

Concept of Realization according to Sankhya

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Among the 6 system of Indian philosophy Sankhya is considered to be a peculiar system of philosophy. Kapila Maharshi was the founder of this system. He is believed to be the author of Sankhya Sutras, but at a later date the original Sutras of Kapila Maharshi were lost and another book of aphorisms on Sankhya was brought to the philosophical literature. However, Ishvara Krishna the author of Sankhya karika is considered to be the oldest book on Sankhya next to the aphorisms of Kapila. Sri Shankaracharya in his Bhaashya on BrahmaSutra very often refutes the philosophical tenets of the Sankhya System.

Sankhya System is considered to be a leading system among the opponents. That is why it is styled as षड्विंशतिमल्लनिबर्हणन्याय .

It is for this because Sankhya propounds its system based on both logic and Upanishads. It quotes so many Upanishadic sentences to corroborate its stands and defends the same points by logic also. According to some scholars Sankhya system is considered to be earlier than the Vedanta system or Brahmasutras.

This system is very much interested in finding solutions to the miseries that we come across. Accordingly the end of miseries itself is called realization.

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दुःखत्रयाभिघाताज्जिज्ञासा तदभिघातके हेतौ ।

दृष्टे सापार्था चेन्नैकान्तात्यन्ततोऽभावात् ॥ सा.का- श्लो-०१

It is very much interesting to a common man because it talks about the miseries which we experience in all walks of our life. Putting a full stop to these miseries means it should be with certainty and permanently. It can be achieved only when a person realizes the difference between himself and the Prakriti (प्रकृतिपुरुषविवेको मोक्षः) .

Because of Avidya or ignorance this Purusha identifies himself with this Prakruti. This itself is the root of all miseries or evils. To get rid of these miseries one has to purify one's mind which is very much disturbed with unlimited Vaasanaas. This can be done only by understanding properly or realizing the truth that this insentient Prakriti is different from the sentient individual self. This truth is embedded in the right understanding of the entire 25 categories..

एवम् तत्त्वाभ्यासान्नास्मि न मे नाहमित्यपरिशेषम् ।
अविपर्ययाद्विशुद्धं केवलमुत्पद्यते ज्ञानम् ॥ सा.का- श्लो-६४

The miseries that we experience in the entire world are included in three main types. They are आधिभौतिक आधिदैविक and आध्यात्मिक ।

आधिभौतिक means the miseries caused by five gross elements (पंचमहाभूत). It may be caused by the earthquake, cyclone, floods, fire and others. It also includes the sorrows that are caused by animals, birds, and other living beings.

The second one is that caused by divine beings and devils and goblins.

The third one is pertaining to the body and the mind (आध्यात्मिक). In other words pains experienced in our body as well as by mind (आधि - व्याधि).

Thus, these are the three types of miseries in which all the miseries are encountered. To find solutions to these miseries first we approach the worldly objects of solutions. Ex; To avoid our mental agony or physical diseases we approach the physicians of some medicines. They do give medicine but it is not assured (न एकान्तत्वम्) and also it is not permanently removed by these medicines (न आत्यन्तिक दुःखनाशः)

Because we take medicine the diseases are cured temporarily. The diseases may come after some time. The physicians cannot assure that these diseases can be removed certainly by this particular medicine. Therefore the worldly solutions have two defects ie. Lack of permanence and certainty.

To avoid these worldly solutions which are seen defective, if we resort to divine solution they too have more defects.

दृष्टवदानुश्रविकः स ह्यविशुद्धिक्षयातिशययुक्तः । सा.का- श्लो-०२

Therefore we have another way of solution which is totally bereft of defects that is the realization of व्यक्त, अव्यक्त and ज्ञ .

तद्विपरीतह् श्रेयान् व्यक्ताव्यक्तज्ञविज्ञानात् ॥ सा.का- श्लो-०२

Now Sankhya system styles the self as the Purusha. Purusha includes human being, Devine being, Supreme god and others.

Prakruti is the creator of the entire universe. But it should have the company of this sentient Purusha. The combination of Purusha and Prakriti is Anaadi. Purusha is devoid of qualities. By the proximity of Prakriti Purusha feels to be Kartaa. Originally this Kartritva and other qualities are not at all connected with this Purusha. A beautiful example of prism is given in this connection. If a red flower is kept before this prism, it appears to be totally red. When it is removed that redness is also disappearing. Similarly Purusha or self is pure like this prism.

The presence of redness is like Prakriti. The Kartritva of this Prakriti is super imposed on the Purusha. In other words Purusha identifies himself with this Prakruti and feels this Kartritva to be his own property. It is due to the ignorance. Prakriti has eight qualities and it binds this Purusha with seven qualities and releases him with the last one that is Jnaana. The seven qualities are Dharma-Adharma, Aishvarya-Anaishvarya, Vairagya-Avairagya, Ajnaana and the last one is Jnaana by which it is helping the purusha to realize his own nature.

रूपैः सप्तभिरेव तु बध्नात्यात्मानमात्मना प्रकृतिः ।

सैव च पुरुषार्थं प्रति विमोचयत्येकरूपेण ॥ सा.का- श्लो-६३

Everything in the proceses of realization and boundage is done by this Prakriti only. That is why Purusha is neither bound nor liberated. It is Prakriti that makes him bound and liberated. For the same reason Purusha is not at all undergoing rebirth. Everything is managed by this Prakriti only.

When the mind is purified completely the Purusha realises his own nature as other than this non sentient Prakriti. This Prakriti with the qualities like Dharma, Aishvarya, Vairagya helps him very much to march on the pathway to realization and that itself make him to get realization with the help of knowledge. For purification of mind the entire code of decipline as accepted by Yogashastra is propounded in this system. When the Purusha realizes the difference, the Prakriti slowly gets back from his proximity. Ishwara Krishna gives a beautiful example for this.

A dancer appears on the stage and puts forth her performance and then gets back from the stage. Similarly Prakriti brings the entire world to this Purusha and gets back when Purusha realises his own nature.

रंगस्य दर्शयित्वा विनिवर्तते नर्तकी यथा नृत्यात् ।

पुरुषस्य तथात्मानं प्रकाश्य विनिवर्तते प्रकृतिः ॥ सा.का- श्लो-५९

This Prakriti though insentient works hard for the sake of Purusha by nature itself. It is just like the milk which is served to the calf by nature.

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पुरुषविमोक्षनिमित्तं तथा प्रवृत्तिः प्रधानस्य ॥ सा.का- श्लो-५७

Prakriti has another form which is found in the individual body and it is called Linga Shareera. This Linga Shareera constituted by 17 elements stays with the body till realization. This is the body that goes to different worlds after death. Thus, this linga Shareera is desolved immediately when the realization takes place. It is only by the Impression (Samskaara), that the body runs till death on account of Praarabdha Karma.

सम्यग्ज्ञानाधिगमाद् धर्मादीनामकारणप्राप्तौ ।

तिष्ठति सम्स्कारवशाच्चक्रभ्रमवत् धृतशरीरः ॥ सा.का- श्लो-६७

However, Sankhya accepts the concept of Jeevanmukthi as advocated by Vedantins.

Thus, when the Purusha gets realized he attains the only state in which the miseries permanently and with certainty vanish. That itself is called Kaivalya Svaroopaa after the fall of body.

प्राप्ते शरिरभेदे चरितार्थत्वात् प्रधानविनिवृत्तौ ।
एकान्तिकमात्यन्तिकमुभयं कैवल्यमाप्नोति ॥ सा.का- श्लो-६८

In this way Sankhya system is the oldest system from which the Vedaanta system borrows so many philosophical points. This concept of self realization is very much supported by Upanishadic sentences. The followers of Sankhya take logic also to defend all these points. In a way the concept of realization of the Sankhyas is slightly in a negative way. In other words Vedantins say that realization is attaining the supreme bliss. But in the Sankhya system it is the removal of miseries. That means Purusha is originally bliss itself. When the miseries are removed he attains his natural state of realization.

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