "deep reflection" or "inquiry." Reflection is at the heart of India's ancient intellectual wealth, figuring prominently in the *Vedas*. As such, reflection is as ancient as the *Vedas* themselves. The *Vedas* offer an inquiry into the visible and invisible, the external and internal, and from the individual to the infinite. This constant inquiry gave birth to two Vedic *darśanas*: Pūrvamīmāṃsā (Mīmāṃsā) and Uttaramīmāṃsā (Vedānta). *Purva*, meaning "prior," indicates a concern with the earlier portions of the *Vedas*, whereas *uttara*, or "later," refers to the later portion, the *Upaniṣads*. This is the last pair of the Vedic *śaḍdarśana*.

**Mīmāṃsāsūtras, a Text of Vedic Rituals:** The *Vedas* are the soul of Hinduism. Without their authority, Hindu traditions could no longer survive. Criticisms of the Veda instigated the need to methodically establish its clarity and demonstrate the authenticity of Vedic thought. Jaimini took it upon himself to systematically shape the Mīmāṃsā Darśana by creating the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*. Spanning twelve chapters and divided into sixty sections, the text considers roughly a thousand different topics, making it the largest collection of philosophical aphorisms of the *śaḍdarśana*. The text principally occupies itself in providing expositions on topics pertaining to interpretation and performance of Vedic rituals.

Unlike the aphoristic texts of the previous *darśanas*, the *Pūrva-*

*mīmāṃsā sūtras* (as well as the *Uttaramīmāṃsā sūtras*) are not independent texts, but based on the *śrutis* of the *Vedas*. Therefore, without some understanding the *Vedas*, one cannot come to terms with the aphorisms of these texts; and without a basic understanding of these aphorisms, it is nearly impossible to comprehend the *Vedas*. In this way, these aphoristic texts and the *Vedas* are dependent upon one another.

**Darśanic Developments:** Mīmāṃsā's desire to understand the nature of *dharma* is presented in the declaration at the beginning of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*: "Now commences an investigation of *dharma*."<sup>1</sup> Here, it defines *dharma* as Vedic directive.<sup>2</sup> Mīmāṃsā investigates its cause<sup>3</sup> and establishes it in the words of the *Vedas*.<sup>4</sup>

In characterizing this Vedic *dharma*, the Pūrvamīmāṃsā Darśana was later divided into three major schools of thought: Kumārila Bhaṭṭa's Bhāṭṭamata, Prabhākara Miśra's Gurumata, and Murāri Miśra's Murārīmata. Of these three, much of the work that followed focused on the expositions of Kumārila and Gurumata. Maṇḍana Miśra, Vāchaspati Miśra and Pārthasārathi Miśra are well known for their contributions under the Kumārila school; while Śālikanātha, Bhavanātha and Nandiśvara were leading contributors to the teachings of Gurumata.

**A Universal Hermeneutical Theory:** Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation. The interpretation of Vedic *śrutis* is the primary focus of Mīmāṃsā's epistemic investigations. Therefore, despite enumerating six distinct means of knowledge, the Mīmāṃsā Darśana places great emphasis on verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*).

The particularity and practicality of this system resulted in Mīmāṃsā's Vedic interpretations becoming more robust. Because of this, even other *darśanas* that did not accept the philosophical principles of Mīmāṃsā utilized these methods for interpreting their own respective texts.

**Fundamental Principles:** Mīmāṃsā believes in the reality of the external world, the *ātman* and *karma*. It also accepts reincarnation, *svarga* and *naraka* (the heavenly and hellish realms) and liberation.

In addition, Mīmāṃsā offers the *Vedas* to be of supreme authority, infallible, and its words as eternal.<sup>5</sup> Having explicitly stated the position of those who oppose the *Vedas*, proponents of the *darśana* respond to these criticisms and establish the *Vedas* as both eternal and infallible. In offering such responses, they also refute the seeming inconsistencies of the Vedic *śrutis*, harmonize them with one another, and ultimately offer philosophical justifications for the beliefs of its underlying ritualism.

**A School of Reflection on Action (Karma-Mīmāṃsā):** It is impossible to live without action. Life itself is nothing but a synonym for collective action (*karma*). Hence, throughout the ages, we have yearned to know what we should do and how and when we should act. These questions have continued to bewilder us. The Mīmāṃsā Darśana offers a means for satisfying our inquiry. In this *darśana*, *karma*, as it is joined with the individual and all of creation, is contemplated. Mīmāṃsā uniquely enjoins rights and duty as two necessary aspects of action.

Because of Mīmāṃsā's emphasis on ritualism, not only is this *darśana* identified as Karma-Mīmāṃsā, but its aphoristic text is also referred to as the *Karmasūtras*. To understand Mīmāṃsā's ritualism, it is necessary to come to terms with its notion of *karma*.

The *darśana* presents the following five different types of *karma*:



Sage Bādarāyaṇa sits in a grove of holy rudrāksha trees, *Eleocarpus ganitrus*, writing the seminal *Brahmasūtras*. Behind him are gathered the āchāryas of some of the subsequent and philosophically distinct Vedānta schools: (left to right) Chaitanya, Śaṅkara, Nimbārka, Madhva, Rāmānuja and Vallabāchārya.

the *Vedāntasūtras*, by its dedicated investigation on the nature of Brahman, is also aptly named the *Brahmasūtras*. The text's enquiry into the nature of Brahman is rooted in Upaniṣhadic revelation. Among the meanings of the term *Upaniṣad*, it is known to mean "That by which *brahmavidyā* (knowledge of Brahman) is known and attained." The *Upaniṣads* themselves define *brahmavidyā* by clearly stating, "*Brahmavidyā* is that by which the knowledge of *akṣara* and *puruṣa* is obtained."

Since the *Brahmasūtras* are based on the *Upaniṣads* and *smṛti* texts, it comes as no surprise that a call to investigate this *brahmavidyā* is expressed in the very first aphorism of the *Brahmasūtras*: "Therefore, now commences a desire to know Brahman."<sup>3</sup> It is also notable that here, at the outset, the *Brahmasūtras*, unlike the aphoristic texts of the other *darśanas*, undoubtedly makes itself known as theistic.

**Fundamental Principles:** Vedānta offers Brahman as the material cause (*upādānakāraṇa*) and instrumental cause (*nimittakāraṇa*) of the world, and as its all-doer. Vedānta also acknowledges the existence of an eternal and sentient *ātman* that is bound by *karma*, and as a result endures rebirth. The *darśana* identifies *brahmavidyā* as the means for attaining never-ending liberation of this *ātman* from the cycle of birth and death.

Vedānta's metaphysical elaborations present descriptions of the *ātman*<sup>4</sup> as the *jīvātman*<sup>5</sup> and as the governors (*iśvaras*)<sup>6</sup> of different realms (*lokas*). It also offers a detailed narration of the cause of bondage of these *ātman*. In addition, it explains the means for their liberation,<sup>7</sup> the liberated,<sup>8</sup> the divine abode<sup>9</sup> of the liberated, the path<sup>10</sup> toward this abode, and the supreme entity, Paramātman,<sup>11</sup> who forever resides within it.

**The Power of Words:** The Vedānta Darśana recognizes the power of the scriptural word. Among the different accepted means of knowledge, it clearly establishes verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) as foremost. Although the Naiyāyikas accepted the authority of verbal testimony, they relied predominately on inference when establishing the existence of *Īśvara*. In Vedānta, however, despite being aware of the Naiyāyikas' efforts, the *darśana* emphasizes verbal testimony over that of pure inference. It seems that the reason for this prominence is its understanding of the instability and unpredictability of logic. Vyāsa himself clarifies in the *Brahmasūtras*, "Because reasoning has no sure basis..."<sup>12</sup> One sees this emphasis on verbal testimony even in the beginning of the *Brahmasūtras*. Upon first proclaiming Brahman as the topic of discussion in the first aphorism, the text continues by describing that Brahman as the creator of the world. The next aphorism explicitly declares that it will demonstrate the nature of this Brahman through *śāstra*.

**Guru in Vedāntic Hermeneutics:** *Guru-krpā* is the heart of the Vedānta Darśana. Having established the significance of verbal testimony, Vedānta also emphasizes the importance of *guru* in its hermeneutics (theory of interpretation). Without understanding the significance of the *guru* in Vedānta, a study of Vedānta would be incomplete. It irrefutably states that it is not possible to experience the meaning of the *śāstras* without surrendering to a *gurudeva*. To demonstrate this, Vedānta appeals to the authority of the *śrutis* and *smṛtis*. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* explains, "To obtain that knowledge one must surrender oneself, with offerings in hand, only to that *guru* who has realized the essence of scriptures, who is Brahman, and steady in Parabrahman."<sup>13</sup> The *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* describes such a *guru* as the *jñānin* (knowledgeable) and *tattvadarśin* (the seer of reality). "To master *brahmavidyā*," the *Gītā* continues, "one must please him by bowing to him (*praṇipātena*), asking him meaningful questions (*paripraśnena*) and serving him (*sevayā*)."<sup>14</sup> By the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, Vedānta makes clear the sentiments one needs to have for such a *guru* in order to realize the true meanings of the *śāstras*: "One should have the same devotion for the *guru* as one has for Parabrahman."<sup>15</sup> Here it advises to view the *guru* as Nārāyaṇasvarūpa (the form of Parabrahman). From this, it seems only appropriate that followers of Vedānta identify the *guru* as "Gurudeva" or "Guruhari." Perhaps it is because of this *guru-śiṣya* (disciple) tradition that the Vedānta Darśana is of great significance even today. In this way, Vedāntic hermeneutics achieves completeness only by accepting the *guru*.

**Sub-Darśanas of Vedānta:** Many schools of Vedānta (*saṃpradāyas*) later emerged from the teachings of *Prasthānatrayī*. Within the Indian philosophical tradition, it became customary for these *saṃpradāyas* to establish their philosophical positions in relation to these three texts. Although these *saṃpradāyas* are positioned within the Vedānta Darśana, they themselves became identified with the title *darśana*. Among them, the most notable are Śaṅkara's Advaita-darśana, Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita-darśana, Madhva's Dvaita-darśana, Nimbārka's Dvaitādvaita-darśana, Vallabha's Śuddhādvaita-darśana, Chaitanyamahāprabhu's Achintyābheda-darśana, and Svāmīnārāyaṇa's Akṣarabrahma-Parabrahma-darśana<sup>16</sup> (also known as the Akṣara-Puraṣottama-siddhānta). Each school is nurtured by a unique interpretation of the *Prasthānatrayī* presented in extensive commentaries.

By discussing, among other things, Brahman as the cause of the world, the form of the *ātman*, liberation and its means, and the unavoidable need of a *guru* to understand sacred texts, the Vedānta Darśana gifts the world with a unique school of philosophy.

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#### Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> *Śruti* refers to Vedic mantras.
- <sup>2</sup> *Smṛti* refers to that which recalls the principles of the *śrutis*.
- <sup>3</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 1.1.1) (Vedavyāsa 1)
- <sup>4</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 2.3.18) (171)
- <sup>5</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 2.3.18-40) (171-185)
- <sup>6</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 4.1.1-4.3.4) (336-363)
- <sup>7</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 3.3.14-24) (264-270)
- <sup>8</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 4.4.5-7) (373-4)
- <sup>9</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 1.4.1, 1.4.6, 4.3.3) (78, 82, 363)
- <sup>10</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 4.3.1-5) (361-4) (78, 84)
- <sup>11</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 1.4.1, 1.4.6)
- <sup>12</sup> (*Brahmasūtra* 2.1.11) (108)
- <sup>13</sup> "तद्विद्वि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया। उपदेशंति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥" ("tadviddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā | upadeśyanti te jñānaṃ jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ ॥" (*Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* 4.34) (Vyāsa 89)
- <sup>14</sup> "यय देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ। तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥" ("yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā devē tathā gurō | tasyāite kathitā hyarthaḥ prakāśante mahātmanah ॥" (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*) (Śāstri 141)
- <sup>15</sup> (Sadhu 172-90)
- <sup>16</sup> (Sadhu 172-90)

## VEDĀNTA DARŚANA: THE SCHOOL OF BRAHMAVIDYĀ

The Vedānta Darśana (also known as Uttaramīmāṃsā) is one of the most prominent and currently the most practiced school of the *śāddarśana*. The title *Vedānta* appropriately characterizes this *darśana* in the following three ways: (1) *Vedānta* is a Sanskrit compound constructed from joining *Veda* with *anta*. The term *Veda* refers to the *Vedas*. Each Veda has the following four parts: *Samhitā*, *Brāhmaṇa*, *Āraṇyaka* and the *Upaniṣad*. Among these, the *Upaniṣads* are referred to as the end part of the *Vedas*. Hence, *Vedānta* refers to the knowledge of the *Upaniṣads*: the end (*anta*) of the *Vedas*. (2) In addition, *anta* also means "concluding essence." The essence of the *Vedas* is included in its *Upaniṣads*. Hence, *Vedānta* also refers to the concluding essence of the *Vedas*. The name of the *darśana* indicates that its principles rest on the teachings of the *Upaniṣads*. (3) When understood as a *darśana*, *Vedānta* also refers to the *Brahmasūtras*, the primary aphoristic text of the *darśana*. Just as the Mīmāṃsā's aphoristic text is based on Vedic ritual expositions, Vedānta's *Brahmasūtras* are based on the *Upaniṣads*.

Although the principles of Vedānta originate from Vedic literature, a systematic representation of its teachings is attributed to Maharṣi Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa. His creation of the *Brahmasūtras* established Vedānta as a *darśana* of Vedic philosophy. Since other *āchāryas* within the *darśana* based their respective philosophies on the expositions of this text, Vyāsa is also referred to as the *ādi-āchārya* of Vedānta.

**Prasthānatrayī, a Trinity of Texts:** *Prasthāna* means "a *śāstra* that establishes principles," and *trayī* indicates "the quantity three." There

are three sacred texts held as authoritative by the Vedānta Darśana: The *Upaniṣads*, the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* and the *Brahmasūtras* (also known as the *Vedāntasūtras*). Because these three sacred texts establish the principles of Vedānta, they are collectively identified as the *Prasthānatrayī*.

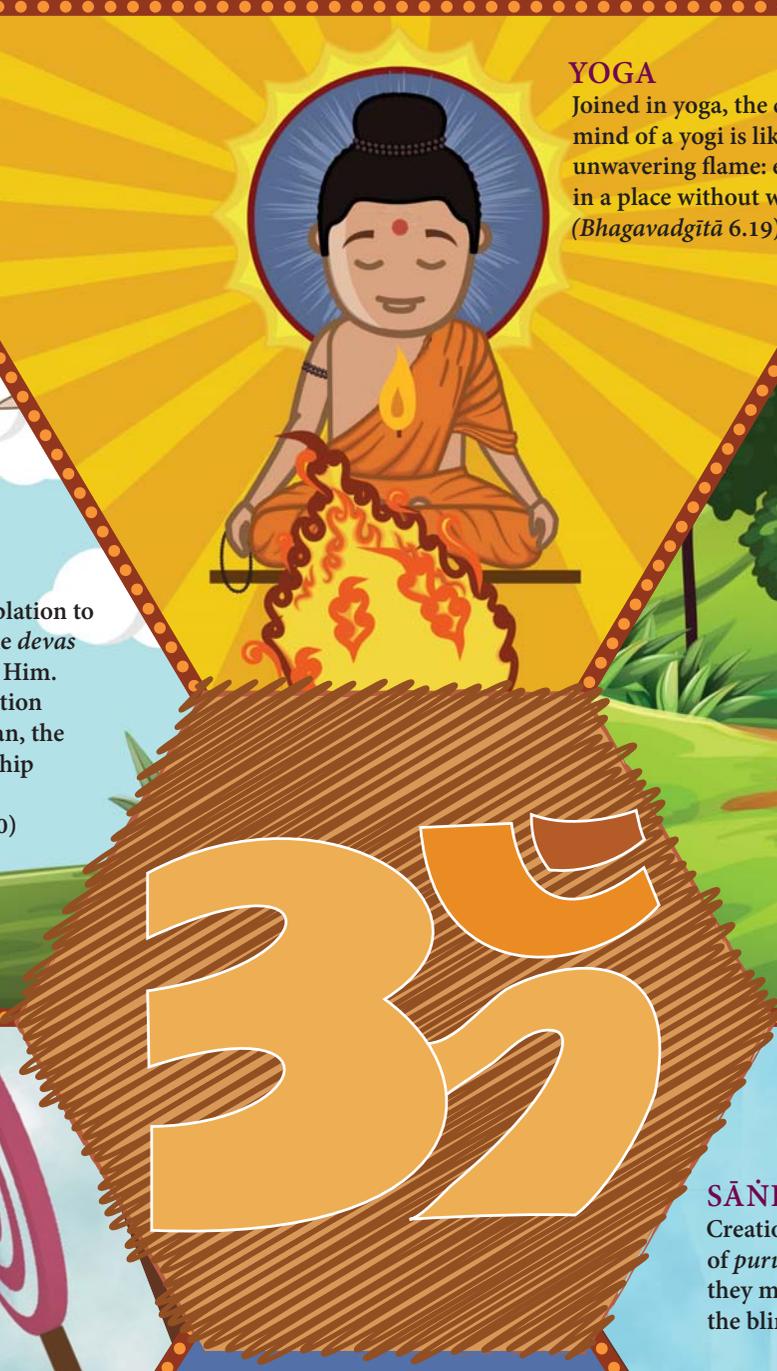
Of these, the *Upaniṣads* are a form of *śruti*<sup>1</sup>, hence referred to as *śrutiprasthāna*; the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* is a form of *smṛti*<sup>2</sup>, and thus identified as the *smṛtiprasthāna*; and the *Brahmasūtras* are a form of *tarka*, or logic, hence identified as *tarka-prasthāna*.

**Brahmasūtras, an Investigation of Brahman:** The *Brahmasūtras* are partitioned into four chapters (*adhyāya*), with each further divided into four sections (*pāda*). The chapters of the text focus on the following topics: (1) Meaning Ascription (*Samanvaya-adhyāya*): the first chapter, through logical analysis, elaborates the meaning of the *śrutis* in which *ānandamaya*, *ākāśa*, *prāṇa*, *akṣara*, *dahara*, *sat* and others appear. In doing so it describes Brahman as, among other things, the sustainer of all, all-pervasive, and the all-doer. (2) Refutation of Objections (*Virodhapratikṣepa-adhyāya*): the second chapter discusses various objections to the mentioned nature of Brahman and refutes those objections. (3) Description of Endeavor (*Sādhanā-adhyāya*): This chapter elaborates the various spiritual endeavors for attaining liberation. (4) The Fruits of *Brahmavidyā* (*Phala-adhyāya*): The final chapter describes liberation, the liberated, their divine powers and the divine abode.

Just as the Mīmāṃsā aphoristic text was identified as the *Karmasūtras*,



**MĪMĀṢĀ**  
By dedicating oblation to Paramātman, the *devas* offer worship to Him. Through association with Paramātman, the *devas* offer worship to Paramātman. (Ṛgveda 1.164.50)



**YOGA**  
Joined in yoga, the conquered mind of a yogī is like an unwavering flame: ever still in a place without wind. (Bhagavadgītā 6.19)

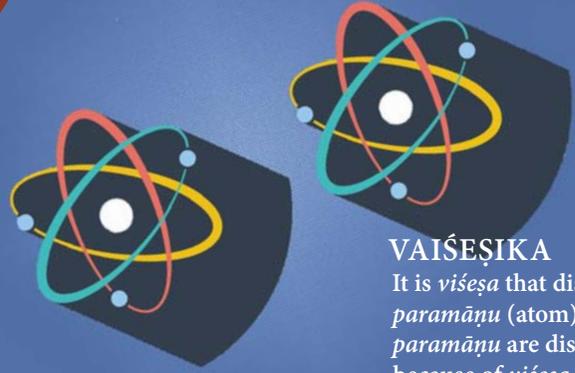


**NYĀYA**  
Just as an unperceived fire is inferred by perceived smoke, given the right reason, the unobserved becomes known. (Gautamasūtrabhāṣyam 2.1.46)

**CLASSIC ANALOGIES OF THE SIX DARŚANAS**



**VEDĀNTA**  
The *guru* is the bow, the Self is the arrow and Brahman is the target. (Muṇḍakopaniṣat 2.2.4)



**VAIŚEŚIKA**  
It is *viśeṣa* that distinguishes one *paramāṇu* (atom) from another. Two *paramāṇu* are distinct from one another because of *viśeṣa*. (Tarkasaṅgraha)

**SĀṆKHYA**  
Creation spurs from the union of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. Together they move like the lame guiding the blind. (Sāṅkhyakārikā 21)

