

Philosophy and Critical Thinking
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Week-11
Lecture 49: Samkhya Philosophy

Namaskar to all. Today I am going to talk about Sāṁkhya Philosophy. Sāṁkhya Philosophy is one of the schools of thought from orthodox school of thought. Now, Sāṁkhya Philosophy is again an important philosophy from orthodoxian school of thought. Just to remind you there are two groups in Indian system. One is orthodox and other side is heterodox. So, we started this Indian philosophy. First, we discussed about the Indian philosophy then we discussed Vedanta philosophy. So, Vedanta philosophy is like Shankaracharya philosophy and Ramanujacharya philosophy. Both of them belongs to Vedanta philosophy. Now, we have discussed Shankaracharya and Ramanujacharya or Nimbarkacharya, Madhvācharya. So, all these philosophers are a part of Vedanta. Now, Vedanta philosophy is in a part of orthodox school of thought. Now, orthodox school of thought it only means they accept authority of Ved. Now, after that we discussed Buddhism or Buddhist philosophy where we have discussed early Buddhist philosophy, Sarvāstivāda, the realist school of Buddhism and the Mahayana school of philosophy basically Yogācāra idealism. That school of thought was a part of heterodox school of thought. Heterodox school of thought means who reject the authority of Ved. Sāṁkhya philosophy which I am going to discuss today, this philosophy is a unique, unique in the sense that the Sāṁkhya philosophy belongs to this orthodox group in this division and it is again has taken many things from Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and so on, scriptures. But Sāṁkhya philosophy or especially classic Sāṁkhya philosophy is not, they do not accept the existence of God. So, in that sense the Sāṁkhya philosophy is a unique and therefore we have included the Sāṁkhya philosophy in this course. Sāṁkhya philosophy again is important because the Sāṁkhya philosophy talks about the creation in a very unique way and a given a different explanation of the creation. So, Sāṁkhya philosophy is again is in a very significant in the sense that he talks about all the human personality and from very different perspective. Therefore, in discussing Sāṁkhya philosophy in Indian system is very important. So, let us start today. I will be discussing this Sāṁkhya philosophy. So first, I will introduce you about Sāṁkhya philosophy and its text and very basic level and then we will talk about a very important concept from Sāṁkhya philosophy is theory of causation. Reason, theory of causation is a basic philosophy of Sāṁkhya philosophy and this other philosophy is based on this theory. So, knowing his theory is very important. So, Sāṁkhya philosophy then obvious one question one may ask that what is the meaning of Sāṁkhya? Why we are saying it Sāṁkhya philosophy? So, for example in Shankaracharya we say Advaita philosophy because he believed in Advaita a single monism. So, that is the reason that is saying Advaita philosophy. Vishistadvaita again because he believes that it is a

qualified monism. So, he believed that and that body mind mind and body is a part of God, not God. Buddhist philosophy if we talk about the Sarvastivada the *Sarvam asti* so everything exists, or Yogacara is idealistic because he believes that everything is just a projection of your mind so on. So similarly, why we have Sāṃkhya philosophy what does it mean? So first, there is an argument that Sāṃkhya means number. Now, it numerates the metaphysical principle of reality in number. We will be discussing that and therefore it means Sāṃkhya system. Sāṃkhya system talks about a metaphysical principle of reality. Then another argument that Sāṃkhya also means the perfect knowledge. So why we need that and why the perfect knowledge is required in the Sāṃkhya philosophy especially in this text it is in mention which I will be discussing. Now, this tradition described to origin of Sāṃkhya system to Kapila. So, Kapila was the founder of Sāṃkhya system. However, they are mentioned about some text about Kapila, that this Kapila has written some text but there is no direct evidence about that work and an author of that. However, the Kapila is a person who started the Sāṃkhya philosophy who talked about the Sāṃkhya system. Now, what we have available that is called *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Ísvarkṛṣṇa in 200 AD. So, *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Ísvarkṛṣṇa is the earliest available work. So, whatever we have idea of Sāṃkhya system, is from Ísvarkṛṣṇa *Sāṃkhyakārikā*.

Now, let us understand that how Ísvarkṛṣṇa is the part of Sāṃkhya philosophy. So, this is the chain where first is Kapila. So, Kapila is a guru and then Asuri is the student of disciple of Kapila. Then Now, next philosopher is Pañcaśikha. Pañcaśikha was a disciple of Asuri, and then Ísvarkṛṣṇa was student of Pañcaśikha. So, this is how this chain, so here what we have from this side from Ísvarkṛṣṇa. So, we know, about the Sāṃkhya system because there is a text written by this Ísvarkṛṣṇa in 200 AD. Name of this text is *Sāṃkhyakārikā*. So, this is one of the earliest available texts in Sāṃkhya system. In 900 AD there are other philosopher is Vacaspati Misra wrote in a commentary on *Sāṃkhyakārikā* known as *Sāṃkhyatattvakaumudi*, which is most authoritative work on the Sāṃkhya system. So, these are the very basic level introduction about the text. However, there are many texts which we have not included in this introduction. Just to give an idea about the Sāṃkhya philosophy and its sources.

Sāṃkhya advocates that suffering is a threefold. As I have discussed in the all the school of thought in Indian system starting from the Vedanta philosophy what we have discussed in this course in Shankaracharya or Ramanujacharya or Madhvācharya or Nimbarkacharya. We also have discussed with this philosophy where Buddha has talked about the four novel truths that all of them is had talked about the suffering. Suffering is an important thing. So, because of this suffering I mean this life is a full of suffering. Therefore, there is an important work or as it works or let us say you have to remove the suffering. Now, what are the path and how you can remove the suffering they have own way to explain. So, Vedanta philosophy talks about a different kind of reality explaining and Buddhist philosophy has a different way to explain this reality and then solution of this problem. So, every philosophy has own way to explain the solution. So Sāṃkhya philosophy similarly

again it talks about suffering but Sāṃkhya philosophy discussing is this suffering in more detail and he argued the philosopher from Sāṃkhya tradition that the suffering is threefold. Now, first one is the personal that is an Ādhyātmika. So, the Ādhyātmika suffering is because of your physical problem or any mental problem. For example, there is an anxiety or any other thing in the mental state. So, whatever you are getting a suffering because of this is called Ādhyātmika. Now, there is another problem of suffering because of external men, animals and other thing. So, that is because of external, that is called Ādhibhautika this suffering. Third type of suffering is a cosmic. So, any suffering due to a supernatural cosmic because, for example, this nature, any ghost in a demon that will come in this category is cosmic or Ādhidaivika suffering. For example, heat and cold it is not possible by Ādhyātmika and same time Ādhibhautika. So that is because it is Ādhidaivika. So, this is what suffering is mentioned in Sāṃkhya philosophy and Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that whatever we have suffered in past so we cannot talk of there is no point of like talking about the destruction of all this pain or cannot talk about the destroying of the past pain because already has gone. The present which we are in suffering that is going to over in next moment so there is again we cannot talk about the destroy. Now, third one is a future pain and Sāṃkhya philosophy says that we have to perform we have to think of the future or need to destroy this pain. So, the suffering is what is an important and you have to important in the sense we need to remove these ideas or you have to remove go for the solution of this problem which problem is we going to face in a future. So, Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that removing this pain and suffering is a very important, significant and Sāṃkhya philosophy provide a solution of this problem. Now, the Sāṃkhya system argues that the non-production of pain in the future is due to the total destruction of its cause. So, the system has established and recommended path where we are going to destruct all the causes of the pain suffering and therefore the Sāṃkhya system also is called a perfect knowledge. In the previous slide, we talked about the Sāṃkhya meanings. So, perfect knowledge is required to remove all suffering. So, remove of or removal of suffering is a very significant. Now, I also would like to mention here that Sāṃkhya philosophy argued that this idea of *dukkha* which we are discussing because we have discussed in the Vedanta philosophy, Buddhist philosophy Now, again we are discussing in a Sāṃkhya philosophy all the philosopher is arguing about that suffering and then solution. This idea it may lead you the pessimism but Sāṃkhya philosophy has a different way to see things. The philosopher from the system believed that this *dukkha* the idea of *dukkha* or thinking of *dukkha* is an important. It is not pessimism it is an optimism. So, when we are not thinking of that then it means we will not be working for the solution of this problem. So, if there is a thinking of the removal of this suffering then this is a good thing. So, talking about suffering and thinking of suffering, writing of suffering is not that way. You have to take it in a very positive sense. So, all the philosophers which they are talking about the suffering or pain basically, they are more focused on the removal of this idea, removal of the suffering and therefore this does not lead to pessimism but optimism. So, this is an

argument where we can talk about the Indian school of thought. Now, the whole goal of the Indian system or Indian school of thought is to give you a proper solution of the problem. Now, this is again it will not be possible if we are not going to explain the reality. We are not going to explain the personhood. We are not going to explain the appearance of world. So, all those things is very important and therefore, you will find that then a school who is addressing all the problems. For example, who am I? They are also going to talk about the appearance of this world. Is it real or not real? And what is the ultimate reality? What are the sources of knowledge and so on. So, these are the topics is dealt by or addressed by all the Indian philosophers or all the Indian school of thought. Sāṃkhya philosophy plays a very important role on the philosophers and Sāṃkhya philosophy has influenced many other philosophers as well. Sāṃkhya philosophy advocates the ontological dualism. There is one name is *prakṛti* and another is *puruṣa*. So, ontological dualism means ultimately there are two things is real. It is *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. What is *prakṛti* and what is *puruṣa* we will be discussing in the next class one by one. Now, this important part is here is Sāṃkhya advocates two things *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. Now, saying this when we are arguing that we are talking about the dualism *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* it also means that it rejecting the Atomistic pluralism. I mean, Vaisheshika philosophy talks about, however, we have not discussed the Vaisheshika philosophy. We have discussed in introduction week about the Vaisheshika philosophy in brief where we have discussed that how Vaisheshika philosophy believes in the atoms talks about the atoms and believe that atoms are real. Now, what Sāṃkhya philosophy is doing when they are talking about the dualism the two things *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* it means that they are also rejecting this pluralism and again the monism of Advait Vedant. What Shankaracharya has argued that only Brahman is real and everything is unreal that is called monism and Sāṃkhya philosophy rejects both sides. Vaisheshika, if you are going for pluralism, then I will say Sāṃkhya philosophy has presented an argument against that philosophy, but again, when you are going for the monism side, this philosophy is again presented against this monism. So, Sāṃkhya philosophy is what talks about the dualism *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. As I said, the classical Sāṃkhya system is atheistic, so this classical Sāṃkhya does not believe in God we will discuss later about even the latest Sāṃkhya and all.

Now, the first theory that I would like to discuss today is the theory of causation. Theory of causation we have discussed in first few classes in first week while discussing about the metaphysical concept. Now, while discussing this Indian philosophy we also have discussed this theory of causation. For example, in Buddhism theory of causation is important. So, theory of causation is an important concept where all the philosopher they have talked about their philosophy based on this theory. So, this theory is clear then it will be sometime easy to talk about the philosophy. Now, what is the problem with this this theory of causation how they have argued. So, for example there is a cause and effect. For example, this X is cause and Y is effect, simple like fire, smoke, milk, curd. So, these are the classic example they give the fire smoke relation that is for milk and curd relation. So,

these are the cause and effect. So, one is cause one is effect. X is cause Y is effect. But this is not as simple as that in the Indian system. They ask another question that can we talk about pre-existence of Y in cause. So, before this causation can we say that Y was which is an effect was in cause in X. So, this is what the main and primary question is. And if you are going to answer this question yes, then it will call Satkaryavāda. If you are going to say no then, it is called a Asatkāryavāda. So, this is what question is answered by a different philosopher and Sāṃkhya maintains that the effect a pre-exists were in the cause in a potential condition and effect is modification of the cause, so there's parinama. So, if there is an X and Y for example fire and then smoke Sāṃkhya says that smoke was already there in cause in potential condition. Now, this smoke is just a modification of this cause. Take example of milk and curd. So, curd was where in this milk before this causation. And, this curd is modification of milk. So, this is what we call Satkaryavāda. So, effect is not a new beginning. It is not X is not producing Y something which is new. Fire is not producing smoke that something is new. This is not starting point. This is not a new beginning. Milk is not producing curd in a sense that it is not a new beginning of the curd. It is nothing a new curd. So, when they are believing that it is there, it is for this causation it was there in the milk. It only means that this effect is not a new beginning. And this doctrine as I said known as Satkaryavāda. So, if there is an any cause for example, clay. The lump of clay and then there is a pot. So clay is a cause pot is a effect, brick is an effect. So, when there is in a cause and there is an effect. What Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that this pot, this brick was there where in this cause as a potential condition. Now, this is effect is in a modification of this cause. So, the clay the modification of clay is this pot or brick. Again, the Sāṃkhya philosophy believed that the both A C and P or B, both are real. Even C is real, sat and then P and B which is an effect of C or modification of C, parinama of C, that is called that is real. So, even this effect is real and then cause is real. That is called Parinama. Sāṃkhya philosophy argues for Parinamavāda. Now, let us just for your understanding or just for an idea, Nyaya-Vaisheshika there is another school of thought from Orthodox school of thought and that is called Asatkāryavāda and Ārambhavada. Now, Asatakaryavada believed that if suppose there is a fire and then smoke. So, they reject the idea that effect was there in cause. So, Asatkāryavāda does not talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause. So, Nyaya-Vaisheshika believed that this is a new beginning and that is called Ārambhavada. So, first they are rejecting this idea. They are saying no it was not there and therefore they are going for Asatakaryavada. Now, they are arguing that this effect is basically a new beginning, so, that is what we call Ārambhavada. Starting from here Ārambhavada. Advaita Vedanta which we have discussed in this class, Shankaracharya, maintains that effect is unreal appearance of the cause which is real. So, Advaita Vedanta advocates Vivartavāda. So, basically Shankaracharya or Advaita Vedanta argues that this is a cause and effect. Let us say Brahman and then world. So Shankaracharya as we have discussed is they saying that this world, this effect is unreal. This is an unreal appearance of cause, Vivart. That is why it is called Vivartavāda. So,

effect, this cause is producing or something which is unreal. So existent is non-existent. Real and is unreal. Brahman is real but this appearance of this effect is unreal. So, this is that is the reason that it is called Vivartavāda. So, Advaita Vedanta has not argued about Satkārya or Asatakārya. He said this is a vivartavāda. So this is how if you take all the school of thought they have in their own way. I mean their philosophy if you know, this theory of causation from their school of thought for example, Buddhism, example Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Jainism. So, it will be easy to talk about how they have talked about. It will be easy to talk about their philosophy. So, theory of causation is clear then their philosophy will be clear. So, Sāṃkhya philosophy says that it exists where in this cause. So, world if you take in this example Brahman and world. I mean we are taking as in a cause effect. Reason is Sāṃkhya philosophy does not advocate for this idea of Brahman. But if suppose there is in a Brahman and world there is a cause and an effect. Sāṃkhya philosophy say that will argue that this effect will exist where in this cause. For example, there is in a smoke and fire it will argue that it is in a pre-existence of effect in cause. It was there and that is the reason cause is producing effect, and this doctrine called Parinamavāda. So, Sāṃkhya philosophy it advocates Parinamavāda. If you know, the Sāṃkhya philosophy about this causation it will also be able to talk about the Sāṃkhya philosophy and their basic concept. So, Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that if there is in a smoke and there is in a fire and then a smoke there is in a cause and then effect. So, before this causation effect what where in the cause. So, we can talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause. And both if and if cause and effect is real. Now, Sāṃkhya arguments to prove the pre-existence of effect in the cause. So, Sāṃkhya what he presented some argument. So, first argument that if the effect is non-existent in the cause prior to his operation none can bring it into existence out of this cause. So, he arguing like for example, there is in a milk and curd relation right. If it is not there. So, for example, we are saying oh, we cannot talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause. If it is so then it is difficult to talk about this M cannot produce the C. So, it will be difficult to bring this C out of M. He argues that it was there in milk, therefore, milk can produce curd. This fire and a smoke relation it was there the smoke was in the cause, the effect was in the cause and therefore this fire is able to produce smoke. Another example the clay and then pot or brick. So, this pot or brick this effect was where in this cause and therefore, this clay is producing this pot and or brick. And if you are arguing that it is not there, we cannot talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause then none of them anything cannot produce cannot bring this P out of C. So, if this curd is not in milk before this causation, then it is in a difficult to get curd or being curd in existence out of milk. So, therefore what Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that this effect is where in the cause. Second argument, a particular effect can be produced out of particular material cause. So, only fire can produce I mean this smoke so when I am saying this particular kind of effect it is only possible in particular kind of cause. So, if there is an occurred is a kind of effect it is only possible with milk, I mean only possible means there is a particular kind of cause. So, it also proves that it was there because only

because milk can produce curd, the clay can produce pot, the fire can produce smoke. So, this cause-and-effect relation it is only possible because this particular type of effect can be produced by a particular type of cause. It only means that we can talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause. Now, third argument if the effect unrelated to the cause could be produced then every effect world arises from every cause but every effect does not arise from every cause. So, if you are going to argue that if C is not related to M, for example, there is we are arguing for this fire and smoke or we can cut if you are arguing that we cannot talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause, what does it mean? It means that any cause can produce any effect. So, even sand can start producing oil, even milk can produce oil, milk can produce like a smoke, sand can produce even curd. So, every if cause is going to produce any effect. Since, this is not possible sand cannot produce oil because the effect was not in the cause. Since, the curd is where in the cause smoke in and is fire therefore only the particular kind of cause can produce particular kind of effect. The fourth argument presented by Sāṃkhya philosophy is that effect pre-exist in the cause since it can be produced by potent cause only. So, only milk can produce curd, only fire can produce smoke only clay can produce pot and therefore it is worth it is there in the cause, because only the milk has this potent cause or the *Sakti* which can produce curd. Only fire has another potent cause or the *Sakti* power, the causal power that can produce smoke only clay has this *Sakti* that we can produce pot. So therefore, it argues that this causal power is only possible when it is it exists pre-existence is there in the cause. So, we can talk about the pre-existence of effect in the cause. Now, again, the fifth argument you know, Sāṃkhya philosophy presented as that effect pre-exist in the cause since it is identical in nature with the cause. So, there is an identical of nature. So, there is a cause and effect they have the identical nature. So, like milk and curd identical nature. So, there is an identical nature with the cause. It only proves that we can talk about the pre-existence of effect in the cause. So, before this causation where we are talking about the cause and effect, before this causation effect was in the cause. So we can talk about the pre-existence of effect in the cause. For Sāṃkhya philosophy, the production is manifestation the avirbhāva, and destruction is disappearance or observation into the cause. So, when there is a clay, and there is a pot so this is cause, this is effect. Sāṃkhya philosophy will say that pot is the modification of clay. So, this is avirbhāva and when is in terms of destruction is a disappearance is observing where going back to the cause. Now, Sāṃkhya argues that effect is identical with the cause in essence. So, if you talk about terms of essence of the cause and effect so there is an identical. So, the essence of the effect is identical with the essence of cause. And Sāṃkhya philosophy presents an argument to prove the identity of cause and the effect. So, first argument is the effect is not a different from its material since it is a property of cause and inheres in it. So, you will find that there is a property of cause which is in effect and that is the proof that the effect is not different from its material cause. Take example of the thread and a cloth. Second argument, there is a causal relation between material and effect constituted by it. So, it is a cause-effect because there is a for example thread and

then cloth. So, this is producing this cause that only thread can produce this cloth. So, there is a way to get this cloth out of this thread. So, they are like in identity, because there is a relation cause and effect relation only this is a cause and this is an effect. So, this particular kind of effect can be produced by particular kind of cause. Third argument, if two objects are different from each other they can conjoin with each other but they cannot so, therefore the two was identical. The material cause and effect are identical with each other in essence, because there is a quantitative quality between them. So, there is a quantitative quality between them therefore this also is an argument that this cause and effect are identical. So, effect is what is there in the cause. So, essence of effect is identical with the essence of cause. So, this is how Shankaracharya has argued about the cause and effect, the theory of causation really in detail and this theory of causation is a very basic of Sāṃkhya philosophy which we have discussed in the basic level. Now, Sāṃkhya recognizes two kinds of cause. First, is in a material cause and second is an efficient cause. And again, Sāṃkhya distinguished two kinds of effect. First, is simple manifestation. So, if milk is in the cream that is in a manifestation of milk in cream and second is reproduction, for example gold in transform into a different ornament. So, this is called reproduction. This is what in conclusion Sāṃkhya philosophy has talked about the cause and effect and cause and based on this cause and effect what they have discussed for example how the pre-existence of cause in effect and after destruction is going back to the cause and then the sense of effect is identical with the effect of cause. So, these two statements, those two arguments is important and Sāṃkhya philosophy has built a philosophy that concept, the concept of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* that is based on this cause and effect relation and we will be discussing that in the next class. So, thank you. This talk was based on mainly Indian philosophy by Jadunath Sinha. He also mentioned Sāṃkhya philosophy well in detail in basic level, and again if you want to number of book then this introduction to Indian philosophy also an important book for this Indian philosophy. So, thank you so much for your kind attention. Thank you.