

vii. Theories of sāmānya and viśeṣa

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Sāmānya (Generality / Community)

Sanskrit References

sarvadā sarvabhāvānāṁ sāmañyāṁ vṛddhikāraṇam. (Ca.Su.1/44)

Always, it is the generality/community that promotes the growth (vṛddhi) of all entities.

sāmānyamekatvakaram. (Ca.Su.1/45)

Sāmānya (generality) establishes oneness or unity (ekattva) among many substances.

tulyārthatā hi sāmānyam. (Ca.Su.1/45)

Generality reveals the equal meaning or similarity (tulyārthatā) between two subjects.

nityamekamanekānugataṁ sāmānyam. (Tarka-saṅgraha)

Sāmānya is eternal (nitya), singular (eka), and yet exists in many forms (anekānugata).

Functional Types of Sāmānya

1. Dravya Sāmānya (Substance Generality)

- **Example:** Consumption of meat (a substance) increases muscle mass in the body.
- **Explanation:** Similar type of substance (flesh) promotes the growth of muscle tissue.

2. Guna Sāmānya (Quality Generality)

- **Example:** Intake of sweet-tasting substances (a quality) increases Kapha doṣa.
- **Explanation:** Similar quality (sweetness) accumulates and enhances Kapha.

3. Karma Sāmānya (Action Generality)

- **Example:** Running (a particular action) increases Vāta doṣa.
- **Explanation:** Similar type of action (mobility, speed) causes Vāta to increase.

Summary

Sāmānya is the principle that “like increases like.” When an entity (substance, quality, or action) is introduced that shares common features with a bodily component or process, it leads to growth or increase of that component.

Viśeṣa (Particularity / Specificity)

Sanskrit References

hrāsaheturvīśeṣaśca, pravṛttirubhayasya tu (Ca.Su.1/44)

Viśeṣa is the cause of reduction (hrāsa). Both Sāmānya and Viśeṣa influence bodily processes.

viśeṣastu pṛthaktvakṛt. (Ca.Su.1/45)

Particularity creates distinctiveness (pṛthaktva).

viśeṣastu viparyayah. (Ca.Su.1/45)

Particularity functions in an opposite manner to generality.

nityadravyavṛttayā vyāvartakā viśeṣāḥ (Tarka-saṅgraha)

Particularities reside in eternal substances (dravya) and exclude all else—i.e., they specify how one thing is distinct from another.

Functional Types of Viśeṣa

1. Dravya Viśeṣa (Substance Particularity)

- **Example:** Eating millet (bājra) or sorghum (jowar) reduces obesity.

- **Explanation:** A specific substance with properties that counteract fat accumulation leads to reduction.

2. Guna Viśeṣa (Quality Particularity)

- **Example:** Using clarified butter (ghṛta) or oil, which are unctuous, mitigates Vāta.

- **Explanation:** The particular property (unctuousness) opposes dryness (a quality of Vāta).

3. Karma Viśeṣa (Action Particularity)

- **Example:** Running can be used to counteract Kapha (which is heavy and static).

- **Explanation:** A particular action (increasing movement) reduces heaviness/stagnation associated with Kapha.

Summary

Viśeṣa is the principle that “opposite qualities reduce or balance each other.” Specific substances, qualities, or actions that oppose another entity will cause reduction (hrāsa) or balancing of that entity.