CHAPTER SEVEN

CRITICISM OF THE NYĀYA-VAIŚHEŚIKA

Untenability of some of the Sāmkhyan tenets was brought out in a preceding chapter. Now Nyāya-Vaiśeśika, the other important schools of orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy, are taken up for criticism. They are so "closely allied in their realistic and passimistic outlook" and are so amalgamated today, that it does not behave graceful to deal with their criticisms independently. The refutation of the Vaiśeśikas at the hands of Śaṅkara may be divided mainly into two sections. The first section attacks the theory of causation of the Vaiśeśikas, and in so doing, it establishes by implication, that Brahman can be the cause of the world in the same manner as the atoms are according to the Vaiśeśikas. The second section goes to prove that atoms cannot account satisfactorily for the causality of the world.

a) The Problem of Causality

The opponent's stand as given by Śaṅkara, assumes two forms. The first is an objection to the theory that Brahman is the cause of the world. The second form is the

1. It may be mentioned here that Bādarāyaṇa has not mentioned Nyāya by name.
narration of the theory of causation as mentioned by the Vaisheshikas.

The colour of the threads, the cause, gets transferred into its effect, the cloth. Taking this analogy, the Naiyayikas deduce a general conclusion that the essential nature of the cause is certainly never absent in its effect. But the essential characteristic of Brahman viz. intelligence, is apparently absent in its effect, the world. Hence Brahman cannot be the cause of the world.

At the time of world-dissolution, the atoms remain inactive. But they are endowed with their respective qualities i.e. The atoms of earth possess colour, taste, water, smell and touch. The atoms of earth have colour, taste and touch. The atoms of fire have colour and touch. The atoms of air possess only one quality of touch. All these atoms are infinitesimally spherical.

At the time of creation, there is initiated some motion in the atoms due to the 'Unseen Principle' (Adrśta). Due to the relation of conjunction, the atoms start joining. Two atoms go to form a dyad. It is worthy of being noticed that the dyad does possess the white colour of the atoms, but they are not spherical in nature. Dyad possesses smallness (Aputva) and shortness (Hṛstva). Thus the

1. Vide Sharīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/11.
Naiyāyikas hold that the cause invariably generates altogether new qualities in the effect. Further two dyads go to constitute a tatred (quaternary compound). The quality of whiteness etc. do produce themselves in tatred, but minuteness and shortness of the dyad are totally absent in tatred because it is said to have been endowed with grossness and length as its new special qualities. Thus the Naiyāyikas conclude that this factor of production of absolutely new qualities in the effect is universally true.

It is surprising that the Vaiśeṣikas who criticise the Vedāntin's theory of creation on the above lines, say that infinitesimal atoms produce a minute and short dyad, which in turn, gives rise to tatred that is long and large. Here we see that sphericity of the atoms is not reproduced in their consequent effects. At every stage while passing from atoms to dyads or from dyads to triads and tatred, dissimilar qualities are produced. Śaṅkara protests here rightly: "What, then, is the harm, if the Vedāntin advocates that non-intelligent world is caused by intelligent Brahman?".

The Vaiśeṣikas may say that the products like dyads, triads etc. become endowed with certain qualities which are

1. Śaṅkara has talked of a combination of three atoms 2/3/11, while commenting on Brahma-Sūtra. But from which source he derived this information is difficult to trace. Literature on Nyāya available at present does not favour this view. Later commentators have termed this explanation of Śaṅkara as pertaining to some irregular theory of the Vaiśeṣikas.
opposed to those of the causes. Those qualities, being dominant, do not let other qualities of the cause appear in the effect. But non-intelligence is the total absence of intelligence and not a quality which may be said to be opposed to intelligence and that may resist intelligence of the world from being perceived. Therefore, there is no reason to prevent the transfer of intelligence of Brahman in its effect, world.

Shamākara proves the futility of the above argumentation thus: Though non-intelligence is the absolute negation of intelligence, yet both cases are at par in so far as the productivity of the qualities into its corresponding effects is concerned. Hence the monists have as much right to attribute the causality of non-intelligent world to the intelligent Brahman as the Vaishēśikas have in maintaining atoms as the cause of dyads etc.

The Vaishēśikas say that the substances, after being created, remain at first without qualities but become endowed with new qualities the next moment. So, there can be a time when the oppressive elements gets removed and infinitesimal sphericity may find scope for its expression in the dyad. This is indeed a funny result even from the standpoint of the Vaishēśikas.

The opponent may say that the qualities of sphericity etc. are engaged in the creation of the other new qualities.  

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Therefore, they don’t have any chance of producing such qualities in the effect-substances as are similar to themselves. Śaṁkara replies here that the opponent cannot escape to the above position. Otherwise, the authority of Kaṇḍaṇa which says that the new dimensions have altogether new causes, would be contradicted.

The opponent may say that plurality or duality of the constituent members of the cause, being always present in the effect, produces new qualities. Śaṁkara reminds here that all qualities reside in all the constituent members of the cause equally. Therefore, they are all, including sphericity, equally contiguous with the effect. Hence there is no convincing reason to prevent the sphericity to be produced in the dyads etc.

The Vaishesikas say that largeness of the Trayanuka is caused neither by atoms nor by dyads, but by the quality of Sankhya, which inheres in the three dyads. Śaṁkara questions here, now does a Quality can produce another independent distinct Quality of dimension. At last, he himself explains the reason why sphericity is not reproduced in the effects. He says that it is their natural mode of behaving. The same explanation can hold true even about the Advaitin’s doctrine that Brahman has also the natural way of not

1. Cf. Śaṁkara Bhaṣya on 2/2/11.
b) **Refutation of the Atomic Theory**

The hypothesis of the opponent runs thus: All substances of the world are wholes made of parts. Take for example, a piece of cloth. It is made up of threads. The parts are joined together due to the quality of conjunction which always inheres in its each constituent part. This process is universally true about all substances. Where this process of division and subdivision of wholes into parts comes to an end, the category is called 'atom'. All this world of mountains, oceans etc. is one whole effect which is constituted of parts. Because an effect must have a cause, therefore, tracing the ultimate cause of this world of effects, the followers of Kaṇāda conclude that the Atoms are the only uncaused cause of the world.

Observing four elements, Earth, Water, Fire and Wind, the Vaiśeṣikas advocate four kinds of atoms corresponding to them. At the time of world-dissolution, the parts of all these four elements start falling off till they reach the smallest possible division, i.e. atom. When the world, on the other hand, is to originate, there arises some motion in the atoms of the wind due to the Unseen

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1. It may be observed here that Śaṅkara keeps mum over the opponent's charge that non-intelligence is a clear negation of intelligence. It is all the more surprising that no later commentary deemed it necessary to say anything about it.
Principle. The motion results in the combination of the atoms. Thus in order of sequence of dyad and triad, the first element of wind comes into existence. Similar is the process with regard to the production of the other elements. Just as the colour of the threads is produced in the cloth, similarly, the colour of the atoms is reproduced in the dyads, triads etc.

Objecting to the above-mentioned theory, Śaṅkara asks the opponent to clarify his positions further. What causes the initial motion in the atoms at the time of new Creation? Movement in itself is an effect, and hence it must have a cause. That cause cannot reside in atoms, or in the soul or in some kind of impact or anything else, there being no physical body during the state of dissolution. We see that the conjunction of threads into a piece of cloth takes place only when some effort is purposely made in that direction. Similarly, world creation implies some effort of the soul or some endeavour or impact, just as the wind causes motion in the trees or hand moves a thing. Any of these initiatory motions cannot take place before the creation of the body. Hence, world-creation cannot take place, because of the impossibility of the union of atoms.

1. Cf. The Commentary of Prashastapāda on the topic 'The Creation and Dissolution of the world'.
2. Cf. Śaṅkara Bhāṣya on 2/2/12.
The original motion cannot be attributed to the Unseen Principle, because the Unseen Principle itself is a non-intelligent entity and as such, cannot cause the required motion independently by itself. Otherwise the Unseen Principle will have to be regarded as residing either in the soul or in the atoms. If we suppose it to be residing in the soul, then from the Vaishesikas' point of view even the soul is non-intelligent during the state of dissolution, it is yet to be endowed with intelligence and hence creation cannot take place. Even though the Unseen Principle is admitted to be residing in the soul, it cannot cause the motion in the atoms because it is not related with atoms in any way, and some sort of relation has got to be admitted in two given entities are to affect each other in any way. Even if we grant relation between the Unseen Principle and the atoms, due to which the iniitary movement takes place, there would result eternal creation because there is none to regularise it. To avoid this difficulty, if it is said that the Principle resides in the atoms, then, it may be pointed out, there will be perpetual motion in the atoms, because the atoms are by nature eternal and if the Unseen Principle, the cause of initial movement in the atoms, is admitted to be residing in the atoms, it will reside there permanently and cause eternal motion. Thus final dissolution will never take place. Hence Vaishesika's doctrine, examined from so many angles is found untenable.
Even if it be granted that the atoms do combine, then again a question arises: Do they interpenetrate each other or they join partially? In the first case, there will be no production of any distinct effect because there will be no increase in volume or the size of the atoms. In the second case, atoms shall have to be conceived as made up of parts because the entities having partial conjunction can never be 'one whole'. And an entity which has "Avayavas" is always impermanent. This goes contrary to the Vaishesikas' assumption.

Even if we accept that the atoms are made up of parts due to their position and direction in the space, then their conjunction will only be an unreal thing of imagination. Consequently, atoms would not serve as the material cause in producing dyads, triads etc. And finally, there would arise another difficulty that dissolution of the world may become impossible because there is no cause that may separate the joined atoms. This difficulty cannot be got over by attributing this act to the Unseen Principle, because, at the most, the Unseen Principle may explain the phenomenon of pleasure and pain in the world but not the state of complete dissolution where there is no pleasure and pain.

Shaṅkara brings out the unworkability of Atoms in another interesting way. The Vaishesikas will have to accede

one of the following alternatives with regard to activity of atoms.

(i) Atoms are active by nature.
(ii) They are non-active by nature.
(iii) They are by nature endowed with activity and non-activity both.
(iv) They are endowed with neither of the two.

All these escapes are untenable. First position results in perpetual creation and no dissolution. The second possibility would cause no creation and there would result eternal dissolution. The third case is logical impossibility, because two contradictory predicates cannot be applied to one and the same entity at one and the same time. The old difficulty stands again in the way of the fourth position that the activity must be due to some other cause. If this cause be the accumulation of merits and demerits, the very nearness of it with the atoms would cause eternal activity or non-activity and thus resulting in permanent creation or dissolution.

In connection with the unworkability of the atoms towards the production of dyads, triads etc., Dr. S.K. Belvalkar makes a remarkable observation which is even geometrically true. If what is infinitely small can be called zero

1. Vide "The Brahma-Sutras of Badarayana" by Dr. S.K. Belvalkar, Page 98 (of notes).
another infinitely small substance added to another infinitely small substance cannot lead to any increase in the dimension in as much as zero plus zero is equal to zero.

Atom, though mobile, cannot move beyond the sphere of the Self, which is all-pervading. Moreover, conjunction is possible only when one of the objects related through conjunction is made up of parts. An all-pervading entity like the Self cannot be spoken of as having upper, lower, middle or side parts to get in contact with the atom. Similarly, conjunction cannot take place between atoms and binaries because "the very notion of the pulling of the atom suggests adherence of the atom by one of its sides, which would ascribe Avayavas to it". This difficulty with regard to the conjunction of atoms creates complications in the process of creation given in the commentary by Prashastapada and thus goes against the hypothesis of the Vaisheshikas. Any way, Shamkara ends the refutation of the atomic theory of the Vaisheshikas by sheltering his eternal protection; because the atomic theory is not accepted by the authoritative persons like Manu and others, therefore, it deserves to be altogether dismissed.

c) Refutation of Asatkaryavada

The Naiyayikas also raise certain objections against the theory of causation of the monists. In so doing, they argue on the lines of Asatkaryavada. Brahman is intelligent,

1. Vide Shariraka Bhasya on 2/1/7.
pure and devoid of qualities. Its effect, the multifarious world is impure, non-intelligent and with form. Thus the āiyāyīkas say that the effect possesses entirely new qualities which are not found in the cause. Hence it is a new creation. Therefore, it is apparently non-existent in the cause.

In defence of the above charge, Śaṅkara points out that the present objection is only a statement which has no objective validity. According to the opponent, the effect did not exist at all prior to its coming into being. How can, then, he negate a thing that is non-existent. In order to negate a thing, we must have some conception of it. We cannot negate a thing which is absolutely non-existent. So the opponent’s argument is a negation, there being no object to be negated. Śaṅkara further declares that the effect is a non-entity if no reference is made to its cause. Therefore, to say that the world did not exist at all before its coming into being, is meaningless.

Śaṅkara does not point out the fallacy in the reasoning of the opponent. The opponent puts his case in one line of reasoning, which no doubts is valid in its own way. On the other hand, Śaṅkara asserts his thesis using a different line of reasoning. He only points a basic drawback involved in the opponent’s judgement. It is doubtless that Śaṅkara’s argument is more appealing and brings out an inherent

1. Vide Śāṅkara Bhāṣya on 2/1/7.
contradiction of the opponent's assumption. From the
defence side of Śaṅkara, it may be said, that the
opponent's charge has already been answered earlier when it
was shown that the factor of "existence" is common to
both — Brahman and its effect, the world.

The scripture speaks of "non-existence" in the
beginning. It may be said to support the Naiṣāyikas
contention of the causal relation. In order to clear such
a misunderstanding, Śaṅkara says that the Scriptural passage
does not mean absolute non-existence of the effect-world.
Non-existence is only with reference to the names and the
forms of the world. An object may be said to be non-existent
when it is in the unevolved condition of its names and forms.

Śaṅkara has given some additional reasons to refute
the opponent's contention that every effect is a new creation
and it is in no way to be linked with its so-called "cause".

1. Vide Chāndogypāniṣad III/19/1.
2. This is according to Śaṅkara's interpretation of
the Śūtra 'Bhāve ṣopalabdheh'. It may be mentioned
here that Vallabha interprets this Śūtra as advocating
the reality of the world. He says that the world is
Bhāvarūpa because it is directly perceived and hence it
is real. He openly accuses Śaṅkara of willfully
interpreting the Śūtra wrongly.
Production of specific effects only by specific causes indicates that a particular effect does exist in its cause. Had the effects been non-existent in their causes, then anything might come out of anything.

The opponent may try to explain the origin of effects, by saying that every cause is endowed with a particular power due to which it creates the effect. In that case, Śaṅkara reminds him that he is abandoning his own position of Asat-kārya-vāda. If the opponent is true to the doctrine of "Asat-Kārya-Vāda", he cannot even talk about a "cause".

It is worth noting that Śaṅkara has employed the arguments given in Sānkhya-Kārikā 9. It may be referred here that the celebrated scholar of Indian Philosophy, Vacaspati Mīśra, while commenting on Sāṅkhya-Kārika 9, brings out the untenability of the doctrine of Asat-Kārya-Vāda and deals elaborately with the arguments given here by Śaṅkara in brief. Wherever Śaṅkara has talked of the identity of cause and effect, it is only to defend himself against the Vaishēśikas who, being Asat-Kārya-Vādins, say that the effect is always different from its cause.

Dr. S.N. Basu's wonderful remark may be noted in this connection: "Vedānta has as much to object against the Nyāya as against the paripāma theory of causation of the Sāṅkhyas; for,

1. Vide Śārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/1/18.
movement, development, form, potentiality and actuality—all these are indefinable and inconceivable in the light of reason, they cannot explain causation but only restate things and phenomena as they appear in the world. In reality, however, though phenomena are not identical with the cause, they can never be defined except in terms of the cause.¹

The fact of origination, Shankara continues to add, points straight to the effect and the substratum in which it occurs. e.g. walking implies reference to a man who does the act of walking. Thus the effect, being a product of an act of origination, cannot be denied to be present in the cause.² Let us analyse the phenomenon of origination in more details. The production of jar indicates a Karaka-vyāpāra. That means some intelligent entity, applying all the needed apparatus, is making to pass the product-in-the-making through various stages of processes. Shankara questions here very aptly as to what is being subjected to the said Karaka-vyāpāra, which in reality has been in operation much earlier than the actual production of the jar. There is no other possibility except that to admit that the same clay passes through different processes of refining, kneading, moulding, whirling on the wheel, drying baking etc. Hence

¹ "History of Indian Philosophy", Volume I, Page 468.
² Vide Sharīraka Bhasya on 2/1/18.
the jar was present throughout the different stages of the process. In other words, it is clay itself that has assumed the form of a jar.

If it be said that the origination is nothing but connecting the effect with existence, then the opponent is saved from the above difficulty. Śaṅkara, in that case, points out that the causal operation is a process carried through a certain duration of time and which begins much earlier than the actual production of the effect. In the light of this fact, the opponent's solution is not acceptable as it amounts to connecting existence i.e., effect, with non-existence, the cause. An absolute non-existence cannot be made a reality in spite of the best efforts of the potter and connection exists only between objects which do exist. It cannot exist between things which are non-existent or between things one of which is non-existent. For example, how stupid it is to speak of the son of a barren woman being the king of a certain province.

The Asat-kārya-vādin may say that people are seen to strive to bring about the effect, and therefore, it indicates that the effect was non-existent before its coming into being, because otherwise, the effort put forth by the efficient cause would be meaningless. Śaṅkara replies that the operative causes or agents simply arrange the cause in a particular form of the effect.¹ In fact, this form of the effect is nothing new from the cause and

¹ Vide Śaṅkara Bhasya on 2/1/18.
remains definitely present in the cause. More change of form does not transform the thing. For example, Devadatta; though he may stretch its arms, he may bring his arms and legs very close, he always remains the same Devadatta.

The opponent may say that persons may be recognised as the same because their varying conditions are not separated by death. But, the jaron the other hand, is said to be different because the clay is as good as being destroyed. Śaṅkara meets this objection by forwarding a counter example of milk. It does continue to exist, though under a different form, even when it transforms itself into curd. It is wrong to hold that the sprout is different from its seed. In fact the seed itself becomes visible in the form of the sprout due to the accumulation of particles of matter. Thus the cause and the effect are merely two ways of looking at one and the same thing. The nature of the act of production is nothing but individual mental projection which can very truly be compared to the world of dreams.

Moreover, if we agree with the Asat-kiśra-vādin, we will find it difficult to explain the recognition of the same person as 'the same person' during his different stages of

1. Śaṅkara's thesis that the cause is the antecedent existence of the effect has beautifully been brought in the following lines of Bhamati:

यथा कृताभिन्नतत्त्वं शास्त्रियतिररूपं रघुनाथं तिर शास्त्रविद्या तत्।

रघुनाथ: कृताभिन्नस्तव शास्त्रियतिररूपं रघुनाथं तिर शास्त्रविद्या तत् तिर शास्त्रविद्या तत्।
life. The existence of a jar is not admitted apart from the existence of clay. That means jar can exist only if the clay exists and not otherwise. Because the effect cannot be perceived in the absence of its cause, we conclude that the cause and the effect are identical in nature. When Brahman is the material cause of the world, the world cannot exist in the absence of the existence of Brahman and hence it is concluded that the world and Brahman are non-different.  

Śaṅkara has tried to bring out that the essence of a thing lies in the portion of the thing which can never exist independently apart from the thing itself under any circumstances. It must be present in the said thing during its all stages. For example, the essence of a jar cannot be its colour or jarness because the colour may fade away and vanish and the jarness may be destroyed when the jar is voluntarily broken. The clay which endures through all stages of the jar, is, in fact, its real essence. Similarly, we can work out the real essence of the world as one whole, taking individual instances of all the objects which go to constitute this world. Thus we find that 'existence' is the only essence of the world. Brahman, on the other hand, is characterised by existence, intelligence and bliss. Because, existence, a common factor of Brahman and the world, is such a category which does not admit any distinction in itself. Hence the identity of Brahman and the world.

1. Vide Śaṅkara Bhāṣya on 2/1/15.
Over and above all this, the Scripture itself declares clearly and emphatically that the world did exist before its coming into being in the form of its cause, i.e. Brahman. This means that Shruti also advocate that the effect is non-different from its cause. Dr. Belvalkar’s observation in this connection multiplies the strength of the present argument in favour of Śamkara Cārya. The causal power that inheres in the cause must be an existent thing. If it exists independent of the cause, we can’t say that it invariably inheres in the cause; a possibility which none can admit because of the universal rule of the specific causal power. If it be completely distinct from the effect, we can’t say it to be the determinant factor of the effect. Hence it is very aptly concluded that the specific causal power points that the effect exists prior to its origination and that it is non-distinct from its cause.

After establishing the law of causation by means of reason, Śamkara takes up the final support of the Scriptures and recalls the existence of a being "which alone was in the beginning, one without a second". And to refute those who call this being as non-existent, the scriptures declare clearly, "All this was existent alone in the beginning".

1. "All this existed before"
2. The Brahma-Sūtras of Pādarāyana" by Dr. S.K. Belvalkar, Page 37{ of notes}.
3. Vide Chāndogyopaniṣad VI/2/1.
All this leaves no doubt for Śaṅkara's assertion that the state of the world before and after the creation is similar to that of the cloth which are rolled up in the first stage and was spread out later. Just as a rolled up piece of cloth cannot be distinctly perceived, and when it is spread out, we may perceive it with all its specific qualities of length and breadth; similarly, the cloth, though it does subsist in its constituent fibres, is rendered perceptible only when it is a finished product. The operating agencies like the sūb shuttle, the loom and the weaver etc. only make manifest what was unmanifest before. Thus what was unmanifested in the cause became manifested in the effect. Hence we infer the similarity of the two.

d) Criticism of the Relation of Whole and Part

It may be suggested that the relation of the Cause and the effect is that of whole and parts. After assuming this relationship, the opponent may say that the parts are linked together due to their eternal relation of Samavāya and the so-called effect is created. Thus the opponent is saved from the difficulties pointed above. The Vedāntin points out here that the solution gives rise to further complications. Śaṅkara questions here as to how does this

1. Vide Śāriṅka Bhāṣya on 2/1/19.
2. Vide Śāriṅka Bhāṣya on 2/1/18.
linking of the cause and the effect take place? If it be said that the whole resides in all the parts simultaneously, then the whole may not be perceived, not being directly in contact with the eye. One sense of organ cannot take into account all the parts of the whole in one act of perception.

Shankara's judgement is true in the light of the following analysis: If the jar "the Avayavin, resides in all the Avayavas taken together, we can never visualise the jar, because we can never take in all the Avayavas together in one effort of vision". If it be said that the Avayavas of the jar are presented in such a rapid sequence that they present one whole cause, then we are admitting a possibility that Avayavas, taken independently, differ from those Avayavas in which the totality of Avayavas of the jar resides. This is not permissible because it goes against the established experience of the specific causal power.

We cannot contemplate the possibility of residing one whole in each part turn by turn, as it gives rise to additional difficulty—when one portion, say the lowest one, will be possessed of jarness, the others still fall off, being deprived of the element of jarness (a funny result indeed!), because one whole cannot reside at two different places at one and the same time. If it be said that the whole resides in some of its parts successively, then the perception of the whole can be inferred just as the whole sword is perceived only by seeing the upper portion which remains out of sheath. We should remember here, observes
Shamkara, that the hidden parts of the sword, are definitely different from those of the sheath. Thus we will have to introduce a new series of parts to connect the original ones. It would lead to the fallacy of Regress in Infinitum. If it be said that the effect as a whole resides in all the parts, then we shall have to admit more than one whole, which is a case of impossibility. Devadatta cannot be present at two different places at one and the same time.

The opponent may say that the whole resides in each one of the parts simultaneously, just like the Sāmānya or Jāti of a cow. It cannot be maintained, replies the Siddhāntin, because every cow manifests the Sāmānya whereas every part of the cause does not necessarily manifest the whole of the effect. The opponent may say that the whole resides fully in each part. Shamkara points out that this position is practically untenable, for otherwise milk can be had even from the horns of a cow.

It is true that a thing is called so because it has a definite and distinctive function of its own. This is also implied in Aristotle's remark that a hand, cut off from the body, is no longer a hand. It is true that all the individuals belonging to one species have their own respective "Artha-kriyā-kārītva" i.e., pragmatic use. It is only on account of this quality that the objects are known by the respective terms denoting them. Hence Shamkara is justified in sucking milk from the horns of a
The Vaishesikas say that the atoms, apart from their other qualities possess colour as their special quality. Shāmkara objects here by pointing out that colour is evidently a physical quality which would definitely make the character of atoms differ from each other. The atoms will not remain uniform even in display of their basic nature. If an atom is taken to be the smallest divisible element of any substance, then, it must be admitted that all types of atoms have equal weight and equal number of properties. These conclusions contradict Vaishesikas' contention that atoms have also got their respective colours.

It may be pointed out here that this line of reasoning given above and employed by Shāmkara is, to quote Dr. S.K. Belvalkar's language, "clearly based upon a confusion between what is smallest and what is simplest". The learned doctor does not seem to have given a deep thought to this comment. We know the famous Nyāya dictum: "

परमार्थों को अवरूपं गौरवम्।

This means that there can be a number of adjectives to

one subject. The adjectives may differ in themselves but the subject ever remains the same. Shamkara is right in pointing out here that the adjectives do introduce degrees of variation in the subject. Hence it would lead to the impermanency of Atoms. The Vaishesikas, applying the analogy of disintegration of substances into their constituent parts, say that atoms are the ultimate divisible element of the substances where no further division is possible. These atoms are classified into four categories according as they possess the qualities of colour etc., whereby they produce gross elements at the time of world-creation. Shamkara points out here that such a hypothesis attributes impermanency to atoms in as much as they will have to be regarded as gross and transitory even as all the objects having the qualities of colour etc. are.

Shamkara adds an illustration from experience to strengthen his observation. We see that things possessing colour and qualities are more transitory and gross than their causes. Take for example, a piece of cloth. It is more transitory and gross and hence impermanent when compared with its cause, the threads. The threads in themselves are so when compared to their respective cause, the fibres. The atoms in themselves will also have to be regarded so when compared to their respective cause, whatever that cause may be. The atoms are also said to have colour, taste, smell and touch. Therefore, on the strength of the above analogy atoms must also be gross and transitory when compared with the first ultimate cause. Consequently, they can no longer be regarded
permanent. Śaṅkara is not unconscious of the Vaishešikas' assumption that the atoms are uncaused. Therefore, he insists again to assign causality to atoms. Śaṅkara's insistence is only to point out the fallacy of Regress in Infinitum involved in the Atomic theory. Whereas it is easy to prove causality taking one's mind on the theory of Vivarttavāda.

After this Śaṅkara proves that the standards of permanency as given by Kanāda himself cannot attribute permanency to atoms. A permanent entity is said to have existence but not a cause. In view of the conclusion reached above, this declaration cannot make the atoms permanent. The second reason that Kanāda puts forward in favour of permanency of atoms is: If atoms were also not permanent like other (unseen) causes, then calling the effects as impermanent would be meaningless. One feels to agree with Śaṅkara here that this is no argument to advocate that atoms alone are permanent.

Another standard that comes up to decide the permanent character of the atoms is the Vaishešikas' aphorism, "Avidyā Ca". This śūtra may be taken to mean, 'the non-perception of the cause of atoms' which exist themselves and produce perceptible effects by their combination. This is

1. Vide Vaiśešika Śūtra 4/1/1.
indeed a too wide definition. Along with the permanency of atoms, this statement makes dyads also permanent, because they produce perceptible effects and at the same time, their cause, the atoms, are imperceptible. To overcome this difficulty, if the Vaishēśikas may that non-perception of a cause means non-existence of material substance which may be considered responsible for the production of effects, then the Siddhāntin would say that this is only a repetition of the Śūtra 'Sadkārṇavannityam'. Then Śūtra "Avidyā Ca" becomes superfluous.

Now Śaṅkara shows an interesting futility of the conception of atoms. According to the Vaishēśikas, water is subtler than earth because it does not contain smell. That is why water enters through smallest pores where sand can never. Fire is subtler than even water because it is devoid of both smell and taste. That is why a ray of light travels through water without disturbing the particles of water. Air is subtlest because it has no quality other than that of touch. That is why air moves through sunshine without disturbing the rays of the sun and without casting any shadow of its own. If this very principle is applied in case of atoms, then we shall have to admit that even the atoms have degrees of grossness and velocity, because, those atoms which have largest number of qualities will be necessarily bigger in size than those which have smaller

1. Vide Śārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/16.
number of qualities. This goes contrary to the nature of atoms as maintained by the Vaishesikas.

If, in order to maintain the equality of atoms, the opponent supposes that they have only one quality, then, the specific effects of the four elements would also become endowed with only one quality. Then Vaishesikas' doctrine of causality collapses. It is absured to think that fire is devoid of touch, water of colour and touch, and earth of touch, colour and taste. Or to maintain the equality of atoms, it may be suggested that each atom is endowed with the equal quantity of the four elements. This is contrary to experience and hence absured to believe. How funny it is to believe that water has smell or fire has smell and taste, or that air has smell, taste and colour.

It may be concluded that the monist's position is sound and safe. The above discussion leads us to assume that the First cause is Nescience because it does not stand in need of the test of logic. Advaitins have characterised it to be so that it is not required to face and meet the demands of logical evaluation which is one of the basic necessary features of Western Philosophy. They say that it is a salient feature of Nescience that no reason is applicable there, because otherwise it will have to be assumed as "Vastu" i.e. something solid and perceptible.  

The Vaishesikas maintain that all the six categories—Substance, Quality, Action, Generality, Particularly and Inherence—are absolutely distinct from each other, as a man is from a horse or a hare from grass. They further hold that it is the first category of 'substance' on which depend the remaining five. Conjunction and Inherence also, though dependent on Quality and Action, ultimately depend on Substance.

This, says Śaṅkara, does not stand to reason. It goes against experience. Take for example, Kusha and Palāśa. They are completely distinct from each other. But they are never dependent on each other. In view of this finding that the two altogether distinct entities can never be inter-dependent. Moreover, the Vaishesikas' contention is logically untenable. It complicates their position further. In other words, it means that Quality etc. exist only if the Substance exists, otherwise not. It is as good as saying that the same Substance assumes five forms of Quality etc. on account of its specific position etc.This

1. It may be mentioned that a detailed criticism and refutation of Nyāya categories of "difference, separateness, quality, action, class-concepts, specific particulars the relation of inherence, perception, doubt, illusion, memory, inference, invariable concomitance, induction existence of reason in the minor term, reason, analogy, implication being, non-being, duality, measure, causality time, space etc." occurs in the second chapter of "Tattva Pradīpikā" by Gitsukha, a commentary of Śrī Harśa.
conclusion is supported by the analogy of Devadatta who, though one, becomes many with respect to his position and other factors. Thus, it is obvious, that the opponent is going astray from his held thesis that the categories are independent and separate from each other.

Citing the example of smoke and fire, the Vāsishṭikas may get out of the above difficulty by saying that dependence of one thing upon another does not disprove their independent nature. In that case, we reply, unlike Subsence and Quality, smoke is believed to be separate on account of perception that we actually see it so. On the other hand, we do not perceive distinctly two independent categories of Quality and Substance at one and the same time. For example, blackness and blanket in a blanket are never perceived as two independent and separate things. The dependence of the five categories on substance is attributed to the relation of "Ayut-siddha". It means the eternal relation of Inherence existing between entities incapable of separate existence. And an inseparable pair consists of two things of which one thing, so long as it does not come to an end, exist only in the other thing. Hence the opponent's refuge in the analogy of smoke and fire is futile and it cannot justify the dependence of Quality etc. on the category of Substance. Thus Shāmśkara's objection is valid.

1. This contention is taken up for refutation in a following separate section(h) of the present chapter.
g) Criticism of the Relation of 'Inherence' and 'Conjunction'

The Vaishesikas say that the Substance and the Quality etc. appear to be the same on account of their eternal connection of Inherence. To this position Shankara questions thus: This so-called relation of Inherence can either be connected with the terms in which it exists or it can be entirely independent of them. The first case gives rise to the fallacy of regress in Infinitum. The second position is apparently impossible because in that case the cause and the effect, or the Substance and the Qualities, will be completely disconnected.

The Vaishesikas say that two atoms go to form a dyad. The dyad is related to the atoms due to the relation of Inherence and yet it is distinct from them. Shankara brings home here that the Vaishesikas forget that Inherence itself is a distinct category in their view. If it is to be related to atoms and dyad in any way, it must require for itself another relation due to which it may inhere in the dyad and the atoms. The second Inherence would require another one and so on Infinitum. The Vaishesikas say that the relation of Inherence externally remains present in the object in which it exists. Therefore, it never

1. Vide Sharīraka Bhāṣya on 2/1/18.
stands in need of another Inherence. Shamkara points out in that case that Conjunction should also not stand in need of Inherence, because it is eternally present in the objects joined. Shamkara's protest against the unlike treatment of Conjunction from Inherence when each of them is at par being 'connections', is justified.

The opponent may get out of this difficulty by saying that Conjunction is a quality and hence there is no contradiction if it is said to stand in need of the relation of Inherence. But Inherence is an independent category and not a quality. Shamkara reminds the opponent here that both the cases are at par in so far as the demands of a distinct entity with regard to its relation with another are concerned. Hence the fallacy of Regress in Infinitum stands as it is.

Vaisheshikas' view about the relation of Inherence and Conjunction is also fallacious. According to them the relation of Conjunction exists between entities capable of independent existence. The relation of Inherence exists between entities having non-separated existence. It is further asserted that the relation between the cause and the effect is that of Inherence. Shamkara says that this is an erroneous conception. It is an established fact that

1 Vide Sharīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/13.
the cause exists independently much prior to the effect. How can it have non-separated existence with an entity, the effect, which has not come into existence? Relation, if it is to exist at all, demands that the entities between which it exists must be existent. It is illogical to maintain that two non-existent things are related to each other or that two such entities, one of which is non-existent, have some sort of relation between them. Why does the opponent forget that he is an Asatkārya-vādin?

If, in order to avoid this difficulty, the opponent says that the effect comes into existence first and then is related to its cause. Śaṅkara in that case points out that the opponent is abandoning his principle that the effect cannot have an independent existence from its cause.

Implication of the conception of Conjunction demands that one of the objects under Conjunction must move towards the other. At the time of the beginning of creation, how does Conjunction take place between Ether, (which is all-pervading and therefore, cannot move) and the other first effect Substance which is devoid of activity at that time, because activity is a Quality and Qualities are in the form of Jāti at that time. It may be added here that the relation of Inherence is unacceptable, also because it lands us in

confusion with regard to the enquiry: which inheres and in what? Hence creation cannot take place in absence of conjunction between the said categories.

Besides, the Vaisheshikas do not furnish a sound proof of Conjunction and Inherence as having actual existence to entities beyond the things in which they exist as relations. That they have got certain names and that they give rise to certain cognitions in us is no sufficient reason to admit its independent existence. We see in the world that things first get an original nature of their own and then they acquire a name. Conjunction and Inherence do not indicate anything that may give an idea of their nature, independent of the nature which they accrue from the relatedness of the things under conjunction. Devadatta is comprehended distinctly as a "MAN", leaving aside all considerations about his social relations. Inherence and Conjunction do not have any permanent meaning of their own, which may exist even in the absence of the things so related.

Against this criticism, the opponent argues thus:

Had Conjunction and Inherence been nothing but the objects in relation only, they could have always been

1. Śaṅkara has called समवय to be perceptible: "नन्यिha pratyayagrahyau Samavayo". (Śārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/13)
   The view may have been originally held, but available data on the point at issue does not support it.

2. Vide Śārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/17.
predicable of the objects so related. Its answer is given by the Siddhāntin from the daily experience. This is not a universal rule that all synonyms are always interchangeable. One synonym is preferred to another due to certain reasons. The similar mode of behaviour can be expected here also. An additional difficulty is that particleless atoms cannot have Conjunction as the opponent maintains. Therefore, Conjunction cannot exist between atoms and the soul, or the individual soul and the mind which is atomic in size. This excludes the possibility of knowledge and formation of dyads etc.

Shāmkara adds further that Conjunction is not the only mode of creation and disjunction that of the destruction. For example, application of heat destroys the solidity of ghee and gold. Thus destruction can take place without disjunction of the constituent parts of that thing. Similarly, conjunction is not necessarily required in case of production. Take for example milk and water. They produce curds and snow respectively without standing in need of any Conjunction.

Do the illustrations of ghee and gold go to prove that they get destroyed simply by applying heat to them? Yes, if the elements are heated to a good deal of degree. The illustration of curdling at once disproves the opponent's thesis that Disjunction is a must in cases of destruction.

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1. Vide Śārīraka Phāśya on 2/2/17.
In fact, it may be pointed out, contrary to the Vaishēśika's assumption, that the milk has been destroyed by the 'Conjunction' of the particles of curd.

Besides, the demands of the relation of Conjunction lead to contradict the nature of atoms as maintained by the Vaishēśikas. The atoms, in order to have Conjunction, must be conceived to be limited and as such, they must assume as many limbs as there are the directions—say six, eight or ten. But all things possessing definite parts are perishable. Hence atoms also become perishable. Thus Śaṅkara examines the doctrine of atoms of the Vaishēśikas from a number of angles and points out the flaws therein quite convincingly.

h) Refutation of the Conception of "Ayut-Siddha"

The Vaishēśikas may say that the quality etc. are dependent on the substance because of their relation of Ayut-Siddha (because they are entities of inseparable existence). Śaṅkara analyses their concept of Ayut-Siddha and says that it can mean inseparable existence in space, or inseparable existence in time; or inseparable existence in nature. None of these alternatives can be proved to be logically valid. The first alternative contradicts Vaishēśikas' contention that a piece of cloth occupies the same space as its constituent threads and that

qualities of cloth occupy the same space as of cloth and not of the threads. In spite of this, Vaishēśikas' aphorism saying that substances originate substance and quality originate quality will no longer hold good. If the second alternative is accepted, then, says Shaṅkara, even the two horns of a bullock would also be regarded as its illustration. The third alternative is a clear case of impossibility because it leaves no scope of maintaining any distinction between substance and quality.

1) Criticism of the Concept of Soul

The Vaishēśikas consider soul to be non-intelligent. They regard that it is endowed with intelligence only accidently. They say, when the soul gets in relation with the mind, it is then, that it becomes endowed with intelligence. It happens exactly in the same way as for example, the jar becomes endowed with the quality of redness when it is in conjunction with the fire. Had intelligence been a permanent feature of the soul, it should have remained with it during deep sleep, swoon etc. But experience tells us quite contrary to it. People, after waking up from deep sleep, declare that they were not conscious of anything. On the other hand, persons are observed to be intelligent in waking states because we perceive them to be engaged in furious activity. In this

1. But mind is also a non-intelligent entity in Vaishēśika Philosophy. How can a non-intelligent thing make another non-intelligent thing as intelligent simply by their conjunction?
way, after proving intelligence of the soul as "intermittent", the opponent asserts that intelligence of the soul is accidental only.

Shāmkara objects this view. He says that the soul is of the nature of intelligence because it is essentially nothing but the Supreme Brahman. But due to its contact with the limited adjuncts, it falsely appears to be conditioned as the individual soul. Thus, in reality, intelligence is an essential characteristic of the soul even as the light and the heat are of fire. Shāmkara quotes a Scriptural passage which clearly says that the soul is sentient.

As regards the objection that persons in sleep are never conscious of anything, Shāmkara brings in a Scriptural passage giving the description of a sleeping person: "And when there he does not see, yet he is seeing though he does not see. For there is no intermission of the seeing of the seer, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from his that he could not see". Thus during sleep, absence of intelligence cannot be maintained because if there are no objects to be illumined that does not mean that intelligence itself has disappeared. After getting up from sleep, people are used to say that they enjoyed a happy sleep wherein they realised the bliss of

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their Self. Shamkara rightly questions here who was this 'I', who perceived the presence of bliss. That means there was a perceiving agent. The object of perception was also there, i.e. the positive notion of bliss. That perceiving entity can only be an intelligent thing. Hence Vaishesikas' doctrine that intelligence of the soul is accidental is untenable. Further, people say that they knew nothing during sound sleep. This fact leads us to hold that there was a permanent, immutable and free from all stages, a Witnessing Principle, who witnessed the absence of activity i.e. passivity. During deep sleep, intelligence is there, but the external objects are not there because the senses have stopped functioning. It is then wrong to infer that the soul loses its intelligence during sleep. Thus the doctrine of the Vaishesikas is not only unsupported by the authority of the Scriptures but is also unconvincing.

According to the Vaishesikas, the Self has the following fourteen qualities: Cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, dislike, volition, number, size, separateness, conjunction, disjunction, Bharaṇa, Dharma and Adharma.

In case of the individual souls at any rate all these qualities, excluding the five beginning from number, are accidental. The soul in his real nature is devoid not only of pleasure and pain, desire and aversion, effort and impression, but it also lacks intellection, merit and demerit.
It is indeed such a quality-less state which can only be achieved at the time of liberation. Rightly enough, such a non-sentient stone-like condition of the liberated soul is made an object of ridicule by all the opponents of the theory.

j) Criticism of the Doctrine of many Souls

The Vaishešikas believe in the existence of many souls. Though, they are all-pervading, yet they are at par with any other object of the world such as jar, stool etc. As such, they are characterised by non-intelligence and are nothing but mere substances. These souls in order to function, stand in need of the co-operation of the mind which is atomic in size and is also in itself non-intelligent. The conjunction of the soul and the mind leads to the origination of none particular qualities known as desire, cognition, pleasure, pain, aversion, endeavor, merit and demerit and Bhāvanā. All these qualities live in the soul without causing any confusion. This is the brief description of the state of empirical existence of the Self in the Vaishešikas Philosophy. Total non-origination of the said nine qualities is called emancipation.

As against this, Shamkara urges that the internal organ is equally connected with the souls in a uniform manner because all souls are exactly at par with regard to their proximity with the internal organ. Hence the connection of one soul with pleasure and pain makes us infer that all
souls are connected with the same amount of pleasure and pain. This conclusion, to which the opponent has been driven, contradicts experience.

The difference of pleasure and pain may very well be attributed to the Unseen Principle. Shaṅkara in that case points out that we find no assignable reason in the Vaishesika Philosophy to believe why a particular "Adṛśa" belongs to a particular soul. It may be said that the difference exists because of the variety in the resolutions of the soul, such as "I want to achieve this" or "I want to avoid that" or "I am struggling to achieve this" or "I want to act in that way". This escape is also futile as the former one, because it furnishes no solution with regard to the old problem that all souls must be equally connected with the equal amount of pleasure and pain, because their proximity with the internal organs is the same.

The opponent may argue that the Conjunction of the soul with the mind is to be understood that mind, after all, is located in the body. Hence the contact of the soul with the internal organ is determined by a particular body which may very well account for the difference of pleasure, pain etc. Shaṅkara says that this is incorrect as it reduces the

conception of soul as made up of parts, a theory which even the Vaisheshikas do not conceive. Even if the soul is granted to be as made up of parts, one fails to make out how these parts may be regarded as determinant factors of the variety of pleasure, pain etc., when all the souls being all-pervading, are in equal proximity with the bodies. The Vaisheshikas advocate Time, Space and Soul as all-pervading. That means that they are all equally related to all human bodies. Hence they cannot be regarded as the determinant factors of the difference in pleasure and pain. Moreover, the Vaisheshikas do not furnish any solid reason for their doctrine of many souls. All this proves that the doctrine of one and all-pervading soul is correct. ¹

k) Criticism of God

Vaisheshika Aphorisms do not mention God. There does occur the term "Ishvara" in the Nyāya Aphorisms. But it is mentioned there as the hypothesis of the opponent. The idea of God has been introduced by Vatsyayana and Prashastiprāda, which was later systematised and developed by Śrīdhara and Udāna.²

According to the Nyāya-Vaisheshika school of Indian Philosophy, God is devoid of activity. The reason substantiated in its favour is that activity demands some

¹ Vide Śhārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/3/53.
² Cf. 4/1/19.
sort of connection with the matter. But no such relation can be envisaged between God and the atoms. The relation of conjunction is not possible because both—God and the atoms—are of infinite nature. Infinite substances can never be connected. Therefore, God must be held to be devoid of activity. Shankara points out a contradiction here. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas advocate that God is also the creator of the world. One fails to understand how an entity which is said to be devoid of the activity is also advocated to be the creator. Does creation not imply some sort of action on the part of its Creator?

Moreover, no purpose is seen in attributing creation to God. If law of Karman is brought in, then we can very easily infer the supremacy of Karman over the will of God and ask dear Naiyāyika, what is the need of contemplating the concept of God? If some motive is admitted behind God's creation, then God will be held an imperfect entity, because activity is a mark of imperfect souls, according to the Vaiśeṣikas.

1) Criticism of 'Liberation'

The process of emancipation in Nyāya system of Indian Philosophy is explained by Vātsyāyana thus:—Destruction of wrong knowledge results in rooting out the defects. This is immediately followed by the cessation of Pravṛtti, the only factor responsible for next birth. Consequently, an end is put to the cycle of birth and death,
it brings Apavarga by destroying all sufferings. The only factor to be noted here is that, according to this system, emancipation consists in the cessation of pleasure, pain etc. which are said to characterise the soul during its state of bondage.

Two objections are raised against this view:

The relation of Inherence existing in substance i.e. the Self, and qualities such as pleasure and pain, makes emancipation an unattainable state. A substance is defined to be that of which the qualities are the very inseparable essence. In that case, how the qualities of pain, pleasure etc. can be separated from the Self to achieve its liberation?

Secondly, this concept of release contradicts Vaishesika Aphorism saying that "the qualities in eternal things are eternal and is non-eternal things are non-eternal."

All this leads us to assume that the soul is erroneously linked with pleasure and pain. In fact, it is the wrong identification due to ignorance that the soul appears to be suffering from pleasure and pain, which, in reality, it does not. In addition to this criticism, we may note Dr. S.K. Belvalkar's observation."The theology of the School and its doctrine of release was

1. Nyāya Bhāṣya on 1/1/2.
2. Vide Śārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/3/50
plainly a later excrescence, and could be met by the arguments used against the theistic schools in Sūtra 2/2/37-41. This is sufficient to justify Śaṅkara's silence regarding the criticism of the concept of Liberation in Nyāya-Vaishēśika Philosophy.

m) Concluding Observations

Śaṅkara has left untouched the theories other than the atomic cosmology of the Vaishēśikas. He has nothing to say with regard to the theories of Inference or fallacies of reasoning. In fact the epistemology of the Nyāya Vaishēśika school of Indian Philosophy is a unique contribution towards the advancement of knowledge and hardly has it been an object of criticism in any branch of Philosophy.

The criticisms of Śaṅkara against the Nyāya-Vaishēśikas may concisely be brought under the four points which may be said to depict a summary of Śaṅkara's stand. They are as follows: (i) "The production of an effect different in nature from the cause, as in the case of the production of the impure world from pure Brahman, can be justified on the analogy of even the critics of Vedāṇta, the Vaishēśikas". (ii) The Vaishēśikas cannot sustain logically the combination of the atoms. (iii) The category

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1. Vide "History of Indian Philosophy" by Dr. S. N. Dasgupta, Volume II, Pages 189-90.
of Generality cannot be logically established. (iv) "Vaisheśikas are wrong in sneaking of six different categories and yet hold that all the five other categories depend on substance for the existence or manifestation".

Dr. S.K. Belvalkar concludes the topic very beautifully: "The Vaishesīka Realism, their distinctions between substance, qualities and the like, have a glamour of common-sense about them, but acute philosophical analysis as has been attempted by the Ācārya is bound to point out the contradictions and inconsistencies of the system. Not that there are not inconsistencies in the Vedānta itself, but apart from the backing of the Scriptures which the Vedānta can boast of, the system is undoubtedly pitched to a much higher philosophical level than is the Vaishesīka".

Śaṅkara is nowhere seen to use logical dialectic as Anandajñāna, on the other hand, does. Śaṅkara attacks his opponent from a pure logical point of view very rarely. As we have seen above, he has not criticised various definitions of the Nyāya-Vaishesīka school. He only highlights a number of confusions and inconsistencies which may come up if some of the selected few important Vaishesīkas theories are examined from logical and metaphysical points of view. It may be noted that Śaṅkara’s criticisms differ

a great deal from those of Shrīhāra, who, unlike Shamkara, "uses all the power of his dialectical subtleties to demolish the cherished principles of pure logic as formulated by the Nyāya logicians". Shrīhāra severely criticises the possibility of true knowledge by means of perception and inference. In this connection, it may be mentioned that Gītakha's approach is comparatively more positive and hence solid. His criticisms of Nyāya Vaishēśika categories reveal some very important tenets of Advaita Philosophy.

1. Vide "History of Indian Philosophy" by Dr. S.N. Dasgupta, Volume II, Pages 191-22.