Chapter- IV

THEORY OF EVOLUTION
AS THE
FOUNDATION OF SĀMKHYA ETHICS

Ethics in the Systems of Indian Philosophy:
A Brief Sketch

The basic concepts

Nature and function of ethics:

Ethics plays an important role in empirical life so far as moral aims are concerned. Ethics is the philosophical thinking about morality—individual and group, moral goodness and badness, moral conduct and character, moral principles and rules, moral ideal like the highest good, etc.; in short, anything pertaining to morality. Anything that is worthy of being judged from the moral point of view is technically called moral in ethics. Hence, what we ordinarily call morally good and morally bad both are the concern of ethics.

Very often ethics is equated with moral code of conduct. But, this is not a correct understanding, because a moral code of conduct is framed in accordance with a moral theory and ethics includes multiple moral theories. Like metaphysics, and epistemology, ethics is one of the main branches of philosophy.

"It can in turn be divided into the general study of goodness or good deeds, the general study of right action, applied ethics, meta-ethics, moral psychology and metaphysics of moral responsibility."388

The central aspect of ethics:

It is significantly different from the common conception of analyzing and or judging anything or any action as right and wrong. The central aspect of ethics is "the good life"—the life worth living or at least satisfying. Ethics is thus concerned with the life-style leads to the highest goal of mankind—*mokṣa* or liberation—the *summum bonum* of life. The sages therefore have integrated traditional morality into their respective systems in accordance with their own standards of ultimate concern—the supreme moral value.

Levels of moral development:

Most of the orthodox traditional philosophical systems originated in India recognize three levels of moral development: **objective level, subjective level and transcendental level**.

- At the **objective level**, we explore the social dimensions of ethics. Here emphasis varies as to the need for adherence to the *varṇāśrama* scheme of life.
- At the **subjective level**, we search for the personal elements of morality, like the purity of heart (*citṛśuddhi*). It has been repeatedly insisted upon that with cleansed heart one must work disinterestedly and unselfishly (*niśkāma karma*).
- Finally, at the **transcendental level**, we analyze the moral structure of the "life absolute", upon which the good is no longer an object to be achieved, rather a realized reality. The liberated man transcends the plane of moralistic individualism getting himself free from the orbit of *samsāra*.389

A few specific central aspects of the ethics of the different schools of Indian philosophy: orthodox and heterodox, may now be stated below.

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Central aspects of the Cārvāka ethics

In conformity with their materialistic metaphysical theories the Cārvāka philosophers discuss the following ethical problems:

- What is the standard of moral judgment?
- What should be the purpose of human conduct?
- What should be the end of human conduct?
- What is highest goal or summum bonum of life that a man can achieve?

The Cārvāka rejects the following Mimāṃsaka-view:

"The highest goal of human life is heaven (svarga), which is a state of unalloyed bliss that can be attained hereafter by performing here Vedic rites."\(^{390}\)

The ground for such rejection: The notion of heaven is based on the unproved existence of a life after death.

"Heaven and Hell are the inventions of priests, whose professional interest lies in coaxing threatening and making people perform the rituals. Enlightened men will always refuse to be duped by them."\(^{391}\)

The Cārvāka also rejects the following other views:

- Liberation as the highest goal of human life.
- Liberation is the complete and permanent cessation of sufferings.
- Liberation can be attained only after death, when the soul is free from the body.
- Liberation can be attained even in this life.

The grounds for such rejection:

- Liberation cannot be the freedom of the soul from its bondage of physical existence, because there is no soul.
- Liberation cannot be the attainment of a state free from all pain in this very life, because it is an impossible ideal.

\(^{390}\) Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. University of Calcutta. 2008. P-62

\(^{391}\) Ibid
“Existence in this body is bound up with pleasure as well as pain. We can only try to minimize pain and enjoy as much pleasure as we can. Liberation in the sense of complete cessation of sufferings can only mean death. Those who try to attain in life a state free from pleasure and pains by rigorously suppressing the natural appetites, thinking that all pleasures arising of their gratification are mixed with pain, act like fools. For no wise man would ... ‘give up eating fish because there are bones’ ...”

The Cārvāka rejects dharma and mokṣa as puruṣārtha-s:

- Out of the four ends of human activity (puruṣārtha), namely artha (wealth), kāma (enjoyment), dharma (virtue) and mokṣa (liberation)—admitted by some Indian Philosophers, the Cārvāka rejects the last two.

The grounds for such rejection:

- Liberation in the sense of the complete and permanent cessation of sufferings can never be obtained, and hence, no wise man would willingly work for that end. Virtue and vice are distinctions made by the scriptures, whose authority cannot be rationally accepted.

The goal of human life:

- “If we remember that our existence is confined to the existence of the body and to this life, we must regard the pleasure arising in the body as the only good thing we can obtain. We should not throw away the opportunities of enjoying this life, in the futile hope of enjoyment hereafter.”

“The goal of human life is, therefore, to attain the maximum amount of pleasure in this life, avoiding pain as far as possible. A good life is a life of maximum enjoyment. A good action is one which leads to a balance of

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393 Ibid. P-63
pleasure and a bad action is one which brings about more pain than
pleasure."\textsuperscript{394}

Categorization of the Cārvāka ethics:
The Cārvāka ethics may, therefore, be called hedonism or theory that
pleasure is the highest goal. Therefore, according to this system, neither virtue
nor liberation should be our end. Wealth and enjoyment are the only rational ends
that a wise man intends to achieve. But while enjoyment is the ultimate end,
wealth is not so in itself, it is good only as a means to enjoyment.\textsuperscript{395}

\section*{Central aspects of the Buddhist ethics}

Ethics in Buddhist Philosophy based on the enlightened perspectives of the
Buddha and his follower enlightened persons. There are many moral instructions in
the Buddhist scriptures handed down through tradition. To justify the claims about
the nature of Buddhist ethics a scholar should, therefore, examine Buddhist
scriptures using anthropological evidence collected from traditional Buddhist
societies. This approach avoids basing Buddhist ethics solely on dogmatic faith in
the Buddha's enlightenment or Buddhist tradition.

The Buddha has provided some basic guidelines for morally commendable
behaviors that are part of the Noble Eightfold Path. According to tradition, the
foundation of Buddhist ethics is the \textit{pañcasīla}, which forbids killing, stealing, lying,
sexual misconduct and intoxication. The initial precept is thus non-injury or non-
violece to all living creatures from the lowest insect to the humans. This precept
defines a non-violent attitude toward every living thing.

The term \textit{pañcasīla}, derived from the words \textit{pañca} (five) and \textit{sīla} (codes of
conduct), therefore, designate the fundamental code of Buddhist ethics, willingly
undertaken by the followers of Gautama Buddha. A lay man undertakes to follow
these precepts/codes of conduct when he becomes Buddhists by taking refuge in

\textsuperscript{394} Chatterjee, Satischandra and Dhirendramohan Datta. \textit{An Introduction to Indian
Philosophy}, University of Calcutta. 2008. P-63

\textsuperscript{395} Ibid. P-64
the *Triple Gem*: the Buddha (teacher), the *dharma* (teaching) and the *sarigha* (spiritual community). He then chants: *buddharh śarṇarh gacchomi, dharmarh śarṇarh gacchomi* and *sarigharh śarṇarh gacchomi*. Like all aspects of Buddhist *dharma* and teaching, the *pañcasīla* are regarded as logically, rather than supernaturally, derived and are to be undertaken voluntarily rather than as commandments from a supreme authority. The basic precepts that lay man undertakes to follow when he becomes Buddhists are of the following forms:

I. I undertake the precept to refrain from causing harm to any living creature.

II. I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that which is not given to me.

III. I undertake the precept to refrain from any sexual misconduct.

IV. I undertake the precept to refrain from incorrect speech.

V. I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicants which lead to carelessness.\(^{396}\)

In becoming a Buddhist, a layman is encouraged to vow for these *vinaya*-s.

The charge that the Buddhist ethics, as formulated in the five precepts, is entirely negative, it is said that the five precepts, or even the longer codes of precepts promulgated by the Buddha, do not exhaust the full range of Buddhist ethics. The precepts are only the rudimentary codes of moral training, but the Buddha also proposes some ethical codes inculcating positive virtues, such as—reverence, humility, contentment, gratitude, patience, generosity, etc. These are stated in the *Mangalasutta*. Besides these there are some other discourses too,

\(^{396}\) These are often recited in Pali as follows:

i. *panātipātā veramani sikkhapadam samādiyāmi*

ii. *adinnādānā veramani sikkhapadam samādiyāmi*

iii. *kāmesu micchācāra veramani sikkhapadam samādiyāmi*

iv. *musāvāda veramani sikkhapadam samādiyāmi*

v. *sura meraya majja pamādatthānā veramani sikkhapadam samādiyāmi*

which prescribe numerous family, social, and political duties establishing the well being of the society—behind all of which duties lie the four attitudes called the "immeasurable" maitri (loving-kindness), karuna (compassion), mudita (sympathetic joy), and upaksha (equanimity).

There are two important distinct views in Buddhism regarding how the moral principle is justified, viz. the Early Buddhist view and the Mahayana Buddhist view.

- Early Buddhist view: Morality, conceived in terms of the principle of dependent origination, is justified by its usefulness in bringing about liberation.
- Mahayana Buddhist thought: Morality is the greatest of values. It is justified not because it is instrumental to other ends, but because it is intrinsically good. The moral life is thus a happy life. This is Dharma.397

**Central aspects of the Jaina ethics**

The most important part of Jaina philosophy is its ethics. Metaphysics or epistemology—in fact, knowledge of any kind—is useful for the Jaina in so far as it helps an aspirant to attain moksha. moksha, for the Jaina, negatively means removal of all bondage of the soul and positively it means the attainment of perfection. Passion or bad disposition (bhava) of the soul is the internal and primary cause of bondage, and the influx of matter (asrava) into the soul is only the effect of it. Bondage that begins in thought may be of two kinds:

1) Internal or ideal bondage (bhava-bandha): The bondage of the soul to bad disposition, and

2) Material bondage (dravya-bandha): Association of the soul with matter. For this bondage, interaction of matter and soul appear to be crude.

In fact, jiva—the soul—the living being, for the Jaina, is not devoid of extension, but co-extensive with living body. In every part of the living body the co-presence or interpenetration of matter and the conscious living substance (i.e. the soul) is a fact of experience. As, for example, the interpenetration of milk and water in a

mixture of the two, or of fire and iron in a red-hot iron ball is a fact of experience. The association of the soul with matter is called bondage in Jainism. Therefore, liberation must be the complete dissociation of the soul from matter. This can be attained by adopting two processes:

I. *samvara*—the process of preventing the influx of new matter into the soul, and

II. *nirjarā*—the process of completely dissociating the soul from the matter, with which the soul has been already mingled, by exhaustion of *karma* altogether.

But before adopting these two processes one must know the root of bondage. The Jaina observations regarding the root of bondage and the removal of bondage are the following:

**Observation-I**

- It is passion that leads a soul to associate with matter.
- Passion, again, ultimately springs from our ignorance about the real nature of the souls and other things.
- Because, ignorance leads one to anger, vanity, infatuation and greed.
- Knowledge alone can remove ignorance.
- The Jaina-s, therefore, stress the necessity of right knowledge (*samyag-jñāna*) or the knowledge of reality.

**Observation-II**

- Right knowledge can be obtained only by studying carefully the teachings of the *tīrthāṅkara*-s, who having already attained liberation and are thus fit to lead others out of bondage.
- But before being inclined to study these teachings, one must have a general acquaintance (called *samyag-darśana*) with the essentials of these teachings and have faith in the competence of the *tīrthāṅkara*-s and some other teachers.
- This right faith based on such acquaintance paves the way for right knowledge (*samyag-jñāna*) and is, therefore, regarded as indispensable.
- But, mere right knowledge is useless, unless it is put to practice.
• Right conduct (samyak-cāritra) is, therefore, the third indispensable condition of liberation.
• In right conduct, a man has to control his passions, senses, thought, speech and action in the light of right knowledge.
• Right conduct enables one to stop the influx of new karma and eradicate old karma-s by gradually dissociating the soul from the matter.
• Right faith, right knowledge and right conduct have, therefore, come to be known in the Jaina ethics as the three gems (triratna) that shine in a good life. 398
• The liberation is the joint effect of these three gems. 399

Central aspects of the Yoga ethics

Yoga, for Patañjali, means the cessation of mental functions or modifications (cittavṛttinirodha). It does not mean contact between the individual self and absolute self or God. The aim of yoga is to prevent one from identifying oneself with mental modifications.

The citta (mind) is constituted of sattva, rajas and tamas. The different degrees in which sattva, rajas and tamas are present and operative in the citta determine its different conditions, which are called cittabhūmi (levels of the mental life). There are five condition or levels of the mental life, viz. kṣipta (restless), mūḍha (torpid), vikṣipta (distracted), ekāgra (concentrated), and niruddha (restrained). Yoga cannot be attained in all the levels of citta.

• kṣipta : In the first cittabhūmi called kṣipta, the mind is under the sway of rajas and tamas. Therefore, at this level the mind, being attracted to the objects of sense and the means of attaining power, fluctuates from one thing

398 In the very first sūtra of the Tattvārthādhigamasūtra Umāsvāmi states the cardinal teaching of Jainism thus: ‘the path of liberation lies through right faith, right knowledge and right conduct’.

to another without resting anywhere. Naturally, this level is not at all conductive to yoga, because at this level the mind and the senses are beyond any control.

- **mūḍha**: The second level of the mental life, viz. mūḍha, having an excess of *tamas* in *citta* or mind has a tendency towards vice, ignorance, sleep and the like. Hence, this level is also not conductive to yoga, because at this level it is difficult to achieve control over the mind and the senses.

- **vikṣipta**: In this level the *citta* or mind is free from the sway of *tamas* and has only a touch of *rajas* in it. It has the capacity to manifest objects and a tendency to virtue, knowledge, etc. It is a stage of temporary concentration of *citta* or the mind on some object. It does not permanently stop the mental modifications, nor does it destroy the mental afflictions of *avidyā*.

- **ekāgra**: ekāgra means mentally concentrated. At this level *citta* is purged of the impurity of *rajas* and there is the perfect manifestation of *sattva*. It marks the beginning of prolonged concentration of the mind or *citta* on any object. The mind or *citta*, then continues to think or meditate on some object, so as to reveal its true nature. This level paves the way for the cessation of all mental modifications, although even at this level the mental processes are not finally arrested. In fact, when *ekāgra* state of concentration is permanently established, it is called *saṁprajñāta* yoga or *saṁprajñāta samādhi* inasmuch as *citta* or the mind is, in this state, assumes the form of the object itself.

- **niruddha**: This is the last level. At this level there is the cessation of all mental functions including concentration—the mark of the previous level. The succession of mental states and processes is then completely stopped and the mind or *citta* is left in its unmodified state of tranquility. The *niruddha* level is called *asaṁprajñāta* yoga or *asaṁprajñāta samādhi*, because all mental modifications are stopped at this level.

Both *saṁprajñāta samādhi* and *asaṁprajñāta samādhi* are known by the common name of *samādhi*-yoga or the cessation of mental modifications, since
both conduce to self-realization. Yoga is that spiritual path that leads to the desired goal of a total extinction of all pain and misery through the realization of the self's distinction from the body, mind and ego. But attainment of this final goal requires a long and arduous endeavor to remain steadily in the state of samādhi and destroy the effects of the different kinds of karma—done in past and being done at present.

- **Central aspects of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika ethics**

  “The two systems have been traditionally synthesized because of their single world view, and because of their common approach to ethics. The word Vaiśeṣika' signifies ‘difference’ and points to the fundamental diversity in the universe. The word Nyāya’ means argumentation and stands for the intellectual and analytical method that has made the system both distinctive and formative. Taken together, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika’ represents a cosmological theory that is realistic and pluralistic, and which is arrived at through the method of logic.”

Like the other orthodox Indian philosophical systems the *summum bonum* according to the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems is the attainment of mokṣa (salvation—complete release from sorrow). Right knowledge (tattvajñāna) of the sixteen categories (padārtha-s), for Gautama, leads to mokṣa. Again, right knowledge (tattvajñāna) of seven categories, for Kaṇāda, leads to mokṣa. At the state of mokṣa the causes of possible pain, namely adṛṣṭa (the unknown pre-set determinant) and saṁskāra (potential tendencies), are neutralized, and thereby all pains ceases to exist permanently. The cessation of pain cannot be described as a state of bliss, because pleasure and pain are interconnected opposite states.

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400 Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. University of Calcutta. 2008. PP-297-298-299

401 Ibid. PP-230-231

mokṣa is thus a state of absolute transcendence, wherein the self is free from consciousness, thought, feeling, willing and any other quality like pain and pleasure. At this state the self enters into a condition of timeless freedom, untouched by the weary cycle of birth and death.\textsuperscript{403} Whereas the chain causes that give rise to bondage is stated in the following way:

\begin{align*}
\textit{mithyājñāna} \iff \textit{doṣa} \iff \textit{pravṛtti} \iff \textit{janma} \iff \textit{duḥkha}
\end{align*}

Thus the empirical existence is a chain that holds the individual in bondage from one cycle of existence to the next. However, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system is optimistic as to the way bondage can be removed. Ethically, this optimism lies in its affirmation of voluntary human capacity to initiate, select and choose \textit{dharma} against \textit{adharma}, which can lead to mokṣa. Kaṇāda's text opens with an ethical note: "Now, therefore, we shall explain \textit{dharma}. According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system the pain in the world is connected directly or indirectly to man’s selfishness--individual or social, but proper moral training prescribed by this system can help the aspirant to overcome selfish desire and impulses.\textsuperscript{404}

A clear and concise description of the ethical path toward mokṣa is found in the \textit{Padarthe} of \textit{Prasastapāda} (400 A.D), wherein, among many issues, we find two key contents of ethics; \textit{dharma} (merit or virtue) and \textit{adharma} (demerit or vice). \textit{dharma} is described as a positive attribute of an individual (jiva).

"It brings about to the agent happiness, means of happiness and final deliverance; it is super sensuous; it is destructible by the experiencing of the last item of happiness; it is produced by the contact of the man with the internal organ, by means of pure thoughts and determinations; and with


\textsuperscript{404} Ibid. P-139
regard to the different castes and conditions of men there are distinct means of accomplishing it". 405

"The means of dharma are found in the Veda and the law-books. They comprise the traditional varṇas and āśramas, along with the duties common to all men. The latter consists of the following: "faith in dharma, harmlessness, benevolence, truthfulness, freedom from desire for undue possession, freedom from lust, purity of intentions, absence of anger, bathing, use of purifying substances, devotion to deity, fasting, and non-neglect (of duties)." 406

Adharma is described as a negative quality of an individual (jīva). It leads an individual to commit sin and thus to face dire consequences. The causes of adharma are:

I. Performance of scripture-prohibited (bad) actions, which are contrary to the causes of dharma; such as harmfulness, untruthfulness, undue possession;

II. Non-performance of scripture-directed (good) actions; and

III. Neglect of duties (good actions). 407

These causes, supported by impure motives, vitiate the mind, bringing about adharma.

The rebirth of an individual is determined by the operation of the moral law of karma. When a man performs acts which are mostly of the nature of adharma, these acts ensure his rebirth in the family of lower animals. Again, by performing virtuous deeds accompanied by sinful acts, a man transmigrates through the wheel of bondage constituted of the various divine, human and animal families. One the other hand, when a man performs dharma, motivated by spiritual insight, having no thought for worldly prosperity he is likely to take rebirth in a pure family and finally to escape the wheel of bondage. His ignorance is then removed, the


406 Ibid

407 Ibid
dhārma and adhārma of his past lives being depleted all his affections have ceased. He then develops a sense of happy contentment and a disregard for his physical existence. The individual self then becomes "seedless" and after decay of his the present body he takes no other further birth. This is somehow comparable to the extinguishing of fire on all its fuel being burnt up. This final perfect release from sorrows is called "mokṣa" ("final deliverance").

### □ Central aspects of the Pūrvamīmāṃsā ethics

Happiness is the goal recognized by the Pūrvamīmāṃsā. By happiness they do not mean happiness in this world, it means happiness hereafter. For the sake of happiness hereafter, the Pūrvamīmāṃsā-s regard, we have to practice self-denial here. Activities, which result in anartha (unhappiness or pain) are not dhārma. Dhārma is an ordinance or command, and it leads to happiness. codanā (injunction) is the lakṣaṇa of dhārma. According to Śabara, codanā denotes utterances which impel men to right action. codanā is the inspiration or impulsion from within, which compels one to follow the scripture-directed courses of conduct that lead to desirable ends. If we do not observe the scripture-directed courses of conduct, we not only miss our happiness, but become subject to suffering.

The ethics of the Pūrvamīmāṃsā is founded on revelation and authority of the Veda-s. According to the Mīmāṃsāka-s, the principles of dhārma and good actions are prescribed by the Veda-s. If we perform any act in response to natural instincts, we are not virtuous. For the Mīmāṃsāka-s human life should be governed by the rules laid down in the Veda-s. These rules are very important for the interpretation of the Hindu law. To gain salvation, we have to observe nitya karma-s (like sandhyā) along with naimittika karma-s. These are the unconditional

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409 Ibid. P-143

moral obligations by performance of which we attain salvation. If we do not fulfill these obligations, we incur sin (pratyavāya). For the Mīmāṃsāka-s, we should not perform kāmya karma-s to gain special ends; because we keep clear of kāmya (optional) karmas we will free ourselves from selfish ends. Again, by avoiding niṣaddha karma-s (forbidden actions) we avoid hell.411

"The Mīmāṃsā assumes human freedom, otherwise the human individuals cannot be held responsible for their acts. The law of karma, when rightly understood, is not inconsistent with freedom."412

"The Vedas speak of śraddhā or faith, bhakti or devotion, and tapas or austerity. Which are only remotely connected with sacrifices. The theistic views which declare that all work should be performed as a sacrifice to God are in conformity with the spirit of the Veda......Laugāksi Bhāskara tells us that when duty is performed in a spirit of dedication to God it become the cause of emancipation. The scene of rewards in this world or hereafter suppresses, moreover, speak of us mainly of sacrifices, and thus fail to cover the major part of human life."413

### Central aspects of the Vedānta ethics

Śaṅkara (Ādi Śaṅkara), Rāmānuja and Madhva stand out in the history of Vedānta Schools of Indian philosophy, having contributed three distinct systems based on the Brahma Sūtra. The proponents of the three systems of Vedānta agree on the point that Brahman is the highest entity, whose attainment on the part of the individual constitutes mokṣa. But the principal issue that they disagree upon is the relationship between individuals (ātman/jīva) and things, on the one hand, and individuals and Brahman on the other. Each of the three systems gives a distinct response to the question.

412 Ibid. P-388
413 Ibid. P-389
According to the Advaita view of Vedānta owing to the function of cognitive error there is an apparent difference among individual persons, things and Brahman.

The Viśiṣṭādvaita view of Vedānta is that persons and things constitute the body the Brahman—the personal God, who is omnipotent, omniscient and morally perfect.

The Dvaita view of Vedānta is that individuals and things are distinct from, but dependent upon, Brahman—the highest monotheistic Deity.\(^{414}\)

Besides these the philosophical view of Mādhva is known as bhedābheda—difference-and-non-difference. This is also the view of Bhāskara, one of the few pre-Rāmānuja commentators. According to this view, things and beings apart from Brahman are both identical with and different from Brahman.\(^{415}\)

**Central aspects of the Advaita Vedānta ethics**

According to Advaita Vedānta superimposition of the object on the subject and vice versa, constitutes "avidya" or ignorance. This ignorance is the foundation of all cognition, but obstacle to achieving mokṣa.\(^{416}\)

"Since a man without self-identification with body, mind, senses, etc., cannot become a cognizer and as such, the means of knowledge cannot function for him, ... therefore it follows that the means of knowledge, such as direct perception as well as the scriptures, must have a man as their locus who is subject to nescience".\(^{417}\)

The implications of this theory of error are far reaching. This error theory implies moral Irrealism: the view that morality rests on a mistake.\(^{418}\) It follows from this theory of error that mokṣa is the only real value; all other values, such

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\(^{415}\) Ibid

\(^{416}\) Ibid. P-313

\(^{417}\) Ibid. PP-313-314

\(^{418}\) Ibid. 314
as dharma, artha and kāma, concern persons who are under the sway of avidya. Because, such persons are able to cognize that they have a duty to do such and such a thing, which will bring them the benefit of pleasure.

"Given Ādi Śaṅkara’s error theory and its moral irrealism, the question that naturally arise is whether (Ādi) Śaṅkara has an ethic at all. Eliot Deutsch in his chapter on “Advaita Ethics” notes that “Advaita Vedanta in particular … turns its back on all theoretical and practical considerations of morality …” (Deutsch 1969 P.99). This is not quit true.\(^{419}\)

"Śaṅkara also has a justificative ethic, by virtue of being a Vedāntin. The justificative ethics is Vedic Foundationalism, the view that the Vedas, which are the source of our knowledge of right and wrong, are independently valid, and constitute a sovereign authority …\(^{420}\)

"Vedic texts enjoining rites (and duties) etc. are not invalid, because they, through the generation of successively newer tendencies by eliminating the successively preceding tendencies, are meant for creating the tendency to turn towards the in-dwelling self.\(^{421}\)

"For (Ādi) Saṅkara, however, the state of liberation is not coextensive with the moral state. On Advaita Vedanta’s axiology, mokṣa is not a moral goal, for dharma is something that must be given up prior to liberation.\(^{422}\)

Central aspects of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta ethics

Rāmānuja has a very different attitude about the scope and importance of morality. Rāmānuja argues that we should abandon our sense of agency or possessiveness with regard to the fruits of actions. For him, our agency is ultimately dependent on Brahman and when we understand this we devote

\(^{420}\) Ibid. P-316
\(^{421}\) Ibid. P-316
\(^{422}\) Ibid. PP-317-318
ourselves to our duties in a manner that leads us to abandon our claim to rewards of actions. This may be stated as a practice of duties in accordance with the Deontological spirit. In support this view, "Rāmānuja quotes the Gītā 18:11 "he who gives up the fruits of works is called the abandoner". But the practice of duties with a strict Deontological consciousness, along with the knowledge that our power as agent is ultimately dependent upon God, is possible only for those to whom God is exceedingly dear and who are free from all evils. Under no circumstance, Rāmānuja holds, we are entitled to think that we can give up our duties. Even if it seems that God is asking us to give up morality, we cannot give up our obligations; because on Rāmānuja’s account, moral perfection is central to God’s divine nature. Brahman or the Ultimate person (Puruṣottama), for Rāmānuja, is opposed to or antagonistic to all evil.

“Since mokṣa, the ultimate goal of Vedants, is achieved by approximating one’s nature to Brahman, it would not be possible, on Rāmānuja’s view, for an aspirant after liberation to give up morality.”

Rāmānuja argues further that the practice of one’s own duties constitutes karmayoga (the discipline of action), in contrast to the discipline of knowledge or jñāna-yoga. While karmayoga is easy and does not involve negligence, jñānayoga is contrary to this.

Rāmānuja in his commentary on the first aphorism of the Brahmasūtra is keen to prove that there are really important differences among things constituted of differences in dharma or attributes, and the attributes of objects are given in consciousness.

“The concept of dharmabhūtajñāna in Viśiṣṭadvaita thought is reaction to the moral irrealism of illusionist monism. The concept implies that the

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424 Ibid. P-320
425 Ibid.
426 Ibid.
427 Ibid. P-321
quality of things—their “dharma”—is a morally evaluable matter, and moreover, that the quality/attributes (dharma) of a thing (bhūta) is epistemically apprehended in knowledge (jñāna). The concept of dharmabhūtajñāna is not simply a testament to the moral realism of the Viśiṣṭādvaita though, but also to its overall metaphysical realism.\textsuperscript{428}

**Central aspects of the Dvaita Vedānta ethics**

“Compared to Rāmānuja, who regards dharma as a means to mokṣa, Madhva’s view is that only bhakti, or devotion to God, leads one to mokṣa. Bhakti, on Rāmānuja’s account, is a kind of refinement of the moral life, which adds to a Deontological consciousness the knowledge that one’s agency is ultimately dependent upon God. Even if one did not have bhakti, Rāmānuja’s view is that the practice of dharma is sufficient to lead one to mokṣa. Not so for Madhva ... Dharma, from the point of Madhva’s axiology, does not result in Mokṣa.” \textsuperscript{429}

“In Madhva’s view, individuals are inherently graded in relation to others according to their moral character. The highest person is Brahman (puruṣottama). There are three kinds of persons below Brahman: Gods, humans and demons. Out of the three type, Gods and humans of outstanding character are eligible for liberation. Middle-level humans transmigrate forever. The basest of humans go to hell, or darkness, while demons go to an even lower hell or darkness.”

“Moreover, on Madhva’s account, “liberation and deep darkness are permanent; there is no return from these two positions”. Madhva thus appears to be the only thinker in the Indian tradition that is of the opinion


\textsuperscript{429} Ibid. P-324
that: (a) some persons will never attain liberation; and (b) that the moral character of persons is fixed, and cannot be changed.\footnote{Ranganathan, Shyam. \textit{Ethics and The History of India Philosophy}. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited. Delhi. 2007. PP-234-325}

- **Central aspects of the Sāṁkhya Ethics**

  Ethics of the Sāṁkhya system is practiced following is metaphysical truth. According to Sāṁkhya metaphysics the contact between \textit{prakṛti} (matter) and \textit{puruṣa} (consciousness) is the root of all pains and sufferings—called bondage. It is the ignorance \textit{(avidya)} of the true nature of one’s body and consciousness in particular, and that of \textit{prakṛti} (matter) and \textit{puruṣa} (consciousness) in general that causes bondage. On the contrary, it is only through discriminative knowledge \textit{(viveka jnana)} of the aspirant’s body and consciousness in particular, and \textit{prakṛti} (matter) and \textit{puruṣa} (consciousness) in general the aspirant attains \textit{mukti} (liberation) followed by \textit{kaivalya} [the completely isolated state of \textit{puruṣa} (consciousness)].

  Naturally, whatever is real is good \textit{(subha)} and whatever is unreal is bad \textit{(asubha)}. Ignorance of the true and pure nature of the bodies, faculties and elements binds us to all sorrows—the evils. But knowledge of the true and pure nature of the bodies, faculties and elements give rise to freedom from all sorrows for ever—the highest good. Our life is like a pendulum swings between sorrow and happiness. Analysis of everyday experience leading to discriminative knowledge helps an aspirant to lead a spiritual life, because it is a very fruitful means to achieve progress in pursuing the highest good.

  A study of the nature, types and causes of \textit{duḥkha} (sorrow) is thus necessary for getting all sorrows of all individuals alleviated for good. The way Sāṁkhya does this is somehow the following:

**Nature and root of \textit{duḥkha} (sorrow)**

\textit{Yuktidipikā} equates \textit{duḥkha} (sorrow) with \textit{rajoguna} by describing it as \textit{rajoguna},\footnote{Yuktidipikā equates \textit{duḥkha} (sorrow) with \textit{rajoguna} by describing it as \textit{rajoguna}, while according to \textit{Sāṁkhyaatadvakaumudi}, \textit{duḥkha} (sorrow) has} while according to \textit{Sāṁkhyaatadvakaumudi}, \textit{duḥkha} (sorrow) has
evolved out of rajoguna.\textsuperscript{432} If duḥkha is equated with rajoguna, then duḥkha would be equally eternal, because rajoguna is eternal. In that case liberation would be impossible. But if duḥkha (sorrow) is treated as evolved out of rajoguna, in spite of being essentially identical with rajoguna, duḥkha does not become eternal. Because, rajoguna manifested as duḥkha can again go back into its subtle form when duḥkha is alleviated into rajoguna. For Sāṃkhya duḥkha is of three kinds: ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika and ādhidaivika.

- ādhyātmika duḥkha: The pain arising from one's own psychophysical states, i.e. the pain caused by the disorders of the body or mental unrest is called ādhyātmika duḥkha.
- ādhibhautika duḥkha: The pain arising from other human beings and non-human things and beings i.e. the pain caused by men, beasts, and birds is called ādhibhautika duḥkha.
- ādhidaivika duḥkha: The pain arising from the super-human beings etc. i.e. the pain caused by the influence of super-human beings, planets and elemental agencies is called ādhidaivika duḥkha.

Every individual strives to alleviate duḥkha. But, duḥkha cannot be rooted out completely and permanently by the remedies prescribed by the empirical means like the science of medicine or by the performance of scripture-directed sacrifices (yajñā) and Vedic rites.

Sāṃkhya urges that like the empirical means the result of the scripture-directed sacrifices (yajñā) and Vedic rites are vitiated by impurity, decay and gradation. The scripture-directed sacrifices (yajñā) and Vedic rites involve a violation of the great moral principle ahimsā. Because performance of scripture-directed sacrifices (yajñā) and Vedic rites require killing of animal and destruction of seed. Killing is productive of sin, even though it is done in a sacrifice. So, by the performance of the sacrifice one can attain heaven (svarga) temporarily.

It should be remembered that bondage arises through the contact of prakṛti with puruṣa. Non-discrimination (aviveka) of prakṛti and puruṣa is the

\textsuperscript{431} "duḥkhar ma rajogunaḥ"— Yuktidīpikā on kārikā-1
\textsuperscript{432} "duḥkhar ma rajoguna samudbhava"— Sāṃkhyaatattvakaumudron kārikā-1
cause of bondage (bandhahetu). aviveka belongs to Buddhi and our misery will terminate only when our aviveka will end. Knowledge and ignorance are the sole determinants of liberation and bondage respectively.\textsuperscript{433} The ethical process is not the development of anything new, but a rediscovery of what is forgotten. Release is a return into one's true self. It is the removal of an illusion, which hides our true nature. The knowledge that 'I am not' (nāsmī), that 'nor is mine' (na me), and that 'I exist not' (nāham), leads to release.\textsuperscript{434}

Liberation is brought about by the practice of virtue, yoga, etc. while bondage is traced to wrong knowledge (viparyaya), which includes not only avidyā (unreal cognition), but also asmitā (egoism), rāga (addiction), dveṣa (hatred) and abhiniveśa (fear of death). These are brought about by asakti (incapacity), which is of twenty-eight kinds, of which eleven belong to the senses and seventeen to buddhi. vairāgya (non-attachment) follows the rise of discriminative knowledge and through vairāgya absorption into prakṛti takes place.\textsuperscript{435}

"The method of yoga occupies a prominent place in the Sāṁkhya Sūtra, though not in the kārikā. We can obtain discriminative knowledge only when our emotional stirrings are subdued and intellectual activities are controlled. When the senses are regulated and the mind acquired calm, buddhi becomes transparent, and reflects the pure light of puruṣa ... By dhyāna (meditation), the taints of citta caused by the external objects are removed. When the citta regains its pristine condition and rids itself of its desires, the objects no longer excite love or hatred."\textsuperscript{436}

The doctrine of the guṇa-s has a great ethical significance. The beings of the three worlds—daiva (super-human), mānusya (human) and tāryak (sub-human) are classified according to the preponderance of the different guṇa-s in them.

\textsuperscript{433} Radhakrishnan, S. \textit{Indian Philosophy}. Vol. II. Oxford University Press. New Delhi. PP-282-284
\textsuperscript{434} Ibid P-284
\textsuperscript{435} Ibid. P-284
\textsuperscript{436} Ibid. P-285
“In the deva-s the sattva elements predominate, while the rajas and the tamas are reduced. In man tamas element is reduce to a less extent than in the deva-s. In the animal world, the sattva is reduced considerably. In the vegetable kingdom, tamas is more predominant than in the others. The upward ascent consists in the gradual increase of the sattva element and diminution of the tamas, since pain is a particular modification of the quality of rajas. Strictly speaking, the guṇa-s mingle combine and strive in every fiber of our being.”

Moral considerations in the Sāṃkhya do not follow from any social need, but from ontological necessity. A close analysis of the Sāṃkhya ethical conception shows the fabric of three strings mentioned below:

- **Firstly**, the concept of good is identical with the metaphysical reality. Emancipation or apavarga arise from the discriminating knowledge about puruṣa and prakṛti. It has been termed kalyāṇa or good, while the opposite of it, has been termed pāpa. The yoga has enumerated the ethical virtues, but they no intrinsic value of their own, because they help the individual to dissociate himself from the experiences and attain ultimate knowledge.

- **Secondly**, the ideal of good as kaivalya has not been taken as something external, but as a nature culmination of the course of prakṛti evolution. Prakṛti creates bondage, but, at the same time, has in itself the way back to freedom. The constituent teleology of the guṇa-s creates the world-phenomena for the experience of puruṣa, maintaining a tendency alongside to withdraw again within itself. Good and evil are thus the off-shoots of the same process: onward and reverse.

- **Thirdly**, the ethical goal has been described from the view-point of feeling: pleasure, pain, and indifference. The Sāṃkhya-yoga emphasized the painful aspect of things and established the desirability of final liberation from all sorrows. The highest end, therefore, is the absolute cessation of sorrows. The

avoidance of all sorrows taken as the ultimate goal includes both joys and sorrows of mundane experiences, since these are essentially sorrowful. The ultimate end is thus the negation of all experiences—pleasurable and painful. The puruṣa shines in its radiance and fullness in the liberated state. abhyāsa (constant practice in mediation) and vairāgya, (detachment from worldly things) have been prescribed as the effective means for attaining the state of consciousness for final enlightenment.⁴³⁸

**Theory of Evolution as the Foundation of Śāṁkhyya Ethics**

Some comments need to be made on how do these twenty-three evolutes of mulapraṇti and the constituent guṇa-s along with puruṣa are related to the ethical process and have been the foundation of Śāṁkhya ethics? Unlike some other systems in which matter is equated with evil and consciousness is equated with good, the Śāṁkhya system suggests no such moral dualism. On the contrary, both the nature and function of prakṛti are aimed at liberation of puruṣa. This is stated in the Śāṁkhya-kārikā in the following way:

"As the insentient milk flows out for the growth of the calf, so does Nature act towards the emancipation of spirit."⁴³⁹

Hiriyana makes the following comment here:

"The noteworthy point here is the physical accompaniment of man as well as his environment is either hostile or indifferent to his attaining the ideal of freedom, through them rather, prakṛti is ever educating him into a fuller knowledge of himself with a view to securing that result. Nature therefore,


cannot in the end, be said to enslave spirit. In fact, it behaves towards man as a “veritable fairy godmother”. 

Ethical significance of the *guna*-s

The doctrine of the *guna*-s has “great ethical significance”. The *guna*-s provide the foundation for three types of ethical activities. *sattvaguna* provide the foundation for virtuous activities (dharma) expressed as kindness, senses-control, absence of hatred, reflection etc ... *rajoguna* provides the foundation for non-virtuous activities (dharma) shown by anger, avarice, passion, discontent, rudeness and violence etc ... *Tamoguna* provide the foundation for non-virtuous activities (dharma) shown through apathy, sloth, laziness, enslavement to women, intoxication and impurity. Through *sattva guna*, the *buddhi* arrive at its original condition of purity. Goodness fails to touch the *puruṣa*, since the ethical life is limited to the empirical sphere, but it is through cultivation of goodness we can distinguish the *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*.  

The essential teachings of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā point to the fact that the *guna*-s are not valueless aspects of reality, rather they are inherently evaluative. The psychological and moral components of the *guna*-s are indispensable for the existence and activities of individual entities or persons. A question concerning the nature of the *guna*-s arises here: whether the *guna*-s are themselves moral properties, or whether they take on a definite moral value in combination and in relative preponderance and relation to other *guna*-s? As per the first option, *rajas* and *tamas* are simply evil, while on the latter view, *rajas* and *tamas* are not synonymous with evil, rather a preponderance of *rajas* and/or *tamas* in an individual’s nature constitutes evil. This latter view is suggested by the Sāṃkhyaśāstra when it states that the functioning of the *guna*-s is “for the

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goal of the puruṣa ... like the action of a lamp."442 In the Yogasūtra it is stated that the guṇa-s are depicted as being evolved by prakṛti, so that puruṣa-s can come to know themselves;443 i.e. the guṇa-s can function towards an axiologically desirable state. It seems that the guṇa-s has evaluative implications inherent in their nature, but the moral significance of a guṇa is determinable only within the context of its relationship with other guṇa-s.

The common cosmology of Sāmkhya declare sattva, rajas and tamas to be the constituents of prakṛti, namely guṇa-s, which bind the immutable self in the body. The constituent’s sattva, rajas and tamas have an important place in India’s traditional system of medicine (ayurveda) and so the Gītā too discusses the dietary implication of the guṇa-s. It tells us that foods liked by persons of sattvika nature are healthy and agreeable; foods liked by persons of rajasika nature are pungent and burning, while the foods liked by persons of tamasika nature are rancid.444

The great moral importance that the Gītā gives to the guṇa-s is also evident from the following:

- The actions done from a strong deontological consciousness, which motivate a person to perform dharma irrespective of personal benefit, are based on the preponderance of the sattva guṇa.445
- The actions done grudgingly or for the sake of their consequences or ostentation are based on the preponderance of the rajaguṇa.446
- Actions done for the sake of injuring others on immoral grounds and performances of obligations under the influence of addiction are based on the preponderance of the tamoguṇa.447

442 kārikā-XII, Sāmkhyakārikā
443 Yogasūtra--II.18
444 Śrīmadbhagavadgītā—XVII.8-10
445 Śrīmadbhagavadgītā—XVII.11, 17, 20
446 Śrīmadbhagavadgītā—XVII.12, 18, 21
447 Śrīmadbhagavadgītā—XVII,13,19,22
Again the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā states the nature of the guṇa-s in terms of the kind of knowledge that arises from them. This too is morally significant.

- Knowledge that arises from sattva is of the nature of jñāna. sattva result in the correct understanding of dharma and adharma.
- Knowledge that arises from rajas is superficially accurate, but fundamentally mistaken. Rajas results in an incorrect account of dharma and adharma.
- Knowledge that arises from tamas is unreasonable, false and distorted. The intellect dominated by tamas "regards adharma as dharma and reverses every value."

**Ethical significance of the fundamental elements: Puruṣa and Prakṛti**

The *sumnum bonum* of all ethical endeavors is the realization of the true nature of puruṣa. This is brought about by the highest empirical knowledge—viveka-jñāna. The ethical process is not the emergence of something new, but a re-discovery of the true nature of puruṣa. An understanding of the *sumnum bonum* thus shows that the metaphysics and theory of evolution are the grounds, upon which the Sāmkhya ethical system is founded.

Like prakṛti, puruṣa is eternal. In almost all other respects, puruṣa is essentially different from prakṛti. Though completely passive and independent, by virtue of its 'nearness' (saṁyoga), puruṣa illumines the incessant processes of the inner senses. This influence of puruṣa is metaphorically described as reflection. Owing to this reflection and super-imposition puruṣa appears as active and prakṛti, appears as conscious. The cause of bondage is, therefore, the anādi ajñāna (beginningless ignorance) of the true nature of puruṣa. Release from bondage

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448 Śrīmadbhagavadgītā—XVII.20-22
449 Śrīmadbhagavadgītā—XVII.30-32
451 Ibid. P-149
452 Ibid
comes through highest knowledge (viveka jñāna)—the clear recognition that all activity and suffering takes place in prakṛti, and that puruṣa stands above all sorrows connected with transmigration through a cycle of birth and death. When this enlightenment dawns, the activity of prakṛti is ceases.

"As a dancer desists from dancing, having exhibited herself to the audience, so does prakṛti desist, having exhibited herself to the puruṣa". 453

But enlightenment does not bring life to an immediate end. kārikā LXVII explains this in the following way:

"Virtue and the rest having ceased as causes, because of the attainment of perfect wisdom, the spirit remains invested with the body, because of the force of past impressions, like the whirl of the potter's wheel, which persists for a while of the momentum imparted by a prior impulse." 454

• mahat (buddhi)

"The first product of evolving prakṛti is mahat (the great one). It is the basis of the individual’s intelligence (buddhi). Looked at in its cosmic aspect as that which holds in it potentialities for further development, it is called mahat. Seen from the point of view of forming the physical basis for psychical activity in each individual, it is called buddhi. Though physical, buddhi functions psychically because of its proximity to and temporary association with puruṣa." 455

adhyaśāya (determination or ascertainment) is the lakṣaṇa (definition) of mahat. There are eight bhāva-s (dispositions) of mahat depending on the different sattvika and tamasa forms.

The satvika form of intellect is of four kind’s viz. dharma (virtue), jñāna (knowledge), vairāgya (non-attachment) and aiśvarya (power).

453 kārikā LIX


455 Ibid, PP-146-147
1) "The virtue is of the nature of mercy, charity, the five *yama* (non-injury, truth, non-stealing, celibacy and non-acceptance of gifts), restraints, the five *niyama* (purity, contentment, austerity, study of Vedas and meditation of God), and obligations."\(^{456}\)

2) "Knowledge is twofold; external and internal. The external knowledge comprises of the Vedas along with the six branches of pronunciation, ritual, grammar, etymology, prosody, and astronomy; the *Puraṇa*-s, the *sāḍa darsana* and the *Dharmaśāstra*-s etc. The internal knowledge is the knowledge of nature and the spirit. From the external knowledge is result celebrity and admiration among the people, and from the internal knowledge is results liberation."\(^{457}\)

3) "Non-attachment also is twofold; external and internal. The external non-attachment is the freedom from thirst for the objects of the sense, in one who is non-attached to these, realizing the defects of earning, protecting, decreasing, attachment and injury. The internal non-attachment is that which arises in the mind of one who is non-attached and has a desire for liberation and regards even the nature as a dream or a magical illusion."

4) "Power is lordliness, it is eight kinds: *ānimā, mahimā, garimā, laghimā, prākāmya, iśītva, vaśītva* and *yatrākāmāvasāyitva*. Ānimā is the state of an atom and the man wanders over the world in a very subtle atomic form. Mahimā is becoming as light as the fibre of a lotus-stalk or cotton particles he stays even on the tips of the filaments of flowers. Prāpti is one gets the desire object, wherever it may be. Prakāmya is one can do whatever one likes. Iśītva is through lordliness one can rein over all the three worlds. Vaśītva is everything comes under his control. Yatrākāmāvasāyitva is one can stand, sit or wander over anything from the Lord to grass, wherever one desire."\(^{458}\)

\(^{456}\) Mainkar, T. G. *Sāṃkhyaśāstra of Īśvarakṛṣṇa with the commentary of Gaṇapāda*. Oriental Book Agency Poona. 1972. P-108

\(^{457}\) Ibid. P-109

\(^{458}\) Ibid.
These four are the sāttvika forms of the intellect. When sattva dominates over rajas and tāmas then a man acquires virtue and the rest. When tāmas dominates over sattva and rajas then a man acquires the reverse of virtue that is vice. In similar manner are ignorance, attachment and absence of lordly powers.459

The Yogasūtra II. 32 give importance to the discipline of dhyāna (meditation) as the means for restoring buddhi to its original sattvika condition. With controlled sense and tranquil mind, purified buddhi is able to receive the reflection of puruṣa.460

• ahamkāra

ahamkāra is a Sanskrit term that refers to egoism and pride. In Sāmkhya the term ahamkāra is used not in the sense of pride, but in the sense of egoism—the "I-am-ness"—the individual ego, which feels it to be a distinct, separate entity.

In the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Lord Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna to remove ahamkāra, because besides assuming our body-mind-complex-personality to be our true being, ahamkāra creates our feelings of separation, pain and alienation. ahamkāra is defined as abhimano'hamkāra. Ahamkāra as abhimāna is understood in ethical terms. It is known as the individuation of the conceit in the ego.461

"According to the Sāmkhyakārikā, there are three types of ahamkāra corresponding to the three guṇa (SK. XXV). From the sattva aspect of ahamkāra, the manas (mind), the five sensory organs, and the five motor organs are derived. From the tāmas aspect of ahamkāra, the five subtle elements (tanmatra-s) are arises, and from these, the five gross elements

460 Ibid, P-108
461 Mainkar, T. G. Sāmkhyakārikā of Iśvarakṛṣṇa with the commentary of Gauḍapāda. Oriental Book Agency Poona. 1972. P-111
are derived. *Rajas guna* provides the energy for these productions of *ahamkāra.*

"When *rajas* and *tamas* are predominated over by *sattva* in the ego, then that ego is *sattvika.* This pure ego has been termed by the ancient teachers as *vaikṛta*—the modified. From this modified ego, the *vaikṛta,* the group of the eleven proceeds. Therefore, the organs are *Sāttvika,* pure and capable of apprehending their objects ... Further, the group of subtle elements from *bhūtādi.* This *bhūtādi* is *tamasa*—when *sattva* and *rajas* are predominated over by *tamas* in the ego, then the ego is known as *tāmasa* and the ancient teacher have termed it as *bhūtādi* and from this *bhūtādi* ego proceeds the group of the five subtle elements. It is called *tamasa* for it abounds in *tamas,* and *bhūtādi* for it is the origin of the gross elements. From this *bhūtādi* originates the group of the five. Further, from the *taijasa* both: when *sattva* and *tamas* are predominated over by *rajas* in the ego, then for the reason the ego gets the term *taijasa* and from this *taijasa* processed both. Both mean the group of eleven organs and the group of the five subtle elements. This *sāttvika* ego becoming modified, *vaikṛta,* produces the eleven organs and at that time takes the help of the *taijasa* ego." 

The eleven senses—*manas, pañca-karmendriya and pañca-jñānendriya*

**karmendriya:** There are five senses of action—the senses, which apprehend the five objects viz. sound, touch, form, taste and smell. *vāk* (sense of speech), *pāni* (sense of grasping), *pāda* (sense of movement), *pāyu* (sense of excretion) and *upastha* (sense of generation) are called *karmendriya*—the senses of action, because they perform action. Of these, the sense of speech utters, the sense of grasping acts like holding, the sense of movement performs acts like going and

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462 *sāttvika ekādaśaḥ pravartate vaikṛtād ahamkārāt,*

*bhūtādestanmātraḥ sa tāmasāḥ taijasād ubhayam.*

463 Mainkar, T. G. *Sāṁkhya-karikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa with the commentary of Gauḍapāda.* Oriental Book Agency Poona. 1972. PP-112-113
coming, the sense of excretion excretes and the sense of generation produces pleasure by procreating children. The distinctive feature of these senses is that ahaṁkāra as characterized by sattva is their material cause.

**jñānendriya**: The senses of knowledge are: cakṣu (sense of sight), karna (sense of hearing), nāsikā (sense of smell), jihvā (sense of taste), tvak (sense of touch). These are so called, because they receive the sensations which are transmitted through the manas to the intellect. The term senses is correctly applicable to the material instruments by which perception is exercised, it is not to be understood as the gross organs of the bodies i.e. any part of the gross body (kārikā XXVI).\(^\text{464}\)

**manas**: manas is said to be saṁkalpaka and ubhaya-ātmaka. It is called saṁkalpaka, because it determines, ponders and proposes. The function of mind is reflection and determination.\(^\text{465}\) Again, it is called ubhaya-ātmaka, because it functions both as the sense of knowledge and as the sense of action. Moreover, manas is regarded as a sense on account of possessing similar characteristic: the sense of knowledge and sense of action originating along with manas from the sāttvika ego.

The manas can be both bound to and free from attachment to perceptible objects of enjoyment, such as women, foods, drinks and cosmetics. By virtue of addiction the manas becomes attached to perceptible objects of enjoyment and by virtue of intellectual illumination it becomes detached from such objects of enjoyment. At the state of indifference to the objects of enjoyment the manas is devoid of attachment to all desirable and undesirable objects as such. This mental state is called desirelessness (vairāgya). Attachment to all desirable and undesirable objects generates pāpa, while vairāgya provides punya.

**paṇca-tanmatra and paṇca-mahābhūta**

\(^\text{464}\) buddhīndriyānī cakṣuh śrotraghrāṇarasanatvagākhyānī, vākpāṇipāda-pāyū pasthān karmendriyānī āhuḥ.

**mahābhūta or sthūlabhūta**: There are five gross elements called mahābhūta or sthūlabhūta. These are, viz. ākāśa (ether), vāyū (air), teja (fire), ap (water) and kṣīti (earth). These gross elements are the last evolutes, because no other grosser element can be produced from them or anything else.

**tanmatra**: There are five subtle elements called tanmatra or sūkṣmabhūta. These are viz. śabda (sound), sparśa (touch), rūpa (form), rasa (taste) and gandha (smell). These subtle elements are produced from ahamkāra. We have already discussed the process of the production of the sthūlabhūta-s from the tanmatra-s by mentioning the two models of production of the same. These are respectively the under-mentioned Sāṁkhyaatattvakaumudi model and the Yuktidipikā model.

### Sāṁkhyaatattvakaumudi-model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sthūlabhūta or mahābhūta</th>
<th>produced from</th>
<th>sūkṣmabhūta or tanmātra-s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ākāśa-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>śabda-tanmātra,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vāyū-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>śabdasparśatanmātra,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teja-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>śabdasparśarūparatanmātra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āp-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>sabdasparśarūparasatanmātra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kṣīti-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>sabdasparśarūparasagandhanmātra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Yuktidipikā-model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>vāyū-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>sparśatanmātra,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teja-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>rūparatanmātra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āp-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>rasatanmātra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kṣīti-sthūlabhūta</td>
<td></td>
<td>gandhanmātra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is already stated there that depending on the dominance of sattva, rajas and tamas the bhūta-s become śānta, ghora and for mūḍha respectively. The
puruṣa-s in contact with sānta, ghora and muḍha bhūta-s becomes respectively happy, sorrowful and bewildered.466

**višeṣa and śarīra**: It is further stated there that the commentaries like Yuktidipikā classify višeṣa into three basic heads, viz. (i) sūkṣma, (ii) mātāpiṭṭja and (iii) mahābhūta. The characteristics of each type of višeṣa have been discussed to show the formation, function, change, transmigration and merging of the two types of śarīra: sthūla and sūkṣma have also been discussed in the previous chapter.

**Evolutionary foundation of moral conduct and aspiration**

Any individual being including humans, for Sāmkhya, may have two kinds of bodies: subtle and gross. Hence, an individual being is nothing but a combination of consciousness (puruṣa) and some kind of body, i.e. materiality (prakṛti).467 Association of consciousness with gross body (sthūlaśarīra) becomes possible only through subtle body (sūkṣmaśarīra). A subtle body (sūkṣmaśarīra) transmigrates from one gross body (sthūlaśarīra-s) to another of different forms like deities (deva), man (mānava), animal (paśu) and big tree (vānaspati).468 Such associations of consciousness with gross body apparently enables it to enjoy...
(through reflection) knowledge (jñāna) pleasure (sukha) and pain (duḥkha) of worldly life.⁴⁶⁹

According to Śāmkhya human happiness is partially dependent on his external natural surroundings, because all beings are engaged in mutual service. Here, mutual service means interdependency (parasparārthatva) of the beings. In Yuktidīpikā and Jayamaṅgalā some cases of interdependency have been described in the following way:

“Plants keep moisture in their roots to keep the soil wet. Trees keep the ground cool by providing shades. Space, air, fire, water, and earth sustain and nourish animal and plant kingdom. Heat, cold, wind and rain appear and re-appear by the influence of the super-human beings”.

The rationale of mutual service is the oneness of the ultimate material cause. The bodies of all beings, viz., plants, animals, humans and gods, are constituted of the same ultimate material element, and hence, they help each other to sustain. But, interdependency means sufferings as well, since a being, which is the sustenance cause of another is also the source of pain for that other being. The occurs owing to the nature of the three constituents (guna-s) of materiality. Again the same action that causes pain to one being may cause pleasure to another. One’s dependence on some others, for reducing sorrow, cause suffering to those others. Causing suffering to others for any reason is a sinful act. So, one should transcend the state of interdependence.

The inclination to transcend the state of interdependence, for Śāmkhya, leads an aspirant to minimize his/her impact on environment initially through a process of non-injury (ahīṃsā). At a final stage the aspirant adopts the path of liberation through the knowledge of separation of consciousness (puruṣa) from materiality (prakṛti).⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁹ “ṣo’im buddhitattvavartinā jñānasukhādinā tatpratīvatvasacchāyāpattiyā jñānasukhādimāṇī bhavatī cetano’nugṛhyati - Śāmkhyatattvakaumudiōn kārikā-V
⁴⁷⁰ “vyaktavyaktajāvijyānāt” - kārikā-II
Sources: S.S Suryanarayana Sastri. Śāmkhyakārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa. University of Madras. 1948. P-i
Sāṁkhyya thus establishes the ethics of *ahimsā* (non-injury) based on the theory of nature-human interdependence. Having shown the defects of ordinary (*dṛṣṭa*) and Vedic ritualistic (*ānuśravika*) means, Sāṁkhyya considers that liberation cannot be achieved by causing harm to any being in particular and the environment in general.

This ethical position supports thus "the theory of conservation of nature". Practice of *ahimsā* enables a person to realize the absolute separateness of consciousness (*puruṣa*) from matter (*prakṛti*). Realization of the absolute separateness of consciousness (*puruṣa*) from matter (*prakṛti*) is liberation. This Virtue-guided actions force a being either to migrate to higher order or to attain liberation. Kapila’s teaching of *vyāktavyaktajñāvijñāna* is, thus, the best virtuous act (*agrya pāvana*).

"So, the Sāṁkhyya moral theory of non-injury (*ahimsā*) is opposed to the modern bio-centric concept of ecological balance, which emphasizes species over individual and accepts food chain as a natural and non-ethical phenomenon in the biological existence. The theory of food chain supports the principle that pain and violence are necessary consequences of biological existence. But the ethical doctrine of non-injury toward all beings prescribed by Sāṁkhyya is an attempt to transcend the ecological process of nature, i.e. to get out of the food chain. In the vicinity of a Sāṁkhyya yogin food chain gets transcended – the cat abandons the mouse as food. A Sāṁkhyya yogin minimizes his impact on environment through a process of non-attachment and withdrawal, beginning with non-injury (*ahimsā*) to all beings and finally attains separation of consciousness from materiality for avoiding rebirth. This is an ideal state of liberation." 471

"At the ordinary level man is simply a victim of sorrow, but at the rise of discriminative knowledge man remains sometimes. That means, even after the attainment of discriminative knowledge, the effects of man’s past sorrowful deeds

471 "*samyagjñānādhirigamād dharmādīnām akāraṇaprāptau, tiṣthati saṁskāravaśāc cakrabhramivad dhītaśaṅkhaḥ*"–Kārikā LXVII
sthūla and sūkṣma sarīra-s are destroyed. As such sarīra-s, as we have said, is the locus of sorrows. Sorrows and sarīra-s being essentially material, they cease to exist gradually at the rise of discriminative knowledge. After the attainment of discriminative knowledge man continues to survive as a jīvanmukta puruṣa so long as the effects of his previous actions are not completely destroyed. "Moreover, a man has to wait for pralaya (the disappearance of all things and beings, i.e. the state of equilibrium of the guna-s) to attain the state of pure consciousness even after the attainment of discriminative knowledge and destruction of his sthūla sarīra, because the sūkṣma sarīra-s continue to exist up to the occurrence of pralaya. Therefore, man’s individual effort may enable him to attain mukti (release from the effects of all present and future actions) at the state of possessing some kind of sarīra: either both sthūla sarīra and sūkṣma sarīra or only sūkṣma sarīra. But the process of attainment of final release is not completed, until all kinds of sarīra-s are destroyed. So, for attaining the state of pure consciousness (kaivalya) a man has to depend on the nature or the collective effort of all individuals, because only at pralaya his sūkṣma sarīra may cease to exist simultaneously with the sūkṣma sarīra-s of all other individual beings." 473

"Attainment of kaivalya is, therefore, a transition from the state of consciousness-illumined intellect to the state of pure consciousness. Following the right path, man successively goes on leaving behind all sorrows forever. Through the stages of leaving gradually the embodied self and disembodied self he reaches the state of pure consciousness. Finally a man loses his human identity to mere consciousness and shines as self-revealing knowledge." 474

473 Ibid
474 prāpte sarīrabhede caritārthatvāt pradhānānivirrtau,
alkāntikam ātyantikam ubhayam kaivalyam āpnoti—Kārikā LXVIII