Chapter-V

CRITICAL RESUME AND CONCLUSION

CRITICAL RESUME

Sāṁkhya—a psycho-epistemic-metaphysical system

"The Sāṁkhya System of thought, propounded by Kapila – the Great Sage (agrya muni) and systematically presented for the first time by Īśvarakṛṣṇa, is a psycho-epistemic-metaphysical system. The reason for considering it as a psycho-epistemic-metaphysical system is that in this system of thought psychology, epistemology and metaphysics are inseparably inter-connected."

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Because for Sāṁkhya,

"one of the two ultimate elements pure consciousness (puruṣa) is Knowledge-as-such (jīna or pramā-svarūpa), while the other ultimate element primal matter (mūlaprakṛti) is the object of knowledge as well as the source of empirical knowledge (jñānā) and ignorance (ajñānā), so it appears that the metaphysical entities have epistemological status too."

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"Again, Sāṁkhya deals with the psychological states and processes connected with the origin of empirical knowledge including discriminative knowledge."

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Sāṁkhya admits pluralistic dualism of a unique kind, according to which the universe with multiple realities has evolved gradually out of primal matter in association with pure consciousness. Etymologically "sāṁkhya" stands for samyak

475 Bhattacharya, Rajat. "Epistemic-Metaphysical Foundation of Ethics"—An unpublished paper presented in the National Seminar, organized by the Department of Philosophy, ...University during 21st, 22nd and 23rd November 2008.

476 Ibid.

477 Ibid.
**Khyāti** or **viveka jñāna** i.e. valid knowledge or discriminative knowledge\(^{478}\) of the nature of **prakṛti** and **puruṣa**.

- **Epistemic-metaphysical pattern of this system**\(^ {479}\)

Sāmkhya System of thought accepts two kinds of Ultimate realities, viz. **puruṣa** and **prakṛti**. Owing to the contact between **puruṣa** and **prakṛti**, twenty three other elements gradually evolve out of **prakṛti**. In some elements (such as, **puruṣa**, **prakṛti**, **mahat**, **ahaṁkāra** and **manas**), the two-fold aspects, viz. Epistemic and Metaphysical, seem to be vivid, while in others it is difficult to trace. The following table will make the said pattern vivid:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epistemic aspect</th>
<th>Metaphysical aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>jiṇa</strong> (Knowledge as such)</td>
<td><strong>puruṣa</strong> (Pure consciousness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>avyyakta</strong> (Non-manifested)</td>
<td><strong>mūlaprakṛti</strong> (Primal Matter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>buddhi</strong> (Intelligence)</td>
<td><strong>mahat</strong> (Great Cosmic Matter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>abhimāṇa</strong> (ascription)</td>
<td><strong>ahaṁkāra</strong> (Ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>saṁkalpa</strong> (determination)</td>
<td><strong>manas</strong> (mind)</td>
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**Epistemic-metaphysical aspects**

- **pañca jñānendriya** (five senses of knowledge)
- **pañca karmendriya** (five senses of action)
- **pañca tanmātra** (five subtle elements)
- **pañca sthūlabhūta** (five gross elements)

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\(^{478}\) In philosophical English expressions like 'wrong knowledge' is incorrect, because knowledge can not in any way be wrong or invalid. But in the philosophical Sanskrit expressions like **asamyak jñāna**, **ayathārtha jñāna** etc. are used as correct ones as the expressions **samyak jñāna** and **yathārtha jñāna** are.

\(^{479}\) This discussion under this sub-title is made following Rajat Bhattacharya's unpublished paper presented in the National Seminar, organized by the Department of Philosophy, the University of Burdwan during **22-23 April, 2008**.
When the two kinds of sarga—pratyayasarga and tanmātrasarga constitute the śarīra-s, there is, on the one hand, metaphysical constitution and epistemic functions on the other.

As we have already discussed individual beings of different orders have two types of śarīra-s, namely sthūla śarīra and suksma śarīra. The sthūla śarīra is mātāpitrja, as it is produced from the parents’ bodies taking three kośa-s from the mother and another three kośa-s from the father. From the mother’s śarīra the mātāpitrja sthūla śarīra gets blood, flesh and nails and hairs; while from the father’s śarīra it gets the nerves, bones and bone-marrow. Other organs and parts of the mātāpitrja sthūla śarīra originate from the modification of the five gross elements, viz. prthivi, jala, teja, vāyu and ākāśa. All these have metaphysical significance, whereas the functions of buddhi and tanmātra are mostly epistemic in nature.

Besides this Sāṁkhya admits the following four factors of knowledge:

- pramātā (knower or the knowing agent or the subject of knowledge),
- pramāna (the sources of knowledge),
- prameya (the objects of knowledge) and
- pramā (knowledge).

According to kārikā-10, only puruṣa is viśayi (subject of knowledge), all other elements are viśaya (object of knowledge). But when kārikā-6 states that all non-perceptible objects can be known by sāmānyatodṛśta type of inference, puruṣa also becomes an object of knowledge, although as a self-revealing subject. Vācaspati defines knowledge in course of analyzing kārikā-IV. He writes:

“asandigdgāviparitānadhigataviśayā cītavṛttih, bodhaśca pauruṣeyah phalarṁ pramā.”

That means, knowledge is the doubt and error free operation of the thought-stuff about a yet to be known object and the apprehension of that thought-stuff by consciousness.

\[480\] Tattvakaumudi on kārikā-39
So, by defining knowledge in this way Vācaspati emphasized both the phenomenal and transcendental aspects of knowledge. That is to say, by describing knowledge as a special kind of operation of thought-stuff Vācaspati has accepted the phenomenal aspects of knowledge \( (jñāna) \) and by indicating the apprehension of that operation of thought-stuff as knowledge he has recognized the transcendental aspect of knowledge \( (jña) \).

The Śāṁkhyaapravacanasūtra-definition of knowledge as: "dvayorekatarasya vyāpyasannikṛṣṭārtha paricchittih pramā" also admits the fact that knowledge \( (pramā) \) is basically of two kinds: knowledge-as-such \( (jña) \) and phenomenal knowledge \( (jñāna) \). \( jña \) is in a class by itself. But \( jñāna \) is divided and sub-divided into a number of categories. \( jña \) is pramāsvarūpa, i.e. knowledge-as-such or pure consciousness.

- **Śāṁkhya ethics based on the dualistic pluralism**

  **of the psycho-epistemic-metaphysical structure**

The moral theory of Śāṁkhya is based on the dualistic pluralism of the psycho-epistemic-metaphysical structure. It is dualistic, because it admits two fundamental realities—prakṛti and puruṣa. Again, it is pluralism, since it admits the existence of multiple elements and objects. The goal of Śāṁkhya theory of evolution is two-fold: (1) creation of saṁsāra—constituted of fourteen kinds of transmigrating living beings [classified under three basic orders \( (yoni-s) \), viz. divine or super-human \( (daiva) \), human \( (mānusya) \) and sub-human \( (taicyak) \)] and (2) attainment of liberation from the saṁsāra. Since, the goal of the Śāṁkhya system is attainment of liberation from the saṁsāra, it is called a mokṣaśāstra. Because, saṁsāra is full of sorrows and sufferings, which are the evils—the root of which is ignorance.

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\[481\] This discussion under this sub-title is made following Rajat Bhattacharya’s unpublished paper presented in the National Seminar, organized by the Department of Philosophy, the University of Burdwan during
mokṣa is the complete and final release from the sorrows and sufferings—the evils. The path leading to mokṣa starts with the practice of ahimsā. ahimsā, for Sāṃkhya, means non-violence or non-injury toward all individual beings of different orders.

Practice of ahimsā is the path of dharma, which gives rise to virtue (punya) that leads an aspirant to a better or birth initially and ultimately to mokṣa. A better birth reduces sorrows and sufferings. But by repeated and uninterrupted practice of ahimsā—the dharma an individual (aspirant) succeeds in attaining complete and final release from sorrows and sufferings through a course of reducing impact on the environment and attaining discriminative knowledge. Reduction of one’s impact on the environment is a step toward minimization of interdependency among the living beings, which ultimately helps an aspirant to acquire discriminative knowledge of primal matter and pure consciousness that leads to complete isolation (kaivalya) of pure consciousness from primal matter.

According to Sāṃkhya the conduct of an individual must be judged from moral point of view taking into consideration his natural inclination. The natural inclination of an individual depends on the relation between the constitution of that individual and the rest of the world. Thus for understanding the natural inclination of an individual, it is necessary to know (a) the entire evolutionary process and (b) the position and role of that individual in that evolutionary process.

It is observed that from the same external object an individual can get pleasure in one time and place, pain in another time and place, and indifference in a different time and place. Likewise, the same external object can simultaneously generate (i) pleasure in one individual, pain in another and indifference to a third one. This happens, because the ingredients of the internal and external worlds are, in essence, same, i.e. constituted of pleasure (sattva), pain (rajas) and indifference (moha). Naturally, the material root casue (metaphysical foundation) of the world is such an ontological entity, which is constituted of pleasure (sattva), pain (rajas) and indifference (moha)—the psychic states and faculties. The state of equilibrium of the three constituents of the material root casue of the world—mūlaprakṛti gives rise to twenty three elements in a long sequence, as soon as
there is proximity of the pure consciousness. From the twenty three elements the world of multiplicity is produced through anuloma pariṇāma. Again, at the end the said twenty three elements get gradually merged in the material root cause through pratiloma pariṇāma. So, causing harm to any being, such as, killing a pre-born or born human being, destroying a forest etc. This is a sin (pāpa) or vice (adharma), which leads one to migrate to a lower order family, whereas the virtue-guided action forces a being either to migrate to higher order or to attain liberation.

"So, the Sāṅkhya moral theory of non-injury (ahīṃsā) is opposed to the modern bio-centric concept of ecological balance, which emphasises 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 Sāṅkhya is an attempt to transcend the ecological process of nature, i.e. to get out of the food chain.

In the vicinity of a Sāṅkhya yogin food chain gets transcended – the cat abandons the mouse as food. A Sāmkhya yogin minimizes his impact on environment through a process of non-attachment and withdrawal, beginning with non-injury (ahīṃsā) to all beings and finally attains separation of consciousness from materiality for avoiding rebirth. This is an ideal state of liberation."

Liberation is dependent on the perfection in ethics. But attainment of perfection in ethics and attainment of liberation are different although ethics and liberation are not absolutely opposite to each other.

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482 Rajat Bhattacharya’s unpublished paper presented in the National Seminar, organized by the Department of Philosophy, the University of Burdwan during
Richard. F. Gombrich\(^{483}\) considers that Sāṁkhya “not concerned about the world, but it is concerned about the liberation of the individual. It discusses about the way of liberation through the rise of the discrimination of consciousness (\textit{puruṣa}) from non-consciousness (\textit{prakṛti}).” So, for him, Sāṁkhya is not a “communal religion”, but soteriology. By “communal religion” He means that which discusses about the ordering of a society, whereas soteriology, he thinks, is concerned only about the individual and individual’s concern for salvation. Sāṁkhya being a science of liberation (\textit{mokṣaśāstra}) is thus for him soteriology, not communal religion.

Gombrich is right in understanding that Sāṁkhya is concerned about the liberation of the individual, but he is wrong in understanding that Sāṁkhya is not concerned about the society and the world. The journey towards the state of \textit{prakṛtilaya} that Sāṁkhya preaches is not simply aimed at the goodness of individual, but also directed to universal goodness. Therefore, neither egotistic ethics, nor egoistic ethics have any place of in Sāṁkhya. A Sāṁkhya type of deontologist engages himself to the detached (\textit{anāśakta}) activities aiming at complete and permanent cessation of sorrow for himself as well as for every individual in general. A Sāṁkhya aspirant, can not therefore, believe in entthropocentricism, because he considers plants, birds, wild and pet animals, men and divine beings as individual beings\(^{484}\) enjoying intrinsic goodness.

Sāṁkhya opines that because of the dominance of \textit{rajoguna} in the humans there is immense sensitivity, activity and sorrow in them, and therefore, the humans are found dissatisfied with their sorrowful given state and possessing an urge for attainment of complete alleviation (\textit{abhibhava}) of sorrows for ever. But, Sāṁkhya believes that all humans belong to a single order (\textit{mānuṣya caikavidha}) and a human society is dependent on individual morality in particular and social morality in general. Perfection in morality perfection enables an individual to purify

\(^{483}\) Knut A. Jacobsen has referred this in his book: \textit{Prakṛti in Sāṁkhya-Yoga}, 1\textsuperscript{st} Indian edn., Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2002, P-333

\(^{484}\) \textit{kārikā-LIII}
himself for the attainment of liberation, and after attainment of liberation a liberated human (jivanmukta purusa-s) can bring peace in the outer world so long as he remains alive.

Moreover, Sāṁkhya considers that liberation can not be achieved by killing any living being and by destroying the non-living things. So, even if indirectly, the Sāṁkhya ethics of non-injury supports the theory of conservation of nature.

A Sāṁkhya aspirant attempts to transcend food chain by minimizing his impact on environment following the ahimsā-based path of non-attachment and withdrawal and finally attains liberation, when he realizes that the present state of the universe is the manifest form of prakṛti—the subtlest form of matter and everything around is in essence prākṛтика, i.e. consciousness-illumined mater.

Having attained discriminative knowledge a man gets mukti, but he has to wait for pralaya to attain the state of pure consciousness, because the sūkṣma śarīra-s continue to exist until the occurrence of pralaya. Attainment of the state of pure consciousness is called kaivalya, which is a transition from the state of consciousness-illumined intellect to that of pure consciousness. "Kaivalya is a state that is free from injury (ahimsā), because the puruṣa has attained absolute separation from prakṛti." 485

Moral status of the individual being-s of different orders in the chain of evolution

According to Sāṁkhya the bodies of static objects, plants, animals, humans and divinities are associated with a puruṣa. Any kind of body associated with a puruṣa can thus be called an individual being, who experiences pain and pleasure in this birth, and takes rebirth according to merit and demerit of the actions done in the past— both in this life and in earlier lives.

So, Sāṁkhya Ethics deals with all individual being-s and not just humans. There is no doubt that any individual being of lower order is incapable of acting as

485 kārikā-LIII
moral agent. Moreover, moralists differ on the moral status of the *individual being*-s of different orders other than adult self-conscious humans.

But, for Sāṁkhya any *individual being* of any order possesses intrinsic goodness, because at any stage of evolution an *individual being* is an association of *puruṣa* and *prakṛiti*—the two ultimate elements, which are intrinsically good. The sense in which Sāṁkhya Ethics deals with all *individual being*-s of any order including those of lower order like the plants and animals is definitely not the conducts pertaining to morality expected from them, but the moral status of them as having intrinsic goodness. That is to say, at any state of evolution, an *individual being* of any order, including those of lower order like the plants and animals, is definitely non-violable by virtue of possessing intrinsic goodness.

It is true that no *individual being* of any order other than adult self-conscious humans can act as moral agents, but for that reason it can not be the case that *individual being*-s of any order other than adult self-conscious humans lack moral status—they only lack the status of being moral agents. Naturally, any *individual being* of any order, including the humans, is non-violable by virtue of possessing intrinsic goodness; whereas the conducts of adult self-conscious humans are subject to moral scrutiny.

☐ Right Human attitude toward all *individual being*-s: 
the road to freedom from all sorrows for ever

Human attitude toward the *individual being*-s of any order other than one’s ownself is thus very important.

"Treatment of non-human living beings causes merit and demerit which influence future rebirth. The question therefore can be asked whether the Sāṁkhya view of the principle of matter and the interdependency of material world has any implications for the understanding of human attitude toward the living beings that constitute the living environment. It seem that, contrary to common assumptions, the practice of non-injury toward all beings (*ahimsa*) is based, not on a spiritual realization of the common identity of all beings, but on the realization of painful nature of their
interdependency and the belief in the separateness of the consciousness principle from that interdependency.”

**mokṣa** means freedom from interdependency

For Sāmkhya, interdependency of the guṇa-s results in the mutual interdependency of natural world where all living beings depend on each other in a system of mutual support. The interdependency binds the individuals of different orders to comit pāpa for survival in the saṁsāra. Hence, for liberation an individual needs withdrawal from matter. **mokṣa**, thus, means freedom from interdependency. So, every act, even the most meritorious one, produces some demerit. In a sacrifice, living beings are killed or seeds are burnt. Even sacrifice, which gives merit, also gives demerit. This is stated by the *Yuktidipikā* on kārikā-2 in the following manner:

“But we do not reject the validity of the Vedas. Nor do we say that one engaged in the violence prescribed by the scripture is associated with undesired results. On the other hand, in spite of being means for attaining heaven, the performance of the (ritualistic) acts prescribed by the Vedas is not possible without killed the living beings. Hence, it should be neglected by those who wish well for them because it is stated that one should not act for one’s own benefit by killing others. It is stated ‘one should not do that to others which is disagreeable to one self’. This is the dharma in brief.”

**Power of ahimsā—the dharma**

As in the Sanskrit literature

“Kālidāsa describes the hermitage of Vālmīki as a place where‘in the evening, the deer were sitting by side of the alters and the wild animals were in a state of peace and tranquillity.”

Vācaspatimiśra comments on the *Yogasūtra* 2.35 in the following way:


487 Ibid. p-332 & 333

488 Ibid. p-337 & 338
“even enemies whose hostility is everlasting like horse and buffalo, mouse and cat, snake and mongoose, in the presence of the exalted yogin who is grounded in abstinence from injury, conform themselves to his mind stuff and renounce altogether their hostility”  

Highest form of the practice of ahimsā—the dharma

“Since killing of living beings is unavoidable in the course of one's life, some people wonder how it can be possible to practice non-injury. This doubt arises out of ignorance of the principle of the practice of non-injury. The commentator (Vyāsa) has said that enjoyment of material objects is not possible without hurting others. Therefore in order to live, hurting living beings is inevitable. Knowing that, the Yogins practice Yoga to avoid being born again. This is the highest form of practice of non-injury”.

So, only liberation puts an end to injuring others, because liberation puts an end to rebirth. This is the logical conclusion of the ethics of non-injury.

“The ethics of non-injury toward all beings is therefore a result of the knowledge of the painful nature of existence and the idea that the true identities of all beings totally transcend nature.”

A few important features of the Sāmkhya ethics of ahimsā—based on its theory of evolution

1. The Sāmkhya ethics of ahimsā is based on its theory of evolution.
2. According to this ethics, although the adult self-conscious humans can be the moral agents, any individual of the cosmic community, i.e. individual of any order is inviolable for having intrinsic goodness.
3. The Sāmkhya ethics of ahimsā thus imposes regulation on human behavior toward nature.

490 Ibid. p-341
491 Ibid. p-342 & 343
4. The purpose of this ethics is to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community.

5. This ethical system is different from any Western environmental ethics. The Sāmkhya ethics emphasizes on taming and restraining one's own innate nature.

6. This makes Sāmkhya ethics of *ahimsā* an unique environmental ethics.

7. The emphasis on restraint and detachment is not antithetical to environmental ethics, but very much conducive to it.

8. "*Ahimsā* is a necessary condition for salvation but not a sufficient condition. The goal of the *mokṣaśāstra* of Sāmkhya is liberation of *puruṣa* from the association with *prakṛti*, because the goal is to get rid of finally and permanently every form pain. To attain this goal any association with matter has to cease." 492

**Conclusion**

On the basis of the study of the entire process of evolution that we have made we can come to the following conclusion:

The Sāmkhya view of evolution is based on an ancient philosophical study of the process of evolution of the world. The term world here stands for the entire universe. The Sāmkhya view of evolution is thus not confined to any scientific enquiry based on so-called scientific observation and experiment on the emergence of new species from genus, rather it is a broad philosophical study based on reflexive study of origin and development of the entire universe.

Evolution, according to Sāmkhya, is real, but gradual development of what exists inherently within the primary cause in a non-manifested state. The process of evolution makes the undeveloped one developed or the less developed one more developed, the less differentiated one more differentiated.

The whole process of evolution, for Sāmkhya, is related to the primary cause—uncaused material root cause. That which evolves cannot be detached from the effect it gives rise to. That means the cause is pervaded in the effect. Yet the evolute is differentiated from the cause as its effect. The effect is the manifested form of the cause. An evolute is manifested to its fullest extent following an inviolable order of sequence. Hence, evolution, for Sāmkhya, is not an emergent one; it is almost cyclic; since Sāmkhya admits kalpāntara—the succession of evolutionary chain.

The succession of the entire evolutionary chain cannot always be fully visualized. As Vācaspati states that the seed of a bayan tree can not bring out all on a sudden another full-grown tree which can protect men and animals from the scorching rays of the sun by giving shed. In reality, a tree grows out gradually in an ordered form getting contact with earth, water and heat. Likewise, the evolutes follow a definite order of succession, they do not appear suddenly. The central conception of evolution lies in the idea of gradual unfoldment of the non-differentiated. So far as the full significance of this idea ably elucidated by Dr. B.N. Seal may found in the following lines:

"Evolution (parināma) in its formal aspect is defined as differentiation in the integrated... In other words, the process of evolution consists in the development of differentiated (vaiśmye) within the differentiated (sāmyāvasthā), of the determinate (viśeṣa) within the in terminate (aviśeṣa), of the coherent (yutasiddha) within the incoherent (ayutasiddha)".

A series of new cycle of creation (kalpāntara) goes on in the universe—onward and return. At the advent of a new cycle of creation, prakṛti comes in a transcendental contact (śāstriya sarvyoga) of the puruṣa, and as a consequence, there occurs a disturbance within the prakṛti resulting in the break up the equipoise of guṇa-s giving rise to in the relative preponderance of one guṇa over the other. The guṇa-s then begin to dominate over one another—giving rise to the starting of the process of becoming. At first sattva element dominates over the
other two, because according to Sāmkhya evolution starts from the finest and proceeds towards the grossest.

Evolution, in the Sāmkhya system, is called *parināma*. *parināma*, means modification, change or flux. There is no *parināma* in *puruṣa*—the pure consciousness, but there is constant *parināma* in *prakṛti*. *parināma* may, again, be of two kinds, according to Sāmkhya, namely *sadrśa* or *svarūpa* (homogeneous) *parināma* and *visadrśa* or *virūpa* (heterogeneous) *parināma*.

The Sāmkhya concept of *parināma*, as we have seen, does not permit the emergence of anything new, but implies the manifestation of the non-manifest. That is to say, what was non-manifest in its causal state becomes manifest in its effect state. Hence, according to the Sāmkhya *parināmavāda*, the evolutes can never be different from which it is evolved. There is no Divine authority over and above the two fundamental elements—*prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, to bring about contact between them. Sāmkhya assigns natural urge inherent in these two fundamental elements for bringing about contact. The *anuloma* and *pratiloma* types of *virūpa parināma*, according to Sāmkhya, are the following:

The entire process of evolution of elements beginning from the origination of *mahat* down to the *sthūlabhūta*-s or *mahābhūta*-s and the subsequent process of evolution all the non-elemental things from the elements is called *anuloma* type of *virūpa parināma*.

The entire reverse process of merging of all the non-elemental things into the *sthūlabhūta*-s or *mahābhūta*-s, and then step by step merging of each effect-element into its immediate cause-element beginning from (i) merging of *sthūlabhūta*-s into *sūkṣmabhūta*-s and then through a chain of merger, viz. (ii) *sūkṣmabhūta*-s, *indriya*-s and *manas* into *ahaṁkāra*, (iii) *ahaṁkāra* into *mahat* (iv) and finally *mahat* into *mūlaprākṛti* is called *pratiloma* type of *virūpa parināma*.

Some comments need to be made on how do these twenty-three evolutes of *mūlaprākṛti* and the constituent *guna*-s along with *puruṣa* are related to the ethical process and have been the foundation of Sāmkhya ethics? Unlike some
other systems in which matter is equated with evil and consciousness is equated with good, the Sāṁkhya 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 Sāṁkhya-kārikā in the following way:

As the insentient milk flows out for the growth of the calf, so does Nature acts towards the emancipation of consciousness.

Hiriyanna’s following comment is noteworthy here:

“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”.

The doctrine of the guṇa-s has moral ethical significance. The guṇa-s provides 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.

Even if through sattva guṇa, 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 an individual can distinguish the puruṣa from prakṛti and thereby attain kaivalya.

The summum 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 summum
bonum thus shows that the metaphysics and theory of evolution are the grounds, upon which the Sāṁkhya ethical system is founded.

Like prakṛti, puruṣa is eternal. In almost all other respects, puruṣa is 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 (ignorance of unknown beginning) of the true nature of puruṣa. Release from bondage comes through highest knowledge (viveka jñāna)—the clear cognition 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 at least metaphorically. When this enlightenment dawns, the activity of prakṛti ceases to last.

"As a dancer desists from dancing, having exhibited herself to the audience, so does prakṛti desist, having exhibited herself to the puruṣa." 493

But enlightenment does not bring life to an immediate end. kārikā-LXVII explains the sequence in which life comes to an end at enlightenment in the following way:

Virtue etc. having ceased as causes, because of the attainment of perfect wisdom, the consciousness remains metaphorically involved with the bodies, 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 the prior impulse.

Any individual being including humans, for Sāṁkhya, 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). 494 Association of consciousness with gross body (sthūlaśarīra) becomes possible only through subtle body (sūkṣmaśarīra). A subtle body (sūkṣmaśarīra) transmigrates

493 kārikā LIX

494 "puruṣaḥ, tadbhapi puri sthūlaśarīre śete iti"-Sāṁkhyatattvakaumudi on kārikā-XLI
from one gross body (sthūlaśarira-s) to another of different forms like deities (deva), man (mānava), animal (paśu) and big tree (vanaspati).

Such associations of consciousness with gross body apparently enables puruṣa to enjoy (through reflection) knowledge (jñāna) pleasure (sukha) and pain (duḥkha) of worldly life. 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. As stated in Yuktidipikā and Jayamarigalā:

“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 the same being, which is the sustenance cause of another is also the source of pain for that other being. 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 must transcend the state of interdependence.

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

495 “tattatsthūlaśariraparigrahaṇāddev vā manusyo vā paśūravā vanastatirva bhavati sūkṣmarī śarīramityarthatāḥ”- Sāmkhyatattvakaumudi on kārikā-XLIII. and
“svasaaktivīśayogattesu teṣu jātyantara parivarttesu dharmādinimittasāmarthyaādyāsamanubhavati”- Yuktidipikā on kārikā-II
Sāmkhya thus establishes the ethics of *ahimsā* (non-injury) based on the theory of interdependence of individual things and beings. Having shown the defects of ordinary (*dṛṣṭa*) and Vedic ritualistic (*ānuṣravika*) means, Sāmkhya considers that liberation cannot be achieved by causing harm to any being in particular and the environment in general.

This ethical position of Sāmkhya supports the theory of conservation of nature. Practice of *ahimsā* enables a person to realize the absolute separateness of consciousness (*puruṣa*) from matter (*prakṛti*), which in turn leads to the realization of the absolute separateness of consciousness (*puruṣa*) from matter (*prakṛti*), and that is liberation. This Virtue-guided actions force a being either to migrate to higher order or to attain liberation.

Sāmkhya moral theory of non-injury (*ahimsā*) is thus opposed to the modern bio-centric concept of ecological balance, which places 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 Sāmkhya is an attempt to transcend the ecological process of nature and to get out of the food chain. A Sāmkhya yogin minimizes his impact on environment through a process of non-attachment and withdrawal based on non-injury (*ahimsā*) to all beings and finally attains separation of consciousness from materiality.

At the ordinary level man is simply a victim of sorrow, but at the rise of discriminative knowledge the effects of man’s past sorrowful deeds do not go away all at once. Man has to wait for the final release, until his *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 *jivanmukta puruṣa* so long as the effects of his previous actions are not completely destroyed. A man has to wait for *pralaya* (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 śarīra*, because the *sūkṣma śarīra*-s continue to exist up to the occurrence of *pralaya*. Therefore, man's individual effort may enable him to attain *mukti* at the state of possessing some kind of *śarīra*, but the process of attainment of final release is not completed, until all kinds of *śarīra*-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 śarīra* may cease to exist simultaneously with the *sūkṣma śarīra*-s of all other individual beings.