

Puruṣacaitanya Revisited:

A Critical Study of the Sāṃkhya Concept of Consciousness

(ABSTRACT)

The Sāṃkhya philosophy represents one of the oldest traditions in the Indian philosophical system. Analogous to the other orthodox schools of philosophy, the Sāṃkhya system too considers liberation to be the highest goal of human life. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophers, though liberation is identical with the absolute cessation of sufferings, it can only be attained by acquiring discriminatory knowledge (*vivekajñāna*) between the *puruṣa* and the *prakṛti*. The main objective of the present research work is to study the phenomenon of consciousness and all its related issues from the classical Sāṃkhya perspective with special reference to and analyses of the neo-Sāṃkhya views. Critiques from the Advaita Vedānta philosophy and their plausible responses have also been provided as far as practicable.

The thesis consists of the following chapters –

Introduction: It specifies the objective of the research work along with the clarification of the basic notions of Sāṃkhya philosophy.

Part I: It concentrates mainly on the doctrine of *puruṣasiddhi*.

Chapter 1 – The Nature of Consciousness

Chapter 2 - Proofs for the Existence of *Puruṣa*

Chapter 3 – Proofs for the Plurality of *Puruṣa*

Part II: This part focuses on the phenomenon of knowledge.

Chapter 4 - Embodied Cognition: The Concepts of *Pramā* and *Pramāṇa* in the Sāṃkhya System

Chapter 5 - *Puruṣāvabodha*: The Genesis and Nature of I-Consciousness

Part III: The relation between the *puruṣa* and the *prakṛti* and its impact on the notions of bondage and liberation have been discussed here.

Chapter 6 - The Relation between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*

Chapter 7 - The Concepts of Bondage and Liberation in the Sāṃkhya System

Part IV: Advaita critique against the Sāṃkhya philosophical tradition has been discussed here.

Chapter 8 – The Advaita Critique of the Sāṃkhya Theory of Consciousness

Conclusion: The entire research findings, their critical evaluation, how far the objective of the work has been achieved and what new avenues have opened up in the course of this study have been comprehensively stated in the concluding chapter.