Hindu Philosophy - Part - 1
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Philosophy – Its Origin and Its Limitations
Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is an integral part of religion in India. It is a rational enquiry into the nature of Truth or Reality. It gives clear solutions for the profound, subtle problems of life. It shows the way to get rid of pain and death and attain immortality and eternal bliss.

Philosophy has its roots in the practical needs of man. Man wants to know about transcendental matters when he is in a reflective state. There is an urge within him to know about the secret of death, the secret of immortality, the nature of the soul, the Creator and the world. Philosophy helps him to know all these things. Philosophy is the self-expression of the growing spirit of man. The philosophers are its voice. Great creative thinkers and philosophers appear in all ages. They elevate and inspire the people.

Certain philosophical questions arise in the mind of man. What is this Samsara? (Samsara = life through repeated births and deaths; the process of worldly life). Has it any purpose? Is the world real or mere appearance? Is there any Creator or Governor of this universe? If there is a Creator, what is His nature? What is the relation between man and the Creator? Is there any way to escape from the round of births and deaths? Is there any such thing as the Impersonal Absolute? If so, what is Its essential nature? How did man come into bondage? What is his essential nature? Is he a part of the Supreme Soul, or is he identical with It? What is the difference between Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute? What is the source for this world? What is matter? What is mind? What is individual soul? What is the goal of life? The search for a solution of these problems is philosophy. Philosophy solves beautifully all these problems.

Death – The Starting Point of Philosophy
The idea of death has ever been the strongest motive-power of religion and religious life. Man is afraid of death and wants to live forever. This is the starting point of philosophy. Philosophy enquires and investigates. It boldly proclaims: “O man! Do not be afraid of death. There is an immortal abode. That is Brahman (the Supreme Reality). That is your own Atman (soul) which dwells in the chamber of your heart. Purify your heart and meditate on this pure, immortal, changeless Self. You will attain immortality”. Death is the ultimate pointer to the transience of all things and the existence of an ultimate reality.

Various Schools of Philosophy
A clear understanding of man’s relation to God is a matter of momentous importance to students of philosophy and to all aspirants. Philosophers, prophets, saints, sages, thinkers, Acharyas and great religious leaders of the world have tried to explain the relation of man to God and the universe. Various schools of philosophy and different kinds of religious beliefs have come into existence, on account of various explanations given by different philosophers.

Philosophy and Intuition
Philosophy will take you to the gates of the realm of eternal bliss, but it cannot allow you to enter that realm. Intuition or realisation is necessary for entering that holy land of everlasting joy and ineffable glory.
Hindu philosophy is not mere speculation or guesswork. It is lofty, sublime, unique, and systematic. It is based on mystic spiritual experience, or Aparoksha Anubhuti. The seers, sages and Rishis who had direct, intuitive perception of the Truth are the founders of the different philosophical systems in India. The different schools of philosophy are all based on the Srutis or the Vedas, directly or indirectly. Those who have studied carefully the Upanishads will find that the revelations of the Sruti (Vedas) are in harmony with the conclusions of philosophy.

The Orthodox and the Heterodox Systems of Indian Philosophy

The six systems of Indian philosophy or the Shad-Darsanas are the six orthodox systems of philosophy. They are the six ways of looking at the Truth. These are:

1. The Nyaya
2. The Vaiseshika
3. The Sankhya
4. The Yoga
5. The Purva Mimamsa
6. The Uttara-Mimamsa or The Vedanta.

The orthodox systems of philosophy believe in the authority of the Vedas. The heterodox systems of philosophy do not believe in the authority of the Vedas. The six heterodox systems of philosophy are:

1. The Materialistic School of Charvaka
2. The System of the Jainas
3. The School of Presentationists or Vaibhashikas (Buddhist)
4. The School of Representationists or Sautrantikas (Buddhist)
5. The school of idealism or Yogacharas (Buddhist)
6. The school of Nihilism of the Madhyamikas (Buddhist)

The Shad-Darsanas or the Six Orthodox Schools

The Shad-Darsanas or the six orthodox systems grew directly out of the Vedas. Darsana means literally sight or vision. Darsana means a system of philosophy. The Darsana literature is philosophical. Each Darsana is a way of looking into the Truth; is a standpoint in respect of the Truth.

Gautama Rishi systematised the principles of Nyasa or the Indian logical system. Kanada composed the Vaiseshika Sutras. Kapila Muni founded the Sankhya system. Patanjali Maharshi is the first systematiser of the Yoga school. He composed his Yoga Sutras. The Yoga-Darsana of Patanjali is a celebrated text-book on Raja-Yoga. Jaimini, a disciple of Vyasa, composed the Sutras of the Mimamsa school, which is based on the ritual sections of the Vedas. Badarayana composed his famous Vedanta Sutras or Brahma Sutras which expound the teachings of the Upanishads. The different schools of the Vedanta have built their philosophy on the foundation of these Sutras.
Different Ways of Approach to the Same Goal

The six schools of thought are like the six different roads which lead to one city. You may go to Bombay by train or airplane or motor bus or any other vehicle. Even so, you can reach the goal of life through Yoga, or Vedanta, or any other path. The methods or ways of approach to the Goal are different to suit people of different temperaments, capacities and mental calibre. But they all have one aim, viz., removal of ignorance and its effects of pain and sufferings and the attainment of freedom, perfection, immortality and eternal bliss by union of the individual soul (Jivatman) with the Supreme Soul (Paramatman).

No student of Hinduism ought to be satisfied without acquiring a clear and accurate knowledge of the principal distinguishing characteristics of the six philosophical schools. The more advanced scholar should study the original Sutras in which the doctrines of each school are enunciated. Study of the six schools of philosophy will sharpen the intellect and give you vast knowledge. You will have clear and comprehensive understanding of the Truth. Each system is a step or rung in the spiritual ladder.

Interrelation Between the Six Systems

The six schools are divided into three groups:

1. The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika
2. The Sankhya and the Yoga
3. The Mimamsa and the Vedanta

The Vaiseshika is a supplement of the Nyaya. The Yoga is a supplement of the Sankhya. The Vedanta is an amplification and fulfillment of the Sankhya. The study of Vyakarana (grammar), Mimamsa, Nyaya and Sankhya is necessary to understand the Vedanta. The Nyaya sharpens the intellect and enables the aspirants to grasp the Vedanta. The Nyaya is considered as a prerequisite for all philosophical enquiry.

The Vaiseshika is not very much in honour now. The Nyaya is popular. The Sankhya is not a living faith. The Yoga is practised by a few in its practical form. The Vedanta is the most popular of all the schools today.

The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika will give you an analysis of the world of experience. They arrange all the things of the world into certain kinds or categories (Padarthas). They explain how God has made all this material world out of atoms and molecules. They show the way to attain knowledge of God. The Sankhya will provide you with deep knowledge of Hindu psychology. Kapila Muni was the father of psychology. The Yoga deals with the control of Vrittis or thought-waves, and with meditation. The Yoga system shows the ways to discipline the mind and the senses. The Yoga will help you to cultivate concentration and one-pointedness of mind and enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi or the Superconscious State.

The Purva-Mimamsa deals with the Karma-Kanda (rituals- ceremonies) of the Vedas, and the Uttara-Mimamsa is also known as the Vedanta-Darsana. This is the corner stone of Hinduism. The Vedanta philosophy explains in detail the nature of Brahman or the Eternal Being, and shows that the individual soul is, in essence, identical with the Supreme Self. It gives methods to remove Avidya or the veil of ignorance and to merge oneself in the ocean of bliss or Brahman.

The Nyaya calls ignorance Mithya Jnana, false knowledge. The Sankhya styles it Aviveka, non-discrimination between the real and the unreal. The Vedanta names it Avidya, nescience. Each philosophy aims at its eradication by knowledge or Jnana. Then one attains eternal bliss or immortality.
By study of Nyaya and Vaiseshika, one learns to utilise his intellect to find out fallacies and to
know the material constitution of the world. By study of Sankhya, one understands the course of
evolution. By study and practice of Yoga, one gains self-restraint and obtains mastery over mind
and senses. By practice of Vedanta, one reaches the highest rung of the ladder of spirituality or the
pinnacle of divine glory, oneness with the Supreme Being, by the destruction of ignorance
(Avidya).

Vedanta – The Most Satisfactory System of Philosophy

Some of the doctrines of the Nyaya, the Vaiseshika, the Sankhya and the Yoga are opposed to the
teaching of the Vedas. These systems are only superficially based on the Vedas. The Nyaya and the
Vaiseshika schools rely too much on human reason, though they accept the Vedas as the supreme
authority. Human intellect is frail and finite. It has got its limitations. It functions within time, space
and causation. Its findings cannot be infallible. It cannot solve transcendental matters. Vedas only
are infallible and authoritative. They contain the revelations or direct intuitional experiences of
seers and Rishis. These experiences will tally with the experiences of those who have attained
Knowledge of the Self (Brahma-Jnana).

The Vedanta is the most satisfactory system of philosophy. It has been evolved out of the
Upanishads. It has superseded all other schools. The Mimamsa school has laid great stress on
rituals, or Karma-Kanda.

According to Mimamsa school, Karma or ritual is all-in-all in the Veda. Upasana (worship) and
Jnana (knowledge) are only accessories to Karma. This view is refuted by the Vedanta school.
According to the Vedanta, Self-realisation (Jnana) is the foremost thing, and ritual and worship are
accessories. Karma will take one to heaven which is only an impermanent place of refined sensual
enjoyment. Karma cannot destroy the cycle of births and deaths, and cannot give eternal bliss and
immortality.

During the time of Sankaracharya, all the six schools of philosophy flourished. Therefore, he had to
refute the other systems in order to establish his absolute monism (Kevala Advaita). But, nowadays,
Sankhya, Vaiseshika, etc., are in name only. Even now, some Hindu preachers, Sannyasins and
Mandalesvars try to establish Advaita Vedanta by refuting these old systems. This is a mistake.
They will have to refute at the present moment materialism, agnosticism, atheism and science, and
then establish Advaita Vedanta.
THE NYAYA

Introduction

The Nyaya or Hindu logic was founded by Gautama Rishi, who is also known by the names Akshapada and Dirghatapas. The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika are analytic types of philosophy. The word ‘Nyaya’ signifies ‘going into a subject’, i.e., investigating it analytically. In this sense of analysis, the word Nyaya is exactly opposed to Sankhya, synthesis. The Nyaya is sometimes called Tarka-Vidya or the Science of Debate, Vada-Vidya or the science of Discussion. Tarka is the special feature of the Nyaya.

The Nyaya is not merely formal logic, but a complete epistemology. Ordinary people think that the Nyaya is chiefly concerned with logic. Logic is merely a part or a single topic. The purpose of the Nyaya is a critical examination of the objects of knowledge by means of the canons of logical proof. The Nyaya system deals critically with metaphysical problems. It contains discussions on psychology, logic, metaphysics and theology.

The Nyaya – A Method of Philosophical enquiry

The Nyaya is intended to furnish a correct method of philosophical enquiry into all the objects and subjects of human knowledge, including the process of reasoning and laws of thought. The evidence of the senses is submitted to a critical enquiry. The Nyaya gives a description of the mechanism of knowledge in detail. The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika explore the significance of time, space, cause, matter, soul and knowledge for experience, and give the results in the form of a theory of the universe. The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika are regarded as parts of one whole. The Vaiseshika is a supplement to the Nyaya. They are allied systems. They both believe in a Personal God, a plurality of souls and an atomic universe. Further, they use many arguments in common.

The Nyaya is the basis of all Sanskrit philosophical studies. It is an introduction to all systematic philosophy. It is the preliminary course for a student of philosophy. You cannot understand the Brahma-Sutras of Sri Vyasa without a knowledge of the Nyasa. A study of the Nyasa develops the power of reasoning or arguing. It renders the intellect sharp and subtle intellect. The Kathopanishad says:

“It (the Atman or the Self) is beheld by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect” (Drisyate Tvagryaya Buddhya Sukshmaya Sukshma-Darsibhih).

The Nyaya Sutra by Gautama is the first work on Nyaya philosophy. This is the most famous book of the school. Numerous commentaries have been written on this book by various authors, viz., Nyaya-Bhashya by Vatsayana, Nyayalankara by Srikantha, Nyaya-Manjari by Jayanta, Nyaya-Bodhini by Govardhana, Nyaya-Varttika-Tatparya-Tika by Vachaspati Misra etc.

Knowledge

All knowledge implies four conditions:

1. The subject or the Pramata, the cogniser
2. The object or the Prameya
3. The resulting state of cognition or the Pramiti
4. The means of knowledge or the Pramana

Prameya, or the objects of which, right knowledge is to be obtained, are twelve, viz,
1. Soul (Atman)
2. Body (Sarira)
3. Senses (Indriyas)
4. Objects of senses (Artha)
5. Intellect (Buddhi)
6. Mind (Manas)
7. Activity (Pravritti)
8. Fault (Dosha)
9. Transmigration (Pretyabhava)
10. Fruit (Phala)
11. Pain (Duhkha)
12. Salvation (Apavarga)

Perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumana), comparison (Upamana), and word or verbal testimony (Sabda) are the Pramanas or the means of right knowledge. Sabda or verbal testimony, includes Vedic revelation. Pratyaksha is perception by the senses.

**God, Self and Universe**

**God**
The Nyaya says that the actions of man produce their fruits, called Adrishta, under the control of God. God supervises the work of Adrishta. The intelligent principle of Adrishta, which governs the fate of man, acts under the direction of God. God does not alter the course of Adrishta, but renders possible its operations. God is the bestower of the fruits of actions of human beings. God is a Special Soul endowed with omnipotence and omniscience, by which He guides and regulates the world.

God is a Personal Being. He is free from Mithya-Jnana (false knowledge). Adharma (demerit), and Pramada (carelessness). He has Jnana (knowledge), Ichha (desire) and Prayatna (volitional effort). God is One, Creator, who is endowed with Nitya Jnana (eternal knowledge) and Ichha-Kriya (desire-action) as his Gunas (attributes). He is Vibhu (all-pervading).

**The Soul**
The soul is a real being. It is an eternal entity. Desire, aversion, volition, pleasure, pain, intelligence and cognition are its qualities or marks. The object of the notion of ‘I’ is the soul. No cognition or recollection is possible without a soul. The eye cannot see objects and the ear cannot hear sounds without a soul. There should be an agent to use the instruments (senses). That agent is the soul. After an object is seen, even if the eyes are both destroyed, the knowledge that ‘I have seen’ remains. This knowledge is not a quality of either the objects or the senses. The mind is not the soul. It is only an instrument of the soul, by means of which it thinks. The self is the subject. The soul exists even when the body perishes, the senses are cut off and the mind is controlled. There are infinite numbers of souls.

**The Universe**
The universe is a composite of eternal, unalterable, causeless atoms which exists independently of our thoughts. The universe is the modification of the atoms (Paramanus) of the physical elements: Earth (Prithvi), Water (Apas), Fire (Tejas), and Air (Vayu). The Nyaya admits nine objects (Dravyas), viz., Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Space (Quarters), Time, Mind and the Self (Atman).
The Cause of Bondage and the Means to Emancipation

One can remove misapprehension or false knowledge and attain supreme felicity by the true knowledge of the sixteen categories. The sixteen categories are: means of right knowledge (Pramana), object of right knowledge (Prameya), doubt (Samsaya), purpose (Prayojana), familiar instance (Drishtanta), established tenet (Siddhanta), members (Avayaya), argumentation (Tarka), ascertainment (Nirmaya), discussion (Vada), wrangling (Jalpa), cavil (Vitanda), fallacy (Hetvabhasa), quibble (Chala), futility (Jati), and occasion for rebuke (Nigraha-sthana).

There is, first, the state of Samsaya or doubt about the point to be discussed. Next comes the Prayojana or motive for discussing it. Next follows a Drishtanta or example which leads to the Siddhanta or established conclusion. Then comes the objector with his Avayava or argument, split up into five members. Next follows the Tarka or refutation, and the Nirmaya or ascertainment of the true state of the case.

A further Vada or controversy takes place, which leads to Jalpa or mere wrangling. This is followed by Vitanda or caviling. Hetvabhasa or fallacious reasoning, and Nigraha-Sthana, the putting an end to all discussion by a demonstration of the objector’s incapacity for argument.

When one attains the true knowledge, his faults, viz., affection (Raga), aversion (Dvesha) and stupidity (Moha) vanish. Aversion includes anger, envy, malice and hatred. Attachment includes lust, greed, avidity and covetousness. Stupidity includes suspicion, conceit, carelessness and misapprehension. Stupidity generates dislike and attachment. You must put an end to the chain, which begins with misapprehension or false knowledge and ends with pain, if you wish to attain release. If false knowledge vanishes, faults will disappear. If faults vanish, one is freed from activity and consequent transmigration and pains.

Transmigration which consists in the soul’s leaving one body and taking another, is the cause of its undergoing pleasure and pain. A soul which is no longer subject to transmigration is freed from all pains. The soul attains release as soon as there is end to the body, and consequently to pleasure and pain.

The State of Apavarga or Release

Apavarga, or release, is absolute deliverance from pain. It is freedom from pain. It is cessation of pain. It is not the enjoyment of positive pleasure. It is not annihilation of the self. It is destruction of bondage. Release from the twenty one kinds of pain or Duhkha is liberation (Moksha). In the state of release, there is no connection of mind with the Atman. The Atman is destitute of desire, effort, merit, demerit, hatred, mental impressions, etc., in the state of liberation, as, then, there is no mind. The liberation (Moksha) of the Naiyayikas is a word without meaning. It is a state of painless, passionless existence, like that of a stone without sensation and interest.

To Sum Up

This world has begun by a combination of atoms. It has Samyoga (conjunction) and Viyoga (Disassociation). The cause of the world is the Paramanus (atoms) and the nine Dravyas (materials), including Isvara (God). Isvara has Nitya-Jnana (eternal knowledge) who has also Ichha-Kriya (desire-action) as Gunas (qualities). He is Vibhu (all-pervading). Jiva (individual soul) is doer and enjoyer. He has several attributes. Jivas are endless. The cause for bondage is ignorance (Ajnana). Twenty one kinds of pain constitute bondage. Moksha is destruction of all kinds of pain. Knowledge of the Atman (Soul), as is distinct from others, is Moksha-Sadhana (austerity for emancipation). Gautama advocates Arambhavada and Anyathakhyati (theory of the production of a new effect from every cause and of realistic epistemology).
Rishi Kanada is also known by the names, Aulukya and Kasyapa.

The Vaiseshika system takes its name from Visesha or particularity which is the characteristic differentia of things. The aphorisms of Kanada contain the essence of the Vaiseshika philosophy. The principal subject treated therein is Visesha, one of the six Padarthas or categories enumerated by the founder.

The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika

The Vaiseshika and the Nyaya agree in their essential principles, such as the nature and qualities of the Self and the atomic theory of the universe. The Vaiseshika is a supplement to the Nyaya. The Vaiseshika has, for its chief objective, the analysis of experience. It begins by arranging its enquiries under categories (Padarthas), i.e., enumeration of certain general properties or attributes that may be predicted of existing things. It formulates general conceptions, which apply to things known, whether by senses or inference, or by authority.

The Aphorisms of Kanada

There are ten chapters in Kanada’s book. The first chapter deals with entire group of Padarthas or predicables. In the second chapter, Kanada has ascertained substance. In the third chapter, he has given a description of the soul and the inner sense. In the fourth chapter, he has discussed the body and its constituents. In the fifth chapter, he has established Karma and action. In the sixth chapter, he has considered Dharma or virtue according to scriptures. In the seventh chapter, he has ascertained attribute and Samavaya (co-inherence or combination). In the eighth chapter, he has ascertained the manifestation of knowledge, its source, and so on. In the ninth chapter, he has established the particular or concrete understanding. And, in the tenth chapter, he has established the differences in the attributes of the soul.

There is enumeration of Padarthas (substances) in the beginning. Then there is definition. Then comes examination or demonstration.

This system is chiefly concerned with the determination of the Padarthas and yet, Kanada opens the subject with an enquiry into Dharma, because Dharma is at the root of the knowledge of the essence of the Padarthas. The first Sutra is: Yatobhyudaya-nihsreyasa-siddhih sa dharmah – Dharma is that which exalts and bestows the Supreme Good or Moksha (cessation of pain). [Note; Dharma = Righteous way of living, as enjoined by the sacred scriptures; virtue.]

The Seven Padartha or Categories

Padartha means literally the meaning of a word. But here it denotes a substance discussed in philosophy. A Padartha is an object which can be thought (Artha or meaning) and named (Pada). All things which exist, which can be perceived and named, all objects of experience, are Padarthas. Compound substances are eternal and independent.

The Padarthas of the Vaiseshika are the following:
1. Substance (Dravya)
2. Quality or property (Guna)
3. Action (Karma)
4. Generalities of properties (Samanya)
5. Particularity (Visesha)
6. Co-inherence or perpetual intimate relation (Samavaya)
7. Non-existence or negation of existence (Abhava)

The first three categories of substance, quality and action have a real objective existence. The next three, viz., generality, particularity and inherence are logical categories. They are products of intellectual discrimination.

Kanada enumerated only six categories, the seventh was added by later writers.

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, time, space, soul and mind are the nine Dravyas or substances. The first four of these and the last are held to be atomic. The first four are both eternal and non-eternal, non-eternal in their various compounds and eternal in their ultimate atoms to which they must be traced back.

Mind is an eternal substance. It does not pervade everywhere like the soul. It is atomic. It can admit only one thought at a time.

There are seventeen qualities inherent in the nine substances, viz., colour (Rupa), taste (Rasa), smell (Gandha), touch (Sparsha), numbers (Sankya), measures (Parimanani), separateness or individuality (Prithaktvam), conjunction and disconjunction (Samyoga-vibhagam), priority and posterity (Paratva-aparatva), intellection or understanding (Buddhayah), pleasure and pain (Sukha-duhkha), desire and aversion (Ichha-dvesha), and volition (Prayatnah). Seven others are said to be implied, viz., gravity, fluidity, viscidity, merit, demerit and sound- making twenty-four in all. Sixteen of these qualities belong to material substances. The other eight, viz., understanding, volition, desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, merit and demerit are the properties of the soul.

The third category, Karma or action, consists of five kinds of acts, viz., elevation or throwing upwards, depression or throwing downwards, contraction, expansion and, motion.

The fourth category, Samanya or generality of properties, is twofold, viz., (1). Higher and lower generality and (2.) that of genus and species.

The fifth category, Visesha or particularity, belongs to the nine eternal substances of the first category, all of which have an eternal ultimate difference distinguishing each from the others. Therefore, the system is called Vaiseshika.

The sixth category Samavaya or co-inherence, is of only one kind. It is the co-inherence between a substance and its qualities, between a genus or species and its individuals, between any object and the general idea connected with it and is thought to be a real entity.

There are four kinds of Abhava, the seventh category, viz., antecedent non-existence, cessation of existence, mutual non-existence and absolute non-existence.

**Knowledge of the Partha Secures Supreme Good**

Knowledge of the Parthas is the means of attaining the Supreme Good. The Supreme Good results from the knowledge produced- by a particular Dharma- of the essence of the Padartha, by means of their resemblance and differences.
The Principle of Adrishta and its inadequacies

Kanada does not openly refer to God in his Sutras. His belief was that the formation of the world was the result of Adrishta, the unseen force of Karmas or acts. He traces the primal activities of the atoms and souls to the principle of Adrishta.

The followers of Kanada introduce God as the efficient cause of the world. The atoms are the material cause of the universe.

The unthinking atoms have not the power and the intelligence to run this universe in an orderly manner. Surely, the activities of the atoms are regulated by an omniscient and omnipotent God. Inference and scriptures compel us to admit God. What is that intelligence which makes the Adrishta to operate? That intelligence is God. The five elements are effects. They must be preceded by someone who has a knowledge of them. That ‘someone’ is God. There must an author for the Vedas. The contents of the Vedas are destitute of errors. The author is free from deceit. He must be an omniscient being.

The souls are destitute of intelligence in the state of dissolution. Hence they cannot control the activities of the atoms. There is no source of motion within the atoms. Therefore, there must be a first mover of the atom. That First Mover is the Creator or God.

Atomic Theory of the Universe

In the Vaiseshika system, the formation of the world is supposed to be effected by the aggregation of atoms. These atoms are countless and eternal. They are eternally aggregated, disintegrated and re-disintegrated by the power of Adrishta. An atom is defined as ‘something existing, having no cause, and eternal’. It is less than the least, invisible, indivisible, intangible and imperceptible by the senses. Each atom has a Visesha or eternal essence of its own. The combination of these atoms is first into an aggregate of two (Dvyanu, dyad). Three of them, again combine into a particle, called Trasarenu (Triad), which like a moat in a sunbeam has just sufficient magnitude to be perceptible.

There are four classes of Paramanus (Paramanu is a sub-atomic particle, such as electron), viz., Paramanus of earth, water, fire and air. The individual atoms combine with others, and again disintegrate after some time.

The Vaiseshika cosmology is dualistic in the sense of assuming the existence of eternal atoms side by side with eternal souls. It has not decided positively the exact relation between soul and matter.

Body and Soul

The body is subtle in Pralaya (dissolution) and gross in creation. The time, place and circumstances of birth, family and the span of life are all determined by the Adrishta.

The individual souls are eternal, manifold, eternally separate from one another, and distinct from the body, senses and mind; and yet capable of apprehension, volition, desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, merit and demerit. They are infinite, ubiquitous or omnipresent and diffused everywhere throughout space. A man’s soul is as much in New York as in Bombay, although it can only apprehend and feel and act where the body is. The soul and the mind are not objects of perception.

The soul is absolutely free from all connections with qualities in the state of Moksha or release. It regains its independence.

Birth, Death and Salvation

Conjunction of soul with body, sense and life, produced by Dharma (virtue, merit) and Adharma (demerit), is called birth, and disjunction of body and mind produced by them is called death.
Moksha consists in the non-existence of conjunction with the body, where there is, at the same time, no potential body existing and consequently rebirth cannot take place.

**Bondage and Release**

Pleasure and pain result from the contact of soul, sense, mind and object.

From pleasure arises desire. From pleasure derived from the enjoyment of garlands, sandal paste, women and other objects, Raga or desire is produced successively for pleasure of a similar kind or for the means of attaining it. From pain caused by snakes, scorpions, thorns and the like, aversion arises with regard to such pain or with regard to its source.

A very powerful impression is produced by constant or habitual experience of objects, through the influence of which, a sad lover who does not win his mistress sees his beloved in every object. He who has been bitten by a snake beholds snakes everywhere, on account of a strong impression regarding that.

**The Faults That Lead to Bondage**

Desire (Raga), aversion (Dvesha) and infatuation (Mohà) are called faults (Doshas), as they are incentives to activity which serves to bind the doer to this world. Gautama also says: “Faults have for their characteristic, incitement to activity or worldly occupation” (Nyaya Sutras, 1-1-18).

**The Knowledge That Results in Release**

Intuitive knowledge of the Self destroys false knowledge. Consequently, attraction, aversion, stupidity or Moha and other faults vanish. Then activity also disappears. Then birth due to action does not take place. Consequently, pain connected with birth also disappears.

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# THE SANKHYA

**Introduction**

Obeisance to Sri Kapila Muni, the founder of the Sankhya system of philosophy, the son of Brahma, the Avatara of Vishnu.

The word ‘Sankhya’ means ‘number’. The system gives an enumeration of the principles of the universe, twenty-five in number. Hence the name is quite appropriate. The term ‘Sankhya’ is used in the sense of ‘Vichara’ or ‘philosophical reflection’ also.

In the Sankhya system, there is no analytical enquiry into the universe as actually existing, arranged under topics and categories. There is a synthetical system, starting from an original primordial Tattva or Principle, called Prakriti, that which evolves or produces or brings forth (Prakaroti) everything else.

Perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumana) and right affirmation (Apta Vakya) are the three Pramanas or proofs in the Sankhya system. The word Apta means fit or right. It is applied to the Vedas or inspired teachers. The Naiyayikas have four kinds of proofs, viz., perception, inference, comparison and verbal authority. The Mimamsakas recognise six kinds of proofs.
**Dual Concept of Purusha and Prakriti**

The Sankhya system is generally studied next to the Nyaya. It is a beautiful system of philosophy. The Western philosophers also have great admiration for this system. It is more categorically dualistic. It denies that anything can be produced out of nothing. It assumes the reality of Purusha and Prakriti, the knowing Self and the objects known.

Prakriti and Purusha are Anadi (beginningless) and Ananta (infinite). Non-discrimination between the two is the cause for birth and death. Discrimination between Prakriti and Purusha gives Mukti (salvation). Both Purusha and Prakriti are Sat (real). Purusha is Asanga (unattached). He is consciousness, all-pervading and eternal. Prakriti is doer and enjoyer. Souls are countless.

**Non-acceptance of Isvara or God**

The Sankhya system is called Nir-Isvara (God-less) Sankhya. It is atheistic. The Sankhyas do not believe in Isvara. They do not accept Isvara (God). The creation produced by Prakriti has an existence of its own, independent of all connection with the particular Purusha to which it is united. So the Sankhyas say that there is no need for an intelligent Creator of the world, or even of any superintending power.

This is a mistake; according to the Vedanta, Prakriti is always under the control of the Lord. It cannot do anything by itself. The Lord gazes at Prakriti. Then alone it is put in motion, and it begins to create. Prakriti is non-intelligent. An intelligent Creator alone can have a thought-out plan for the universe. Prakriti is only a helper (Sahakari). This is the theory of Vedanta.

**Theory of Evolution and Involution**

The Sankhya adopts the theory of evolution and involution. The cause and effect are the undeveloped and developed states of one and the same substance. There is no such thing as total destruction. In destruction, the effect is involved into its cause. That is all.

There cannot be any production of something out of nothing. That which is not cannot be developed into that which is. The production of what does not already exist potentially is impossible like a horn on a man, because there must, of necessity, be a material out of which a product is developed, and because everything cannot occur everywhere at all times, and also because anything possible must be produced from something competent to produce it.

That which does not exist cannot be brought into existence by an agent. It would be useless to grind groundnut, unless the oil existed in it. The same force applied to sand or orange would not express groundnut oil. The manifestation of the oil is a proof that it was contained in the groundnut and consequently, a proof of the existence of the source from which it is derived.

The effect truly exists beforehand in its cause. This is one of the central features of the Sankhya system of philosophy. Cause is a substance in which the effect subsists in a latent form. Just as the whole tree exists in a latent or dormant state in the seed, so also the whole world exists in a latent state in Prakriti, the Avyakta (unevolved), or the Avyakrita (undifferentiated). The effect is of the same nature as the cause. The effect or the product is not different from the material of which it is composed.

**Fourfold Classification of the 25 Tattvas (principles)**

The Sankhya gives a description of categories based on their respective productive efficiency, viz.,
1. Productive (Prakriti)
2. Productive and Produced (Prakriti-Vikriti)
3. Produced (Vikriti)
4. Neither Productive nor Produced (Anubhayarupa)

This fourfold classification includes all the twenty-five principles or Tattvas. Prakriti or Nature or Pradhana (chief) is purely productive. It is the root of all. It is not a product. It is a creative force, evolver, producer. Seven principles- intellect (Buddhi), egoism (Ahankara) and the five Tanmatras (subtle rudimentary elements in an undifferentiated state before quintuplication or Panchikarana)- are productions and productive. Buddhi (intellect) is productive as Ahankara (egoism) is evolved out of it. It is produced also, as it itself is evolved out of Prakriti. Egoism is a production, as it is derived from intellect. It is productive, as it gives origin to the five subtle rudiments or Tanmatras. The subtle rudiments are derived from egoism. Hence they are productions. They give origin to the five elements (space, fire, air, water, earth). Hence they are productive. The sixteen principles, the ten organs, the mind and the five elements, are productions only. They are unproductive, because none of them can give birth to a substance essentially different from itself. The Purusha or Spirit is neither a production, nor is it productive. It is without attributes.

The Object of the Sankhya Philosophy

The enquiry into this system of philosophy is to find out the means for eradicating the three sorts of pain, viz., internal or Adhyatmika (e.g., fever and other diseases), celestial or Adhidaivika (lightening, cold, heat, floods, earthquakes, storms etc.), and external or Adhibhautika (pain from animals, snakes, scorpions etc.), and the disease of rebirths. Pain is an embarrassment. It stands in the way of doing Yoga Sadhana and attaining Moksha or release. Kapila Muni imparted a knowledge of the twenty-five principles which annihilated this pain. According to the Sankhya, he who knows the twenty-five principles attains liberation. The ultimate cessation of the three kinds of pain is the final goal of life.

Prakriti

‘Prakriti’ means that which is primary, that which precedes what is made. It comes from ‘Pra’ (before) and ‘Kri’ (to make). It resembles the Vedantic Maya. It is the one root of the universe. It is called Pradhana or the chief, because all effects are founded on it and it is the root of the universe and of all objects.

Characteristics of Prakriti

Pradhana or Prakriti is eternal, all-pervading, immovable. It is one. It has no cause, but is the cause of all effects. Prakriti is independent and uncaused, while the products are caused and dependent. Prakriti depends only on the activity of its own constituent Guna (metaphysical properties).

Prakriti is destitute of intelligence. It is like a string of three strands. The three Guna form the three strands. Prakriti is mere dead matter which is equipped with certain potentialities due to the Guna.

The Modifications of Prakriti

Crude matter is without form. Mahat or the Cosmic Intelligence is its first form. Intellect is the matter for egoism. Egoism is a form of intellect. It is the matter of which the senses and the rudimental elements are formed. The senses and the rudimental elements are forms of egoism. The gross elements are forms of the rudimental elements.
Intellect, egoism and the five subtle rudiments or Tanmatras are the effects of Prakriti. This creation, from intellect down to the elements, is brought about by the modifications of Prakriti. Having observed the effects, the cause (Prakriti) is inferred. It is imperceptible from its subtlety. It must, therefore, be inferred from its effect.

The Function of Prakriti

Prakriti is the basis of all objective existence. Prakriti does not create for itself. All objects are for the enjoyment of the spirit or soul. Prakriti creates only when it comes into union with Purusha, like a crystal vase with a flower. This work is done for the emancipation of each soul. As it is the function of milk to nourish the calf, so it is the function of Prakriti to liberate the soul.

The Gunas

According to the Sankhya philosophy, Prakriti is composed of three Gunas or forces, called Sattva (purity, light, harmony), Rajas (passion, activity, motion), and Tamas (inertia, darkness, inactivity).

Guna means a cord. The Gunas bind the soul with a triple bond. These Gunas are not the Nyaya-Vaiseshika Gunas. They are the actual substances or ingredients, of which Prakriti is constituted. They make up the whole world evolved out of Prakriti. They are not conjoined in equal quantities, but in varying proportions, one or the other being in excess. Just as Sat-Chit-Ananda is the Vedantic trinity, so also the Gunas are the Sankhya trinity.

Interaction Between the Gunas Leads to Evolution

The three Gunas are never separate. They support one another. They intermingle with one another. They are intimately related as the flame, the oil and the wick of a lamp. They form the very substance of Prakriti. All objects are composed of the three Gunas. The Gunas act on one another. Then there is evolution or manifestation. Destruction is only non-manifestation.

The Gunas are objects. Purusha is the witness-subject. Prakriti evolves under the influence of Purusha. Mahat or the great (Intellect), the Cause of the whole world, is the first product of the evolution of Prakriti. Ahankara (egoism) arises after Buddhi. Agency belongs to Ahankara. It is the principle that creates individuality. Mind is born of Ahankara. It carries out the orders of the will through the organs of action (Karma Indriyas). It reflects and doubts (Sankalpa-Vikalpa). It synthesizes the sense data into precepts. The mind takes part in both perception and action. There is no separate Prana Tattva in the Sankhya system. The Vedanta system has a separate Prana Tattva. In the Sankhya system, mind, with the organs, produces the five vital airs. Prana is a modification of the senses. It does not subsist in their absence.

Characteristics of the Three Gunas

Sattva is equilibrium. When Sattva prevails, there is peace and tranquillity. Rajas is activity which is expressed as Raga-Dvesha, likes or dislikes, love or hatred, attraction or repulsion. Tamas is that binding force with a tendency to lethargy, sloth and foolish actions. It causes delusion or non-discrimination.

When Sattva is predominant, it overpowers Rajas and Tamas. When Rajas is dominant, it overpowers Sattva and Tamas. When Tamas is predominant, it overpowers Rajas and Sattva.
How One Is Affected by the Three Gunas

There are three Gunas in every man. Sometimes, Sattva prevails in him. Then he is calm and tranquil. He reflects and meditates. At other times, Rajas prevails in him and he does various sorts of worldly activities. He is passionate and active. Sometimes, Tamas prevails. He becomes lazy, dull, inactive and careless. Tamas generates delusion.

Again, one of these Gunas is generally predominant in different men. A Sattvic man is virtuous. He leads a pure and pious life. A Rajasic man is passionate and active. A Tamasic man is dull and inactive.

Sattva makes a man divine and noble. Rajas makes him thoroughly human and selfish, and Tamas makes him bestial and ignorant. There is much Sattva in a sage or saint and there is much Rajas in a soldier, politician and businessman.

The Purusha

Characteristics of the Purusha

The Purusha or the Self is beyond Prakriti. It is eternally separate from the latter. Purusha is without beginning or end. It is without attributes and without qualities. It is subtle and omnipresent. It is beyond mind, intellect and the senses. It is beyond time, space and causality. It is the eternal seer. It is perfect and immutable. It is pure consciousness (Chidrupa).

The Purusha is not the doer. It is the witness. The Purusha is like a crystal without any colour. It appears to be coloured by the different colours which are placed before it. It is not material. It is not a result of combination. Hence it is immortal. The Purushas or souls are infinite in number, according to the Sankhya. There are many Purushas. If the Purushas were one, all should become free if any one attained release.

The different souls are fundamentally identical in nature. There is no movement for the Purusha. It does not go anywhere when it attains freedom or release.

Souls exist eternally separate from each other and from Prakriti. Each soul retains its individuality. It remains unchanged through all transmigrations. Each soul is a witness of the act of a separate creation, without taking part in the act. It is a looker-on uniting itself with the unintelligent Prakriti, like a lame man mounted on a blind man's shoulders, in order to behold the phenomena of a creation, which Prakriti herself is not able to observe.

The Purusha or the Self is the witness (Sakshi), a spectator (Drashta), a by-stander (Madhyastha), solitary (Kaivalya), passive and indifferent (Udasina).

Inference of the Existence of the Purusha

Intelligence cannot belong to the intellect, because the intellect is material and is the effect of Prakriti which is non-intelligent. If intelligence is absent in the cause, it cannot manifest itself in the effect. Therefore, there must be a distinct principle of intelligence and this principle is Purusha or the Self.

The insentient body seems sentient on account of its union with the Self, and the Self appears as the agent. Just as a pot with cold water appears to be cold, with hot water seems to be hot, so intellect and the rest seem to be sentient on account of union with the Purusha. This mutual transfer of properties is like that of fire and iron, or that of the sun and water.

There must be a Supervisor over and above the Pradhana or Prakriti. The Supervisor is Purusha or the Self. Prakriti and its products are objects of enjoyment. There must exist an enjoyer who must be an intelligent principle. This intelligent enjoyer is Purusha or the Self.
Just as chair and bench are for the use of another, so also this body, senses and mind are for the use of the Self which is immaterial, as it is destitute of attributes and as it is beyond the Gunas. The Purusha is the witness of the Gunas. The Gunas are the objects. Purusha is the witness-subject. Hence, it is not affected by pleasure, pain and delusion which are attributes of the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, respectively. If pain is natural to the Purusha and if the Purusha is not naturally free from the action of the Gunas, no salvation from rebirth is possible.

**Purusha and Prakriti – A Contrast**

The characteristics of Prakriti and Purusha are contrary in nature. Purusha is consciousness, while Prakriti is non-consciousness. Purusha is inactive (Akarta), while Prakriti is active. Purusha is destitute of the Gunas, while Prakriti is characterised by the three Gunas, Purusha is unchanging, while Prakriti is changing. The knower is Purusha. The known is Prakriti. The knower is the subject or the silent witness. The known is the visible object.

**The Universe**

The world is evolved with its different elements when the equilibrium in Prakriti is disturbed. The countless Purushas exert on Prakriti a mechanical force which distracts the equipoise of Prakriti and produces a movement. Then the evolution of the universe starts.

**The Process of Evolution and Involution**

Prakriti is the root of the universe. Prakriti is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe. From this Prakriti emanates the cosmic Buddhi or Mahat. From Mahat proceeds the cosmic Ahankara or the principle of egoism. From this egoism emanates the ten senses and the mind on the subjective side, and the five subtle Tanmatras of sound, smell, taste, vision (or colour) and touch on the objective side. From these Tanmatras proceed the five gross elements—earth, water, fire, air and space.

Akasha (space) has the property of sound which is the Vishaya or object for the ear. Vayu (air) has the property of touch which is the Vishaya for the skin. Tejasa (fire) has the property of form or colour which is the Vishaya for the eye. Apas (water) has the property of taste which is the Vishaya for the tongue. Prithvi (earth) has the property of odour which is the Vishaya for the nose. Each of these elements, after the first, has also the property of preceding besides its own.

During dissolution of the world, the products return by a reverse movement into the preceding stages of development, and ultimately into Prakriti. Earth merges in its cause, water, water in fire, fire in air, air in space; and space in Antahkarana (egoism), and Antahkarana in Mahat (intellect), and Mahat in Prakriti. This is the process of involution. There is no end to Samsara or the play of Prakriti. This cycle of evolution and involution has neither a beginning nor an end.

**The Process of Knowledge**

An object excites the senses. The mind arranges the sense impressions into a percept. Egoism refers it to the Self. Intellect forms the concept. It converts the precept into a concept and presents it to the Purusha. Then there is knowledge of the object.

Before you engage in any matter, you first observe or consider, then you reflect, and then determine: “This must be done by me”; and then you proceed to act. This ascertaining: “Such act is to be done by Me”, is the determination of the intellect (adhyavasaya). The intellect is an instrument which receives the ideas or images conveyed through the organs of sense and the mind, constructs them into a conclusive idea, and presents this idea to the Self. The function of the intellect is determination (Nischaya).
The mind is both an organ of sensation and of action. The senses receive simple impressions from without. The mind cooperates with the senses, and then the impressions are perceived. The mind ponders, the intellect determines, and egoism becomes conscious.

Agency belongs to egoism- the Ahankara or the I-maker- which is itself a product of Prakriti, but not to the Purusha or Self who is always a silent witness.

Intellect, egoism, mind and the eye see a form (shape) at once, in one instant, and come immediately to the conclusion, say, “This is a jar”. The same three, with the tongue, at once relish taste; with the nose smell; and so with the ear and the skin. The function is also occasionally gradual. A man going along a road sees an object at a distance. A doubt arises in his mind whether it is a wooden pole (post or a stump) or a man. He then sees a bird sitting on it. Then the doubt is removed by the reflection of the mind. The intellect makes a determination that it is a wooden pole only. Then the egoism says: “I am certain it is a wooden pole only”. In this way, the functions of the mind, intellect, egoism and the eye are gradual, also. There is leisure for the eye to see, for the mind to reflect or consider, for egoism to apply, and for the intellect to conclude. There is another example. The ear hears the twang of a bowstring; the mind reflects that this must be for the shooting of an arrow; egoism says: “It is aimed at me”; and the intellect determines: “I must run at once”.

The intellect, the mind and egoism are the door-keepers. The five senses of perception or Jnana-Indriyas are the gates. The intellect is the instrument or organ which is the medium between the senses and the Self.

The Intelect and Its Functions

The intellect or the Buddhi is the most important of all the products of Prakriti. The senses present their objects to the intellect. The intellect exhibits them to the Purusha. The intellect discriminates the difference between Purusha and Prakriti.

The intellect is the instrument or organ which is the medium between the other organs and the Self. All ideas derived from sensation, reflection, or consciousness are deposited in the chief or great instrument, intellect, before they can be made known to the Self for whose use and advantage alone they have assembled. They convey impressions or ideas with the properties or effects of pleasure, pain and indifference, accordingly as they are influenced by the qualities of Sattva (purity), Rajas (passion) or Tamas (darkness).

Just as the headman of a village collects the taxes from the villagers and pays them to the collector of the district, just as the local collector pays the amount to the minister, and the minister receives it for the use of the state, so also the mind receives the ideas from the external organs, transfers them to egoism, delivers them to the intellect which is the general superintendent and takes charge of them for the use of the Sovereign Self.

The intellect is the prime minister of Purusha. It brings for Purusha the fruition of all that is to be experienced. It appears to be intelligent on account of the reflection of Purusha which is very near to it, though, by itself, it is really non-intelligent.

The Jiva (embodied soul)

The Jiva is the soul in union with the senses. It is limited by the body. It is endowed with egoism. The reflection of Purusha in the Buddhi or intellect appears as the ego or the empirical soul. It is associated with ignorance and Karma. It is subject to pleasure and pain, action and its fruits, and rotates in the cycle of births and deaths.

The Jiva must realise the perfection of the Purusha. It must attain to the status of the Purusha. Every Jiva has in it the higher Purusha hidden within. It must become conscious of the real nature of the higher Purusha. Freedom or perfection is a return into one’s true Self. It is the removal of an illusion which conceals one’s true nature.
Release

Bondage belongs to Prakriti, but is attributed to Purusha. Purusha is eternally free. Union of Purusha with Prakriti due to non-discrimination is bondage; the failure to discriminate between Purusha and Prakriti is the cause of Samsara or bondage; and disunion of Purusha and Prakriti due to discrimination is emancipation. Release is not merging in the Absolute, but isolation from Prakriti.

The object of the Sankhya system is to effect the liberation of the Purusha or Self from the fetters which bind it on account of its union with Prakriti. This is done by conveying the correct knowledge of the twenty-four constituent principles of creation, and tightly discriminating the Self from them.

In the Sankhya system, the Pramanas or means of obtaining the correct measure of existing things, are three, viz., Pratyaksha or perception by the senses, Anumana (inference) and Apta-Vachana (trustworthy testimony).

How Release Is Effected

When the separation of the soul from the body takes place by destruction of the effects of virtue, vice and the rest, and Prakriti ceases to act in respect to it, then there is the final and absolute emancipation or the final beatitude.

When the fruits of acts cease, and body-both gross and subtle-dissolves, Nature does not exist with respect to the individual soul. The soul attains the state called Kaivalya. It is freed from the three kinds of pain.

The Linga-Deha or subtle body which migrates from one gross body to another in successive births, is composed of intellect, egoism, mind, the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action and the five Tanmatras. The impressions of actions done in various births are imbedded in the subtle body. The conjunction of the Linga-Deha with the gross physical body constitutes birth and separation of the Linga-Deha from the gross physical body is death.

This Linga-Deha is destroyed by the knowledge of the Purusha.

When one attains perfect knowledge, virtue and vice become destitute of causal energy, but the body continues for some time on account of the previous impulse, just as after the action of the potter has stopped, the wheel continues to revolve owing to the momentum given to it.

Release Is Nothing but Termination of the Play of Prakriti

The union of the Self with Nature or Prakriti is like the association of a lame man with a blind man. A lame man and a blind man were deserted by their fellow-travellers in a forest. They agreed to divide between them the duties of walking and of seeing. The lame man mounted himself on the shoulders of the blind man and directed the blind man. The blind man was able to pursue his route by the directions of his friend. Even so, the Self is like the lame man. The faculty of seeing is in the Self, not that of moving. The faculty of moving, but not of seeing, is in Prakriti. Prakriti is like the blind man. The lame man and the blind man separated when they reached their destination. Even so, Prakriti, having effected the liberation of the Self, ceases to act. The Self obtains Kaivalya or the final beatitude. Consequently, their respective purposes being effected, the connection between them terminates. The Self attains liberation by knowledge of Prakriti.

Prakriti’s performances are solely for the benefit and enjoyment of the Self. Prakriti takes hold of the hand of the Self and shows it the whole show of the universe, and makes it enjoy everything which this world can give, and lastly helps it in its liberation.
In truth, the Self is neither bound nor released, nor does it migrate, but Nature alone in relation to various beings is bound, is released, and migrates.

As a dancing girl, having exhibited herself to the spectators, stops dancing, so also Nature ceases to function when she has made herself manifest to the Purusha or the Self. Nothing is more modest than Prakriti, when she becomes conscious that she has been seen by the Purusha. She does not again expose herself to the gaze of the Purusha.

THE YOGA

Introduction
Prostrations to Sri Patanjali Maharshi, the exponent of the Raja Yoga system of philosophy, the first systematiser of the Yoga school, whose ‘Yoga Sutras’ is the basic text.

The word Yoga comes from the root YUJ which means to join. Yoga is restraint of the activities of the mind, and is the union of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul.

Hiranyagarbha is the founder of the Yoga system. The Yoga founded by Patanjali Maharshi is a branch or supplement of the Sankhya. It has its own charm for students of a mystic temperament and of a contemplative type. It claims greater orthodoxy than the Sankhya proper by directly acknowledging the existence of a Supreme Being (Ishvara).

The God of Patanjali is a Special Purusha or Particular Soul unaffected by afflictions, works, fruition and vehicles. In Him is the highest limit of the seed of omniscience. He, being unconditioned by time, is the teacher of even the ancients. He is ever free.

The sacred syllable OM is the symbol of God. Repetition of Om and meditation on Om, should be practised. This will remove all obstacles and will lead to the attainment of God-realisation.

The Yoga Sutras
The ‘Yoga Sutras’ of Patanjali form the oldest text-book of the Yoga school. It has four chapters. The first chapter, Samadhi Pada, deals with the nature and aim of Samadhi (the state of super-consciousness where Absoluteness is experienced attended with all-knowledge and joy; Oneness). The second chapter, Sadhana Pada, explains the means of attaining this end. The third chapter, Vibhuti Pada, gives a description of the supernatural powers or Siddhis that can be achieved through the Yoga practices. The fourth chapter, Kaivalya Pada, describes the nature of salvation.

Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga
Patanjali’s Yoga is Ashtanga-Yoga or Yoga with eight limbs. This Yoga deals with the discipline of the mind and its psychic powers. Hatha Yoga treats of the methods of bodily control and regulations of breath. The culmination of Hatha Yoga is Raja Yoga. A progressive Sadhana (self effort; spiritual practice) in Hatha Yoga leads to the accomplishment of Raja Yoga. Hatha Yoga is a ladder to ascend to the stage or summit of Raja Yoga.

When the movement of breath is stopped by means of Kumbhaka (retention of breath) the mind becomes supportless. Purification of the body and control of breath is the direct aim of Hatha Yoga. The Shat-Karmas or six acts of purification of the body are Dhauti (cleansing of the stomach), Basti (natural form of enema), Neti (Cleansing of the nostrils), Trataka (unwinkingly gazing at some object), Nauli (churning of the belly) and Kapalabhati (removal of the phlegm through a certain
kind of Pranayama). [Pranayama = regulation and restraint of breath]. The body is rendered healthy, light, strong and steady by the practice of Asanas, Bandhas and Mudras.

**Yoga – A Methodical Effort to Control the Mind**

Yoga is a method of strict discipline. It imposes restrictions on diet, sleep, company, behaviour, speech and thought. It should be practised under the careful supervision of an expert and illumined Yogi.

Yoga is a methodical effort to control the mind and attain perfection. Yoga heightens the power of concentration, arrests the wanderings and vagaries of the mind, and helps to attain the super-conscious state or Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The practice of Yoga removes restlessness of body and mind. It removes the impurities of the mind also and steadies it. The aim of Yoga is to teach the means by which the individual soul may attain complete union with the Supreme Soul. This fusion or blending of the individual soul with the Supreme Purusha is effected by controlling the Vrittis of the mind. This is a state which is as clear as crystal, since the mind is not coloured by contact with worldly objects.

**The Yoga And The Sankhya**

Kapila’s system is Nirisvara Sankhya, as in it there is no Isvara or God. The system of Patanjali is Sa-Isvara Sankhya, because there is Isvara or Special Purusha in it, who is untouched by afflictions, works, desires, etc. Patanjali built his system on the background of the metaphysics of the Sankhya. Patanjali accepts the twenty-five principles of the Sankhya. He accepts the metaphysical view of the Sankhya system, but lays great emphasis upon the practical side of self-discipline for the realisation of the absolute unity of the Purusha or true Self.

Sankhya is a system of metaphysics. Yoga is a system of practical discipline. The former lays emphasis upon investigation and reasoning, and the latter upon concentration of the will-power.

The individual soul in the Yoga has greater freedom. It can attain salvation with the help of God. The Sankhya maintains that knowledge is the means to salvation. The Yoga holds that concentration, meditation and Samadhi will lead to Kaivalya or Independence. The Yoga system holds that the Yogic process consists in the suppression of the diversities of mental functions and the concentration of the mental energy on the self-luminous Purusha.

**The Eight Limbs of Raja Yoga**

Raja Yoga in known by the name Ashtanga-Yoga or the Yoga with Eight Limbs. The eight limbs are:—

1. Yama (restraint)
2. Niyama (observances)
3. Asana (posture)
4. Pranayama (control of breath)
5. Pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses)
6. Dharana (concentration)
7. Dhyana (meditation)
8. Samadhi (super-conscious state)

The first five of these form the external limbs (Bahir-anga) of Yoga. The last three form the internal limbs (Antar-anga) of Yoga.
Yama and Niyama

The practice of Yama and Niyama constitute ethical discipline. It prepares the Yogic student for the real practice of Yoga. The Yogic student should practise non-violence, truthfulness, continence, non-stealing, and non-acceptance of gifts which are conducive to luxurious living; and practise purity, contentment, austerity, sacred study and surrender to God. The chief of them is non-violence (Ahimsa). All other virtues are rooted in Ahimsa. Non-violence is abstinence from malice towards all living beings- in every way and at all times. It is not merely non-violence, but non-hatred.

The Yamas or restraints are the great universal vows (Mahavrata), not limited by caste, place or country, time or circumstances. They must be practised by all. There are no exceptions to these principles. Not even self-defense can justify murder for one who is practising the vow of non-violence. He should not kill even his enemy if he is to practise Yoga rigorously.

Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara

Asana is steady, comfortable posture. Asana or posture is a physical help to concentration. When one obtains mastery over the Asana, he is free from the disturbance of the pairs of opposites. Pranayama or regulation of breath leads to tranquillity and steadiness of mind, and good health. Pratyahara is introversion. It is withdrawal of the senses from their objects. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara are accessories to Yoga.

Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi

Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are the three consecutive stages of the same process of mental concentration and are thus parts of an organic whole. Dharana is the effort to fix the mind steadily upon an object. Dhyana is continuous and unbroken fixity of the mind upon the object. Samadhi is fixity of the mind upon the object with such intensity of concentration as to become the object itself. The mind is wholly merged in and identified with the object upon which it is fixed.

Samyama or concentration, meditation and Samadhi are one and the same, that gives a knowledge of super-sensual objects. Siddhis are by-products of concentration. [Siddhi = perfection; psychic power]. The super-natural powers are really obstacles to Samadhi or freedom.

Yoga Samadhi And Its Characteristics

Dhyana or meditation culminates in Samadhi. The object of meditation is Samadhi. Samadhi is the goal of Yoga discipline. Body and mind become dead, as it were, to all external impressions. The connection with the outer world is broken. In Samadhi, the Yogi enters into Supreme Silence which is untouched by the ceaseless noises of the outer world. The mind ceases its functioning. The senses are absorbed in the mind. When all the modifications of the mind are controlled, the Seer, the Purusha, rests in his own Self. Patanjali speaks of this in his Yoga Sutras as Svarupa-Avasthanam (establishment in one’s true Self).

There are kinds or degrees of concentration or Samadhi, viz., Samprajnata or conscious and Asamprajnata or super-conscious. In Samprajnata Samadhi, there are definite objects of concentration for resting. The mind remains conscious of the object. Savitarka (with deliberation), Nirvikalpa (without deliberation), Savicchara (with reflection), Nirvicchara (without reflection), Sananda (with joy), and Sasmita (with the sense of personality) are forms of Samprajnata Samadhi. In Samprajnata Samadhi, there is a clear consciousness of the object meditated upon, as distinct from the subject. In Asamprajnata Samadhi, this distinction vanishes, it being transcended.
Conditions For Success In Raja Yoga

The Importance of Yama and Niyama
Aspirants who desire to attain God-realisation should practise all the eight limbs of Yoga. On the destruction of the impurities through the practice of the eight limbs- or accessories- of Yoga, arises the light of wisdom leading to the discriminative knowledge.

For the attainment of Samadhi or union with the Divine, the practice of Yama and Niyama is an indispensable necessity. The Yogic student should practise Yama and observe Niyama side by side. It is not possible to attain perfection in meditation and Samadhi without the observance of the practice of Yama and Niyama. You cannot have concentration of mind without removing from within falsehood, deceit, cruelty, lust etc. Without concentration of mind, meditation and Samadhi cannot be attained.

The Five Mental Planes According To Patanjali
Kshipta, Mudha, Vikshipta, Ekagra and Niruddha are the five mental planes according to the Raja Yoga school of Patanjali. The Kshipta plane is that wherein the mind wanders amongst various sensual objects. The mind is filled with Rajas. The Mudha plane is that wherein the mind is in a state of sleep and impotence on account of Tamas. The Vikshipta plane is that wherein Sattva preponderates, and the mind oscillates between meditation and objectivity. The rays of the mind are slowly collected and gathered. When Sattva increases, you will have cheerfulness of mind, one-pointedness of mind, conquest of the senses, and fitness for the realisation of the Atman (Self). The Ekagra plane is that wherein the mind is one-pointed. There is deep meditation. Sattva is free from Rajas and Tamas. The Niruddha plane is that wherein the mind is under perfect control. All the Vrittis of the mind are annihilated.

A Vritti is a whirlpool or thought-wave in the mind-lake. Each Vritti or mental modification leaves behind a Samskara or impression or latent tendency. This Samskara may manifest itself as a conscious state when the occasion arises. Similar Vrittis strengthen similar dispositions. When all the Vrittis are arrested, the mind is in a balanced state (Samapatti).

Disease, langour, doubt, carelessness, laziness, worldliness, erroneous perception, failure to attain concentration and instability in it when attained, are the main obstacles to concentration.

The Five Klesas And Their Removal
According to Patanjali, Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Raga-Dvesha (desire and aversion, or likes and dislikes), and Abhinivesa (clinging to mundane life) are the five great Klesas or afflictions that assail the mind. These are alleviated by means of continued Yogic practice, but not uprooted totally. They remain hidden in the form of seed. They sprout out again the moment they find an opportunity and favourable surroundings. But Asamprajnata Samadhi (Absolute-Experience) destroys even the seeds of these evils.

Avidya is the main cause of all our troubles. Egoism is the immediate result of Avidya. It fills us with desires and aversions, and veils the spiritual vision. The practice of Yoga-Samadhi uproots Avidya (ignorance).

Practice of Kriya Yoga
Kriya-Yoga purifies the mind, attenuates or thins out the five afflictions, and leads to Samadhi. Tapas (austerity), Svadhyaya (studying and understanding of scriptures) and Isvarapranidhana (worship of God and surrendering the fruit to God) constitute Kriya-Yoga.
Cultivation of friendliness (Maitri) towards equals, compassion (Karuna) towards inferiors, cheerfulness (Mudita) towards superiors and indifference (Upeksha) towards wicked people (or with regard to things pleasant and painful, good and bad) produce tranquillity of mind (Chitta-Prasada).

One can attain Samadhi through devotion to God. Devotion to God gives freedom. By Isvara pranidhana, the Yogic student obtains the grace of God.

**Abhyasa and Vairagya**

Abhyasa (practice) and Vairagya (dispassion, non-attachment) help in steadying and controlling the mind. The mind should be withdrawn again and again and brought back to the centre, whenever it goes out towards sensual objects. This is Abhyasa Yoga. Practice becomes fixed and steady, when pursued for a long time without any break and with perfect devotion.

The mind is a bundle of Trishnas (cravings). Practice of Vairagya will destroy all Trishnas. Vairagya turns the mind away from the objects. It does not allow the mind to go outwards (Bahirmukha action of the mind), but promotes its Antarmukha (inward going) action.

**The State Of Kaivalya Or Absolute Independence**

"The goal of life is the absolute separation of Purusha from Prakriti. Freedom in Yoga, is Kaivalya or absolute independence. The soul is freed from the fetters of Prakriti. The Purusha is in its true form or Svarupa. When the soul realises that it is absolutely independent, and that it does not depend on anything else in this world, Kaivalya or Isolation comes in. The soul has removed the Avidya through discriminative knowledge (Viveka-khyati). The five Klesas or afflictions are burnt by the fire of Knowledge. The Self is not touched by the conditions of the Chitta. The Gunas retire to rest and the Self abides in its own divine essence. Even if one becomes a Mukta (liberated Soul), Prakriti and its modifications exist for others. This, the Yoga system holds, in agreement with the Sankhya.

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**THE PURVA MIMAMSA**

**Introduction**

Adoration to Sri Jaimini, the founder of the Purva Mimamsa system, the disciple of Sri Vyasa Bhagavan!

Purva Mimamsa or Karma-Mimamsa is an enquiry into the earlier portion of the Vedas, an enquiry into the ritual of the Vedas or that portion of the Vedas which is concerned with the Mantras and the Brahmanas only. The Purva Mimamsa is so called, because it is earlier (Purva) than the Uttara Mimamsa, not so much in the chronological sense as in the logical sense.

**Mimamsa- A System of Vedic Interpretation**

Mimamsa is not a branch of any philosophical system. It is rather a system of Vedic interpretation. Its philosophical discussions amount to a kind of critical commentary on the Brahmana or ritual portion of the Veda. It interprets the Vedas in the literal sense. The central problem of Purva Mimamsa is ritual. Jaimini has systematized the rules of Mimamsa and established their validity in his work. The rules of Mimamsa are very important for the interpretation of the Hindu Law.
The Mimamsa Sutras of Jaimini give a detailed description of the different sacrifices and their purposes, the doctrine of Apurva, and also some philosophical propositions. There are twelve chapters.

Sabara is the author of the chief commentary or Bhashya on the work of Jaimini. Kumarila, the Guru of Bhavabhuti, commented on the Sutra and the Bhashya. He proved the eternal character of the Vedas and the efficiency of Vedic ceremonials. Prabhakara was a pupil of Kumarila. He wrote a commentary on the Bhashya of Sabara.

Jaimini accepts the three Pramanas of perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumana) and authoritative testimony (Sabda or Veda). Jaimini holds that there is a perpetual connection between a word and its sense and that sound is eternal.

**The Eternal, Self-Existing Veda**

Jaimini was an opponent of rationalism and theism. The Veda was practically the only God for him. The eternal Veda needs no other basis to rest on. There is no divine revealer. The Veda itself is authoritative. It is the only source of our knowledge of Dharma. God was not necessary for him and his system. He said that Veda was itself the authority. His first aphorism ‘Athato Dharma-Jijnasa’ states the whole aim and object of his system, viz., a desire to know Dharma or duty, which consists in the performance of the rites and sacrifices prescribed by the Veda. Dharma itself bestows the rewards. The aim of Purva Mimamsa is to investigate into the nature of Dharma.

The Purva Mimamsa has a number of deities. The offerings may be made to them. The practice of Vedic Dharma is not in need of any Supreme Being or God. Vedic religion does not require the assistance of God. The eternal self-existent Veda serves all the purposes of Jaimini and the Purva Mimamsakas. Jaimini does not so much deny God as ignore Him.

**Practice Of Vedic Dharma- The Key To Happiness**

Dharma is enjoined by the Vedas. The Vedas are also called the Sruti.

[Note: Sruti means the revealed scriptures. The literal meaning of Sruti is ‘that which has been heard.’]

Its practice leads to happiness. If the Smriti does not agree with the Sruti, the former is to be ignored.

[Note: Smriti = Auxiliary scripture that explains and elaborates the Sruti. Examples of Smritis are The Manu Smriti or the Laws of Manu, the Mahabharata, Ramayana, Puranas etc. The Smritis constitute the body of traditional law, secular as well as religious, which guides the daily life of the Hindus. They were delivered originally by Manu, Yajnavalkya, and other inspired legislators, to their respective pupils, and committed later from memory to writing].

The practice by virtuous men or custom comes next to the Smriti. A Hindu should lead his life in accordance with the rules of the Vedas. A Hindu must perform Nitya Karmas like Sandhya etc., and Naimittika Karmas during proper occasions, to get salvation.

[Note: Nitya Karma = daily obligatory rites. Naimittika Karma = obligatory rites on special occasions, such as death anniversaries, eclipses etc.]

These are unconditional duties. If he fails to do these, he incurs the sin of omission to attain special ends. If he avoids prohibited actions (Nishiddha Karmas), he will avoid hell. If he performs the unconditional duties, he will attain salvation.

Some later Mimamsakas maintain that all works ought to be performed as an offering to God or the Supreme Being. Then they become the cause or means of emancipation.
If works or sacrifices are done in a mechanical way without feeling, Sraddha (faith) and devotion, they cannot help one to attain salvation. One may perform any number of sacrifices; and yet, there may not be any change in the heart, if they are performed without the right spirit or right mental attitude and right will. What is really wanted is not the ceremonial sacrifice, but the sacrifice of selfishness, egoism and Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes).

The Doctrine Of Apurva
The fruits or rewards of sacrifice are not dispensed by any beneficent God. Apurva bestows the reward on the sacrificer. Apurva is the link or necessary connection between work and its fruit or result. Apurva is Adrishta. It is a positive, unseen force created by an act, that leads to the attainment of the fruit of the action. This is the view of Jaimini.

Other thinkers severely criticized that. The critics maintained that the unconscious or non-intelligent Apurva could not bestow the rewards. The Mimamsa system could not satisfy the intelligent, thoughtful men. Hence, the later Mimamsakas slowly introduced God. They declared that if sacrifices were performed in honour of the Supreme Being, it would lead to the achievement of the Supreme Good. Apurva cannot act, unless it is moved by God or the Supreme Being. He who makes the Apurva function is God.

The Self And Its Characteristics
The self is distinct from the body, the senses and the intellect. The self is the experiencer or enjoyer. The body is the abode of experiences. The senses are the instruments of experience. The self perceives when it is in union with the mind. It experiences internally pleasure and pain; and externally, objects such as trees, rivers, plants, etc.

The self is not the senses, because it persists even when the senses are injured or destroyed. The body is made up of matter. The perceiver is distinct from the body. The self directs the body. The body is a servant of the self. There is some being which synthesizes the various sense-data. That being or entity is the self. The self is all-pervading and imperishable. Selves are countless.

The real self survives the annihilation of the body. The performer of a sacrifice goes to heaven. Jaimini does not believe in Moksha (liberation). He believes in the existence of Svarga (heaven) attainable through Karma or sacrifice. The Veda promises rewards to the sacrificer to be enjoyed in another world.

The Later Mimamsakas

Prabhakara and Kumarila
Jaimini showed the way to attain happiness in Svarga or heaven, but he did not tell anything about the problem of the final emancipation. The later writers like Prabhakara and Kumarila, however, could not avoid this problem of final salvation as it engaged the attention of the thinkers of other schools. Prabhakara says that the absolute cessation of the body caused by the total disappearance of Dharma and Adharma, whose operation is the cause of rebirth, is ultimate release or liberation. Man abandons prohibited acts, and the deeds which lead to happiness in heaven.

He does the necessary expiations for exhausting the previously accumulated Karmas. He practises self-restraint and disciplines himself. He develops virtuous qualities. He frees himself from rebirths by a true knowledge of the self. One cannot attain release by mere knowledge. Exhaustion of Karmas only can bring about release. Knowledge prevents further accumulation of virtue and vice. Karma by itself cannot lead to the attainment of the final emancipation. Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes), which lead to the performance of actions, must be destroyed if one wants to attain Moksha.
(liberation). Moksha is the cessation of pleasure and pain. It is not a state of bliss, as the attributeless soul cannot have even bliss. It is simply the natural form of the soul.

The view of Kumarila comes very near to the view of Advaita Vedantins. Kumarila maintains that the Veda is composed by God and is Brahman in the form of sounds. Moksha is a positive state for Kumarila. It is the realisation of the Atman (self). He is of the opinion that knowledge is not sufficient for salvation. He thinks that final emancipation can be attained through Karma (action) with Jnana (knowledge).

**Jaimini’s Philosophy In A Nutshell**

According to Jaimini, performance of the actions that are enjoined in the Vedas is the Sadhana or means for attaining heaven. Karma-Kanda is the chief section of the Vedas.

[Note: Karma Kanda = The section of the Vedas dwelling only on the rituals or mainly on the rituals. Karma Kanda is also known as the Samhitas and the Brahmanas of the Vedas.]

The cause of bondage is the performance of Nishiddha Karmas or prohibited actions. The self is Jada-Chetana, a combination of insentient and intelligence. Souls are countless. The soul is doer and enjoyer. It is all pervading. Jaimini does not believe in the creation of the world. He believes in grades of happiness in heaven and in sadachara or right conduct, viz., Satyam Vada (Speak the truth), Dharmam Chara (Perform duty).

**Criticism of Jaimini’s Philosophy**

The Purva Mimamsa system of philosophy is said to be unsatisfactory and incomplete, in as much as it does not deal with the problem of the Ultimate reality and its relation to soul and matter. There is no philosophical view of the world. The central feature is the performance of the sacrifices. This is the most essential or fundamental thing. ‘Perform sacrifices and enjoy in Heaven’- this is the sum and substance of Jaimini’s teaching. This is his Moksha or the final goal. This cannot give satisfaction to the thinkers who know that the enjoyment in heaven is transitory, imperfect, sensual and worldly.

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**THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY**

**ALSO KNOWN AS THE UTTARA MIMAMSA**

**Introduction**

Prostrations and adorations to Sri Vyasa, the founder of Uttara Mimamsa or the Vedanta system of philosophy. Avatara of Lord Vishnu, son of Sri Parasara Rishi.

Uttara Mimamsa or the Vedanta philosophy of Vyasa or Badarayana is placed as the last of the six orthodox systems, but, really, it ought to stand first.

The Uttara Mimamsa conforms closely to the doctrines propounded in the Upanishads. The term Vedanta means literally the end or the essence of the Veda. It contains the doctrines set forth in the closing chapters of the Vedas. The closing chapters of the Vedas are the Upanishads. The Upanishads really form the essence of the Vedas.
The Brahma Sutras of Bhagavan Vyasa

Sri Vyasa wrote the Brahma Sutras or the Vedanta Sutras which explain the doctrine of Brahman. Brahma Sutras are also known by the name Sariraka Sutras, because they deal with the embodiment of the Supreme Nirguna Brahman. ‘Brahma Sutras’ is one of the three books of the Prasthanatraya, the three authoritative books on Hinduism, the other two being the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita. Sri Vyasa has systematized the principles of Vedanta and removed the apparent contradictions in the doctrines. The Brahma Sutras are 555 in number. Sri Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Nimbarka, Vallabha, Bhaskara, Yadavaprakasa, Kesava, Nilakantha, Baladeva and Vijñana Bhikshu are the chief commentators on the Brahma Sutras. Each has commented in his own way and built his own philosophy. The most reputed teacher of this school of philosophy is Sri Sankaracharya.

Sri Vyasa has criticised the doctrines of the Vaiseshika system and the Sankhya system.

There are four chapters, viz., Samanvaya, Avirodha, Sadhana and Phala. In the first chapter, an account of the nature of Brahman and of Its relation to the world and the individual soul, is given. In the second chapter, the rival theories, viz., Sankhya, Yoga, Vaiseshika, etc., are criticised. Suitable answers are given to the objections leveled against this view. In the third chapter, the means of attaining Brahman-Vidya are treated. In the fourth chapter, there is a description of the fruits of Brahman-Vidya. There is also a description how the individual soul reaches Brahman through the Devayana or the path of the Devas, whence there is no return. The characteristics of the Jivanmukta or liberated soul are also discussed in this chapter. Each chapter has four parts (Padas). The Sutras in each part form Adhikaranas or topics.

The five Sutras of the first chapter are very important.

The first Sutra is: “Athato Brahama-Jijnasa” (Now, therefore, the enquiry into Brahman). This first aphorism states the object of the whole system in one word, viz., Brahama-Jijnasa, the desire of knowing Brahman (the Supreme Reality).

The second Sutra is: “Janmadyasya Yatah” (Brahman is the Supreme Being from Whom proceed origin, sustenance and dissolution of the world).

The third Sutra is: “Sastra-Yonitvat” (The scriptures alone are the means of right knowledge. The omniscience of Brahman follows from Its being the source of the scriptures).

The fourth Sutra is: “Tat Tu Samanvayat” (That Brahman is to be known only from the scriptures and not independently by any other means is established, because it is the main purport of all Vedanta texts).

The fifth Sutra is: “Ikshater Na Asabdam” (On account of ‘thinking’, Prakriti or Pradhana not being first cause). Pradhana is not based on the scriptures.

The last Sutra of the fourth chapter is: “Anavrittih Sabdat, Anavrittih Sabdat” (There is no return for the released souls, on account of scriptural declaration to that effect).

Brahman, Maya and Jiva

Brahman

Brahman, the Absolute, after creating the elements, enters them. It is the Golden Person in the sun. It is the Light of the soul. It is ever pure. It is Sat-Chid-Ananda, one without a second. It is Bhuma (infinite, unconditioned). It dwells in the heart of man. It is the source of everything.

Brahman is the material cause, as well as the instrumental cause of the universe. Brahman and the universe are not different, just as the jar is not different from clay. Brahman develops Itself into the
universe for Its own Lila or sporting, without undergoing the least change, and without ceasing to be Itself.

Brahman is without parts, without qualities, without action and emotion, beginningless, endless and immutable. It has no consciousness, such as is denoted by ‘I’ and ‘Thou’. It is the only Reality. Brahman is to the external world what yarn is to cloth, what clay is to jar and what gold is to a gold ring.

Brahman is Paramarthika Satta (Absolute Reality). The world is Vyavaharika Satta (relative reality). The dream object is Pratibhasika Satta (apparent reality).

**Maya**

Maya is the Sakti (power) of God. It is the Karana Sarira (causal body) of God. It hides the real and makes the unreal appear as real. It (Maya) is neither Sat nor Asat nor Sat-Asat.

[Note: Sat = existence; reality; truth. Asat = opposite of Sat]

Maya is Anirvachaniya (indescribable).

Maya has two powers, viz.,

1. The power of veiling or Avarna Sakti
2. The power of projecting or Vikshepa Sakti.

Man has forgotten his essential divine nature on account of the veiling power of Maya. This universe is projected owing to the Vikshepa Sakti of Maya.

**Jiva — *The Five Sheaths (Kosas)***

The Jiva or the individual soul is enclosed within five sheaths (Kosas), which are like the sheaths of an onion. The five sheaths are:—

1. The Food-sheath (Annamaya Kosa)
2. The Vital sheath (Pranamaya Kosa)
3. The Mental sheath (Manomaya Kosa)
4. The Intellectual sheath (Vijnanamaya Kosa)
5. The Bliss sheath (Anandamaya Kosa).

The food sheath constitutes the physical body. The next three sheaths (vital, mental and intellectual) form the subtle body. The last sheath (bliss) forms the causal body. The individual soul should transcend all its sheaths through meditation and become one with the Supreme Soul which is beyond the five Kosas. Then only it will attain liberation or freedom.

**Jiva — *The Three States of Consciousness***

There are three states of consciousness for the individual soul, viz.,

1. The waking state
2. The dreaming state
3. The deep sleep state.
Turiya or the fourth state is the super-conscious state. Turiya is Brahman. Turiya is the silent witness of the three states. The individual should transcend the first three states and identify himself with the Turiya or the fourth state. Then only he can attain oneness with the Supreme Soul.

Avidya is the causal body of Jiva or the individual soul. The Jiva identifies itself with the body, mind and the senses on account of Avidya. It has the erroneous notion that the body is the soul, just as one has the wrong notion that the rope is the snake, in the twilight. The moment the individual soul is freed from the self-imposed ignorance by a proper understanding of the Truth through the Vedanta philosophy, Vichara (enquiry), reflection and meditation on the Supreme Brahman, all the illusion disappears.

The identity of the Jivatman (individual soul) and of the entire phenomenal world with the Supreme Soul or Brahman is re-established. The Jiva attains immortality and eternal bliss. It merges itself in Brahman or the Ocean of Bliss.

Badarayana (Vyasa) believes in Jivanmukti or Liberation While Living.

### Celebrated Vedantic Formulae

The following are the celebrated formulae of Vedanta:

*Ekam Eva Advitiyam* – The Reality is One alone without a second.

*Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya, Jivo Bhrahmaiva Na Aparah* - Brahman only exists truly, the world is false, the individual soul is Brahman only and no other.

*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* – All this is, indeed, Brahman.

*Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma* – Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinity.

*Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* – The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

*Santam, Sivam, Advaitam* – Brahman is Peace, Auspiciousness and Non-duality.

*Ayam Atma Santah* – This Atman is Silence.

*Asango Ayam Purusha* – This Purusha is unattached.

*Santam, Ajaram, Abhayam, Param* – This Brahman is Peace, without old age, Immortal, fearless and Supreme.

May you all understand the truths of Vedanta philosophy. May you all realise the bliss of oneness. May you all become Jivanmuktas while living.
Hindu Philosophy - Part 2

Saiva Siddhanta and Saktism
By Swami Shivananda, The Divine Life Society, Rishikesh

The Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy

Introduction

In the books that treat of Saivism, there is a reference to four schools, viz., the Nakulisapasupata, the Saiva, the Pratyabhijna and the Rasesvara.

Saiva Siddhanta is the philosophy of Southern Saivism. It owes its origins to no single author. It is midway between Sankara’s Advaita and Ramanuja’s Visishtadvaita. Its literature consists chiefly of

1. The twenty-eight Saivite Agamas
2. The collection of Saivite hymns as Tirumurai [See Note below]
3. The collection of lives of the Saivite saints, known as Periyapuranam
4. Meykandar’s Siva-jnanabodham
5. Arulnandi’s Sivajnanasiddhir
6. The works of Umapati.

[Note: Tirumular’s work ‘Tirumantiram’ is the foundation upon which the later structure of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy was built. Compiled by Nambi Andar Nambi, the Tirumural includes the Tirumantiram of Tirumular, the Tevaram of Appar, Sundarar and Sambandhar, and the Tiruvachakam of Manikyavachagar.]

The central doctrine of the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is that Siva is the Supreme Reality, and that the Jiva or the individual soul is of the same essence as Siva, but not identical. Pati (God), Pasu (soul) and Pasa (the bonds), and the thirty-six Tattvas or principles which constitute the world, are all real.

The Saiva Siddhanta system is the distilled essence of the Vedanta. It prevailed in Southern India even before the Christian era. Tirunelveli and Madurai are the centres of the Saiva Siddhanta School. Even now, Saivism is a very popular School in South India. It is a rival school of Vaishnavism.

Characteristics of the Supreme Reality

The Supreme Reality is called Siva. He is infinite consciousness. He is eternal, changeless, formless, independent, omnipresent, omniscient, one without a second, beginningless, causeless, taintless, self-existent, ever-free, ever-pure and perfect. He is not limited by time. He is infinite bliss and infinite intelligence. He is free from defects, the all-doer and the all-knower.

Lord Siva is the God of love. His grace is infinite. His love is infinite. He is the saviour and Guru. He is engaged in freeing the souls from the thraldom of matter. He assumes the form of a Guru out of His intense love for mankind. He wishes that all should know Him and attain the blissful Siva-Pada. He watches the activities of the individual souls and helps them in their onward march. He liberates the individual souls from their fetters or bonds.
The Five Activities of the Lord

The Five Activities of the Lord (Pancha-Krityas) are:

1. Srishti (creation)
2. Sthiti (preservation)
3. Samhara (destruction)
4. Tirobhava (veiling)
5. Anugraha (grace)

These separately considered, are the activities of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Mahesvara and Sadasiva.

Siva, Sakti and Maya

The Lord Siva pervades the whole world by His Sakti. He works through His Sakti. Sakti is the conscious energy of Lord Siva. She is the very body of Lord Siva. The potter is the first cause for the pot. The stick and the wheel are the instrumental causes. The clay is the material cause of the pot. Similarly, Siva is the first cause of the world. Sakti is the instrumental cause. Maya is the material cause.

Sakti is not the material cause of the universe, because she is of the nature of consciousness (Chaitanya). Siva is pure consciousness, but matter is pure unconsciousness. Sakti is the intermediate link between the two.

Sakti is the reflex of Siva. It has no independent existence. Siva assumes this form out of His great love for mankind. Siva wishes that all should know Him.

Evolution of the Tattvas From Suddha-Maya

The world undergoes evolution for the benefit of the souls. The whole process of creation is for the sake of the salvation of the souls. The world is real and eternal. The world of matter and souls forms the body of the Lord.

The Saiva Siddhanta analyses the universe into thirty-six Tattvas or principles, as against the twenty-five of the Sankhya. The thirty-six Tattvas arise from Maya, the material cause of the world. Suddha Maya is Maya in its primal state. From it arise the five pure principles called Siva Tattva, Sakti Tattva, Sadasiva Tattva, Isvara Tattva and Suddha-Vidya Tattva. Siva functions through these five pure principles.

Maya evolves into the subtle principles and then into the gross. Siva Tattva is the basis of all consciousness and action. It is undifferentiated (Nishkala Suddha Maya). The Sakti of Siva starts her activity. Then Siva becomes the experiencer. Then He is called Sadasiva, known also by the name Sadakhya, who is not really separate from Siva. The Suddha Maya becomes active. Then Siva, the experiencer, becomes the ruler. He is then Isvara, who is not really separate from Sadasiva. Suddhavidya is the cause of true knowledge.

The Bonds that Bind the Soul

Anava, Karma and Maya

Souls (Pasu) are by nature infinite, all-pervading, eternal and all-knowing like Lord Siva (Pati). Yet they think that they are finite, limited and little-knowing, ignorant and temporary. This is due to their bonds (Pasa), viz., Anava, Karma and Maya that are called the three Malas or impurities. Anava is the impurity which makes the all-pervading Jiva think itself to be atomic (Anu). It produces the erroneous notion of finiteness. The second impurity or bond is Karma. The soul acts in
certain ways on account of its limitation and does good and evil actions. Karma brings about the conjunction of the soul with its body. The results of the Karma have to be worked out in the world. There should be worlds and bodies, in order to experience the fruits of actions and acquire knowledge. These are provided by Maya, the third Mala or bond. Maya is the material cause of the world. The soul gets experience and limited knowledge through Maya.

The soul learns, by long experience, that this Samsara is full of pains and is transitory, and that he can attain eternal bliss and immortality only by attaining Sivatva or the nature of Siva or God-realisation. He develops Vairagya (dispassion), and Viveka (discrimination between the real and the unreal, the permanent and the impermanent).

**Three Orders of Jivas**

The Saiva Siddhantins divide Jivas (individual souls) or Pasus into three orders, viz., Vijnanakalas, Pralayakalas and Sakalas. Vijnanakalas have only the Anva Mala (egoism). Maya and Karma have been resolved. Pralayakalas are those who are free from Maya alone, in the stage of Pralaya. Sakalas have all the Malas (defects), viz., Anava, Karma and Maya.

The Malas affect only the Jivas and not Siva. Those who are freed from the Malas or impurities attain Sivatva or the nature of Siva. They are Siddhas or perfected beings.

**The Way to the Attainment of Sivatva or God-realisation**

You must free yourself from the three bonds, if you want to attain salvation. You must annihilate Maya which is the root of all sins. You must destroy all Karmas which produce rebirth. You must remove the erroneous notion of a finite self.

The three bonds can be removed only through rigorous Tapas (austerity), proper discipline, the help of a Guru, and above all, the grace of Lord Siva. Charya (observance), Kriya (rites) and Yoga (Yama, Niyama etc.) constitute the discipline. When the aspirant practises in right earnest Charya, Kriya and Yoga, he obtains the grace of Lord Siva. Then the Lord instructs the soul, reveals Himself and illumines him. Then the soul realises its nature as Siva (Jnana).

Discipline and grace culminate in Jnana. Jnana is the supreme means of salvation or the attainment of the final beatitude. Karma and other means are only subsidiary to it. They are only auxiliaries.

The attainment of Saivatva or Siva-nature does not mean complete merging of the soul in Siva. The liberated soul does not lose its individuality. It continues to exist as soul in God. Sivatva is the realisation of an identity of essence in spite of difference. The soul attains the nature of Siva or God, but it is not itself Siva or God.

**The Sakti Yoga Philosophy**

**Introduction**

In this system of Sakti Yoga philosophy, Siva is omnipresent, impersonal and inactive. He is pure consciousness. Sakti is dynamic. Siva and Sakti are related as Prakasa and Virmarsa. Sakti or Vimarsa is the power that is latent in the pure consciousness. Virmarsa gives rise to the world of distinctions. Siva is Chit. Sakti is Chidrupini. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva do their functions of creation, preservation and destruction in obedience to Sakti. Sakti is endowed with Ichha (will), jnana (knowledge) and Kriya (action). Siva and Sakti are one. Sakti-Tattva and Siva-Tattva are inseparable. Siva is always with Sakti.
Siva-Tattva and Sakti-Tattva
The creative aspect of the supreme Siva is called Siva-Tattva. Sakti-Tattva is the will of Siva. It is the seed and womb of the entire world.

Siva has two aspects. In one aspect, He is the supreme, changeless One who is Satchidananda. This is Para Samvit. Nishkala Siva is Nirguna Siva. He is not connected with the creative Sakti. In the other aspect, He changes as the world. The cause of the change is Siva-Tattva. Sakti-Tattva is the first dynamic aspect of Brahman. This Siva-Tattva and Sakti-Tattva are inseparable.

Sakti – The Ruler of Maya
Maya or Prakriti is within the womb of Sakti. Maya is the matrix of the world. Maya is potential in the state of dissolution. She is dynamic in creation. Maya evolves into several material elements and other physical parts of all sentient creatures, under the direction of Sakti.

There are thirty-six Tattvas or principles in the Sakti philosophy.

Sakti- The Active Aspect of the Immanent God
The power or active aspect of the immanent God is Sakti. Siva or Brahman is the unchanging consciousness. Sakti is His changing Power that appears as mind and matter. Sakti is the embodiment of power. She runs this world-show. She maintains the sportive play or Lila of the Lord. She is the supporter of the vast universe. She is the supreme Power by which the world is upheld. She is the Universal Mother. She is Durga, Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Kali, Chandi, Chamundi, Tripurasundari and Rajarajesvari. She is Lalita, Kundalini and Parvati. There is no difference between God and His Sakti, just as there is no difference between fire and its burning power.

Devi is Sakti of Lord Siva. She is Jada Sakti and Chit Sakti. Prakriti is Jada (insentient) Sakti. Suddha Maya is Chit Sakti.

[Note: Chit = The principle of universal intelligence or consciousness.]

Nada, Bindu and the rest are only names for different aspects of Sakti. Sakti is Prakriti, Maya, Mahamaya and Sri Vidya. Sakti is Brahman Itself. Sakti manifested Herself to Lord Siva in the ten forms as the Dasa-Maha-Vidyas, viz., Kali, Bagalamukhi, Chhinnamasta, Bhuvanesvari, Matangi, Shodasi, Dhumavati, Tripurasundari, Tara and Bhairavi.

Sakti is Chidrupini. She is pure, blissful, Consciousness. She is the Mother of Nature. She is Nature Itself. She is Jagat-Janani, Creatrix of the world; Mahishasuramardini, destroyer of Mahishasura (the demon); Bhrantinasini, destroyer of illusion or Avidya; and Dardryanasini, destroyer of poverty. The world is a manifestation of Sakti. The countless universes are only the dust of Divine Mother’s holy feet. Her glory is ineffable. Her splendour is indescribable. Her greatness is unfathomable. She showers Her grace on Her sincere devotees. She leads the individual soul from Chakra to Chakra, from plane to plane, and unites him with Lord Siva in the Sahasrara.

Manifestations of the Divine Mother
The Supreme Lord is represented as Siva and His power is represented as His consort-Sakti, also called Durga or Kali. Just as the husband and wife look after the well-being of the family, so also Lord Siva and His Sakti are engaged in looking after the affairs of this world.

Divine Mother is everywhere triple. She is endowed with the three Gunas, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. She manifests Herself as Will (Ichha Sakti), Action (Kriya Sakti) and Knowledge (Jnana Sakti). She is Brahma-Sakti (Sarasvati) in conjunction with Brahma, Vishnu-Sakti (Lakshmi) in conjunction with Vishnu and Siva-Sakti (Gauri or Uma) in conjunction with Siva. Hence She is called Tripurasundari.
Radha, Durga, Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Savitri are the five primary forms of Prakriti or Devi. Durga destroyed Madhu and Kaitabha through Vishnu. As Mahalakshmi, She destroyed the Asura Mahisha; and as Sarasvati, She destroyed Sumbha and Nisumbha with their companions Dhumralochana, Chanda, Munda and Raktabija.

The Abode of the Divine Mother

The abode of Tripurasundari, the Divine Mother, is called Sri-Nagara. This magnificent abode known as Mani-Dvipa, is surrounded by twenty-five ramparts which represent the twenty-five Tattvas. The resplendent Chintamani Palace is in the middle. The Divine Mother sits in the Bindu-Pitha in Sri-Chakra in that wonderful palace. There is a similar abode for Her in the body of man also.

The body is Sakti. The needs of the body are the needs of Sakti. When man enjoys, it is Sakti who enjoys through him. She sees through his eyes, works through his hands and hears through his ears. Body, mind, Prana, egoism, intellect, organs, and all functions are Her manifestations.

The whole world is Her body. Mountains are Her bones. Rivers are Her veins. Ocean is Her bladder. Sun and moon are Her eyes. Wind is Her breath. Agni (fire) is her mouth.

The Indescribable Glory of Devi

The Story of the Yaksha

In the Kenopanishad, it is said that the gods became puffed up with a victory over the Asuras. They wrongly took the success to be the result of their own valour and powers. The Lord wanted to teach them a lesson. He appeared before them in the form of a Yaksha- a huge form, the beginning and end of which were not visible. The Devas wanted to find out the identity of this form and sent Agni for this purpose. The Yaksha asked Agni (fire): “What is thy name and power?” Agni replied : “I am Agni, Jatavedas. I can burn up the whole universe in a minute.” The Yaksha placed before Agni a dry blade of grass and asked him to burn it. Agni was not able to burn it. He ran away from the Yaksha in shame.

The gods then sent Vayu to enquire who he was. Vayu approached the Yaksha. The Yaksha asked Vayu: “Who are you? What is your power?” Vayu replied; “I am the wind-god. I can blow away the whole world in a minute.” The Yaksha then placed a blade of grass before Vayu and challenged him to blow it away. Vayu could not make it move an inch from its place. He, too, left the place in shame. Last of all came Indra (king or ruler of heaven) himself. When Indra reached the place, he found that the Yaksha had vanished.

Then Uma appeared before Indra and revealed to him the real identity of the Yaksha. She said to Indra: “It is the power of the Divine Mother- and not that of the gods- that crowned the gods with victory. It is the Sakti of Uma or Himavati, sister of Krishna, that is the source of the strength of all the gods”. Sakti is the great Teacher of Jnana. She sheds wisdom on Her devotees.

The Devi Behind the Gods

When Vishnu and Mahadeva destroyed various Asuras, the power of Devi was behind them. Devi took Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra and gave them the necessary Sakti to proceed with the work of creation, preservation and destruction. She is at the centre of the life of the universe. She is in the Muladhara Chakra in our bodies. She vitalises the body through the Sushumna. She vitalises the universe from the summit of Mount Meru.
The Mother That Protects

Sakti may be termed as that by which we live and have our being in this universe. In this world, all the wants of the child are provided by the mother. The child’s growth, development and sustenance are looked after by the mother. Even so, all the necessities of life, life’s activities in this world and the energy needed for it, depend upon Sakti or the Universal Mother.

The first syllable is the name of the beloved mother. Is there any child who does not owe its all to the affection and love of its mother? It is the mother who protects you, consoles you, cheers you and nurses you. She is your friend, philosopher, preceptor and guide throughout your life. The human mother is a manifestation of the Universal Mother.

The Scriptures of the Sakta School

The Devi-Sukta of the Rig-Veda, Sri-Sukta, Durga-Sukta, Bhu-Sukta and Nila-Sukta, and the specific Sakta Upanishads such as the Tripurasundari Upanishad, Sitopanishad, Devi Upanishad, Saubhagyā Upanishad, Sarasvati Upanishad, Bhavanopanishad, Bahvrichopanishad, etc.- all emphatically declare the Mother aspect of God.

Saktaism - A Universal Cult

He who worships Sakti, that is, God in Mother form, as the Supreme Power that creates, sustains and withdraws the universe, is a Sakta.

Worship of Sakti, or Saktaism, is one of the oldest and most widespread religions in the world. Everybody in this world wants power and loves to possess power. He is elated by power. He wants to domineer over others through power. War is the outcome of greed for power. Scientists are followers of Saktaism. He who wishes to develop will-power and a charming personality is a follower of Saktaism.

Scientists say now that everything is energy only, and that energy is the physical ultimate of all forms of matter. The followers of the Sakta school of philosophy have said the same thing long ago. They further say that this energy is only a limited manifestation of the infinite Supreme Power or Maha Sakti.

Vedanta and Saktaism

The basis of Saktaism is the Veda. Saktaism upholds that the only source and authority (Pramana) regarding transcendental or super-sensuous matters such as the nature of Brahman, etc., is the Veda. Sakti Vada or Sakta Darsana is a form of monism or Advaita Vada. Saktaism is only Vedanta. The Saktas have the same spiritual experiences as those of a Vedantin.

Saktaism speaks of the personal and impersonal aspects of Godhead. Brahman is Nishkala or without Prakriti, and Sakala or with Prakriti. The Vedantins speak of Nirupadhika Brahman (pure Nirguna Brahman without Maya), and Sopadhika Brahman (with Upadhi or Maya) or Saguna Brahman. It is all the same. Names only are different. It is a play of words or Sabda Jala. People fight on words only and carry on lingual warfare, hair-splitting, logical chopping and intellectual gymnastics. In reality, the essence is one. Clay only is truth; all modifications such as pot, etc., are in name only. In Nirguna (without attributes) Brahman, Sakti is potential; whereas, in Saguna (with attributes) Brahman, Sakti is dynamic.

Sakti-Yoga Sadhana

Saktaism is not mere theory or philosophy. It prescribes systematic Sadhana (austerity) of Yoga, regular discipline according to the temperament, capacity and degree of evolution of the Sadhaka. Sadhana means unfolding, rousing up or awakening of the power of Sakti. Saktaism helps the
aspirant to arouse the Kundalini and unite Her with Lord Siva and to enjoy the supreme bliss or Nirvikalpa Samadhi. A Sakta does Sadhana that helps the union of Siva and Sakti through the awakening of the forces within the body. He becomes a Siddha in the Sadhana when he is able to awaken Kundalini and pierce the six Chakras. The mode of Sadhana depends upon the tendencies and capacities of the Sadhaka.

**Bhava or Attitude**

The aspirant thinks that the world is identical with the Divine Mother. He moves about thinking his own form to be the form of the Divine Mother and thus beholds oneness everywhere. He also feels that the Divine Mother is identical with Brahman.

The advanced Sadhaka feels: “I am the Devi and the Devi is in me”. He worships himself as Devi instead of adoring any external object. He says: “Saham” (I am She (Devi).

**The Awakening of Kundalini**

The Sakti must be awakened by Dhyana, Bhava, Japa and Mantra Sakti. The Mother, the embodiment of the fifty letters, is present in the various letters in the different Chakras. When the chords of a musical instrument are struck harmoniously, fine music is produced. Even so, when the chords of the letters are struck in their order, the Mother who moves in the six Chakras and who is the very Self of the letters, awakens Herself. The Sadhaka attains Siddhi easily when She is roused. It is difficult to say when and how She shows Herself, and to what Sadhaka.

When Kundalini sleeps, man is awake to the world. He has objective consciousness. When She awakes, he sleeps. He loses all consciousness of the world and becomes one with the Lord. In Samadhi, the body is maintained by the nectar that flows from the union of Siva and Sakti in the Sahasrara.

**Pasu Bhava and Divya Bhava**

Physical contact with a female is gross Maithuna. This is due to Pasu-Bhava or animal attraction or brutal instinct. Mother Kundalini Sakti unites with Lord Siva in the Sahasrara during Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This is a real Maithuna or blissful union. This is due to Divya-Bhava or divine disposition. You must rise from Pasu-Bhava to Divya-Bhava through Satsanga, service of Guru, renunciation, dispassion, discrimination, Japa and meditation.

**Indispensability of Guru’s Guidance and Mother’s Grace**

Sakti Yoga Sadhana is to be practised in a perfect, practical way under the guidance of a Guru who has become perfect. Guru is indispensable for the practice of Sakti Yoga Sadhana. He initiates the aspirant and transmits the divine Sakti.

No one can free himself from the thraldom of mind and matter without Mother’s grace. The fetters of Maya are too hard to break. If you worship Her as the great Mother, you can very easily go beyond Prakriti through Her benign grace and blessings. She will remove all obstacles in the path, lead you safely into the illimitable domain of eternal bliss, and make you absolutely free. When She is pleased and bestows Her blessings on you, then alone you can free yourself from the bondage of this formidable Samsara.

**Knowledge of Sakti Leads to Salvation**

Knowledge of Sakti leads to Salvation. “Sakti-Jnana Vina Devi Nirvanam Naiva Jayate” – O Devi! Without knowledge of Sakti, Mukti cannot be attained, says Siva to Devi. The Jiva or the individual
soul thinks, when he is under the influence of Maya, that he is the doer and the enjoyer and identifies himself with the body. Through the grace of Sakti and through Sadhana or self-culture, the individual soul frees himself from all fetters and attains spiritual insight and merges himself in the Supreme.

Worship of the Divine Mother, intense faith and perfect devotion and self-surrender, will help you to attain Her grace. Through Her grace alone you can attain knowledge of the Imperishable.

Glory to Sri Tripurasundari. The Mother of the world, who is also Rajarajesvari and Lalita-Devi. May Her blessings be upon you all. May you all obtain the grace of Sakti, the Universal Mother and enjoy the supreme bliss of final emancipation.