

PRAKRITI OF SANKHYA

Dr. RANJANA SHARMA
Head, Department of Philosophy
Durga Mahavidyalaya, Raipur

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- ◉ According to Sankhya there are two types of reality-1.Prakriti 2.Purusha
- ◉ Prakriti is the ultimate cause of the world of objects.
- ◉ Sankhya gives the different names of Prakriti , Pradhana , Avyakta etc.
- ◉ The world is the series of effects and that it must have a cause.
- ◉ The cause of the world must be the not-self.
- ◉ The cause must explain the gross objects of nature like earth and water, trees and seas as well as subtler products like mind, the intellect and the ego.

- ◉ The cause is subtle than the effect and it pervades the effect.
- ◉ The ultimate cause of the world must be some unintelligent or unconscious principle which is uncaused, eternal and all pervading, very fine and always ready to produce the world of objects. This is the Prakriti of the Sankhya.
- ◉ It is the first cause of all things, therefore, has itself no cause.
- ◉ As the uncaused root-cause of all objects Prakriti is eternal.

- ◉ Being the ground of such subtle products of nature as mind and the intellect. Prakriti is a very subtle, mysterious and tremendous power which evolves and dissolves the world in a cyclic order.
- ◉ The existence of Prakriti as the ultimate subtle cause of the world is known by inference from the following grounds-

FIRST GROUND

- ⦿ All particular objects of the world, from the intellect to the earth are limited and dependent on one another. So there must be an unlimited and independent cause for their existence.

SECOND GROUND

- Things of the world possess certain common characters owing to which everyone of them is capable of producing pleasure , pain and indifference . Therefore, they must have a common cause having these three characters.

THIRD GROUND

- All effects proceed from the activity of some cause which contains their potentiality within it . The world of objects which are effects must , therefore, be implicitly contained in some world-cause.

FOURTH GROUND

- ◉ An effect arises from its cause and is again resolved into it at the moment of its destruction . That is , an existent effect is manifested by a cause, and eventually it is re-absorbed into the latter. So the particular objects of experience must arise from their particular causes, and these again from other general causes, and so on, till we come to the first cause of the world. Contrariwise, at the time of destruction, the physical elements must be resolved into atoms, the atoms into energies and so on, till all the products are resolved into the unmanifested , eternal Prakriti.

THREE GUNAS

- ◉ Prakriti is constituted by the three gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas. It is said to be the unity of the gunas held in a state of equilibrium(samyavastha).
- ◉ Gunas here means a constituent element or component and not an attribute or quality. Hence ,by the gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas we are to understand the elements of the ultimate substance called Prakriti.
- ◉ The gunas are not perceived by us. They are inferred from the objects of the world are their effects.
- ◉ Since there is an essential identity between the effect and the cause, we know the nature of the gunas from the nature of their products. All objects of the world , from the intellect down to the ordinary objects of the perception(e.g. tables, pots etc.) , are found to possess three characters capable of producing pleasure, pain, and indifference, respectively. The same things are pleasurable to some people, painful to another, and neutral to a third.

SATTVA

- Sattva is the element of Prakriti which is of the nature of pleasure ,and is buoyant or light, and bright or illuminating(prakash). The manifestation of objects in consciousness(gyan), the tendency towards conscious manifestation in the sense , the mind and the intellect, the luminosity of light, and the power of reflection in a mirror or the crystal are all due to the operation of the element of Sattva in the constitution of things. Similarly , all sorts of lightness in the sense of upward motion, like the blazing up of fire, the upward course of vapour and the winding motion of air, are induced in things by the element of Sattva . So also pleasure in its various forms, such as satisfaction, joy , happiness, bliss , contentment,etc. is produced by things in our minds through the operation of the power of Sattva inhering in them both.

RAJAS

- Rajas is the principle of activity in things. It always moves and makes other things move. That is, it is both mobile and stimulating. It is on account of Rajas that fire spreads, the wind blows, the senses follow their objects and the mind becomes restless, on the affective side of our life, Rajas is the cause of all painful experiences and its itself of the nature of pain . It helps the elements of Sattva and Tamas, which are inactive and motionless in themselves, to perform their functions.

TAMAS

- Tamas is the principle of passivity and negativity in things . It is opposed to Sattva in being heavy and in obstructing the manifestation of objects. It also resists the principle of Rajas or activity in so far as it restrains the motion of things. It counteracts the power of manifestation in the mind, the intellect and other things, and there by produces ignorance and darkness and leads to confusion and bewilderment . By obstructing the principle of activity in us it induces sleep , drowsiness and laziness.

- ◉ All the three gunas are present in everything of the world, great or small, fine or gross.
- ◉ The nature of the things is determined by the predominant guna, while the others are there in a subordinate position.
- ◉ Everything in this world contains all the three elements in different proportions.
- ◉ The classification of objects into good, bad and indifferent is decided by the preponderance of Sattva , Rajas , and Tamas.
- ◉ Gunas are constantly changing. Change or transformation belongs to the very essence of the gunas.

- ◉ There are two types of transformation-
- ◉ First-During the pralaya or dissolution of the world, the gunas change, each within itself, without disturbing the others. That is , Sattva changes into Sattva , Rajas into Rajas , and Tamas into Tamas. This transformation is called Swaroopaparinama.
- ◉ Second-This transformation takes place when one of the gunas dominates over the others which become subordinates to it. When this happens we have the production of particular objects. Such transformation is called Viroopaparinama. It is the starting point of the world's evolution.