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Philosophy of Samkhya-Yoga and the Bhavas: The principles of self-transformation

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It is a challenge to present the complexities of any ancient philosophy. Especially, not allowing it to remain a mere intellectual study but introducing its principles as a practical application on the journey of life, enabling the avid seeker to live life fully, yet, remaining grounded in philosophic wisdom. The position of a philosopher is precarious; between philosophy, its application, utilitarianism and today's world of science and research where empirical observation, logic, experimentation, analysis, validity play an important role. Intuition and the inner realm of subjective experiences which cannot be validated become mystical and something that cannot be spoken about with scientific sanctity and surety. However, a synthesis of philosophical theory, its application, experiences, howsoever subjective, are imperative for wholesomeness. The intention of this paper will be to bring out certain traditions from closed jackets of an ancient jargon and present it in a new light. It is understanding the ancient language in the light of new socio-political-economic conditions and requirements to render it more suitable to the general reader and for the sincere seeker of practical philosophy who seeks to bring about transformations within him/her towards more aware states of consciousness. In this paper, there will be an understanding of the close association of the principles of Yoga and Samkhya. Secondly, this paper will discuss the concepts of the four bhavas of dharma, jñana, viraga, aisvarya, which are the key features of Samkhya philosophy that enable the fulfillment of its dual goals; of transcending pains of life and to achieve self-awareness/purpose/realization. Bhavas, the intrinsic and inherent nature of any entity, thing, object have the potential of undergoing the transformation. This paper will elaborate on this transformative capacity which is possessed by the human intellect and how any individual can use this faculty to access higher states of awareness and in the process to realize a transformation of the personality. Samkhya of Isvara Krsna is the main focus and not the earlier version of Kapila. It has seventy-two karikas (verses). These verses, though explaining cosmology, epistemology, teleology, ontology, goes beyond these to analyze the capacity of the mind-intellect complex. Though, a dualist philosophy, it is not a Cartesian dualism between mind and body but a dualism of the conscious principle named 'Purusa' and the material principle 'Prakriti'. Within the purview of this paper, besides its philosophical principles, it is the practical realm of discovering the methods of self-transformation.

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