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**Appearance and Reality in Ancient India**

**Essential Points**

* Vedas and Upaniṣads

Development of philosophy out of mythical explanations of nature

Move from polytheism to monotheism and monism (*brahman*)

Upaniṣadic self (*ātman*) – immaterial, eternal, conscious perceiver

The cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*) as a product of *karma*

The self (*ātman*) may be identical to *brahman*; difference is illusory

* The Buddha

Rejected authority of Vedas and Upaniṣads

Aim: Cessation of all suffering

The Four Noble Truths –

the existence, origination, cessation, and path to cessation of suffering (*duḥkha*)

The cause of suffering = attachment; the cause of attachment = false understanding of self and reality

Eightfold Noble Path –

right view/intention/speech/conduct/livelihood/effort/ mindfulness/concentration

Four Divine Abidings

Lovingkindness, compassion, joy, equanimity

Cessation of suffering = escape from cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*) = *nirvāṇa*

*Nirvāṇa* without remainder = total escape upon death of the body

All things are aggregates of momentary elements (*skandha*)

Five skandhas:

material form, sensation, perception, habitual mental activity, consciousness

*Anātman* = non-self, rejection of enduring soul, unitary agent

Clinging to the delusional idea of self is the source of attachment

*Anitya* = impermanence, all things are constantly arising and ceasing

Dependent origination = all events are fully caused by preceding events

How do non-self and impermanence cohere with rebirth and karma?

Buddhists’ answer = causal connections between bundles of skandhas

* Nāgasena

Mereological argument against the existence of wholes over and above their parts, against selves over and above the skandhas. Names are just conventional designations for skandhas arranged in a certain way.

* Vaiśeṣika

Realists about the diversity of selves and objects in the world

Four atomic material elements (water, air, fire, earth)

Fifth omnipresent material element = ether

Atomic and composite material substances

Inherence and conjunction relations

Composite wholes inhere in their conjoined parts

Attributes – e.g., color, taste, magnitude – inhere in substances

Particularity (*viśeṣa*) – distinguishes individual substances from each other

Universals inhere in substances, attributes, and motions

Selves (*ātman*)= non-material substances in which mental states inhere

Mind = internal sense organ distinct from the self

* Nyāya

Developed logic and epistemology to complement Vaiśeṣika metaphysics

*Pramāṇa* = source of knowledge

Four pramāṇas = perception, inference, analogy, testimony

Perception = arises from connection between sense faculty and object; non- linguistic, inerrant, and definitive

*Tarka* = supports one view by showing another incompatible view to contradict evidence from a *pramāṇa*

Arguments against anti-realists about composite wholes, objects in general, and the self:

Composite wholes are directly perceived

No basis for claiming that objects we experience while awake are unreal just like the objects we experience while dreaming

An enduring, substantial self can be inferred from the existence of mental states, multi-sensory perception of a single object, karma, and rebirth