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VAIŚEṢIKASŪTRA – A TRANSLATION

Ionut Moise and Ganesh U. Thite

Vaiśeṣikasūtra – A Translation

This book introduces readers to Indian philosophy by presenting the first integral English translation of Vaiśeṣikasūtra as preserved by the earliest canonical commentary of Candrānanda (7th century AD) on the old aphorisms of the Vaiśeṣika school of Indian philosophy.

The present monograph offers a canonical description of the fundamental categories of ontology and metaphysics, among which the category of 'particularity' (viśeṣa) plays a major role in the 'problem of individuation' of the 'nature' of substance in both Indian as well as Western metaphysics. This commentary should be read primarily in relation to Aristotle's Categories. It is structured in 3 parts. Chapter 1 contains a general introduction to Indian philosophy and the Vaiśeṣika system. Chapter 2 is a textual-philological discussion on the commentary itself, since its first publication in 1961 by Muni Jambūvijayaji up to the present day. Chapter 3 is a 'philosophical translation' that reads Vaiśeṣika in the global context of Comparative Philosophy and aims to render this text accessible and comprehensible to all readers interested in ontology and metaphysics.

A new reference work and a fundamental introduction to anyone interested in Indian and Comparative Philosophy, this volume will be of interest to scholars and students in Classical Studies, Modern Philosophy, and Asian Religions and Philosophies.

Ionut Moise is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Exeter, UK, and a Research Fellow at The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, UK, where he teaches Comparative Philosophy. He is the author of *Salvation in Indian Philosophy*, which is also published by Routledge (2020).

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in the translation was wrong. A token of gratitude to Ms Dorothea Schaefter of Routledge Hindu Studies Series, for making all this published work possible, and my English friends, Professor Sir David Winkley and his good wife Dr Linda Winkley, as well as Ranjit Sondhi (OBE) under whose encouragements I began work on a new project, a comparative philosophy of difference.

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Preface

It is a matter of great delight that we present to all philosophy students the first integral English translation of Candrānanda's Vṛtti, the oldest commentary available on the sūtras of the Vaiśeṣika school of Indian philosophy. The system is a robust ontology that presents, in 6 major categories, a complete picture of the world. Its description goes through a set of definitions that define substances from their concrete condition to their abstract state. A full draft of the current translation was made during the summer of 2019, in the Sackler Library at Oxford, but, given uncertainties concerning syntax, I had to call on the help of my Sanskrit guruji, the eminent Professor Ganesh U. Thite of Pune University, for a revision. Thus, in the course of the spring of 2020, I returned to Pune to revise the whole of the translation, and following the dramatic deterioration of a global pandemic, Professor Thite and I were forced to continue working on this revision through the medium of WhatsApp video calls, both in India and the UK (March to June 2020). As we were both under lockdown, we kept on meeting online and while I was reading to him my rough draft, he judiciously stopped to correct me, each time when my reading went wrong. This is the fruit of a wonderful and unforgettable Indo-European collaboration, and I am delighted to publish it in co-authorship with my Sanskrit mentor, Professor Ganesh Thite.

The introductory chapter seeks to provide a textual reading of the 'editio princeps' of Vaiśeṣikasūtra edited by Muni Jambūvijayaji at Baroda 1961, the very edition which this translation has used. I discuss the MSS on which this edition is based and other MSS on which Isaacson and Ruzsa have improved upon, as well as other 5 new MSS on the Sūtrapāṭha, which the editor Ionut Moise photographed at Wai, Mysore, Bombay, and Madras while in India with an Erasmus Fellowship (December 2015–September 2016). This is, of course, an incomplete contribution to the reconstruction of the 'independent transmission' (Wezler, 1982) of the Vaiśeṣikasūtra, for more MSS work must still be done in due course, mainly because the recent description of the entry 'Vaiśeṣikasūtras,' which the New Catalogus Catalogorum, vol. 32, published recently (2013), gives us important clues concerning locations of MSS on Sūtrapāṭha. Here, I should like to highlight the importance of a second Vaiśeṣika commentary, Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's Vyākhyā

(VSv) (short and long version, respectively) – again not available in English – whose glosses shed new light on both the early and later history of Vaiśeṣika tenets, at least prior to the Navya-Nyāya period when the Vaiśeṣika system is inflated with additional concepts or becomes simply assimilated by the Nyāya scholastic tradition. Both texts – VSc and VSv – are of paramount importance, but the current translation aims to disseminate Indian philosophy in a global context, through the discipline of comparative philosophy. Indeed, if there is any originality that this edition carries, then it lies in the attempt of the editors to read Indian philosophy in the context of world philosophy, and following an Indian academic tradition, to bring Indian philosophy in conversation with world philosophy at large.

Before reading this translation, the student needs to learn the lists of 9 substances and 24 qualities indicated often briefly by the particle 'ādi' ('and so forth'). The knowledge of substances and qualities is of chief importance for understanding Vaiśeṣika's ontology, as well as the broader picture of 'reality' (metaphysics); for that matter, I have marked all 9 substances and 24 qualities in commas, mostly when these are used in the nominal form. In this darśana, nouns and entities seem to be more important than verbs. I have translated the overwhelming use of the particle '-ādi' (etc.) by the expression 'and so forth.' For example, the student needs to read 'dravyādi' with the whole list of 9 substances in mind. Another thing to bear in mind when reading the Sūtras (Vaiśeṣikasūtra, Sūtrapāṭha) is to recollect the subject stated in the previous aphorisms because Sanskrit syntax is condensed, and the subject is not repeated but rather assumed and 'hidden' as it were in the preceding sūtras. For Roman transliteration, although, I initially followed the conventions set by the Baroda 1961 edition, I decided nevertheless to keep compounds (guṇa and vṛddhi) united and apply word division whenever necessary.

Within scholarship, there have been other translation attempts of Candrānanda's Vṛtti from Vaiśeṣika scholars, which I had initially consulted. Such fragmentary translations can be found at Nozawa (chapters VSc 1, VSc 2) and Halbfass (fragments VSc 1.2, VSc 9), as well as several passages discussed and translated by Thakur (2003), Arena (Sūtrapāṭha), and Miyamoto (fragments), to name but a few. Although Thakur (2003) provides a translation of Sūtrapāṭha, it does not correspond to the Sūtrapāṭha preserved by Candrānanda. The student must be aware that the synopsis Thakur provides is an eclectic compilation of several commentators on Sūtrapāṭha: it is not a translation of Candrānanda's commentary.

The reason for the first integral English translation of Candrānanda's Vṛtti (VSc) is 2-fold: (1) VSc is the oldest commentary on Sūtrapāṭha (VS) available at present; and (2) the fragmentary and incomplete translations we have on VSc transmitted by the scholars mentioned earlier seemed rather old-fashioned, or, from my point of view, simply incomprehensible. Since this translation developed in several stages over the past four years, I wish to acknowledge the support of several important European, English, and Indian trusts: the Spalding Trust, the Teape Trust, the Infosys Foundation, and the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen for having kindly granted me his elegant Oxford study office where I could meet online with Ganesh Thite for the first revision of this work.

11 July 2020, Oxford

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Abbreviations

ALMOIB	Alphabetical List of Manuscripts in the Oriental Institute, Baroda.
Arist Cat.	Aristotle's Categories (ed. J. L. Ackrill.).
AS	Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques.
Car	Caraka Saṁhitā.
CC	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca and Series Latina, Brepols Publishers.
CSPM	Catalogue of Sanskrit and Prakṛti Manuscripts, Ahmedabad.
DP	Daśapadārthaśāstra of Candra, H. Ui ed. 1917.
GIP	Geschichte der Indischen Philosophie. Frauwallner, Erich.
GOS	Gaekwad's Oriental Series.
GRETIL	Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages.
HIP	History of Indian Philosophy. Frauwallner, Erich. (English).
HSPCIC	History of Science Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization.
IBS	Indological and Buddhist Studies.
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
JIP	Journal of Indian Philosophy.
JOIB	Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda.
Kir Udayana's	Kiraṇāvalī. In PD.
Loeb	Loeb Classical Library (online).
LSJ	A Greek-English Lexicon. Eds. H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, 1968 (online).
LXX	The Septuagint. Rahlfs/Hanhart. Eds. (online).
MBhV	Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali
MBhD	Mahābhāṣyadīpikā of Bhartṛhari
MW	Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary (online).
Mysore N.D	A New Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts, Mysore, 1984.
NK	Śrīdhara's commentary on PD.
OHHAP	Oxford Handbook of the History of Analytic Philosophy.
PD	Praśastapāda's Bhāṣya in GOS.
PG	Bibliotheca Patrum Graeca, J. P. Migne 1865

PGL	PGL Patristic Greek Lexicon. Lampe, G. W. H. 1961 (online).
SII	Studien zur Indologie unt Iranistik
SP	Śivāditya's Saptapadārthī.
VIJ	Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal.
VP	Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari
VS	Sūtrapāṭha of VSc (with tentative reconstruction from the 'independent transmission').
VSc	Candrānanda's Vṛtti, GOS 136.
VSi	Il Vaiśeṣika Sūtra Di Kaṇāda. Trans. Leonardo V. Arena
VSś	Vaiśeṣika aphorisms of Kaṇāda, trans. Gough, A.E.
VSv	Vādīndra's Vyākhyā. Darbhanga 1957.
Vyo	Vyomaśiva commentary on PD.
Wai D. II.	Descriptive catalogue of MSS Prājña Pāṭhaśālā Maṇḍaḷa, Wai.
WZKS	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens.

Note: For another list of abbreviations, especially on the primary sources, see the Bibliography.

Appendices

Tables

Note on transliteration

Transliteration. For the Roman transliteration of VSc, although I initially followed the canon set by Muni Jambūvijayaji, I decided to follow instead the advice of Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen by keeping compounds united (guṇa and vṛddhi), and apply whenever possible the appropriate word division. Inconsistences may occur. Since the gloss is too brief, I have decided not to capitalise the beginning of sentences in either transliteration or translation. For variant manuscript readings, I recommend a comparison between Jambūvijayaji's footnotes with other valuable contributions of new manuscripts reading brought forth by Harunaga Isaacson (in his PhD unpublished thesis, 1995), as well as Ferenc Ruzsa's transliteration on VSc that is available online (academia.edu). I do really hope that my transliteration will spare students' time and will encourage them to use and quote from Candrānanda's commentary more often in any Indian philosophical study henceforth.

In this edition, I have not followed the convention of putting either Sanskrit, Greek, or Latin in italics. Since this edition addresses both philosophy and Indology scholars, engaging with both Greek philosophical and Sanskrit sources, given its accuracy and widespread acceptance, I decided to follow IAST (International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration) for Sanskrit. More generally, in the Bibliography, I have consulted and used the diacritics for the Sanskrit authors and works referred as these appear in the Bodleian Libraries Catalogue (SOLO). Whenever I have referred to a particular Sanskrit term in brackets, I have opted for the 'stem form' of MW Dictionary (e.g. for karma, karman). When I have not done so, I gave a portion of the quotation. I have also used Sanskrit terminology more colloquially ('theory of karma,' or the plural form 'dravyas'), not least because such concepts are already established within scholarship. The most striking feature perhaps is the 'excessive' use of commas for all ontological categories (substance, quality, motion, universal, particular, inherence). As this introduction explains, Vaiśeṣika is a substantialist philosophy, therefore, the reader must be alert when a word used in its nominal form occurs, and whenever categories occur in the text. For the same reason, I put only the uncertain terminological translations in brackets, for example, 'substance' (dravya). Sometimes, I analysed terms without even supplying a translation for these (e.g., saṃskāra), as I consider their English rendering controversial. The Index with the Glossary

at the end will help in this respect. For Greek literature, however, given the different styles of Romanisation, and in order to leave any ambiguity out, I found it straightforward to render the quotation in the Greek script itself, as is printed in most bilingual and critical editions. For the same reason, such an approach may be followed when dealing with other Oriental languages as well (Arabic, Syriac, etc.). The Sanskrit transliteration of Candrānanda's Vṛtti commentary has been made by Ferenc Ruzsa (academia.edu). However, the shortcoming of his feat is that he worked on the 1982 edition, which Isaacson recommends avoiding as it contains a sprinkle of new misprints. Hence, in all my work, I have relied on Jambūvijayaji's first edition (1961), which I have referred and quoted throughout. The electronic transliteration that Ruzsa made used different electronic diacritics, which made their reproduction very difficult. I had to reread and retype it all, both against the Baroda 1961 edition, as well as in comparison with a new but incomplete transliteration available at DCS (Digital Corpus of Sanskrit; available at www.sanskrit-linguistics.org/dcs/index.php?contents=texte). Nevertheless, I have fruitfully used the philological material of my Vaiśeṣika predecessors: Isaacson and Ruzsa, who are best equipped to supply a new critical edition of Vaiśeṣikasūtra.

Referencing. In both footnotes and bibliography, I have used an abbreviated form of the Oxford referencing system with only the author's surname, year, and the page (e.g., Halbfass, 1992, p. 234), and no brackets for the year. An exception to this rule has been in the footnotes where I have recommended a title for the readership mentioning only surname, title and year (Quinton, The Nature of Things, 1973). For English, I have used English grammar and spelling (e.g. realise, instead of realize). The first section of the introductory chapter addresses a worldwide philosophical audience providing a brief overview of what Indian philosophy is and where Vaiśeṣika stands in this overall picture. This sort of explanation continues in the footnotes of the translation. The second part of the chapter is more technical for it aims to put forward preliminary material for a future critical edition on Vaiśeṣikasūtra (Sūtrapāṭha). Illustrations on Vaiśeṣika manuscripts and their location is a good starting point. For the benefit of philosophy students, I have appended 2 charts/illustrations: 'Vaiśeṣika and world philosophy' and the 2 charts 'Vaiśeṣika and world philosophy' and the 'Vaiśeṣika scholasticism.'

1 Introduction to Indian philosophy and Vaiśeṣika

One question that Western philosophers usually ask is whether there is such a thing as 'Indian philosophy' and, if so, what are the topics, questions and problems it raises. Philosophy is hard to delineate in general, yet there are typical questions it poses, and knowing them, rather than laying down its definitions, is perhaps a better way to understand it. The second set of questions raised more recently is whether 'Comparative Philosophy' constitutes a genuine method or a self-subsisting discipline in the vast field of World Philosophy. If philosophy must go global, being as it were an universal domain of inquiry that transcends all temporal, geographical, and cultural boundaries, then the response is in the affirmative, hence Indian texts must supply both a contribution as well as a precise account of their own standing point and research questions. The most fundamental and, at the same time, most difficult problem in comparative philosophy remains 'translation,' for readers must not only understand the unique nature of the Indian philosophical concepts themselves, free of any Western bias, but they also must be able to translate them properly into the general World philosophical language. For that to happen, scholars need to expand and build a new philosophical glossary, with input from all known forms of linguistic contexts, including Sanskrit. Things have more than one meaning-definition, therefore, translations must do justice to each shade or layer of meaning an object carries. However, there are instances when Indian philosophical concepts are harder, if not impossible to comprehend; thus, one must go about such conundra by simply looking at fundamental and idiosyncratic research questions, which define the general philosophical inquiry. Philosophy is impermanent not because of its solutions, but rather through its questions. The scholastic Sanskrit tradition has demonstrated that new inquiries arise always in respect to the ancient texts and through their translations, fresh interpretations and change of meaning does occur in the history of Indian philosophy, albeit sluggishly. Thus, there is arguably scope for creative progress, even here. One such change is the one that the commentators on various Sūtra texts had brought, which consisted mainly of bringing new shades of meaning, and together with it a new school of interpretation, all this by claiming to offer either a hidden meaning unexplained by the founder of the school, or by simply extending the list of categories (padārtha) in view of strengthening and defending their own tradition, now under attack.

To introduce Indian philosophy to readers of Western philosophy, we should recall the old naturalist questions posed by the Pre-Socratics, those who coined the term. Therefore, what defines 'philosophy' is not the propositions taken to be true, but rather the constant perennial questions that lie at the basis of any fundamental description of the fabric of the world. To put it differently, philosophy develops first from realistic premises, with ontology, rather than logical inferences, with intuitions rather than justified reasons, with questions rather than definitions and presuppositions. Indeed, when one looks at the theories put forward by the first Pre-Socratic thinkers, namely the questions that Ionian, Pythagorean, and Eleatic physicists addressed, and then, when we compare these with the first Vedic philosophical speculations, one cannot but be struck by the seemingly analogous questions the early Vedic and Pre-Socratic philosophy gave rise to.[1] Such questions lie in the zone of 'ontology.' Thus, Zeller differentiates 2 stages in the development of Pre-Socratic thought. The first is marked by questions on 'substantial causes' (Thales, Anaximander) and 'essential natures' (Pythagoras, Anaximenes), while the second stage raises questions related to the 'origin,' 'decay,' and 'change' of the world (Heraclitus), as well as the laws that cause such phenomena (Empedocles).[2] One may see in the latter a maturation of inquiry from the fundamental questions about 'being' and a shift to those regarding 'becoming' for these take into account the importance of oneness and multiplicity (Xenophanes), and rationality in the framework of a philosophical realism (Parmenides, Zeno). Questions on the substantial cause of the world, the stuff out of which everything came to be, or what is the essential nature of which the 'world' (one being) or 'things' (many beings) consist of, are examples of naturalist types of inquiry.

The second stage of Greek Pre-Socratic thought, one that resembles the Vedic and Upaniṣadic philosophy, raises questions about substantial 'change', apparent 'transformation' of the world, and what are the laws and principles behind these. These were explained by postulating the laws of combination and separation of ultimately imperishable substances. This stage includes atomic theories (Leucippus) and explanations about the cyclical and disintegrating nature of the world, primordial elements, which are qualitatively different from each other, limited in number, and infinitely divisible (Empedocles), questions about one universal cause such as a primordial 'mind' (νοῦς)(Anaxagoras), and questions about the essence of the world spoken of in terms of either 'Being' (Parmenides) or 'numbers' (Pythagoras).[3] The rationale of this preliminary survey on the Pre-Socratic Greek philosophy is important because of their conspicuous resemblance with the problems raised by the early Vedic and Upaniṣadic seers. The point made

1 Filliozat 1970: 7.

2 Zeller 1895: 35.

3 A good introduction to Greek philosophy is R. P. Appleton, The Elements of Greek Philosophy, 1922 (for A levels and baccalaureate readers); and for a richer presentation, see Edward Zeller. Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy, 1895 (for graduate scholars).

here is that the first philosophical questions in philosophy lie in the zone of ontology (nature of things) and its broader domain, metaphysics (relation of things).

Now, regarding the difference between ontology and metaphysics, one conceptual and methodological distinction must be made, one that is not always clearly drawn in modern analytic philosophy, because both terms are often used interchangeably. It is, it seems, that the Aristotelian corpus determines a terminological difference between the two, for it articulates a science of ontology that inquiries about 'ontic beings' (τὰ ὄντα) (Categories 1a20) and the formulation of a 'science of being-as-being' (ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη τις ἣ θεωρεῖ τὸ ὂν ᾗ ὄν) (Metaphysics, Book Γ, 1003a). Heidegger too seems to follow a distinction between ontology and metaphysics in his 'Being and Time' (1927) where he distinguishes an 'ontological' inquiry of a most general concept 'Being' (Dasein) from a more specific 'ontic' inquiry regarding beings caught in temporal existentiality.[4] If we are to take into account both ancient and modern understandings, ontology is, and should therefore be, the ontic inquiry into the nature of beings and their essential and existential nature. Its purpose would then be to elucidate as far as we can the meaning of 'Being' (a most elusive concept in metaphysics) and its multifarious components, manifestations, real and mental events. Furthermore, it is important to mention that ontology implies a taxonomic agenda, whereas metaphysics is a broader domain that takes into consideration and elaborates upon the causal and logical relations between the ontic categories, putting them all in a broad 'picture of the world.'[5] Quinton goes as far as to say that any metaphysical system must arrange its categories into a sort of hierarchy, and that such an arrangement is 'ontology.' As we shall see, in Indian philosophy such a vertical display is characteristic of the Sāṃkhya school with its own successive stages of evolution derived from a primaeval elemental nature (prakṛti), whereas Vaiśeṣika, another important school, exemplifies a horizontal form of ontology, where categories are displayed synchronically, standing as they were in a relation of inter-dependence.[6]

If metaphysics is – within the context of modern analytic philosophy – a domain that presents, by rational means, a general 'picture of the world,'[7] this should not be confused with a mere encyclopaedic account of the elements of such a picture, for metaphysics must include the domains of knowledge and language too. In Indian philosophy, taxonomy and enumeration is important, for as Vyomaśiva,

4 The difference between 'Being' (ontological domain) and 'beings' (ontic domain) has been revived more recently by Heidegger in Being and Time. (1962 English trans).

5 Quinton 1973: 237.

6 Halbfass 1992: 48–9. The order is, of course, a simplification; as far as Vaiśeṣika is concerned, its ontological categories are related both vertically, into a system of supervenience, as well as horizontally, for the category of particularity (viśeṣa) is a horizontal derivation of the quality of distinctness; as I shall argue later, the Vaiśeṣika 'picture of the world' is a realistic immanent pluralism. The synchronic arrangement is most telling when we analyse the nature of abstract substances, time, space, vacuum, and soul, which are said to be all-infinite and all-pervasive, which implies the assumption that these can co-exist as the same time and space.

7 Quinton 1973: 235.

a 9th century Vaiśeṣika commentator explains, philosophy intends to enumerate everything in the world that has the character of being.[8] Another important characteristic, which is relevant for the study of Vaiśeṣika, is that metaphysics is not the simplification of Parmenides' axiom 'thinking is being', or the Socratic thought-form dualism (Timeous 51d-e), but as Vaiśeṣika illustrates, thought is indeed only one component of reality, in the complete ontological framework, which stands on 3 important levels which are recognised even by modern analytic philosophy:[9] (1) the basic or the ultimate; (2) the derived, or dependent level; and (3) the illusory or the fictitious.[10] As to how Vaiśeṣika presents its 6 categories,[11] this tripartite pattern is most visible in the description of the chief category, namely 'substance' (dravya), upon which the whole edifice of the system's metaphysics stands, for it is spoken in relation to adjacent categories, such as 'qualities' and 'motion' that substance relates to and is defined by. 'Sub-stance'[12] is the most basic category (point 1), particularly when it is regarded as a genus-universal (sāmānya), that is to say, as a simple all-pervasive essence in which the multitude of qualities are inherent. Between them, the latter represents the 'species' known by 'lower universals' (point 3), while the derived, or the dependent ontic level discussed previously stands in Vaiśeṣika philosophy for the 'ultimate particularity' (antyaviśeṣa) (point 2); its existence is infinite due to its inter-dependent nature within the universal. Point 3 of Vaiśeṣika metaphysics, this edition argues, could forcefully complement the controversial and dualistic matter-form (later on essence-versus-existence) tension and debate that pervaded the history of Scholastic philosophy from the post-Aristotelian age down to Duns Scotus and

8 Vyomaśiva's Vyomavatī (vol. 1, p. 21), and Udayana's Kiraṇāvalī (GOS, p. 148) talk about an ambitious intention of Kaṇāda, the founder of the system, to 'enumerating everything in the world that has the character of being,' via Halbfass, 1992, p. 69.

9 Anthony Quinton, The Nature of Things 1992, I shall refer to this work throughout.

10 Quinton 1973: 242. In Indian philosophy, we see the tripartite grades of metaphysics in Candramatī, who distinguishes between highest universality (sattā) and a specific universality (sāmānyaviśeṣa), both of which are part of the category of universal (sāmānya); if we analyse these 2 universals alongside particularity, as both Candrānanda and Praśastapāda do, then we obtain 3 levels of reality. The tripartite classification fits well with analytic philosophy, and Indian thought as well.

11 Each Indian philosophical system (darśana) must be approached through the list of its 'categories' (padārtha), for a list of these, see the Grimes dictionary 1996: 235–8. It is recommended, however, with great caution, for this dictionary, though a starting point, contains entry definitions that do not discuss divergent contradictory padārthas, which occur among commentators inside 1 school. One should be aware of the difference between the categories preserved in the founding sūtra texts, and the inflated list, which the subsequent commentators added. For example, if we look at Vaiśeṣikasūtra in its independent form, it seems to have had originally only 3 basic categories: substance (dravya), quality (guṇa), and action (karma), yet the commentarial tradition begins to discuss 6 categories, appending to these another 3: universal (sāmānya), particularity (viśeṣa) and inherence (samavāya). It worth mentioning that the 'addition' of 3 categories does nothing but characterise and elucidate the nature of the 3 fundamental categories, in particular, the substance category, and its relation to qualities, and more generally, cosmic 'karmic' motion.

12 Substance is a notoriously fuzzy translation for dravya, for a discussion of this, see the fifth chapter of Wilhelm Halbfass, On Being and What There Is, 1992.

Neo-Scholasticism.[13] By contrast, metaphysics, as considered by Vaiśeṣika, has 3 descriptive levels: (1) a vast universality (sāmānya); (2) a specific universality (sāmānyaviśeṣa); and (3) an ultimate particularity (antyaviśeṣa). These are all characterised by 'existence' (sattā), which has an ontological universal status as well. This tripartite metaphysical model would be challenged further by later Vaiśeṣika scholastics, for instance, Śivāditya[14] and Candramatī.[15]

Ontological categories (padārtha) undergo a considerable change under Praśastapāda (6th century AD). His work, not a 'commentary' (vṛtti), but rather an innovative 'digest' (bhāṣya), introduces, under the influence of Pāśupata Śaivism,[16] a new theistic interpretation of the world and the origin of its constituent parts.[17] His stress lies on epistemology more than on the ontology of being, as had been taken in its nominal, substantial form by Candrānanda. The nature of being is narrowly linked with that of thinking. As in the tripartite metaphysics mentioned earlier, the categories of Praśastapāda have 3 major basic features: they possess existence 'existentiality' (astitva), 'knowability' (jñeyatva), and 'nameability' (abhidheyatva), and correspond to the 3 major areas of philosophical inquiry: ontology, epistemology, and language, respectively.[18] The change Praśastapāda brought into the system is a subordination of ontology to epistemology, a fact that singles him out within the overall canonical tradition. Though Vaiśeṣika is usually regarded as an ontological system (Halbfass 1992), the textual evidence we have illustrates that we are dealing with something more than just an ontic enumeration. It puts forward a complex system of descriptive metaphysics, which combines elements of physics (natural philosophy), and draws different distinctions. Such distinctions are for instance between ritual actions and moral intentions, between perception, and inference, and intuition; relational distinctions between inherence and conjunction; between names, definitions, and abstract objects; between substance and essence; between quality and substratum; between laws and motions; between mind and mental states; between values and

13 See Francis A. Cunningham, Essence and Existence in Thomism. A Mental Versus the Real Distinction, 1988.

14 Śivāditya SP p. 9 (he classifies universal in 'near universal,' 'remote universal,' both 'near and remote universal'); we come across this tripartite gradation of metaphysics in Candramatī, who distinguishes between highest universality (sattā) and a specific universality (sāmānyaviśeṣa), both of which are part of the category of universal (sāmānya). If we analyse these 2 universals alongside particularity, as both Candrānanda and Praśastapāda do, then we obtain 3 levels of reality, which is accepted by both analytic philosophy and Indian thought.

15 Candramatī DP 1.1. mentions 10 categories, but interestingly enough, he enumerates, alongside universality and particularity, a 9th category called commonness; it is worth asking what the difference and relationship are between commonness and universality; could it be that commonness is that lower universal that links particularity with universality as in the case of Candrānanda?

16 Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's Āgamaḍambara (a satirical play critical to various traditions in Kashmir) mentions a certain Dharmaśiva as a teacher of the philosophies of Kaṇabhakṣa and Akṣapāda Gautama, via Thakur 2003: 383.

17 See the article Johannes Bronkhorst, God's Arrival in the Vaiśeṣika System, 1996.

18 For the relation with the 3 major domain of philosophical inquiry, see Shashiprabha Kumar, Classical Vaiśeṣika in Indian Philosophy: On Knowing and What Is to Be Known, 2013.

goals; and, last but not least, between karmic transmigration and ontic liberation.[19] These are only some problems and questions addressed by Vaiśeṣika in particular, and Indian philosophy in general.

The aim of this edition of Vaiśeṣikasūtra is, therefore, to introduce students of Western philosophy to some of the categories of Indian philosophy, and by way of this to demonstrate the necessity of conceptual correlation between Indian philosophy (particularly Vaiśeṣika) and the perennial and insoluble questions of today's World philosophy. Despite the hurdles we face in translation, both textual-philological and philosophical-conceptual, nevertheless, the authors of this edition highlight that philosophical understanding lies in relations and correlations, a fact shown by Vaiśeṣika's own categories bound by logical interconnections,[20] teleological goals, and value-related implications.[21] Moreover, the project of comparative philosophy is arguably the continuation and confirmation of Strawson's proposition that there is such a thing as a 'central core of human thinking' beyond history, and that there are categories and concepts of fundamental character that remain undiminished throughout time.[22] This present edition argues that by matching unrelated systems of thought (Indian, Greek, analytic, and so forth), our knowledge rebuilds and reconstructs while the ontic definitions of the world gain more clarity than has ever been possible. This work supports the idea that philosophy is a counterpart of history and that understanding comes not only through philological and empirical archaeological data, but also from relations, comparisons, and epistemic intuitions.

One simple way to understand Indian philosophy is by looking into the research questions that a Vaiśeṣika student addresses in the opening dialogue of gloss VSc 1.1.1, on the one hand, and to the fundamental ontic categories of gloss VSc 1.1.4–6 on the other hand. The opening discussion between a teacher and a student is characteristic of the conversational mode of transmission of classical and early medieval Indian philosophy, a mode of teaching that was widespread in both Classical Greece (see Plato's Dialogues) as well as in the Upaniṣads (see Dialogue between Uddālaka Āruṇi and Śvetaketu). At origin, the aphoristic style of Indian philosophy is either Śramaṇic or Buddhist. The second section of the Pāli canon known as Sutta Piṭaka comprises a vast number of 'threads' of thought ('sutta' in Pāli, 'sūtra' in Sanskrit) recognised to be the sayings of the Buddha himself. Sūtras, however, should not be confused with either 'mantras' (in the Vedas), or with 'ślokas' (poetical verses that follow a precise meter used in the

19 I have shown recently that enumeration and knowledge in Vaiśeṣika, quite unsurprisingly, have, like other Indian philosophical systems, a soteriological goal. See Ionut Moise, Salvation in Indian Philosophy, 2019.

20 Strawson 1959: 10.

21 I have contextualised the metaphysics of Vaiśeṣika in relation to modern analytic philosophy. Contrary to post-colonial theory, comparative philosophy argues that philosophical conversation should not make any judgements of superiority, or inferiority, nor the conversion and domination of thought over and above the reality of being, to which philosophy is committed.

22 Strawson 1959: 10.

epic literature). The preservation of the sūtras is problematic, not least because they – unlike mantras and ślokas – lack in rhyme and beauty, which otherwise render them easier to memorise and transmit. These sūtras became the 'founding texts'[23] of certain scholastic schools: Mīmāṃsāsūtra, Vaiśeṣikasūtra, Nyāyasūtra, Yogasūtra, Pāśupatasūtra, Kāmasūtra, Sāṃkhyasūtra,[24] and Brahmasūtra are only a few examples of texts that generated subsequently a scholastic commentarial tradition. Yet readers should be cautious when interpreting these fundamental sūtra texts because their preservation in their current state is most probably inflated. A closer reading of their thread of thought shows that they contain not only the fundamental tenets of their own school, but the counter-arguments of opponents as well, which a careless reading would take to be the system's own views. Thus, the reconstruction of the basic tenets of the sūtra-text must come from a thorough knowledge of the commentarial tradition, internal and external, as well as from further archaeological work (textual-critical collation on manuscripts). Hindu orthodox philosophical systems (āstika), that is to say, those that take the Vedas and Upaniṣads as authoritative for their tenets, developed to counter the forceful Buddhist rise, particularly the highly effective sūtra-style of philosophising. Teaching was heavily oral, hence, the style of these aphorisms had a mnemotechnic role in preserving such philosophies. The aphoristic style helped boost the spread of new currents of thought that had been common in other parts of the world, for instance, in ancient Greece among the Pre-Socratic thinkers[25] and in Europe down to Nietzsche.

Indian philosophy developed in a scholastic manner and current readers who study it are usually equipped with skills similar to those that European Classicists and Medievalists possess.[26] Indian scholasticism presents many problems related to authorship, doctrinal change, and time of composition. Indeed, these are highly contentious issues in the history of Indian thought and have much to do with the way in which orthodox Hindus usually view their Vedic and philosophical thought: as an authorless, changeless, and timeless revelation handed down to sages from a remote past. Although conceptual or philosophical change does happen in the history of Indian thought, its progression is very slow indeed. Unlike Sanskrit scientific works (astrology and mathematics), the colophons of Sanskrit philosophical manuscripts hardly mention any date, and very little is known about

23 It is debatable whether all the sūtra texts listed here can be considered founding texts.

24 Sāṃkhyasūtra is not the earliest text of Sāṃkhya philosophy; see Iśvarakṛṣṇa's Sāṃkhyakārikā. On an approximate date of the sūtra texts composition, see Hermann Jacobi, On the Dates of the Hindu Philosophical Sūtras, 1911.

25 Heraclitus (c. 475–535 BC) seems to have handed down his thought in 'pregnant, picturesque sentences which were often oracular and laconic to the point of obscurity,' a fact that gained him the surname of 'The Obscure,' Zeller 1895: 66.

26 Yet, more recently, Indian philosophy has been approached in a more creative manner (logics and epistemology), for instance, the school of Bimal Krishna Matilal and his pupil Jonardon Ganeri; an even bolder and creative approach combining ancient and modern perspectives on ancient and modern philosophy is found in Richard Sorabji, Gandhi and the Stoics: Modern Experiments on Ancient Values, 2012.

the founding fathers and authors.[27] In order to either reconstruct an author or a concept, internal bibliographical references within one school, as well as external ones (rival schools), must be traced and taken into account ahead of others, as the latter ones might be free of bias and speculative change of mind. Once again, fresh textual and archaeological material is highly useful but insufficient; understanding Indian philosophy requires not only painstaking philological effort, but also wide-ranging knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature.[28]

A common trunk of origin for the ramification of various systems is sometimes easier to pinpoint in Indian thought and literature, for unlike in the Western thought where philosophical insurrections and original ideas have been deeply sought, in the context of Sanskrit scholasticism, such insurrections and ideological '-isms' hardly arise. With the exception of unorthodox systems (for instance, Jaina, Buddhist, Cārvāka), the function of Indian thought, particularly the Hindu one, is to justify, expand, and complement the original authoritative texts, not to criticise them.[29] However new an Indian philosophical system is, the tendency Brahmin philosophers have is to call on the authority of the Vedic and Upaniṣadic corpus to justify its orthodoxy.

The history of Indian philosophy developed around '3 tensions,' which may be classified as philosophical, religious, and social. Regarding the first, monistic interpretations about an 'ultimate essence' of reality often clashed with pluralistic worldviews that defined substance by 'difference' not simplicity (Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika, Jaina), facts which brought an inevitable tension between 'idealism' and 'realism.' A second type of tension is felt among influential religious traditions (Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Smārta, and Śākta) of the second millennium AD that assimilate various orthodox 'classical philosophies' (darśana) into their own unified theologies. The result is a binary amalgamation (e.g. Vaiśeṣika with Nyāya; Sāṃkhya with Yoga; Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā with Vedānta), or the creation of further conceptual tensions between 'immanent' and 'transcendent' (in Śaivism). New theological doctrines such as the nature of knowledge or god would create further religious tensions, splits, and dissensions within the great Vedānta philosophy. There is also a more recent (modern) tension in Hindu philosophy, one that concerns modern Indian culture and society and produced new interpretations of Hinduism. This is a tension that only flourished recently (19th–21st centuries), chiefly as a response to the Western colonial challenge. Its interpretations revisit perennial philosophical themes concerning 'freedom' (individual and collective) (Aurobindo) as well as social and religious Indian 'inclusivism' and 'pluralism' (Ambedkar, Gandhi). These new contributions are not in the

27 Kaṇāda is the founder of Vaiśeṣika, Kāpila the founder of Sāṃkhya, Jaimini of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, Akṣapāda Gautama of Nyāya, Bādarāyaṇa of Brahmasūtra (Vedānta), and Patañjali of Yoga. This is by no means a complete list.

28 See Maurice Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, 1927, for a start; as for philosophy, see Karl Potter, Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies, 25 vol. (ongoing).

29 A view aptly expressed by Nirmala R. Kulkarni at a conference on 'Critics and Criticism in Indian thought,' February 2020, at the Sanskrit Department, University of Pune.

least negligible, for their general outlook is comparative and synthetic, drawing upon and balancing traditional with modern views.[30]

Given the previously discussed definition of metaphysics in analytic philosophy, as a 'picture of the world' (Quinton) explicitly, it is striking that when one looks at the classical orthodox Hindu systems, each of these individualises itself by putting forward a distinct view of reality, a worldview for which the term 'darśana' is a case in point. The term derives from the first-class stem √ dhṛ, which gives the past participle dhṛta meaning 'uphold, maintained.' The stem gave the Vedic concept of Ṛta, as well as dharma, the latter of which developed significantly into a multitude of meanings and usages. Of these, only 2 basic connotations will be discussed, one ontological, the other epistemological. When a philosophical darśana[31] focuses on the ontological, then the system deploys various ontic taxonomies and its defining feature is generally realistic pluralism. From this point of view, Sāṃkhya, Vaiśeṣika, Jaina, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, and Nyāya might be considered realistic philosophies. When, on the other hand, such philosophies subordinate ontology to a form of ultimate knowledge, then a form of monistic idealism prevails. In this category, one may see Vedānta philosophy with all its subdivisions: Advaita, Bhāmatī, Vivaraṇa and Sureśvara's Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Bhedābheda,[32] with the exception of Dvaita Vedānta. Within Brahmanical thought, that is to say, its scholastic orthodox traditions, there are, however, other 'pictures of the world,' namely cosmological descriptions such as those of the Śaivite-Śāktic and Vaiṣṇava-bhakti movements of the second millennium AD. Śaivism, in particular, accommodates various tendencies (monistic and dualistic) but manages to offer a unified immanent-cum-transcendent theology with tremendous success across the whole spectrum of Hindu darśanas, not least the Vaiśeṣika system.

Other philosophical schools may not fit into the category of the 'orthodox picture' (āstika darśana) of the world. As in the course of classical Greek philosophy, in classical Indian thought, revisionist Śramaṇic movements continue to grow in the post-Upaniṣadic era. Greek heterodox movements that threaten the religious or political establishment (see Socrates Trials, Plato's political fiasco in Syracuse, Aristotle's flight from Athens) have parallels in the Indian śastric movements, whose founding authors initiate new interpretations of the world (in sūtra texts) and supply solutions for liberation that conflict with the old Vedic descriptions (saṃsāra, loka). These movements would generate, in turn, lasting scholastic traditions. The Classical world abounds in 'heterodox' creativity. In the Greek world, such new philosophies are categorised in various currents: the Pythagorean thought, Sophistic

30 For a view on Indian philosophical literature, Potter's Encyclopaedia is a good starting point, as it offers translation excerpts from the whole spectrum of Indian philosophy.

31 Sometimes confused with śastra ('science'), darśana stands for a 'worldview' or 'philosophical school,' while śastra stands for a 'discipline' that encompasses authors from different traditions.

32 The tradition has several variations: Bhāskara (Aupādhika Bhedābheda) (8th and 9th century AD), Yādava and Nimbārka (Svābhāvika Bhedābheda) (13th century AD), and Caitanya (Acintya Bhedābheda) (1486–1534).

movement,[33] Cynic and Cyrenaic thought, Stoicism, Epicurism, Pyrrhonism, and the Peripatetic school, while in the Subcontinent, Cārvāka Scepticism,[34] Ājīvika Fatalism,[35] Yogācāra-Mentalism, and Mādhyamika dialecticism are comparable examples. What all these may share in common is a natural craving for advancing new forms of descriptive metaphysics, substantiated in original and singular philosophical views (darśanas). The study of their tenets poses doxographical problems due to their marginalisation in relation to more established schools of thought privileged by the political, religious, and socio-cultural establishment. The 'picture of the world' of such movements varies; it inclines either towards idealistic and mentalistic elucidations or towards nihilistic and moralistic interpretations. Although these schools use analogous terminology, their semantics and hermeneutics differ considerably. Despite that, one prevalent aspect developed in their thought is to engage robustly with the elusive question of 'being,' either by refuting, marginalising, or simply redefining it entirely. They were all in one way or another critical of the then extant picture of metaphysics, hence they engaged themselves with ontology, which offered not only definitions but also existential solutions. The term 'soteriontology' that more recently Halbfass discussed concerning Advaita Vedānta and some Mahāyāna Buddhist schools is one such example.

It has been customary to limit the number of classical Indian philosophical systems to 6. This is the position that an important Jain commentator Haribhadrasūri (c. 5th–8th centuries AD) took in his 'Compendium of Six Philosophies' (Ṣaḍdarśanasamuccaya)[36] and is a view taken for granted in the 19th century by Max Müller in a book with a similar title.[37] The 6 systems discussed are the first teaching of Buddha, Nyāya, Sāṃkhya, Jaina, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, and a separate one called Cārvāka (Lokāyata). That Lokāyata (a materialistic system that denies the reality of substance-essence) has not been listed among the 6 systems shows the bias of such doxographers but also indicates the necessary qualification that a darśana must meet, namely a knowledge that goes from an upper to a deeper physical description of the concrete materiality of the world. Haribhadrasūri's canon, however, faces a challenge from a Lokāyata polemical work composed by a sceptical thinker known as Jayarāśi Bhaṭṭa (8th century AD). His work, as the title 'Lion of Destruction of Philosophical Theories' (Tattvopaplavasiṃha) suggests, is one that deploys a major refutation of the validity of some of the doctrines

33 Socrates belongs to the Sophistic movement, but he was not a sophist himself, and the accusation cost him his life (Plato's Apology 19a–20c).

34 Names associated with Cārvāka as gleaned from Buddhist and Upaniṣadic sources are Pūraṇa Kassapa, Pakudha Kaccāyana, and Ajita Kesakambalī.

35 For Ājīvika, Makkhali Gosāla is one such name. See more in A. L. Basham, History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas, 1951.

36 About the number of 6 systems, see also Sarvamatasaṅgraha, written possibly by Rāghavānanda, and Mādhava Sarasvatī's Sarvadarśanakaumudī (c. 1500 AD). For a discussion of the number of Indian systems, see Prem Pahlajrai, Doxographies – Why six darśanas? Which six? 2004 (available online).

37 Max Müller. The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, 1899.

(soul, sound, non-existence) or categories (perception, inference, comparison) that orthodox and non-orthodox systems propound. Yet, by the 14th century, Mādhava of Śringerī[38] would expand the list of philosophies to 16 in his 'Compendium of all philosophies' (Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha).[39]

What is then the place of Vaiśeṣika in Indian philosophy? For the sake of simplicity and clarity, we shall say that its distinctness becomes evident only when contrasted with the whole panorama of the main classical systems. Sāṃkhya stands for a dualistic cosmology. Mīmāṃsā (Jaiminīya) is a form of hermeneutics based largely on the relationship between sound-language and act-ritual in view of a precise classification and performance of the Vedic ritual and mantras. Cārvāka is a nihilistic and materialistic system that denies the reality of the essence of world constituents (e.g. Tattvopaplavasiṃha). Buddhism is a dialectical philosophy of mind, which developed several variations: either mentalist (Yogācāra) or dialectic (Mādhyamika) and so forth. Nyāya is a system of logic with an enlarged theory of perception. There are Pāṇini's grammar and the philosophy of language that generated subsequent important philosophical commentaries (Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya and Bhartṛhari's Vākyapadīya). Jaina is a dualistic-cum-pluralistic philosophy in its ontological, epistemological, and soteriological descriptions. Vedānta is largely a transcendental philosophy with a dualistic epistemology that differentiates between a 'lower' (vyavahārika) and an 'absolute' (pāramārthika) reality. As far as the absolute reality is concerned, the Vedāntic sub-schools range from absolute monism (Śaṅkara's Advaita) to qualified monism (Rāmānuja), and even dualism (Madhva, Pūrṇa-prajña system). Between these, there lie divergences of opinion in relation to the origin and nature of the world, which is either the product of a form of transformation (Bhedābheda) or just the manifestation of Brahma (Bhāmatī and Vivaraṇa Advaita).[40] Śaivism – with its enormous rise and varied traditions (Nakulīśa-Pāśupata, Śaiva System, Pratyabhijñā, Raseśvara System)[41] – represents, broadly speaking, an attempt to accomplishing an harmonious synthesis between transcendent and immanent explanations of reality, a fact that brought many of the classical darśanas under its spell and devotional allegiance. With several exceptions, the vast majority of these classical and early medieval systems deal with the soteriological

38 Though contemporary, Mādhava-Vidyāraṇya (c. 1296?–1386?) should not be confused with Madhva of Dvaita Vedānta (1238–1317), the former is a monist Vedāntin, whereas the latter a dualist.

39 Each of the following systems is discussed in a separate chapter in the following order: Cārvāka, Bauddha System, Jaina, Rāmānuja System, Pūrṇa-prajña, Nakulīśa-Pāśupata, Śaiva System, Pratyabhijñā, Raseśvara System, Vaiśeṣika, Nyāya, Jaiminīya System, Pāṇinīya System, Sāṃkhya, Patañjali or Yoga System, and Vedānta of Śaṅkara. Other classifications of classical Indian philosophies can be found in doxographical works: 32 systems in Dvātriṃśikā of Siddhasena Divākara (5th–7th centuries AD), 12 systems in Sarvasiddhāntasaṃgraha (authorship debated), and 10 systems in Sarvamatasaṃgraha (authorship unknown); Thakur 2003: 427–35.

40 For a table of conceptual variations of Indian philosophies, see Potter's Presuppositions of India's Philosophes, 1963.

41 For a classification of Śaiva traditions see Sanderson, History through Textual Criticism in the study of Śaivism, the Pañcarātra and the Buddhist Yoginītantras, 2001. Although the work is focused on method, it nevertheless contains a wealth of information about important Śaiva authors.

questions that have finality in an ontological irreversible state; in fact, the ontology somehow moves from a differentiated condition of becoming to a static state of being. In short, Indian philosophies begin, change, and challenge the scope of ontology. While the history of Western thought had shifted from the essentialist and naturalist ontology of the Pre-Socratics to the phenomenology and existentialism of the 20th century, in Indian philosophy, however, there has been a different type of development, a tendency towards a continual sharpening of the Upaniṣadic view on the nature of the world and the ultimate reality. Quite often, as the Śaivist tradition typifies, its description is the synthesis and interplay between an immanent and transcendent nature of being and ontology.

1.1 Vaiśeşika

What is the originality of Vaiśeṣika within the broader picture of classical Indian thought? What are its main ontological categories and what purpose do these serve to? In a preface to one important voluminous work on the system, Anantalal Thakur places Vaiśeṣika alongside Pāṇini's grammar, as one of the fundamental aids for the study of all Indian systems of knowledge.[42] The significance of this statement stems from the fact that any knowledge system lies on both a precise 'language' and the ontological reality of 'object.' In other words, without an interdependence between a science of language (pada) and a science of word-object (padārtha), there is no possibility for the knowledge of any real objects. Indeed, as Praśastapāda points out in his Bhāṣya, the objective 'existentiality' (astitva) and 'nameability' (abhidheyatva)[43] of the world's constituents (categories) go hand in hand with their own 'knowability' (jñeyatva), all 3 representing core domains of knowledge: ontology, epistemology, and language. Can any word exist without a reference to object? Is there any hierarchy among the 3 major philosophical domains: ontology, language, and knowledge? If Aristotle knew Vaiśeṣika, his view would probably be that this Indian ontological system is of a more fundamental value, and, in a way, a most necessary one. As he put it in his Categories (7b15), the 'knowable' must be prior to the 'knowledge' itself, and as a rule, it is unlikely that a 'knowable thing' and the 'process of knowledge' are simultaneous, for otherwise, when 'knowledge' disappears that would lead to the destruction of the 'knowable thing' itself as well; but this is not so.[44] The point Aristotle makes

42 Thakur 2003: xxv (preface to HSPCIC).

43 Praśastapāda PD, 11: ṣaṇṇām api padārthānām astitvābhidheyatvajñeyatvāni; Halbfass 1992: 75–6, 154.

44 Arist Cat 7b15: τὸ γὰρ ἐπιστητὸν τῆς ἐπιστήμης πρότερον ἂν δόξειεν εἶναι· ὡς γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ προϋπαρχόντων τῶν πραγμάτων τὰς ἐπιστήμας λαμβάνομεν· ἐπ᾽ ὀλίγων γὰρ ἢ ἐπ᾽ οὐδενὸς ἴδοι τις ἂν ἅμα τῷ ἐπιστητῷ τὴν ἐπιστήμην γιγνομένην. Ἔτι τὸ μὲν ἐπιστητὸν ἀναιρεθὲν συναναιρεῖ τὴν ἐπιστήμην, ἡ δὲ ἐπιστήμη τὸ ἐπιστητὸν οὐ συναναιρεῖ· ἐπιστητοῦ γὰρ μὴ ὄντος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη, – οὐδενὸς γὰρ ἔτι ἔσται ἐπιστήμη – ἐπιστήμης δὲ μὴ οὔσης οὐδὲν κωλύει ἐπιστητὸν εἶναι· οἷον καὶ ὁ τοῦ κύκλου τετραγωνισμὸς εἴ γε ἔστιν ἐπιστητόν, ἐπιστήμη μὲν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδέπω, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ἐπιστητὸν ἔστιν.

is that the knowable thing endures even after knowledge is no longer there, and that an object is prior to language, whence the priority and paramount importance of the 'knowable thing' that Aristotle defines in 10 forms of predication.[45] The difference between the 6 categories of Vaiśeṣika[46] and Aristotle's 10 categories is that the former do not represent 'forms of predication' whose existence depends on language and predication, but rather exist independently from language, being real objects, having as they should, well-established ontological states interconnected and immanently derived from each other.[47] Besides states, the substances in Vaiśeṣika can undergo conditions; such as, for instance, soul (ātman), whose nature can have 'essential characteristics'[48] in its ontological state, and 'accidental characteristics'[49] in its embodied condition. The particularity of Vaiśeṣika is a recurrent analysis of entities (substances) that have a fixed order and value, a focus on the knowledge of their intrinsic nature, and a description of the transmutation of their conditions that harness impurity and corruption to their nature. It is a system focused on entities (nouns) rather than actions (verbs). The construction of Pāṇini's grammar seems to follow the same pattern of thought; both Vaiśeṣika and Pāṇini depart from the early etymologist and linguist Yāska, whose work Nirukta defines 'verb' (ākhyāta) as 'consisting mainly of becoming' (bhāvapradhānam ākhyātām) (Durga com. Nirukta 1.1.9). By that, Yāska places a heavy stress on the importance of action and verb, which he sees as a 'continuous series of momentary becoming of bhava,' whereas noun represents the 'stagnation or solidification of the verb.'[50] The universe of Vaiśeṣika stands in sharp contrast to Yāska's view and his early re-interpretations. Vaiśeṣika is a substantialist philosophy at heart, a fact demonstrated by its Sūtrapāṭha, which lists 3 basic categories: substances (dravya), qualities (guṇa), and motions (karma), of which the first category represents the rock-bottom foundation on which other categories

45 The 10 categories are in fact 'modes of predication' that point to the reality of things beyond language. It is an attempt to provide a theory of individuation about the existence of a substance. The categories are enunciated by Aristotle in Cat 4.1.b.25: (1) substance; (2) quantity; (3) qualification; (4) relation; (5) location; (6) time; (7) position; (8) possession; (9) acting; and (10) being-affected (Τῶν κατὰ μηδεμίαν συμπλοκὴν λεγομένων ἕκαστον ἤτοι (1) **οὐσίαν** σημαίνει ἢ (2) **ποσὸν** ἢ (3) **ποιὸν** ἢ (4) **πρός τι** ἢ (5) **ποὺ** ἢ (6) **ποτὲ** ἢ (7) **κεῖσθαι** ἢ (8) **ἔχειν** ἢ (9) **ποιεῖν** ἢ (10) **πάσχειν**).

46 The standard numbers of Vaiśeṣika categories are: (1) substance (9 in total); (2) quality (17 initially); (3) motion (5); (4) universal (2); (5) particular (2); and (6) inherence (between substance and quality). Later Vaiśeṣika work Śivāditya's Saptapadārthī adds 'abhāva' as the seventh padārtha (SP 3).

47 One such example is the derivation of the category of 'distinctness' (viśeṣa) from the older category of quality of 'separateness' (pṛthaktva).

48 The essential characteristics of the soul – known as generic qualities sāmānyaguṇa – are number, dimension, separateness, conjunction, and disjunction (VSc 3.2.17).

49 The specific qualities of the soul are cognition, pleasure, pain, volition, aversion, effort, merit, demerit, and latent impetus (VSc 3.2.17). They constitute the psychological apparatus, a sort of subtle body – equivalent to what Praśastapāda calls 'ativāhikaśarīra' (PD 359) – that undergoes transmigration.

50 Singh 1987: 191.

(quality, action, universality, particularity, and inherence) reside. Among these, the substance-category is the most important of all.

Substance is one of the most controversial topics in philosophy and demands much elucidation not only in the Western thought but also in Indian philosophy as well. Problems of translation abound for at least 2 reasons. First, because our modern vocabulary is of the second order: terms like 'essence' (via Cicero) and 'existence' (via Marius Victorinus) are Latin adaptations and interpretations from Greek 'ousia' (οὐσία) and hyparxis (ὑπάρξεις), respectively.[51] A second reason is the very problem of clarifying what substance means in both Greek and Scholastic philosophical contexts, the semantic shifts it has undergone throughout history, beginning with Aristotle's first interpretations of Plato's theory of forms, then under Islamic Neo-Platonist translations and re-interpretations, as well as during the debate on real distinction (essence versus existence) within the Thomist scholasticism.[52] It is, therefore, imperative that a new methodology of analysing the theory of substance should be sought with input from a comparative philosophical reflection that engages Indian (Sanskrit) ideas and literature. Philosophy is global, contextual, and cross-cultural. With Dilthey and Halbfass, the method of comparative philosophy argues that Indian philosophy can indeed live in the medium of Western thought and that, as a result, can challenge and change our old assumptions on the elusive topic of being, essence, and substance.[53]

As mentioned, one of the chief characteristics of Vaiśeṣika philosophy is the reference and preference for individuality and individuation for the description of substance. It is an aspect by which the system contributes to some unanswered questions in Western philosophy. Thus, if we look again over Aristotle's Categories, particularly the first chapters, we find several important directions, which may act as starting points to understand Vaiśeṣika in a comparative programme.

1) Aristotle distinguishes a 2-fold nature of substance: on the one hand, a 'primary substance' that is its individual nature (e.g. one individual man), and on the other hand, a 'secondary substance,' which is its specific genera (e.g. man) (Cat 2a11). He goes as far as to say that the individuality of a substance (the primary substance) is 'more of a substance than genera' (Cat 2 b7), a view that agrees with Vaiśeṣika's view, according to which, an ultimate particularity defines the essence or nature of a 'substance' (dravya). A comparable classification is how Vaiśeṣika system differentiates between 'permanent' (nitya) and 'impermanent' (anitya) substances; given the character of substances as being wholes and compositional, as well as simple and universal, the usual translation of nitya by 'eternal' is unsatisfactory. The classification of the system in relation

51 Chapter 1 'The Question of Being' in Halbfass 1922: 1–20.
52 See previous reference to Cunningham, 1988.
53 Halbfass 1992: 12, f. 43.

to its 9 substances,[54] is not according to their intrinsic state, but rather to their condition. What 'nitya' presumably means is the state of being 'indivisible,' 'indestructible,' and a 'simple whole' (unitary oneness). The classification is problematic because all 9 substances are placed in the category of 'permanent' substances, when these are in a unitary state (time, space, vacuum, and to a certain extent, soul) or an atomic state (mind, earth, water, lustre, wind). In the second category of impermanent substances, Vaiśeṣika places some of the substances in 'impermanent' (anitya) (earth, water, lustre, wind), which can alternatively refer to the condition of being 'divisible' and 'destructible.' It is a category marked by the laws of motion, which is karma theory. The problem of this classification increases as regards the condition of the soul in this diagram. Is soul, that is to say (ātman), permanent or impermanent? Candrānanda's commentary – which this edition puts forward – does not always specify when soul (ātman) refers to an embodied soul or when it refers to a pure eternal and essential dis-embodied soul. Its intrinsic nature is devoid of motion and activity (VSc 5.2.23), therefore, the question reoccurs as to how it is possible to acquire embodiment and transmigration.[55]

2) A second important complementarity between Aristotle's Categories and Vaiśeṣikasūtra's is the valorisation of the individual ahead of the universal. Although Aristotle did not put differentiae (διαφοραί) into the list of his categories (as Vaiśeṣika, and later on Dvaita Vedānta does), he consistently maintains that a substance is primarily an individual, and not a genera (Cat 2b20), although he seems to contradict himself later in Cat 15a4–7, where he states that genera are always before species.[56] Aristotle aims to safeguard the reality of individual nouns and subjects, for all knowledge and predication seems to point to these. As he puts it, 'the primary substances stand to everything else…and all the rest are predicated of these' (Cat 2b29).[57] Aristotle provides an epistemic or scientific method that runs from the individual to the universal and not vice-versa. Genera do not have value if they are not grounded on individuality first, which explains why he is in favour of the reality of the nouns and subjects ahead of the reality of verbs, actions, and processes. The stress Vaiśeṣika places here reminds of one of Śākaṭāyana and

54 VS: 1.1.4. pṛthivī āpas tejo vāyur ākāśaṃ kālo dig ātmā mana iti dravyāṇi (earth, water, lustre, air, vacuum, time, space, soul, mind – these are the substances).

55 Transmigration of humans happens according to Candrānanda in relation to everything that has 'body' (śarīra) (VSc 4.2), in which sense the term of 'transmigration' (saṃsāra) is used (VSc 5.2.19).

56 Cat 15a4–7: τὰ δὲ γένη τῶν εἰδῶν ἀεὶ πρότερα· οὐ γὰρ ἀντιστρέφει κατὰ τὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἀκολούθ ησιν· οἷον ἐνύδρου μὲν ὄντος ἔστι ζῷον, ζῴου δὲ ὄντος οὐκ ἀνάγκη ἔνυδρον εἶναι. The example Aristotle gives here is that of the fish; if there is a fish, then we can indicate by that there is an animal, but we cannot say that if there is an animal, we can necessarily indicate a fish.

57 This is a shortened translation of a passage from J.L. Ackrill ed. Aristotle Categories, 2002: 8, with reference to Cat 2b29.