

Realness, and Knowledge: Two Problems with the Vaiśeṣika Theory of Liberation

TADAS SNUVIŠKIS

Lietuvos kultūros tyrimų institutas
catascopus@gmail.com

This article tackles the problem of realness and knowledge regarding liberation in the Vaiśeṣika school. Liberation is the ultimate goal of Indian philosophical schools. This is also true in Vaiśeṣika, which defines liberation as the absence of mental qualities (cognition, pain, etc.) in the self. However, there is a problem with the definition of liberation as involving absence. Early on, Vaiśeṣika did not recognize absence as *padārtha*, meaning liberation is not real (non-existent and dependent upon the self). With this in mind, how could one strive for something non-existing? In this article, I propose that liberation has to do with a different mode of knowledge, yogic-perception, which presupposes a different, anti-realist ontology. One of the effects of mastering yoga is yogic perception, which allows one to perceive all *padārthas* (the world). With yogic perception, even the said-to-be-existent objects of *padārthas* become dependent on the perceiver. Thus, there is no difference between absence or existence, as both are equally “ideal” objects.

Keywords: Vaiśeṣika, liberation, yogic perception, realness, knowledge.

Introduction

Almost every system of Indian philosophy (except Cārvāka-Lokāyata) describes the ultimate goal of their philosophy as liberation. Different schools prefer different words to denote it (e.g., *mokṣa*, *apavarga*, *kaivalya*, *niḥśreyasa*, *nirvāṇa*, etc.). Despite differing terms and varying liberation theories among the schools, the gist of liberation could be roughly summarized in the following manner: altering the individual state from ordinary to extraordinary, achieving the most excellent, and removing all suffering (e.g. Moise 2020:

64–110). Therefore, Vaiśeṣika is not an exceptional school in the Indian context because it puts forward its ultimate aim as liberation.

In what follows, several questions concerning liberation are considered. First, what is liberation in Vaiśeṣika? Can it be said to be real in the sense of being both existent and independent of the cognizer? Second, how is valid knowledge related to liberation? Can valid knowledge be a means to liberation? Below, I discuss realness and knowledge and their implications for the theory of liberation in Vaiśeṣika.

Realness and Liberation

The point of departure is what the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* has to say about liberation. The ideas of liberation are explained in the initial three *sūtras* of the first chapter, the fifth chapter, and at the very end of the tenth chapter. The beginning three *sūtras* of the first chapter are of the utmost significance because they delineate the essence of liberation (Candrānanda 2004: 2–3). As it states: 1.1.1) “now, therefore, we shall explain *dharma*” (*athāto dharmam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ*); 1.1.2) “*dharma* is that from which there is the result of elevation [to heaven] and what is the most excellent” (*yato bhyudayaniḥśreyasasiddhiḥ sa dharmam*); 1.1.3) “The authoritative-ness of the Vedas is because of its pronouncement [by the God]” (*tadvacanād āmnāyaprāmānyam*).

The first *sūtra* was explained by Candrānanda as said by Kaṇāda (the founder of Vaiśeṣika) in the situation when he had been approached by a Brāhmaṇa, who reflects the Chāndogya Upanishad statement: “pleasure and unpleasure do not touch the one who is without a body.” As the story goes, the Brāhmaṇa then asks Kaṇāda about the means of reaching this state without the body, and Kaṇāda responds that the means is *dharma*. After some follow-up questions about *dharma*, Kaṇāda consents to proceed by uttering the first *sūtra*.

The second *sūtra* gives the definition of *dharma* by specifying its result. The result of *dharma* is either elevation to heaven (*abhyudaya*) or “what is the most excellent” (*niḥśreyasa*). Candrānanda defined “elevation to heaven” as the acquirement of

the desired body in the paradise of Brahma and the removal of misfortune (*abhyudayo brahmā’ di-lokeṣu c’eṣṭai-sarīra-prāptiḥ, anarthoparamaś ca*). In contrast, “what is the most excellent” is defined as “the state of the absence of particular self qualities (inner qualities like cognition, pleasure, pain, etc.), which is liberation” (*niḥśreyasam adhyātmano vaiśeṣika-guṇā’bhāva-rūpo mokṣaḥ*). Kaṇāda also specified that characteristics of *dharma* are known from the Vedas (*āmnāyāt*). And so, the third *sūtra* gives the basis for why the Vedas are authoritative; it is because they are revelations from God, whose names are Hiraṇyagarbha, Bhagavān, and Maheśvara.

The first three *sūtras* demonstrate at least two things. First, as understood by Candrānanda, the Vaiśeṣika system is firmly rooted in the Vedic tradition and originated within the Brāhmaṇa community. Second, its ultimate aim is the liberation from worldly life in two forms: the lesser, living in heaven with a perfect body and continued vitality through positive bodily experiences (thus, still staying in *saṃsāra*), and the ultimate one, the life of the self (*ātman*) without a body, having no experiences (the state of final liberation or *mokṣa*). It is this second form of liberation, which interests me because it is the highest form that corresponds with the notions of liberation used in other schools.

Before turning to the problem of realness, it is necessary to touch upon a question that Erich Frauwallner once raised (Frauwallner 1984). The well-known scholar of Indian philosophy doubted whether these three *sūtras* were present in the original version of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* and counted

them as later interpolations. Moreover, Frauwallner thought that the Vaisesika system must have been very naturalistic and scientific in its original spirit, permitting nothing supernatural, like God or liberation.

Frauwallner hypothesized that in its original version, the first *sūtra* must have been Kaṇāda's announcement, as if of a positivist scientist: "all that, which is really existing, I shall enumerate" (*yad iha bhāvarūpam, tat sarvam mayāupasaṃkhyātavyam*). This version is only preserved by the commentators of *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha*, namely Vyomaśiva and Udayana. However, later reconsiderations of this point by Jan Houben and Wilhelm Halbfass have questioned whether it was the case, since a comparatively early fifth-century author named Bhartṛhari referred to the very first *sūtra* of Kaṇāda in a way that dismisses Frauwallner's problem (Halbfass 1986; Houben 1994).

Moreover, Houben has noted that the motivation behind Frauwallner's thesis could have been his preoccupation with discovering or reconstructing a unitary (not multilayered or contradictory) system of Vaisesika due to his strict background in Classics. I qualify Frauwallner's interpretation as in alignment with the dominant trends of the Western reception of Vaisesika, which tended to see it as a purely natural and scientific system in contrast to some other dominant theistic Indian systems of thought. Furthermore, at least two Japanese authors have also questioned Frauwallner's proposition by pointing out that liberation is also intimately related to the fifth and sixth chapters of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, both of which can hardly be interpolations (Adachi 1984, Nozawa 1997).

Another place that mentions liberation is *sūtra* no. 5.2.20 (Candrānanda 2004: 51). Here it is said that, "when there is an absence of that [*adr̥ṣṭa*], there is no conjunction between the mind and the self, [the body] does not appear, that is liberation" (*tadabhāve saṃyogābhāvo'prādurbhāvaḥ sa mokṣaḥ*). This *sūtra* gives an alternative or supplementary definition to the one given by Candrānanda when commenting on *sūtra* no. 1.1.2: "the state of the absence of particular self qualities." What this *sūtra* means that when there is no "invisible force" (*adr̥ṣṭa* comprising *dharma* and *adharma*), the conditions for earthly life are not obtained, the conjunction between mind and the self does not appear, so the body does not occur.

In *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha*, liberation is mentioned in the sections on "the purpose of the treatise" (*granthaprajanaprakaraṇam*) and "the saṃsārā and liberation" (*saṃsārāpavarga*). In the "saṃsārā and liberation" section, liberation is explained in very similar terms to *sūtra* 5.2.20 (Praśastapāda 1994: 65–66). Namely, when *dharma* and *adharma* (*adr̥ṣṭa*) are not produced (*dharmādharmayor anutpattau*), and previously accumulated *dharma* is thoroughly exhausted (*pūrvasañcitayoś copabhogān nirodhe*), there is disregard for the body (*śarīraparicchedam*). As a result, the self becomes without seeds (*nirbījasyātmanaḥ*, i.e. without *dharma-adharma*), and therefore, the body, and so on, disappears (*śarīrādinivṛttiḥ*). The resultant state is likened to the calmness (cessation) of burnt firewood in a fire, that is, liberation (*dagdhendhanānalavad upaśamo mokṣa*

iti). Thus, liberation is like the natural extinction of a fire when all the wood is burnt down and no more wood is added.

The commentaries on *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha* also explain the idea of liberation in the first verse of the treatise. *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha* begins by paying homage to God and Kaṇāda and the announcement of *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha*, literally the “Collection of the Dharmas of Padārthas,” that brings “great prosperity” (*mahodaya*)¹. All three early commentators of *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha* determined “great prosperity” to be related to liberation.

Śrīdhara described it as “the supreme fruit [of the works] with the characteristic of liberation” (*mahatphalamapavargalakṣaṇam*; Śrīdhara 1991: 13). After dismissing other schools’ views on liberation, he defined “great prosperity” as “absolute cessation of suffering” (*ahita nivṛttirātyantikī mahodaya iti yuktam*; *ibid.* 16). Thus for Śrīdhara, *mahodaya* is a synonym for liberation (*apavarga, niḥśreyasa*). Udayana explained *mahodaya* as “going up,” “awakening,” or “knowledge” (*udgama, ud-bodha, jñāna*; Udayana 1971: 4) and related it to the goal of *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha*. In other words, the treatise provides knowledge, which is one of the means for liberation (“what is the most excellent,” or *niḥśreyasa*). Udayana explains *niḥśreyasa* in the same way as Śrīdhara, namely as “the absolute disappearance of suffering” (*niḥśreyasaṃ duḥkhanivṛttirātyantikī*, (*Ibid.*: 5). And Vyomaśiva presented *mahodaya* as characteristic of both elevation to

1 “Pranamya hetum isvaram munim kanadam any atah Padarthadharmasamgrahah pravakshyate mahodayah”.

heaven and liberation (*mahānūdayaḥ svar gāpavargalakṣaṇo’smādbhavatīti mahodaya itiyuktam*; Vyomaśiva 1983: 22).

Vyomaśiva and Śrīdhara also referred to the definition of liberation given by Candrānanda as the absence (or destruction) of particular qualities of the self (e.g., *mokṣa navānām ātmaviśeṣaguṇānām atyantoccheda*, Vyomaśiva 1983: 4; also refer to Śrīdhara 1991: 273). These qualities are explicitly listed as nine: cognition (*buddhi*), pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, internal effort (*prayatna*), impression (*saṃskāra*), *dharma*, and *adharmā*. A similar definition is also reported in Buddhist and Jain works that mention the Vaiśeṣika theory of liberation (Nozawa 2007).

From what was said above, it is clear that Vaiśeṣika describes liberation in negative terms². *Sūtra* no. 5.2.20 emphasizes the absence (*abhāva*) of three things *dharma* and *adharmā*, the conjunction of mind and the self, and the body. The definition provided by Candrānanda (and later Śrīdhara and Vyomaśiva) emphasizes the absence of the nine mental qualities of the self.

The latter definition also presupposes the absence of the conjunction of the mind with the self and the body. The definition of liberation as the total absence of suffering also involves absence. In considering the realness of liberation, I take the predominant definition of liberation as the absence

2 However, there must have been pressure from the rising popularity of Advaita Vedānta that preferred to define liberation in positive terms. There are some hints in Śrīdhara that he also positively referred to liberation. In one passage, he is in agreement with *Yoga-Sūtra*, which describes liberation as “abiding in one’s own form” (*ātmanah svarūpa avasthānam*; Mesquita 1995: 220, 249–250).

of nine mental qualities of the self. More interesting, perhaps, is that the question of the realness of liberation could be reduced to a question about the realness of absence. Consequently, is absence real?

Vaišeṣika theorists define the world in terms of *padārthas*, which are existent, knowable, and nameable. Among these *padārthas*, Vaišeṣika authors (except Udayana in *Lakṣaṇāvalī*), from the period before the school merged with Nyāya, do not count absence as a *padārtha*. Absence is not existent; therefore, it is not real. However, phenomenologically speaking, after losing something/someone, one perceives the absence of something/someone lost. It is one of the reasons that could have led the later Nyāya-Vaišeṣika system to include absence among what is real (*padārthas*). However, there is a problem with the existence aspect. If we allow for absence to exist, we end up with two (or more) existences, since one has to distinguish between the existence of an ordinary object and an absent one, like liberation or pegasus.

Therefore, it seems to be simpler to say that perception of absence does not involve existence. Furthermore, perception of absence depends on the perceiver since he/she has the memory of the absentee when it was previously existent. If the memory of the previous presence of the now absent object is not there, it is impossible to speak about the perception of absence. Therefore, absence is unreal.

Knowledge and Liberation

What is the relation between knowledge and liberation? If we treat liberation as unreal, it is actually a misnomer to then speak

about its knowledge. Therefore, I consider the possibility of the realness of liberation by conceding it to be a form of existence. Nevertheless, the means by which we can acquire the knowledge about liberation need to be more precise. In other words, are there any other knowledge sources besides the Vaišeṣika scriptures that could support knowledge about liberation? This question was also taken up by the Vaišeṣika thinkers themselves, who tended to admit the realness of liberation.

First, think again about the possible perception of liberation. One of the problems is that perception itself is one of the qualities of the self that is absent in the state of liberation. Therefore, the liberated self cannot verify with ordinary knowledge whether it is liberated or not. This liberation also cannot be perceived by other embodied selves (not yet liberated), since they cannot perceive other selves' inner mental qualities, thus cannot determine their presence or absence (which are only accessible to each self privately). Therefore, according to Vaišeṣika, ordinary perception is a source of knowing about liberation that is technically impossible. Nevertheless, there are two other sources of knowledge: inference and corroboration by other authoritative scriptures.

Śrīdhara concluded that the authority of the ancient scriptures (like the *Upanishads*) is sufficient proof for the state of liberation (Śrīdhara 1991: 17). For example, the authority of statements like that above refer to the statement in the *Chāndogya Upanishad*: “pleasure and unpleasure do not touch the one who is without a body.” By contrast, Vyomaśiva preferred inferential proof

for the realness of liberation. He gave the following inferential explanation: “the continuum of nine specific qualities are inevitably terminated because it is a continuum. What is seen as a continuum is terminated. Like the continuum of the flame of a lamp”³ (Vyomaśiva 1983: 2; Kumāra 2019: 127).

While Udayana contended that the Upanishadic statements are authoritative enough to prove liberation, he also determined inferential proof (as provided by Vyomaśiva) to also be valid. Udayana refuted the oppositional view, which argued that suffering is beginningless compared to the termination of the continuum of a lamp’s flame. Udayana suggested that it is possible to identify the cause of the suffering similarly to how fuel is recognized as the cause of the fire. If the cause is understood and eliminated, no suffering arises (Tachikawa 2001: 285).

This brief glimpse into Vaiśeṣika discussions on the knowledge sources for liberation informs us that two forms of proof were admitted for liberation: scriptural authority and inference (for a more detailed treatment, see: Suzuki 2010). This discussion of proof also suggests that, despite the definition of liberation as a special kind of posterior absence, Vaiśeṣika thinkers debated it as if it were something knowable and existent, although obviously not existing in the same sense that an ordinary object exists. Further, liberation is not even understood in the sense of the posterior absence of an ordinary object because the

3 *navānāmātmaviśeṣaguṇānāṃ santāno’tyantamucchidyate santānatvāt yo yaḥ santānaḥ sa so’tyantamucchidyamāno dṛṣṭaḥ yathā pradīpasantāna.*

absence of mental qualities in the liberated cannot be perceived.

Yogic Perception as the Means to Liberation

In this last section of the chapter, I cover the stated means for liberation as described by Vaiśeṣika texts. In classical Vaiśeṣika, the primary means for liberation is usually understood as obtaining valid knowledge of *padārthas*. However, I argue that there is no connection between liberation and the ordinary or realist type of knowledge of *padārthas*. First, because it is related to knowledge: how to do yoga and be good in your life by performing rituals and actions in the appropriate attitude and gaining *dharma*. When the proper amount of *dharma* is accumulated, a yogic perception of all *padārthas* can shine forth when performing yoga. As a result, this allows for the shifting from a realist understanding of the world to an idealistic anti-realism, which I argue leads to liberation.

In the original *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* (without reference to the commentaries), there is no explicit mention that knowledge of *padārthas* is a means for liberation. What is clear from *sūtrapāṭha* is that the means for liberation are *dharma* (1.1.2) and yoga practice (5.2.17). As regards *dharma*, in this case, it refers to various practices and duties that are described in greater detail in the sixth chapter of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*.

The commentary of Candrānanda introduces knowledge as a means of liberation for the first time. The commentary on *sūtra* 1.1.6 explains that, “The cause of *dharma* helps in truly obtaining liberation when the

similarities and differences of six *padārthas* are discerned. Also, when as a result looking at things as possessing deficiency, the dispassion arises.⁴ It goes on to restate the importance of knowing the similarities and differences of *padārthas* when introducing *sūtra* 1.1.7: “The cause of the elevation to heaven and liberation is the discrimination of similarities and differences of substances and so on.”⁵ Lastly, knowledge of similarities and differences of *padārthas* is mentioned in the commentary on the final *sūtra*: “Having known the similarities and differences of substances, etc., arisen the knowledge of dispassion, obtained the discernment through [reflecting about] the sentences like “know yourself” and doing regular worship, one achieves liberation”⁶ (10.21).

It is not clear, based on the commentary of Candrānanda, how knowledge of the similarities and differences is obtained. Some similarities and differences are mentioned in the *sūtras* of the first chapter of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*. Therefore, knowledge of them could be thought of as emerging from studying the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* and other scriptures. However, as shown in *Padārthadharmasamgraha* and its commentaries, knowledge of similarities and differences is not associated with ordinary knowledge.

Here, I briefly mention the apocryphal

4 *Evam ṣaṇṇām padārthānām sādharma-vaidharma-parañānam viśaya-doṣa-darśana-dvāreṇa vairāgyōtpattau satyām niḥśreyase sādharma-dharma-hetuḥ* (Candrānanda 2004: 4).

5 *Vijñāta-sādharma-vaidharmyānām ca dravyādinām abhyudaya-niḥśreyasa-hetutvāt* (*Ibid.*, 4).

6 *Evam dravyādinām sādharma-vaidharma-parañānād vairāgya-jñānōtpatter “ātmā jñātavya” ity-ādi-vākyebhyaś c’ opāsā-krameṇa vijñānāvāpter niḥśreyasādhiḡamaḥ* (*Ibid.*, 89).

fourth *sūtra* of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* as reported by Śaṅkara Miśra: “The liberation [is obtained] by the true knowledge of similarities and differences of *padārthas*, which spring from the particular *dharma*” (*dharmaviśeṣa prasūtāt dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaviśeṣasamavāyānām padārthānām sādharma-vaidharmyābhyām tattvajñānānīḥśreyasam*). Miśra further explained that “the particular *dharma*” means good works, ethical action (Gough 1873: 6). Therefore, true knowledge is generated (while doing yoga) from particular *dharma*s, which are collected by the performance of practices and duties and do not directly correspond with worldly objects.

At the very beginning of *Padārthadharmasamgraha*, it mentions that, “The cause of liberation is the true knowledge of similarities and differences of six *padārthas* of substance, quality, action, commonness, particularity, and inherence” (*Dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaviśeṣasamavāyānām ṣaṇṇām padārthānām sādharma-vaidharmyatattvajñānam niḥśreyasahetuḥ*). However, one should not read this sentence separately from what follows next: “That is also because of *dharma*, revealed by the injunction of God.” (*Tac ceśvaracodanābhiviyaktād dharmād eva*). Reading this together with the former sentence, one can see that this knowledge is because of *dharma*. Let us consult the commentators for a better understanding.

According to Vyomaśiva, “true knowledge is produced by the *dharma* that arises from the yoga [practice]” (*atha yogajadharmādupajātātattvajñāno*). “To bring about the true knowledge

for us, Kaṇāda composed the sūtras' (*śm adādestattvajñānasampādanāya kaṇādah sūtrāṇi karotītyavasthām*). The true knowledge (*tattvajñāna*) is not knowledge that arises from ordinary perception 'this is special true knowledge which causes liberation' (*viśiṣṭatattvajñānasya niśreyasakāraṇatvābhyupagamāt*). Although this passage of Vyomaśiva's commentary is a bit corrupted, the intention seems to be that true knowledge comes from studying (listening to) scripture (*śruti*), assisted by accumulating *dharma* that comes from yoga practice. The following sentence alludes to this interpretation: "Actually, the true knowledge arises based on scriptures; however, it is produced immediately after [in those] engaged in yoga who do not have remaining specific qualities in the self through practice. That is the cause of liberation"⁷ (Vyomaśiva 1983: 2).

Śrīdhara stated that "Liberation is present only due to dharma. The sentence "the true knowledge of substance and so on," convey the intention that it is due to its cause [dharma] [knowledge] is the means for liberation."⁸ (Śrīdhara 1991: 26). Śrīdhara was speaking about knowledge of *padārthas* (inner and outer) for the sake of seeing faultiness in them and becoming indifferent to them. Both the desire for and action of objects ceases when the practitioner obtains knowledge of the

self⁹ (Ibid.). Equally, in another passage, Śrīdhara described the process leading to liberation as what happens when there is only the perception of the self with no external experience and the activity of the external sense organs ceases (Śrīdhara 1991: 635). These reflections about the perception of the self hint at yogic perception because the self cannot be perceived by any other method.

Udayana explains *dharma* as involving the practice of yoga that has been revealed in various scriptures sent by God. A summary of Udayana's position follows: "The injunction of God means that it is a teaching of Veda (knowledge), it is conveyed from the *dharma* manifested by the injunction. Because *dharma* has the characteristic of extinction, caused by constant long-term efforts by the method of yoga taught in scriptures like Śruti, Smṛti, Itihāsa, Purāṇa, and after consideration of the *padārthas* from Śāstras, the true knowledge arises"¹⁰ (Udayana 1971: 8).

From the three leading commentators on *Padārthadharmasamgraha*, it can be concluded that so-called "true knowledge" (*tattvajñāna*) is not ordinary perception nor is it the inference of *padārthas* in the realist mode. It is the yogic perception of the self and other *padārthas*. It is attainable by practicing yoga, performing good works

7 *Śraute hi tattvajñāne samutpanne yogābhyāsepravartamānasya abhyāsaśāśādātmanyaśeṣaviśeṣāliṅgi te'antyaṃ tattvajñānamupajātam niśreyasa kāraṇam iti.*

8 *Tanniśreyasaṃ dharmādeva bhavati, dravyādī-tattvajñānaṃ tu tasyakāraṇatvena niśreyasasādhanamityabhiprāyah.*

9 *Bāhyādhyātmikeṣu viṣayeṣu doṣadarśanādviraktasya samihānivr̥ttāvātmajñānasya tadarthāni karmmānyakurvatas tat parityāga.*

10 *Tacceti- īśvaracodanā upadeśo. Veda iti yāvat, tenābhivyaktāt-pratipāditād dharmāt. Ayamārtha śāstreṇa padārthān vivicya śruti, smṛti, itihāsa, purāṇapradīṣṭayogavidhinā dirghakālādaranaīrantar yasevitān nivr̥ttīlakṣaṇād dharmādeva tattvajñānam utpadyate.*

and ritual actions, and studying scriptures, which gives rise to *dharma*. Practicing yoga and performing good works are undoubtedly not about perceiving external objects but, rather, demand developing a specific skill (yogic perception).

Finally, how does yogic perception allow for the reaching of liberation and how does its definition as absence become less problematic when looking from the imaginary viewpoint of the liberated?¹¹ When one is doing yoga, no pleasure and pain arise because there is no contact with

external objects. Furthermore, due to the non-arising of pleasure and pain, no desire, aversion, or internal effort appear. Only cognition (as a quality) of *padārthas* is available when the yogic perception of the self and other *padārthas* flashes.

However, because things are perceived in the self, they are ideal objects and not external objects. As a result, the perception of these ideal objects does not bring pleasure, pain, etc. All that remains is perception, which was caused by *dharma* and stems from a desire for liberation. When there is only perception, its presence or absence is wholly dependent on the self. If the desire for liberation was present before doing yoga, after its perception the self remains in deep unconscious contemplation, discontinuing perception.

Therefore, from the liberated viewpoint, the self is absent of mental qualities and the remaining *padārthas* because there is no longer a difference between them and mental qualities. Looking from the realist viewpoint, the Vaiśeṣika theory of liberation looks bizarre; how can one strive for absence when this means turning oneself into an unreal state? However, if we switch into the anti-realist, yogic perception mode, it enables an explanation for the absence or presence of ideal objects as a matter of dependence on the self (due to the desire for liberation before doing yoga).

11 How does yogic perception occur? Yogic perception occurs when performing yoga and initially appears for the self and later for all objects of *padārthas*. According to *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* no. 9.13, "Perception of the self occurs due to the special conjunction of the self and mind." Candrānanda explained this *sūtra* in his commentary: "Having withdrawn the sense organs from objects, the mind comes in the self. At the time of deep contemplation [*samādhi*], in dependence on *dharma* produced by yoga, and the special conjunction of mind and the self, perception of the self occurs" (Candrānanda 2004: 79). Yogic perception occurs due to the conjunction of the self and mind plus the *dharma* resulting from yoga practice. Here, yogic perception can only appear after a lengthy yoga practice. Only when the appropriate amount of accumulated *dharma* from yoga is available in the self can the yogic perception appear during the performance of yoga. The first object to be perceived from this extraordinary perception is the perceiver, the self. This is in line with anti-realism because the perception of things can only arise after the perception of the self, which cannot be perceivable through ordinary perception, but must be perceived through yogic perception.

Primary Sources:

Candrānanda,
2004. *Candrānanda's Commentary on the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*. Ed. Ferenc Ruzsa. Unpublished.

Prāśastapāda, 1994. "Prāśastapādabhāṣya". In *Word Index to the Prāśastapādabhāṣya*. Prepared by Johannes Bronkhorst, Yves Ramseier. Delhi: M. Banarsidass.

Śrīdhara, 1991. *Nyāyakandaī: Kāṇā-davaiśeṣikasūtrasya Vivaraṇarūpasya Prāśastapādabhāṣyasya Ṭikā*. Ed. by Jitendra Jetly. Vadodara: Oriental Institute.

Udayana, 1971. *Prāśastapādabhāṣyam: With the Commentary Kiranāvalī of Udayanācārya*. Ed. By Jitendra Jetly. Baroda: Oriental Institute.

Vyomaśiva, 1983–1984. *Vyomavati*. Ed. by Gauṛinātha Śāstrī Vol. 1–2. Vārāṇasī: Sampūrṇānanda-Saṃskṛta-Viśva-vidyālaya.

Secondary Sources:

Adachi, Toshihide 安達俊英, 1984. "Vaisheshika Sūtra Ni Okeru Gedatsu Ni Tsuite" ヴァイシエーションカーストラにおける解脱について. In *Indo-Gaku Bukkyō-Gaku Kenkyū* 印度学仏教学研究. 64: 136–137.

Frauwallner, Erich, 1984. "Der ursprüngliche Anfang der Vaiśeṣika-Sūtren". In *Erich Frauwallner. Nachgelassene Werke. Bd. 1: Aufsätze, Beitraege, Skizzen*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: 35–41.

Gough, Archibald Edward, ed. and transl. 1873. *Vaiśeṣika Sūtras of Kanāda. With sections of Śaṅkara Miśra Upaskāra and Jayanārāyaṇa Tarkapancānaś Vivṛti*. Benares: E. J. Lazarus and Co.

Halbfass, Wilhelm. 1986. "Review of "Der ursprüngliche Anfang

der Vaiśeṣika-Sūtren"". In *Journal of American Oriental Society*. 106: 857–858.

Houben, Jan E. M., 1994. "Liberation and Natural Philosophy in Early Vaiśeṣika: Some Methodological Problems," In *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques*. 48(2): 711–748.

Kumāra, Saśiprabhā, 2019. *Categories, Creation and Cognition in Vaiśeṣika Philosophy*. Springer: Singapore.

Mesquita, Roque, 1995. "Der Apavarga-Begriff bei Śrīdhara. Eine vedantische Erlösungslehre?" In *Sauhrdayamaṅgalam Studies in Honour of Siegfried Lienhard on his 70th Birthday*. Ed by Mirja Juntunen, William L. Smith, Carl Suneson. Stockholm: The Association of Oriental Studies: 215–258.

Moise, Ionut, 2020. *Salvation in Indian philosophy: Perfection and Simplicity for Vaiśeṣika*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

Nozawa, Masanobu, 1996. "Concept of Yoga in the Vaiśeṣika-sūtra". In *Indian Thoughts and Buddhist Culture, Essays in honor of Prof. J. Imanishi on his Sixtieth Birthday*. 17–30.

Suzuki, Takanori 鈴木孝典, 2010. "Vaisheshika Gakuha Ni Okeru 'Ronri' Shikō To 'Seiten' Shikō -- Gedatsu No Sonzai Ni Taisuru Pramana o Megutte" ヴァイシエーションカ学派における「論理」志向と「聖典」志向—解脱の存在に対するpramanaをめぐる—. In *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū* 印度学佛教学研究. 58(2): 891–887.

Tachikawa, Musashi, 2001. "The Introductory Part of the Kiranāvalī". In *Journal of Indian Philosophy*. 29(1): 273–289.