

**Philosophy and Critical Thinking**  
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**Lecture 52: Samkhya Philosophy**

Namaskar to all. Today I am going to discuss the Sāṁkhya Philosophy and in Sāṁkhya Philosophy, I will be discussing the theory of evolution. In the last class, we have discussed the idea of puruṣa, and before that I have also discussed the idea of prakṛti from Sāṁkhya Philosophy. The first class of the Sāṁkhya philosophy, I have discussed that cause and effect. So, relation of this cause and effect. I mean what I mean to say is, in Sāṁkhya philosophy, one question is very important that can we talk about the pre-existence of effect in cause and this question is significant in the sense that based on this theory, the Sāṁkhya philosophy talks about the theory of evolution. Now what does it mean? So, for example, there is a clay and there is a pot. So, clay is cause, pot or brick is an effect. Now, Sāṁkhya philosophy argues that this pot or brick is before this causation was there in the cause. So, this effect is basically a modification of this cause. So, one is discussed, when you are like discuss destroying this object, it will be going back to the cause. So, Sāṁkhya philosophy, how he argued that there is an idea of prakṛti and prakṛti is in a material cause of this universe. So, this universe, this object, all this individual object in the world is effect and cause is the Prakṛti and that is the reason that we discuss first the cause and effect theory from Sāṁkhya perspective and then we discuss the notion of Prakṛti and the notion of Puruṣa from Sāṁkhya perspective. Now, today I am going to discuss the theory of evolution in very basic level. So, you will have an idea about the Sāṁkhya philosophy and its argument about this world. As we have been discussing, the Sāṁkhya advocates the two ontological dualism that is prakṛti and puruṣa. If you ask me Prakṛti and Puruṣa, so Prakṛti is everything but not what is puruṣa or prakṛti is completely different from puruṣa and puruṣa is completely different from puruṣa. That is the reason that there is two things. It is called dualism. So, Sāṁkhya philosophy believed that the prakṛti and puruṣa are ultimately real. Again, let me remind you as I have discussed in Sāṁkhya philosophy there is no concept of God. They do not believe in concept of God in classic Sāṁkhya. So, the puruṣa what we already have discussed is a concept, and but this puruṣa is again is a meaning. It is not one puruṣa. Prakṛti is an equilibrium position of three Gunas, the Satva, Rajas, and Tamas. We also have discussed the effect of the Satva, Rajas, and Tamas.

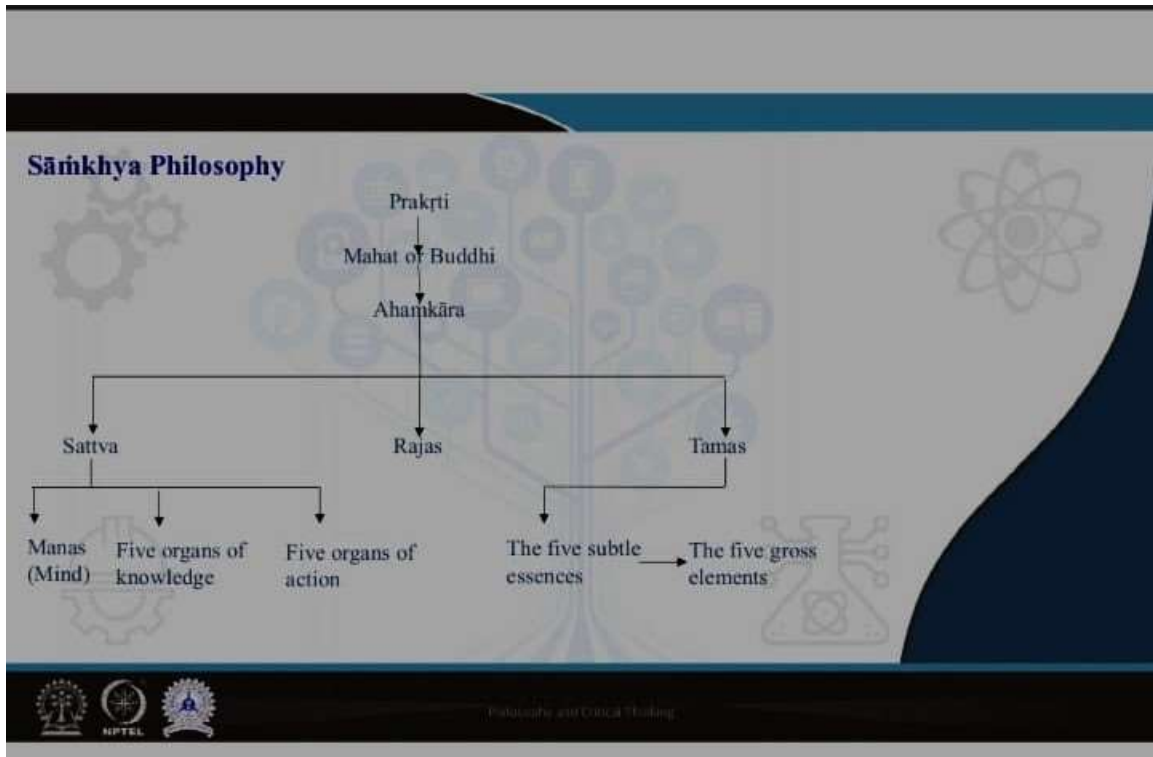
Now, let us understand what exactly is Prakṛti. However, we have discussed the prakṛti, concept of prakṛti in the last class where I have discussed well in detail what is Prakṛti. And we have discussed that how the prakṛti is in a state of equilibrium position of Satva, Rajas, and Tamas, the three Gunas. Now, it is not state of inactivity but in kind of tension. Tension in the sense that among these Gunas, Satva, Rajas, and Tamas. And then infinite number of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas counteract their activities and bring about in a state of

tension. So, there is a prakṛti and prakṛti is what, there is a state of these three Gunas. But these three Gunas is in a tension. So, they are in a position. Now, they relieve the tension and break the equilibrium under the influence of puruṣa. So, when there is a prakṛti, when it comes in influence, some sort of influence of puruṣa, then there is a disturbance in this tension. Disturbance in this tension and then that leads to a creation. So, this tension break and break the equilibrium under the influence of puruṣa. But there is one question which I would like to mention here about the puruṣa and prakṛti. So, we have discussed in the last class, the puruṣa is inactive. Prakṛti is active but not intelligent. As we were discussing that chariot and charioteer, so how the chariot cannot move without any intelligent person or intelligent agent who can control this chariot. Similarly, prakṛti is material and this material needs an intelligent agent who can control. Now in Sāṃkhya philosophy, puruṣa is completely inactive and therefore there is no way to argue that puruṣa is intentionally influencing Prakṛti. So, my point is, Prakṛti is, there is a Prakṛti is a matter and puruṣa is completely inactive. Now the question arises that how the puruṣa Prakṛti came together? I mean the question arises about the creation, the evolution. Before that, what triggers this evolution? Why it happened? Why in the sense how it happened? So, is there any point or is there any action and who took this first initiative and, in the sense, how this puruṣa which is completely inactive influences Prakṛti. In *Karika*, there is no much explanation about this process, how it happened, how this puruṣa and Prakṛti is coming together. So, it is like that, for example, there is a prakṛti and prakṛti is what, there is an equilibrium position of three gurus, this subtle form. Now here is for example in puruṣa, puruṣa is completely inactive. Now, how this puruṣa and prakṛti is coming together because when they are coming together, then only there is an evolution, then only there is a creation, then only there is another world, this universe. So, this universe is an effect of their, when they are coming together, puruṣa and prakṛti. But the question arises that how does this puruṣa and prakṛti is coming together because this is completely inactive, puruṣa is inactive, devoid of all gurus which we have discussed in the last class about the puruṣa. Again, prakṛti is not intelligent. Therefore, we cannot argue that there is no proper explanation that how this Prakṛti is, or gurus is coming together. So, in *Karika* is not has an much discussion about this process, that how the puruṣa and Prakṛti come together. The text illustrates that the effect of interaction of the two principles and argues the form from beginning they are together. So, they are arguing that the effect of this interaction, so when they are interacting, puruṣa and prakṛti is coming together, they are interacting, then there is an evolution. So, text is more focused on the effect of this interaction. So, when they are coming together, there is a creation and text explains this creation well in detail. All the Tatva which we have discussed today that mentions in this text. They believe that, I mean text argues that, that from beginning they are together. So, there is no question of like how this prakṛti and puruṣa come together. So, what their argument is, from beginning they are what, they are there together. Again, text argues that the main goal of text is to explain the nature of human existence and suffering and offer the solution or path. So, what they are saying, our main

goal is now to talk about how it just came together, but our goal is to talk about the human nature of human existence. If you can explain the nature of human existence and suffering, then only it will be possible to talk about the solution. So, there is a problem, and then there is a solution. So, this is what Sāṃkhya philosophy text argues that our main goal is to talk about the problem, the human existence, the problem of human existence, suffering, then its solution. So, therefore they are not giving much emphasis on how puruṣa and prakṛti interact. What makes them to interact with each other. That question is for them takes a second priority or suppose let us say that there is no focus on that because they believe that the focus and the goal is to talk about the suffering and then solution. However, it does not mean that the other texts have not talked about this problem. So, in the other Sāṃkhya text, there is an attempt to illustrate how prakṛti and puruṣa first came in contact with one another. So, the idea is the other Sāṃkhya philosophy, philosophical text has argued that how they are interacting, prakṛti and puruṣa. So, this is one of the philosophical problems in Sāṃkhya philosophy where we talk about the problem of evolution, how it takes place, how puruṣa is going to interact with prakṛti. So how this interaction is possible, that is a matter of discussion. So, there are many texts and research paper on that where they are arguing that how puruṣa and prakṛti came together. So, there has been a different opinion, set of opinion and argument which we are not going to discuss in this class. So, for us, we will go with the *Karika* saying that they were together from beginning and then this main goal of this philosophy is to talk about the nature of human existence. Since, this course is in a basic level, so we will just understand, I will take this concept in this way that the puruṣa and prakṛti were together from beginning. Now, in the text it is mentioned that there is an absolute separation between prakṛti and puruṣa. So, the puruṣa is never in fact bound to the world. It is only appeared to be bound due to the lack of discrimination. Therefore, prakṛti and puruṣa are always in proximity to one another, never in actual contact. So, the proximity of the two which is like that a blind man and a lame man is for the purpose of seeing the pradhāna and for the purpose of the isolation of puruṣa. So, there is one way of arguing is like this that prakṛti and puruṣa there is no actual interaction. It is only in proximity to one another. So, this is not an actual contact and I will be discussing this concept in detail because this point is important terms of when we are going to explain the concept of this world. How puruṣa came in this bond is and is not bound due to lack of discrimination. So, that is for that concept, this concept is an important. So, this concept says that there is an argument that this interaction is not an actual interaction. It is not an actual contact. So, puruṣa and prakṛti are always only in proximity to one another. So, for example, they gave an example of the blind man and lame man. So, one person will see and one person will like walk. So, this is what an example. However, all this purpose of seeing this pradhāna is just for the liberation of the Puruṣa. So, all this which we have discussed in the last class, all this activity is just for puruṣa. So puruṣa is an experiencer, puruṣa is an enjoyer. However, I will be discussing in the next class that how puruṣa is not an experiencer. The sense that and how because of aviveka, or the false knowledge, he in

this problem. So, you take it in this way that puruṣa and prakṛti there is a problem of their interaction. It is also not an actual contact, and this actual contact, there is no actual contact. How prakṛti and puruṣa interaction is false, we will be discussing today.

Now, let us understand the Sāṃkhya philosophy argument about this world. Sāṃkhya argues that the many folds world is not created by God, but these are the world of prakṛti which is the first cause. So as even we have discussed in the last class that how the prakṛti is the material cause of this universe. Sāṃkhya philosophy does not believe in the idea of God and, therefore they do not argue for existence of God first and second. The classical Sāṃkhya philosophy argued that God has not created this world because for them there is no God. Now, then what is the cause of this world? Sāṃkhya philosophy will argue that prakṛti is the cause of first cause of this world. So, this is a world and prakṛti is the first cause, which is uncaused. It only means that there is no cause of this cause. So, prakṛti is not an effect of anything, but this world is an effect of prakṛti. As we have discussed when some sort of this influence is there on the prakṛti or prakṛti comes under the influence of puruṣa, so there is a disturbance in this equilibrium position of this Gunas. And because of this disturbance it leads to the creation. So, as we were discussing about their tension, so there is a Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas because they are infinite. And because of this influence of Puruṣa, there is a disturbance takes place in this Gunas. And because of this there is an argument that there is a creation takes place. So, all objective existence is the transformation of three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. So, in Sāṃkhya philosophy these three Gunas are very significant. So, what they are saying prakṛti, so prakṛti is in a subtle form that is in a Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. But that is an equilibrium position, that is an attention. And then when it comes under the influence of Puruṣa, then there is a disturbance and then there is a creation. Because of disturbance of this Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, this position, the creation takes place. Now, this creation is in an effect and cause is puruṣa. If you can recall about the first class of the Sāṃkhya philosophy when we have talked about the cause and then effect. So, for example, cause is clay, effect is jar, effect is brick. So, this production is basically Sāṃkhya belief is transformation. So, this clay and jar is the transformation of this production, I mean the transformation of this clay. So, when the prakṛti is producing this world and there is an effect out of this prakṛti or prakṛti is a cause of all this effect. So, basically this prakṛti is a transforming where in these effects. Or evolution is due to the excess of some gunas and diminution of the others. Suppose this is what we were discussing that influence of puruṣa leads to a disturbance and this disturbance is due to some excess of some gunas. So, due to this disturbance, there is an excess of some gunas and then there is a creation. Now, this is the, I have prepared this chart for you so it will be easy to understand this idea of creation, evolution.



This is a prakṛti from prakṛti. So, this is a prakṛti and this also is puruṣa. If you take complete all Tattva then puruṣa and prakṛti is then ultimately real and ontological reality. When prakṛti comes under influence of puruṣa then there is a disturbance in its Gunas and because of this disturbance there is a creation. So, the prakṛti is, first creation of this prakṛti is Mahat or Buddhi. And this Buddhi is a cosmic Buddhi, it is not an individual Buddhi. Anyway, this prakṛti is a subtle form. However, this Buddhi is less subtle than prakṛti but more subtle than next level, Ahaṅkāra. So prakṛti, the first is the Mahat and Buddhi, it transforms and then it continues then it goes to the Ahaṅkāra. Now, Ahaṅkāra of the sattvic aspect of Ahaṅkāra produces this Manas, the five organs of knowledge and then five organs of action. The Tamasic aspect of Ahaṅkāra produces five subtle essence and the five subtle essence produces what is in a cause of the five gross element. So, this is idea of evolution from the Sāṅkhya philosophy. Rajas concept Guna is an important because it is energize the others two gunas. So, Rajas Guna is very significant and plays a very significant role in Sāṅkhya philosophy. Now, this prakṛti is what, is cause but time of like suppose is vanishing, this world is like going out of this creation that mean all with resolve to where in this prakṛti. So, prakṛti is cause and then effect is Mahat but Mahat again, is the cause of this Ahaṅkāra. Ahaṅkāra is the cause of this Manas and five organ knowledge, five organs of action. Again, this Tamasic aspect of Ahaṅkāra is goes these five subtle essences which is the cause of the five gross elements. So, this is what a complete list of the prakṛti and its evaluates or different Tattva. And this is what the creation is from subtle to the gross where there is a subtlety in a subtle form and then this is the less one and this one again is the less subtle than Mahat or Buddhi, and Ahaṅkāra is

more subtle than this Manas and other. So, this is how the Sāṅkhya philosophy talks about the evolution, talks about the creation of this world. Now, the five organ of knowledge is ear and the feeling, seeing, testing and the smelling. The five organs of action, mouth, hand, feet, the excretory organ and the reproductive organ. The five subtle essence this is just for your information because it will be easy to refer you from the previous slide. Sound, touch, color, taste and the smell and this the five subtle essences also called Tanmātra produces this space, wind, fire, water and earth. Now, Sattva and Tamas are inactive in themselves as I said in this last slide and they are energized and moved to function by Rajas. So, Rajas how it plays in a role in this creation. In this modification Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are all present and perform their functions. So, in this prakṛti is modifying all three Gunas are playing important role. However, all these Gunas have a different function and different nature but they are functioning together, performing their function as an example of the wick and oil. The atoms of five elements are generated from the Tanmātra, the subtle essence, the evolutes of the Tanmātra, the five atoms. The first evolutes of the prakṛti is Mahat or Buddhi which is seed of the world. So, the world become a common objective ground of experience for all person. So, if we are going to take this Buddhi, Mahat and individual Buddhi and Mahat, then every Jiva will have own different world, own different subjective world. But the Sāṅkhya philosophy argues that it is a cosmic so that is on a common objective ground for experience of for all persons. So, Buddhi becomes an intelligent by reflection of puruṣa, consciousness in it. Now, this is a very important point and here a Sāṅkhya philosophy talks about the bondage and then liberation. Puruṣa is inactive in the Sāṅkhya philosophy. So, for example, this is puruṣa and this is prakṛti. So, puruṣa is inactive, prakṛti is non-intelligent. Now, first one is the Buddhi or Mahat. Now, this Buddhi or Mahat, they say that the Sattvic guna or Sattva guna dominates in this Buddhi. However, there is a different way to explain that why the Buddhi has this, Sattva Guna. But text argues that Sattva guna dominates where in this Buddhi and because of that, Buddhi is transparent. And since this is transparent, so there is a reflection of puruṣa where in this Buddhi and because of this reflection, it becomes intelligent. Who? Buddhi. This Buddhi is again non-intelligent because this is a product of prakṛti. But when the puruṣa is reflecting where in this Buddhi, then Buddhi becomes intelligent just because of this reflection. You take it in this way. Suppose there is two mirror lights in the opposite wall. So one is in a picture, photographs and other side just in a empty. So, this is in a reflecting where in this another mirror, and Buddhi started believing that this is me and it is called bondage. So, when puruṣa started believing that I am matter or I am this body, then there is a bondage. So, Buddhi is intelligent because of this reflection of puruṣa. So, the puruṣa consciousness reflecting where in Buddhi. So, this reflected consciousness being united with the conceptual determination of the Buddhi creates the phenomenal self which actually undergoes the various experiences of pleasure and pains. So, now this is a reflection. Now, because of this reflection, it started believing that this is me and now they started experiencing the pleasure and pain, the various experiences. So, this is what in

Sāṃkhya philosophy says that it is in a bondage. So, there is a prakṛti and then it is in a creation. Buddhi is what is something which is transparent. Transparent means if anything is coming near to this Buddhi, it will reflect in this Buddhi. So puruṣa, the consciousness is reflecting where in Buddhi, and because of this reflection, they started believing this is the creation of the phenomenal self. Now, because of this aviveka, not right knowledge, it undergoes the various experiences of the pleasure and pain. Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that Buddhi in its sattvic aspect possesses virtue, wisdom, non-attachment, and in its tamas aspect, it possesses vice, ignorance, attachment and negation of lordly power. So, in tamas aspect, Buddhi started believing that this is what this world is, is ignorance, the not right knowledge and therefore attachment and that leads to this set of actions and then leads to samsara. This world of cycle of birth and rebirth.

Now, next evaluate is Ahaṅkāra. Ahaṅkāra is more determinate from the Mahat-Buddhi. The function of Ahaṅkāra is self-assertion. So, when I am saying this is an I, I have done this, I am doing this, so that is an Ahaṅkāra. So, it is Ahaṅkāra that induces puruṣa to wrongly consider itself the agent of action. So, there is an inherently free. Puruṣa is in Sāṃkhya philosophy is inherently free. Now, this puruṣa is become an agent because of this wrong information, wrong knowledge, aviveka make. This is what Sāṃkhya philosophy says. So, this Ahaṅkāra, it includes the puruṣa and wrongly consider that this is an agent, that I am an agent and performing this action. So, performing an action and then impression of this action. So, experiences of the pleasure and pain. The senses present the immediate determinate impression to the mind and these impressions are then synthesized by the mind by assimilation and discrimination. So, when we talking about the other evolutes where there is a sense of organs, so sense of organs and then the world. So, world is information is going to sense organ to the mind. Mind is working through the synthesis and then discriminations and passing this information to the Mahat-Buddhi. Then refer to the principle of ego-hood which is the principle of integration and lastly, they are determined by the Buddha which is hands them over the self. So, mind, five sense organ, five senses, mind, five sense and five organs of accent is the sattvic Ahaṅkāra which is an evolute which we have discussed seen in this Prakṛti and it evolutes. Five subtle elements is the Tamas Ahaṅkāra Tamasic aspect Ahaṅkāra or Tamas Ahankaar and this five subtle elements produces the five gross elements. So, this is what about the Sāṃkhya concept of this evolution where he talks about how the prakṛti transform in the different Tatva or different let us say stages where they have talked about the Mahat-Buddhi, then Ahaṅkāra and then this side Manas and then we have the five senses of the knowledge, and then action and then we also have Tanmātra that is called five subtle elements. That is again produces the five gross elements. So, this is a complete theory of evolution from Sāṃkhya perspective, where he talks about how the prakṛti produces this effect but this effects it can go back to the where in this prakṛti. So that is the reason that when we are discussing about the cause and effect, Sāṃkhya philosophy argued that the destruction of the effect is just an object and going back to the cause. So, therefore Sāṃkhya philosophy believes that

effect is worst where they are in the cause. It is a pre-existence of effect in cause. So, in Sāṃkhya philosophy the prakṛti is the three gunas and this world is made up of three Gunas. So, in all the object in this world is the three gunas are there. Now, puruṣa, when Puruṣa what because of aviveka is reflecting where in this Buddhi and believing that this is me, Ahaṃkāra again is going to determine it. So this is me and become an agent. When through meditation, through the right knowledge, when you are going to realize this discrimination, the knowledge of discrimination that what is what is me and what is not me then it will be liberation. Because this is a realization of the own nature, real nature. However, this talks we will discuss and we will continue in the next class because again we have discussed about the Buddhi then Ahaṃkāra, and so we also then Manas. So, all these things we will be discussing again at times of when we will start discussing about the Jiva. What is Jiva and how do we perceive an object. So, when we will be discussing this concept, the idea of Jiva and then idea of perception then this creation and this evolution will be very clear for you that how it works. So, when we perceive things, when we know things then how it works. So, it will continue.

I will be continuing this discussion in the next class and thank you for your kind attention. This talk was based on this book, these books Indian Philosophy by Jadunath Sinha, and the Classical Sāṃkhya a critical Study by Amita Sengupta and the Classical Sāṃkhya, and Interpretation of its History and Meaning by Larson. So, these are the important books and as I said in last class, the first two books also is very basic level. You can read and you can understand. So, thank you so much for your kind attention. Thank you.