CHAPTER - VI

BONDAGE AND LIBERATION
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The conception of liberation is the most important topic of Indian philosophy. In Indian philosophy, liberation is considered as the paramount ideal and end of life. The conception of liberation attained such prominence in India that Indian philosophical systems are called the "Mokṣaśāstra" (the science of liberation).

In almost all the systems of Indian philosophy, the concepts of bondage and liberation are the important topics for discussion and each of the schools advocates its own view in this regard. In Indian philosophy, bondage means the liability of the individuals to birth and consequent sufferings and liberation, which is termed as mokṣa or mukti, is regarded as the summum bonum of life.

In this context Prof. Max Muller comments that philosophy is recommended in India "not..., for the sake of knowledge but for the highest purpose that man can strive after in this life, that is his own salvation"1 According to him, the highest purpose of Indian philosophy is none other than liberation. Liberation stands for 'release from pains and sufferings'.

According to all Indian philosophical systems, liberation means release from bondage. Liberation also means release of the self from the cycle of birth and death. In fact the Puruṣa or self or soul by nature is eternally

1. Muller, Max, The six systems of Indian Philosophy, P. 370
free. But due to ignorance the *Purusa* or soul wrongly identifies itself with the mind-body organism and undergoes the process of birth and rebirth. In this regard, *Gita* stated that the process of birth, rebirth, death and consequent sufferings to which an individual is subject to is termed as bondage. The ending is termed liberation.  

2. *karmajān buddhiyuktaḥ hi phalam tyaktāmanisīnāḥ/
   janmabandhavinirmuktāḥ padaṁ gacchantyanāmayam// Gita, 2.51

Satischandra Chatterjee also said, “The process of birth and rebirth is called bondage and its cessation is called liberation because the one implies certain limitations and the other freedom from those limitations for the individual soul, just as in ordinary life and conversation a man, when under restraint, is said to be bound, and, when subsequently released from restraint, is said to be free and liberated.”

The thinkers of ancient India devoted their intellectual resources to discover the path leading to the ultimate goal of human life in so many passages. But as it is not possible to explain the Absolute Reality from the human point of view, so Upaniṣads do not explain precisely the condition of the ultimate liberation. Generally, in the Upaniṣads this ultimate freedom is described as a state of oneness with Brahman or as the attainment of Brahman (*Brahmaprāpti*) Regarding this point S.N. Dasgupta opines, “Emancipation or Mukti means in the Upaniṣads the state of infiniteness that a man attains when he knows his own self and thus becomes Brahman.”

Bondage or ceaseless series of transmigration is for one who is ignorant. The wise person, who has divested himself of all passions is not affected by ignorance and the resultant bondage. He becomes free from all

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2. *karmajān buddhiyuktaḥ hi phalam tyaktā manisīnāḥ/
   janmabandhavinirmuktāḥ padaṁ gacchantyanāmayam// Gita, 2.51
afflictions and sorrows. In the Upanisads, liberation is not regarded as something new, which is to be attained. It is not a new acquisition or a new product. “For everything that comes to be is transient; that which from nothingness became something may also return back from being something into its nothingness.” Therefore, liberation is not a new beginning but the perception of that which existed from eternity.

1. CONCEPT OF BONDAGE IN SĀMKHYA–YOGA PHILOSOPHY

According to Sāmkhyā philosophy, Puruṣa is eternally enlightened, eternally liberated, pure and free from pain or sorrow. It is devoid of three guṇas (sattva, rajas and tamas). But due to non-discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛti, Puruṣa has a false sense of bondage. It is because of the relation between Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the Puruṣa feels sorrow and pleasure. Puruṣa has no real connection with pain and pleasure. Pain and pleasure are the qualities of buddhi. Being reflected in the modes of buddhi, the Puruṣa wrongly identifies itself with these qualities. According to Vacaspati Mīśra, this false sense of identity of the Puruṣa with the mode of buddhi is bondage. In his view buddhi is insentient but endowed with three guṇas. Because of sattvaguna buddhi can accept the reflection of objects adjacent to it. Puruṣa which is of the nature of consciousness is reflected in buddhi. Because of this the insentient buddhi and the reflection of consciousness of Puruṣa appear as non-different. Buddhi then appear as conscious and Puruṣa though devoid of any attribute appear as doer and enjoyer. This is what is called bondage or transmigration.6 Vijñānabhikṣu

5. Deussen, Paul, The Philosophy of the Upanisads, P.344
6. Cf. SK 20; STK on it, 5, 20

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also maintains that Puruṣa is reflected in the mode of buddhi which is tinged with pain. This mental mode of pain is reflected back in Puruṣa, so that Puruṣa has the experience of pain. For example when a red flower is placed near a crystal, the crystal appears to be tinged with red, though it is not really so. Similarly Puruṣa, which is devoid of any association with guṇas, appears to be tinged with the mental mode of pain, though it is not really tinged, and feels to be its own experience owing to the superimposition of ahamkāra or abhimāna on it. So, according to Vijnānabhikṣu, bondage is a mere feeling of Puruṣa's being coloured by the modes of buddhi, owing to non-discrimination. Hence, Puruṣa's bondage is not real.7 “Although bondage in the form of the cognition of pain, and discrimination and non-discrimination in the form of functions belong to the citta or the inner organ, still Puruṣa's enjoyment or suffering consists in the mere reflection of pain in him.”8 Thus the bondage of Puruṣa is a fiction9 due to its proximity to citta. So, it is said to be adventitious (aupādhika). The Sāṁkhya philosophers maintain that if freedom is not natural to Puruṣa, it cannot be generated by any outside events. Vijnānabhikṣu quotes a verse from Kurma Purāṇa to support this view. It is said in the Kurma Purāṇa “were the self by nature impure, unclean, mutable, verily release would not be possible for it even by hundreds of rebirths.”10

7. bandhādīnāṁ sarveṣāṁ citte ekāvasthānāt tat puruṣe vānmātram sarvāṁ, sphaṭikalauhityavat pravīṃbāmāṭratvāt, na tu tattvaṁ tasya bhāvah. SPB on SS, 1.58; yathā japa-sphaṭika yornoparāgahah, kintu japa-pravīṃbāvāsādūparāgabhīmanamātraṁ, raktaḥ sphaṭika iti; tathaiva buddhi-puruṣayornoparāgahah, kintu buddhi-pravīṃbāvāsādūparāgabhīmanamāno’ vivekavāsādityarthah. Ibid; 6.28
8. sinha, Nandalal, The Sāṁkhya Philosophy, P. 90
9. vānmātrāni na tu tattvāṁ cītasthitāḥ. SS, 1.58
10. yadyatmā malināu’svaccho vikāri syāt svabhāvataḥ/ na hi tasya bhavenmuktirjanmāntaras’atairapi// KP, 2.12
Sāmkhya philosophy also maintains that bondage of Purusa is not due to relation to space and time. Already, we know that Purusa is eternal and all-pervading and space and time are also all-pervading. Therefore, space and time would be related to all Purusas, released as well as bound. Thus, released Purusas also would be bound by being related to space and time. Kapila also said that bondage of Purusa is not due to karmas (actions), because karmas (actions) are not properties of Purusa, but of the gross body. Again, bondage of Purusa cannot be due to organic condition, because it is a property of the sarira (body) which is subject to change, while Purusa is beyond change.

Moreover, bondage of Purusa cannot be due to Prakṛti. Prakṛti cannot entangle Purusa in bondage without depending on a particular conjunction of Purusa with buddhi. If Prakṛti can cause its bondage without a particular conjunction, then Purusa would experience pain and be in bondage even in the state of dissolution. But the Sāmkhya philosophy holds that Purusa does not feel pain in the state of dissolution. So, bondage of Purusa is not real, but only phenomenal.

In the Sāmkhyaśūtra, it is said that bondage is traced to wrong knowledge or viparyaya. The author of Sāmkhyaśāra supports the view of Kapila. According to Sāmkhya philosophy bondage of Purusa is due to

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11. napi kalasambandhanimittakah purusasya bandhah. SPB on SS, 1.12.
12. na karman, anyadharmanvādatiprasaktesca. Ibid., 1.16
13. navasthātaḥ, dehadharmanvāt tasyāḥ. Ibid., 1.14
14. prakṛtinaibandhanāccenna; tasyāpi paratantryam. Ibid., 1.18
15. SPB on Ibid.
16. bandho viparyayāt. SS, 3.28
17. viparyayadisyate bandhah/ SK, 44.
the contact of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. This contact is due to non-discrimination or *aviveka*. Supporting this view, Viṣṇunābhaṅku also said that *aviveka* is the cause of the contact between the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. *Aviveka* is the non-discrimination between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* and that *aviveka* is also known as the form of *avidyā*. The meaning of *aviveka* is not the absence of knowledge; but it is a form of knowledge (*jñānāntar*) which is the terminator of valid knowledge. This non-discrimination belongs to *buddhi*, though it has *Puruṣa* for its object. It follows that our sorrow will be terminated only when our non-discrimination ends.

Regarding the theory of bondage, *Patanjali* has also illustrated in the Yoga philosophy. He said that when *Puruṣa* falls down from its original position, the modes of *buddhi* and *Puruṣa* become identical, and consequently, the mental mode of pain is falsely experienced by *Puruṣa* as its own. This experience of pain is known as bondage. Actually *lingasārīra* (subtle body) suffers sorrow and death. But *Puruṣa* wrongly thinks that all these pertain to it. If *Puruṣa* remains in its natural position of pristine purity, the question of bondage and liberation would never come. So, bondage is not natural to *Puruṣa*. Mukta Biswas observes, "*Puruṣa* is eternally pure and transcendent consciousness. It is the *citta* with the reflection of the

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18. *nitya-suddha-buddha-mukta svabhāvasya tadyogah*. SS, 1.19
19. *tadyogo'pyavivekāt, na samānātvasam*. Ibid., 1.55
20. *SPB* on Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. *YS*, 2.20; *Yogabhāṣya* on it *Tattvavaisārādi* on it.
24. *Yogabhāṣya*, 2.18

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Puruṣa in it or the Puruṣa as reflected in the citta which is phenomenal ego or jīva, which is subject to birth and death, and transmigration and to all painful or pleasurable experiences; and which imagines itself as the agent and the enjoyer............. The bondage of the self is due to its wrong identification with the mental modification and liberation, and therefore, means the end of this wrong identification through proper discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛti and the consequent cessation of the mental modifications.25

According to Yoga philosophy, avidyā (ignorance) is the cause of bondage of the Puruṣa. According to Patanjali, avidyā consists in the knowledge of eternal in the non-eternal objects, knowledge of pleasure in sorrow and the knowledge of soul in the non-soul. The wrong conception acquired by lack of knowledge of the subject matter is called illusion.26 Thus, we find that there is practically no difference between the meaning of Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s viparyaya (reverse) and the yoga philosophy’s avidyā. Viparyaya may be called the cause of jīva’s bandage.27

From the above discussion we can say that bondage really belongs to Prakṛti. It arises through the accompaniment of Prakṛti with Puruṣa who is by nature eternal and pure, enlightened and unconfined in time and space. It is aviveka belonging to buddhi which is the cause of bondage. Hence, with the end of aviveka (non-discrimination) our misery will also go away.

Bondage is divided into three kinds by the Sāṃkhya philosophy. These are: (1) Prākṛtika (Natural), (2) Vaikṛtika (Evolutional) and Dākṣinaka

25. Biswas, Mukta, Sāṃkhya-Yoga-Epistemology, P.36
26. viparyyayo mithajñanamatadāppratistham. YS, 1.8
27. viparyyayo bhavasya kārāṇam.. Yogabhasya, 4.30
Those who worship Prakrti, as the self, their bondage is called natural or prakrtika bondage. Those who worship the various evolutes of Prakrti, viz., the elements, the sense organs, the ahamkara (ego) and the buddhi (intellect) thinking them the Purusa, the bondage pertaining to then is the vaikrtika or evolutional.

The personal or daksinaka bondage is due to Istapūrta (actions like charities, sacrifices, digging of tanks etc.) done with the sole motive of personal gains. Those performing such actions are influenced by desire and ignorant of the true nature of the spirit and so they undergo bondage. Gaudapāda also accepted these three kinds of bondage. It has also been said in his commentary as “He who is bound by natural, incidental or personal bondage, is not liberated by any other means (than knowledge)”.

2. THE THREEFOLD PAINS

The earthly life is full of sorrows and sufferings. There are in fact many pleasures of life. But many more are the pains and sufferings of life and all living beings are subject to them. Though it be possible for any individual beings to avoid all pains, yet it is not possible for him to avoid decay and death. The pleasures are momentary but the pains are permanent. Pain is a modification of buddhi. Generally, we suffer from threefold miseries. These are: ādhyātmika (intrinsic), ādhibhautika (extrinsic) and ādidaivikā (divine or superhuman).

That is called ādhyātmika pain which is due to physical injury and

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28. sa ca trividhah-prakrtiko vaikrtiko dāksinakaśceti. STK on SK, 44
29. sa caśa naimittakaḥ prakrtio vaikariko daksinakasca bandha iti. GB on SK, 44
30. duḥkhatrayabhīghalad....../SK, 1
mental agitation caused by emotions and passions.

The second type of pain i.e. ādhibhautika is caused by men, beasts, birds, reptiles, alligators, deer etc. Ādhibhautika pain is caused by fourfold living beings, viz., jarāyujā (viviparous), anādaja (oviparous), svedaja (born of sweat) and udbhidajā (born of soil).31

The third type of pain is caused by supernatural agencies, like planets, demous, ghosts and also by the elements of heat, cold, storm, rain, thunderbolt etc.

The three kinds of pain are beautifully summerised by Dr. Chandradhar Sarma. He says, “The earthly life is full of three kinds of pain. The first kind, called ādhyātmika, is due to intraorganic psychophysical causes and includes all mental and bodily sufferings. The second, ādhibhautika, is due to extra-organic natural causes like men, beasts, birds, thorns etc. The third ādhidaivika, is due to supernatural causes like the planets, elemental agencies, ghosts, demons etc.”32

3. MEANS OF LIBERATION

According to Saṁkhya philosophy, all the sufferings of human life cannot be removed either by science or by religious practices and other known means. The performances of vedic rituals can not remove these sufferings for a long period. Again though medicine can cure the physical diseases and indulgence in ordinary pleasures can removed the mental sufferings yet these types of reliefs are also very short-lived. Because

31. ādhibhautikaṁ caturvidhabhūtagramanīmitam......jarāyujān-dajasvedajodbhijebhyah sakasadupajāyate. GB on SK, 1
32. Sharma, Dr. Chandradhar, A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, P.163
there will be recurrence of the physical diseases and mental sufferings. So,
the seen means as well as unseen means like performances of vedic sacrifices
cannot lead to the annihilation of sufferings. According to Śaṃkhya philosophy,
all these sufferings are really due to ignorance. Actually buddhi and Purusa
are separate. But through ignorance, an apparent unity between the Purusa
and Prakṛti is wrongly established, as a result of which pain and misery,
which really belong to buddhi, appear to follow from birth to birth. It is
necessary that a person should attain the true conception of the nature of
Purusa and with the help of knowledge one will attain liberation from the
sorrows and sufferings of the world. Ignorance can be removed by right
knowledge which leads to liberation. Liberation consists in absolute cessation
of threefold pain.

In the Śaṃkhya system, liberation is only phenomenal since bondage
does not really belong to Purusa. It has already been mentioned that though
Purusa has no real connection with pain yet through misconception bondage
and liberation are attributed to Purusa. When the self is conceived of as
bound and fettered, it experiences all the sorrows and joys that really
happen to its ease. Liberation is attained by means of knowledge of the
distinction of Purusa and Prakṛti. This discriminative knowledge is known
as vivekajñāna. When this vivekajñāna, Purusa realises its own nature.
When discriminative knowledge is attained, Prakṛti ceases to evolve and
the self attains release, which is the actual object of the evolution of
Nature.

33. SS, 3.23-24; SK, 44, 63
34. Cf.SK, 66; STK on it

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4. NATURE OF LIBERATION

According to Sāmkhya philosophy, Liberation is a state of negation of pain. However, in the view of the Sāmkhya philosophers, negation of pain does not mean attainment of bliss. According to Advaita Vedānta, liberation is the attainment of Brahman which is of the nature of bliss. It is also said to be the destruction of pain. Hence, in the Advaita Vedānta system also liberation consists in the negation of pain which is also of the nature of bliss.

But this view is not accepted by the Sāmkhya philosophers. For them, bliss is only an attribute and Puruṣa being free of any attribute cannot be regarded as possessing bliss in liberation. The scriptural passages where which speak of liberation as bliss actually mean that the state of liberation is one of freedom from pain. Liberation is not even the absorption of the jīva into Brahman as advocated by these Advaita Vādins, for there can be no connection of the part with the partless.

Liberation is not the extinction of self. In this state Puruṣa remains in its natural form which is of pure consciousness. Radhakrishnan’s words are noteworthy in this context. He points out, “While deliverance is an escape from suffering, it is not an escape from all existence. The Sāmkhya has firm faith in the continuance of Puruṣa, and so cannot be regarded as pessimistic. When the play of prakṛti ceases, its developments will lapse

35. duḥkhāyatantivṛtyasūryantapuruṣārthah. SS, 1.1
36. anandaṁmakabrahmaprāptimokṣah, VPa, P-211.
37. sūkhanivṛtirvā, Ibid.
38. nanandābhīvyaktivitmuktimirdharmatvāt. SS, 5.74
39. duḥkhānivṛtteragauṇah, Ibid, 5.67
40. na bhāgiyo bhāgasya, Ibid, 5.81
into the undeveloped. The Purusas will be seers with nothing to look at, mirrors with nothing to reflect, and will subsist in lasting freedom from prakṛti and its defilements as pure intelligences in the timeless void.”

This is conveyed in the Śamkhya Karikā thus: when discriminating knowledge arises the Puruṣa being unmoved and self-controlled looks at Prakṛti which has ceased to produce as a spectator only.

Liberation does not consist in the acquisition of any power, nor does it mean a passage from imperfection to perfection. The yogins advocate that in liberation, the self acquires many supernatural powers, which is also not acceptable to the Śamkhya. Acquisition of power is sure to be destroyed being effects, and as such liberation will be non-eternal. According to Śāmkhya, liberation does not consist in the soul’s upward movement to supra-mundane space (vīśeṣagati). The Śāmkhya concept of liberation is not to be confused with Jaina liberation also. In Jainism, the liberated self moves upward and goes straight to siddha-śīla (the top of the mundane world). It acquires the four infinites (ananta-catusṭaya), i.e., eternal knowledge, eternal perception, eternal bliss and eternal power.

Refuting the Jaina view Aniruddha points out that the self being all-pervading, it is not possible for it to move from one place to another. Even if it is said that the self will move from one place to another with the help of the bodies it undertakes, then the self will be regarded to be made up of

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41. Radhakrishnan, S., Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, Pp.312-313
42. tena nivṛttaprasāmārdhavasāṁ saptaṁ paviṁ vṛttam / prakṛtiṁ pasyati puruṣaṁ preksakavadavasthitah svaccaḥ// SK, 65
43. SS, 5.82
parts and thus non-eternal.\(^{44}\) The \textit{Puruṣa} being inactive cannot move upward.

The Śāmkhya concept of liberation is also not the same as that of Buddhist view. According to Buddhists also extinction of suffering is called \textit{nirvāṇa} which is the highest ideal of a section of this system. In their view, freedom or \textit{nirvāṇa} is the complete extinction of the existence of the self. This view of the Buddhists is not acceptable to the Śāmkhyas. For them the self is of the nature of consciousness. Escape from suffering is not an escape from all existences. It is also seen in the world that the annihilation of the self is not an object desired by a person.\(^{45}\) A section of the Buddhists (i.e., \textit{Sunyavādins}) again maintain that release is nothing but void (\textit{sunya}). It means that there is annihilation of the whole creation consisting of cognition and the objects of cognition in release. The Śāmkhyas do not accept this view on ground mentioned above, i.e., this is never desired by any person.

The attainment of liberation means the clear recognition of the \textit{Puruṣa} as a reality which is beyond time and space and above the mind and the body, and therefore, essentially free, eternal and immortal. The saving knowledge between \textit{Puruṣa} and \textit{Prakṛti}, is not a mere theoretical knowledge. It is a direct knowledge or clear realisation of the fact that the self is not the body, the mind and \textit{buddhi}.

\textbf{5. \textit{JīVANMUKTI} AND \textit{VIDEHAMUKTI}}

In the foregoing lines it has been mentioned that liberation is attainable only through \textit{vivekaññāna} or discriminating knowledge. Kapila also declares

\(^{44}\) AnV on Ibid., 5:76
\(^{45}\) na sarvocchittirapurusārthatvādidosāt. SS, 5.78
that discrimination can attained by means of *tattvābhyāsa* (habitual cultivation of the principles)⁴⁶ and by means of abandonment of *abhimāna* or conceit or self-identification. Vijnānabhipṣū points out that perfect development of discrimination takes place only through *asamprajñāta*.⁴⁷

Two types of liberation is advocated in Sāṁkhya philosophy, viz., *jīvanmukti* (embodied) and *videhamukti* (disemboied). The person who has attained discriminating knowledge but continues to live in the mind-body complex is called a *jīvanmukta*. Hence, that kind of liberation is called *jīvanmukti* while a person attains liberation but his body persists. When discrimination arises, *Prakṛti* does not release the *Purusa* immediately. He has to continue in this body on account of his *prārabdhakarmaṇs* (actions which have started giving fruits). On account of the momentum of the past actions, the work of *Prakṛti* continues for some time. By virtue of *prārabdhakarma*, the body continues, though no fresh *karma* is accumulated. The *jīvanmukta*, though possessing a body has no non-discrimination(*aviveka*). According to the Sāṁkhya, liberation from bondage and continuance of the body can go on simultaneously as they are determined by different causes. After the destruction (death) of *jīvanmuktas*, the liberated *Puruṣas* attain what is called *videhamukti*. This liberation is the complete freedom when the selves obtain freedom from gross, subtle and all bodies. This ensures absolute and complete freedom.⁴⁸

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⁴⁶. Ibid., 3.75
⁴⁷. SPB on Ibid., 3.77
⁴⁸. *prapte sarirabhede caritarthatvat pradhānavinivṛttau / aikāntikamātya-ntikamabhayam kaivalyamāpunoti // SK, 68*
Now the question is: why the self has to delay after attaining the true knowledge? It is maintained by all Sāṃkhya-cāryas that liberation results through knowledge and hence one should be completely liberated immediately after attaining discriminating knowledge. There is no need to continue in the body. To this the Sāṃkhya reply that though the jīvanmukta has no aviveka yet his past sāmskāras compel him to delay in this embodied state.\(^49\) This is explained with the help of the example of the potters wheel. Just as after the removal of the whirling rod, the wheel does not stop revolving, but continues to revolve for some time through the force of the momentum; similarly the jīvanmukta remains in this body even after the attainment of discrimination by virtue of the force of the sāmskāras in the form of prārabdhakarmanās.\(^50\)

According to Vijñānabhikṣu, this videhamukti is the actual form of release as in this condition only there can be complete separation of mind and body and the consequent destruction of all physical and mental ills.\(^51\) As long as the self is embodied, it cannot be completely free from the influence of the bodily and mental changes. So, according to him, the disembodied liberation is the real liberation. The opinion of Sāṃkhya philosophy is that the total annihilation of sorrows and sufferings is the supreme goal. This supreme goal is achieved by the self, when the delusion, that the evolutes of Prakṛti are its production of the self is completely destroyed and absolute freedom from pain is fully attained.

Dr. Chandradhar Sharma summerises the whole thing thus: “Sāṃkhya

\(^{49}\) Ibid., 67
\(^{50}\) satnskaravasaccakrabhramivaddhrtasarirah. Ibid; also STK on Ibid; SS, 3.82, 83 and SPB on Ibid.
\(^{51}\) SPB on SS, 3.84
believes that bondage and liberation alike are only phenomenal. The bondage of the Puruṣa is a fiction. It is only the ego, the product of Prakṛti, which is bound. And consequently it is only the ego which is liberated. Puruṣa, in its complete isolation, is untouched by bondage and liberation. If Puruṣa were really bound, it could not have obtained liberation even after hundred births, for real bondage can never be destroyed. It is the Prakṛti which is bound and Prakṛti which is liberated.”

In this context Isvarakṛṣṇa says that Puruṣa is neither bound nor liberated nor does it transmigrate which view has already been mentioned above.

6. RADHANATH PHUKAN’S VIEW ON BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

Regarding the concept of bondage and liberation Phukan’s view is in agreement with the Śaṅkhya ācāryas. However, he explains bondage and liberation in his own unique way, which is noteworthy. He points out that usually, every man wishes to get rid of pain. When pleasure is derived pain is destroyed. So, it is meaningless to find a way to get rid of pain. However, gaining of earthly things does not necessarily mean the end of pain. Because there is no end to the hope and aspiration of man. Radhanath Phukan says that pleasure always goes with pain. If it is thought minutely it can be realised that to find pleasure is a vain effort. Hence, strive for attaining salvation from all types of pain is a fact of life. Supporting the view of Śaṅkhya philosophy, Radhanath Phukan says that salvation is possible by acquiring the knowledge of twenty five tattvas including Prakṛti. In his words, “Accordingly, the only way to root out misery once for all is to

52. Sharma, Dr. Chandradhar, A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, P.164
obtain an intimate knowledge of the Vyakta, the Avyakta and the Soul (jñā)." According to Phukan, the knowledge of Vyakta, Avyakta and Jñā is a different kind of knowledge which knowledge is called aparokṣa jñāna in Vedānta. It is not to be obtained by the ordinary method. "This is the sort of knowledge which Śaṅkhya seeks for, and which alone can remove misery once for all. Śaṅkhya calls it kevala jñāna or visuddha jñāna."  

Phukan says that dissolution after creation and creation after dissolution have been going on since beginningless time. The relation between Puruṣa and Prakṛti is also beginningless like creation. But this relation can not be natural to Puruṣa and Prakṛti, though beginningless. That which is natural to a thing, cannot be separated from it, just as the power of burning which is natural to five and hence it cannot be separated from the latter. If it happens in case of the relation between Puruṣa and Prakṛti then attainment of liberation will not be possible. For kevalajñāna consists of the knowledge of Puruṣa and Prakṛti existing separately. Hence without the discriminating knowledge of Puruṣa and Prakṛti liberation will be impossible. Puruṣa is associated with Prakṛti for a particular object, i.e. for the enjoyment of Puruṣa. As soon as that particular object is fulfilled they must part. The example of blind man and lame man is forwarded by the Śaṅkhyaśas to illustrate the association of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Phukan points out that this is a very suitable example. In his words, "The illustration of a blind man carrying a lame one is therefore quite apt and full of meaning. These two men associate for a common purpose, viz., going to a distant place, and they separate as soon as their common

53. Phukan, Radhanath, SKI, P.592.
54. Ibid., P. 593.
55. Ibid.
object is attained; so is the Puruṣa linked with Prakṛti for a particular object (i.e.,
for our enjoyment) and they must part as soon as that object is attained.\footnote{56}

_Puruṣa_ completely enjoys _Prakṛti_ through the world created by the relation
between _Puruṣa_ and _Prakṛti_. It has already been mentioned that the purpose of the
association of _Puruṣa_ and _Prakṛti_ is both enjoyment and liberation of the _Puruṣa_.
When _Puruṣa_ realises that _Prakṛti_ is completely separated from _Puruṣa_, this
purpose _Prakṛti_ comes to end. Now Phukan contends that “The _Puruṣa_ must first
understand that _Prakṛti_ is only the phenomenal cause of this creation and is not the
ultimate reality ……… not to know this is Tamas or _Avidyā_.\footnote{57} _Avidyā_ is false
knowledge which makes a person to think that any one among the _Prakṛti_ and its
seven evolutes viz., _Mahat_, _Ahaṁkāra_ and _five tanmātras_ is the ultimate reality.
This _avidyā_ is the real cause of bondage of the _Puruṣa_.\footnote{58} Hence _Puruṣa_ must first
get rid of this _avidyā_ and then only he can proceed to know his own self. When the
_Puruṣa_ attains this knowledge then only he can part with _Prakṛti_ for ever.\footnote{59} He then
realises that being all-pervading consciousness he cannot undergo any modification.

“He always remains the same in all successive births. Being static, he does not
move, nor is there any place for Him to go to because he is always present at every
place.”\footnote{60} Birth, death, rebirth etc. pertain to the _lingāsārīra_ or subtle body, which
is produced from _Prakṛti_.\footnote{61} _Puruṣa_ obtains isolation when this _lingāsārīra_ is
destroyed. _Prakṛti_ binds and frees itself by creating and destroying body.\footnote{62} In

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\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{56}{Ibid., P. 602.}
\item \footnote{57}{Ibid., P. 621.}
\item \footnote{58}{Ibid., P. 615.}
\item \footnote{59}{Ibid., P. 621.}
\item \footnote{60}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{61}{SK, 56.}
\item \footnote{62}{Ibid., 62; JR, Phukan, Radhanath, P. 489}
\end{itemize}
agreement with the view of Śaṅkhya philosophy Phukan also says that Prakṛti binds itself in seven forms (dharma, vairāgya, aisvāryya, adharma, ajñāna, avairāgya and anaisvāryya) for the enjoyment of Puruṣa. Radhanath Phukan here raises a question regarding the view of Śaṅkhya that Prakṛti becomes free through knowledge. He asks: As Prakṛti is unconscious how is it possible that Prakṛti attains freedom through knowledge? It is not possible for unconscious Prakṛti to attain knowledge. Radhanath offers the solution to this problem in the manner of the Śaṅkhyācāryas. He says that what is meant by the expression rupaiḥ saptabhiḥ in kārikā 63 of Śaṅkhya-kārikā are the seven kinds of thoughts, viz., virtue, vice, ignorance, attachment, non-attachment, power and want of power. “When a man gets rid of all these kinds of thoughts, he parts with Prakṛti for ever. These seven kinds of thoughts are like a screen over his head and as soon as they are removed, he sees the reality which is he himself. He cannot remove the screen himself being entirely inactive. Thus Puruṣa cannot part with Prakṛti unless Prakṛti herself parts from the Puruṣa. Hence, the freedom of Puruṣa also implies the freedom of Prakṛti. The infinite and endless knowledge comes out itself when the screen like ahaṁkāra is destroyed. Without ahaṁkāra knowledge is the pure knowledge. There is no rebirth when self-knowledge is acquired.

Radhanath Phukan has pointed out a very pertinent question regarding Śaṅkhya concept of liberation. It is said that when Puruṣa understands the Prakṛti and its evolutes, it becomes liberated. Prakṛti then ceases to act. Now the difficulty is that accordingly to Śaṅkhya Puruṣas are many, while Prakṛti is one. Hence, as soon as

63. SK, 63
64. Phukan, Radhanath, SKI, P. 622
65. Gītā, 5.16
a single self is liberated Prakṛti ceases to act and the creation ends. In that case what will happen to other Puruṣas who are still bound? To avoid this difficulty, says Phukan, the Sāmkhyas forward the analogy of the dancing girl, whose act is meant for the general public. Although some persons might have seen her in her actual form, she does not refrain from dancing until the entire audience is satisfied.66

However, this explanation cannot actually satisfy Phukan. He gives this view only with a consideration to the traditional view. His real view is somewhat different. Hence, he says, “This is only an analogy and it is neither a proof nor an explanation which gives us any idea of the mystery of the creation. Much better is the other explanation viz., that according to Sāmkhya, not only are the Puruṣas many, but the Prakṛtis are also many, so that each Puruṣa has his own Prakṛti.”67 As has been his practice, he opines that this will have the scientific merit also. As the modern science upholds that the physical world is subjective, there is no harm I thinking that each man creates his own world by his own Prakṛti.68

From the above discussion we can say that regarding the concept of bondage and liberation there is no major difference of opinion between the view of Radhanath Phukan and Sāmkhya philosophy. He agrees that liberation is the highest goal of life, which is possible to be attained by means of the true knowledge of the twentyfive tattvas.

66. Cf. SKI, Phukan, Radhanath, P. 620
67. Ibid.
68. Cf. Ibid.