

Exploration of *Sāṃkhya* Basing on *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*

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Abstract

The *Sāṃkhya* philosophy relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* discusses the ultimate reality of the universe in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. When the balanced state of *Prakṛti* is disturbed by *Puruṣa*, the process of evolution takes place in the universe. This article concentrates on the significance of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* as the base of the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. At the same time, it also deals with the impression of these two components of nature in this philosophy for the creation and maintenance of this universe. To analyze the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, this study has been used as overall theoretical approach. It is important in order to present how the *Bhāgavata* reflects the use of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* for the creation of the universe. The interpretive method is used for the exploration of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in the text. The findings of the investigation suggest that *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are the bases of the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy and the readers should have knowledge about this philosophy of the very ancient time. The prime conclusion drawn from this research is that *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are the main elements of Nature from which the creation and the existence of the universe are possible.

Keywords: sāṃkhya, prakṛti, puruṣa, panchatanmātrā, panchamahābhuta

Introduction

The *Sāṃkhya* philosophy, one of the ancient philosophies of the *Hinduism*, discusses the numbering system of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. With the support of this notion, James Fieser and Bradley Dowden define *Sāṃkhya* philosophy in Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy as:

Word *Sāṃkhya* is derived from the *Sanskrit* noun *Sankhya* (number) based on the verbal root *khya* (make known, name) with the proverb *sam* (together). *Sāṃkhyathus* denotes the system of enumeration. It belongs to number and calculation. (1)

Sāṃkhya is a representative philosophy of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. This philosophy includes two sorts of entities i.e. *Prakṛti* (nature) and *puruṣa* (persons). These are the basic principles for the creation of the universe. “*Puruṣa* is a person or self or spirit and possesses intelligence and feelings, while *Prakṛti* is impersonal or *jada* or inert and devoid of both intelligence and feelings” (Roy 96). The researcher emphasizes on *Prakṛti* and *puruṣa* for the analysis of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy.

Seer Kapila, the son of Devahuti and Kardama Muni is the founder of *Sāṃkhya philosophy* (Roy 2). The seer instructs this philosophy to his loving mother Devahuti especially in the “Third and Eleventh Cantos” of the *Bhāgavata Purāna*. People call this *Sāṃkhya philosophy* as *Kapilagita* (Basel 24). The *Bhāgavata Purāna* traces dichotomy between the principles of *Prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. “The *puruṣa* is beginningless and attributeless, distinct from and superior to *Prakṛti*” (Tagare: 2075). The *Puruṣa* has association with *Prakṛti* and the divine being plays a part for the performance of his *līlā* (playful activities). There is the existence of *Prakṛti* from the equilibrium among *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tama* elements. The *Bhāgavata Purāna* includes the use of *Sāṃkhya philosophy* in different places through the text systematically. One can find a large section of *Sāṃkhya philosophy* in the Sixth Chapter of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* as *Kapilagita* (Basel 2). According to Basel, everybody views the systematic version of the *Sāṃkhya philosophy* at 2.5, 3. 5, 3.7, 3.26 and throughout the Eleventh Canto of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* (30). One can see the reliability and validity in his notion relating to the *Sāṃkhya philosophy*.

Sāṃkhya philosophy is the creation from *mahatattvas (budhi)*. This element creates *ahamkāra* (egoism) which is the production from *manas*. *Ahamkāra* causes the birth of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tama guṇas*. Basel formulates a critical survey in it:

The *Bhagavata* refers to the *Brahman* not as the supreme principle as in *Vedanta*, but instead as the sum total of the evolutionary process of *Prakṛti*. The learned know *Brahman* as comprising of the effects of *pradhana*- a collection of 24 principles 5 *tanmatras*, 5 *mahabhutas*, 4 internal organs, 10 sense organs (5 cognitive and 5 conative organs). There are only five gross elements (*mahabhutas*). The precise order in which these twenty- four *tattvas* is as follows: *mahat* (also referred to as *chitta*) is produced from the unmanifest (*avyakta*) *Prakṛti* and then gives rise to the threefold *guṇas* is dominant; in *vaikarika*, *taijasa- ahamkāra rajas*, and in *tamas-ahamkāra*. From these, the remaining *tattavas* are produced. (25)

Tagare gives continuation in the survey of *Sāṃkhya philosophy* by arguing that “The *vaikarika-ahamkāra* produces *manas*” (2074). Similarly, *taijasa- ahamkāra* is the production of *buddhi*, ten *indrias* and *prāṇa*. In the same case, *tamasa-ahamkāra* causes the production of five *tanmatras* and five *mahabhutas* in pairs.

The *Bhāgavata Purāna* uses the term *Sāṃkhya* for the sake of *jnana*-knowledge. This philosophy discusses dualism, realism, and also pluralism. This perspective of life and nature depict the dualistic relation between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. On the basis of this notion, Champak Deca further proves that “*Sāṃkhya* accepts twenty-four principles among which two (*Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*) are the Ultimate Realities (37). Other 23 principles (*mahat*, *ahamkāra*, *pancha-janendriyas*, *pancha- mahabhutas*, *pancha-tanmatras*) belong to *Prakṛti* due to their production from it. “When the equilibrium state of the three *guṇas* in *Prakṛti* is disturbed by *puruṣa*, then

the process of evolution starts” (Deca 37). The *Sāṃkhya* explains the reality for practice to end pains and for achieving gains. One gets liberation from the distinctive knowledge between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. The gateway of liberation is sure to gain by removing pains. According to the usage, *Sāṃkhya* philosophy depends on the relation between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*.

Kapil’s teachings of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy comprises from twenty –five to thirty-three chapters of the Third Canto of the *Bhāgavata Puraṇa*. A large number of critics, philosophers, and scholars have expressed their different views in the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. This philosophy relates the principles of the universe. In the same line of logic, Prabhupada links it with metaphysics: “*Sāṃkhya* is what Western scholars generally refer to as “metaphysics” (2). It deals with “matters” and ‘spirit’ for the sake of *Bhakti*. In this regard, Kamala Subramaniam provides the similar ground for interpretation. The interpreter is apt to state the relationship between the three *guṇas* and mind: “When mind gets involved in the three *guṇas*: when there is an upset in the balance of the three *guṇas*, then, one of the *guṇas* becomes predominant and the *Atman* gets involved in the play of emotions” (71). This logic strengthens the idea that creatures are in need of consciousness either in conditioned or in the liberated states. The *Sāṃkhya* philosophy of life enhances the consciousness of humans.

The same point is further explored and explained by Swami Ranganathanda. The critical thinker has remarkable exposition in favor of spiritual life from *Sāṃkhya* philosophy: “God is to be worshipped not only in a temple, not only in the image, but also in the hearts of all” (917). The theological perspective of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy makes a union between God and heart. To respect creatures is no more than the respect of God. *Dharma* (responsibility) is the understanding of spiritual identity. Kapil’s philosophy of *Sāṃkhya* links between *dharma* and *karma*. Prabhupada supports this idea and the interpreter ventures to state that “*Dharma* is the order of the Supreme Being” (4). Twenty-five principles of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy of Kapila is the foundation stone of the universe as well as the *dharma* in the law of nature. *Dharma* and religion are different things because *dharma* is the special quality of things or creatures. For example, the main *dharma* of the sun is to give heat. Thus this philosophy deals with the *dharma* of 25 principles for the existence of everything in the universe.

Basel, an analyst of Kapil’s *Sāṃkhya* philosophy, has different interpretation from the perspective of Prabhupada and Ranganathananda. The critic puts forward other tradition to stress the philosophy of *Samkhya*:

Besides the *Sāṃkhya* School proper, there are a number of other traditions that may use related *Sāṃkhya* concepts and arguments that in many ways resemble those of the *Bhāgavata*; Principally the classical *Yoga* School and the *panchatantra* tradition. (19)

There is linkage of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy with the classical *yoga* and *tanmātra*. This philosophy gets support to flourish from the two classical principles. In the same line of argument, Gerard

James Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya present similar concepts emphasizing on *yoga sutra*: “The *yoga sutra* actually refer to themselves as a *Sāṃkhyapravachana*, or explanation of *Samkhya*” (23). It traces that the *yoga sutra* is the base for the clarification of *Samkhya* philosophy.

Basel provides the ground for *Sāṃkhya* philosophy by mentioning the *panchatanmātrā* literature. This literature is itself quite voluminous and has not been studied by modern scholars (23). Due to the linkage of this literature to ritual, the philosophers and scholars neglect this lens of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. Jan Gonda extends the scope of Kapila’s philosophy by stressing Basel’s idea of *panchatanmātrā*. The critic puts forward the idea of three texts and argues:

For the tradition itself the three most important texts are the *sattvata*, *pauskara*, and *jayakhya samhitas*. Collectively these are known as the three gems (*ratnatraya*). These three are generally considered to be the oldest of the *panchatanmātrā samhitas*. (52)

The text of *panchatanmātrā* includes theological and philosophical materials such as *Paramsamhita* and *Laxmi Tantra*.

Thus *Sāṃkhya*, one of the oldest philosophies of the *Hindus*, has its roots in the *Vedas*. It relates to numbers so that this philosophy provides appropriate knowledge about Nature and reality. It focuses its notions on the evolution of *Prakṛti* from the multiplicity of objects. *Prakṛti* incorporates the three *guṇas*, (qualities) namely *sattva*, (super ego) *rajas*, (ego) and *tamas* (id). When there is disequilibrium in the three *guṇas*, there is the birth of Nature. On the basis of this notion, *Sāṃkhya* philosophy has its own problems due to the lack of proper analysis and evaluation in Sanskrit literature. The pioneers of the *Hindu* philosophy have incomplete exploration of this philosophy. In the words of Anima Sen Gupta: "As a consequence, in recent years, there has been a growing desire to understand the development of the *Sāṃkhya* school of classical Indian philosophy" (2). Basing her argument on such idea, one can argue that this philosophy is one of the oldest ancient *Hindu* philosophies. The major focus of this study is to highlight how *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is exhibited in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. For the specification of the problems, the researcher uses the following questions:

- What remarkable images of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy in relation to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* can we find in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*?
- How are *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* dealt within the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy?

The major objective of the study is to explore the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy in the *Bhāgavata* and its connection to *Prakṛti*.

Sage Kapil's philosophy of *Sāṃkhya* has become the subject matter of discussion among readers, critics, scholars and academicians. Its subject matter, theme and importance have drawn attention of the diverse critics. Among them, the major philosophers, critics and the

men of intellects are R. Puligandla, Mikel Burley, Gerald James Larson, C. T. Kenghe, Jumli Nath, Vikram H. Zaveri and Pratima Chattopadhyay. Puligandla tries to clarify himself on *Sāṃkhya* with his argument: "Every object of our experience is dependent upon and caused by other objects" (116). Explaining this statement, one oscillates that different elements of Nature have reciprocal relation to each other. In the different line of thought, Mikel Burley links *Sāṃkhya* with *Yoga* referring that "*Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* are among the oldest and most influential systems of classical Indian thought and religious practice" (1). The critic broadens the scope of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy with *yoga*.

Likewise, Gerald James Larson notes that *Sāṃkhya* becomes rationalism in the history of thought (21). This argument turns out to be valid in the creation of this world and makes conscious to the readers about its importance. To strengthen the argument, Jumli Nath expresses his view: "*Sāṃkhya* system doesn't believe in the unreality of the phenomenal world. It solely deals with the evolution of the universe which is not based on just a mere hypothetical speculation" (44). On the base of this notion, we believe that there are real matters in relation to the evolution of the universe. In this context, it is necessary analyze the use of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy as one of the very ancient philosophies of the *Hindus*.

Unlike Puligandla, Burley, Gerald Larson, C. T. Kenghe argues that the references of *Sāṃkhya* are very old. In his notion: "Though Kapila mentioned in the *R̥gveda* and the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* cannot be identified with the founder of *Sāṃkhya* system, it is quite obvious that *Sāṃkhya* was already recognized as an ancient system in the age of the *Mahābharata*" (6). Elaborating this argument, one can portray that *Sāṃkhya* philosophy begins in the *R̥gveda* and it flourishes in the *Śvetāśvatara* and other *Upanishads*. It gets its popularity in the *Mahābharata* and *Purānas*. Jumli Nath supports this idea and the critic further explores: "*Sāṃkhya* flourishes on the strong foundation laid by the *Upanishads* regarding this concern" (45). Moving ahead in this line of logic, the readers opine that *Sāṃkhya* philosophy has become popular on the bases of the *Vedic*, *Upanishadic* and *Paurāṇic* texts.

The next critic of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is Vikram H. Zaveri. In his article, he admits that the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy relates to the creation of this universe (2). The critic posits his argument relating to this philosophy about the creation of the universe. The humans of the present world believe in the creation of the universe. In this context, it is necessary to analyze the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy as the basis of knowledge. In this line of thought Richard Garbe broadens the area of the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. He points out that "In Kapila's doctrine, for the first time in the history of the world, the complete independence and freedom of the human mind, its full confidence in its own powers, were exhibited" (Chattopadhyay 8). This notion is connected with the views of the other critics and philosophers relation to the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. He has analyzed the human minds on the base of this philosophy.

The above discussed critics and their critical writings on *Sāṃkhya* philosophy basically deal with how the notions of *Sāṃkhya* relate to the creation of the universe. This philosophy has been created and flourished in Sanskrit literature. No one has explored the use of the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. Thus, the following discussion concentrates on the use of this philosophy on the base of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in the *Bhāgavata*. For this regard, the exploration of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is necessary to throw light on the connection to display *Sāṃkhya* philosophy in the selected text.

Methodology

This library-based research work is inspired by *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in *Sāṃkhya* philosophy and it implies elective and qualitative methodology. *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is the main theoretical modality that shall be applied in the preparation of this article. The researcher applies the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy of sage Kapila to analyze the primary text for this article. For this, *Sāṃkhya* philosophy relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is based for the analysis of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* compiled by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa and translated into English by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Prabhupāda. *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is used as the theoretical research tool for the completion of this article. This philosophy relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is cited and highlighted for the analysis. Basically, it is based on the library research so that the selected text forms the primary source for the study.

Besides, different Eastern and the Western critics' opinions on the text's philosophy and basically perceptions of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are observed. For this, the research questions are answered with the use of interpretive methodology. For the transliteration, the researcher uses A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda's the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. In this connection, K. N. Upadhyaya further argues: "*Sāṃkhya* thought would be well advised to make close perusal of it" (342). The extension of this logic can be found in the relation between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in the text. The secondary sources will be taken from *Sanskrit* and *English* languages. But those sources will be used in terms of free translation. Both electronic and print forms of the sources will be used to collect the secondary data. Moreover, the *Vedas* and other classical *Sanskrit* literatures like *Upanishad*, *Manusmṛiti* will be dealt with to strengthen the research. This study will also attempt to read other classical religious texts to reframe its teaching on *Prakṛti* to *Puruṣa*. In the course of critical reading, the study will seek to take help of various modern theories to strengthen the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. The collected data will be selected, evaluated, interpreted and presented.

Discussion

This article shows that *Sāṃkhya* philosophy relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* traces that it is useful to study the conservation of Nature. This philosophy is necessary to highlight the value of this *Vedic* science at present. The study proves that the humans of the modern period

should have knowledge of this philosophy to be sensitive about the creation and conservation of this universe. *Prakṛti* is the source of everything and it is active consisting of the three human qualities conscious, subconscious and unconscious (superego, ego and id). On the basis of this relation, all the objects of the universe are related to *Prakṛti* which is active and *jada* - object. Humans and other creatures perform their activities on the base of *Prakṛti*. But *Puruṣa* feature is conscious, passive and free from the three *guṇas* (qualities) of *Prakṛti*. In this regard, *Sāṃkhya* philosophy has proved the equal importance of matter and consciousness in the evolution of the universe.

Sāṃkhya philosophy has depicted that *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are two fundamental opposite realities which can eternally co-exist. *Prakṛti* accounts for whatever is physical, both mind and matter-cum energy. This study hints that the existence of creatures is an outcome of the consciousness matter relation. A proper understanding of this relation can help humans realize their position in the universe. *Jiva* (living being) is the state in which *Puruṣa* is connected to *Prakṛti* in some form. The universe is described by this school as one created by *Puruṣa-Prakṛti* entities infused with various combinations of variously enumerated elements, senses, feelings, activity and mind. Each sentient being or *Jiva* is a fusion of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, whose soul/*Puruṣa* is limitless and unrestricted by its physical body. *Samsāra* or bondage arises when the *Puruṣa* does not have discriminating knowledge and so is misled as to its own identity, confusing itself with the Ego/*ahamkāra*, which is actually an attribute of *Prakṛti*. The spirit is liberated when the discriminating knowledge recognizes the difference between conscious *Puruṣa* and unconscious *Prakṛti* as realized by the *Puruṣa*.

Reflectation of *Prakṛti* in the *Bhāgavata*

The *Bhāgavata* elaborates the concept of *Prakṛti* and one believes that it is an original stuff from which there is the evolution of the material things. In this connection, the *Bhāgavata* notes that *Prakṛti* is the origin of the material world (Jumli Nath 131). In this line of thought, the text portrays that *Prakṛti* is the basic principle out of which there is the existence of the world. This standpoint justifies that the text explains the Nature of *Prakṛti* and her process of evolution in the light of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. The *Bhāgavata* remarks that *Prakṛti* is the source of all specific objects and it is eternal imperceptible and indeterminate. There is the manifestation of *Prakṛti* in the three *guṇas* (qualities) *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

The flourish of *Prakṛti* in the material and transcendental worlds, gives shape to *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. In the expression of Kapila: "One should be situated in the transcendental position, beyond the stages of material consciousness, and should be aloof from all other conceptions of life. Thus realizing freedom from false ego, one should see his own self just as he sees the sun in the sky" (Prabhupāda 521). On the basis of this relation, consciousness is necessary to understand the value of *Prakṛti*. With the similar beliefs, Pushendra Kumar opines that the three *guṇas*: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* reflects *Prakṛti* (225).

This dealing is based on the idea that the three qualities of Nature display *Prakṛti*. This notion traces that human qualities are reflected in *Prakṛti*. With this conditioning, the human qualities resemble the qualities of Nature.

Manas (minds), *budhi* (intelligence) and *ahaṁkāra* (egoism) are the elements for the evolution of *Prakṛti*. Devahuti writes in confirmation with her idea: "The eternal subtle senses are experienced as having four aspects, in the shape of mind, intelligence, ego and contaminated consciousness. Distinction between them can be made only by different functions, since they represent different characteristics" (3.26:14) *Note. Appendix¹*. From this stand point, readers come to know that Devhuti is curious to know about the *Sāṁkhya* philosophy from her son Kapila. Providing the ground for interpretation, Ganesh Vasudeo Tagare expresses his logic that the above three aspects (*manas*, *budhi* and *ahaṁkāra*) are the internal organs of humans (370). This analysis shows that our *manas*, *budhi* and *ahaṁkāra* are part and parcel of *Prakṛti*. In this regard, thoughts and activities of humans affect the condition of *Prakṛti* in the *Bhāgavata*.

Prakṛti has its relation to Lord Viṣṇu and this notion is forwarded by Kṛṣṇa to his friend and secretary Uddhava. According to Kṛṣṇa:

The material universe may be considered real, having nature as its original ingredient and final state. Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu is the resting place of nature, which becomes manifest by the power of time. Thus nature, the almighty Viṣṇu is the resting place of nature, which becomes manifest by the power of time. Thus nature, the almighty Viṣṇu and time are not different from Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth. (11. 24:19) *Note. Appendix²*

Explaining this statement, we clarify that Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu is the base and final condition of *Prakṛti* in the *Bhāgavata*. This argument turns to be valid from the link of *Prakṛti* to the Lord. In that line of thought, Bibek Debroy argues that the creation and the destruction of *Prakṛti* is related to the universal form of Viṣṇu (1317). Due to connection between *Prakṛti* and the Lord, readers are motivated to love both *Prakṛti* and the Lord.

Mahā-Viṣṇu at the initial stage of creation manifests himself in *māyā* and thereby he prepares *Prakṛti* for the process of creation. The *Bhāgavata* insists that *Prakṛti* has manifold manifestation and she is an inseparable part of *Puruṣa*. In the general understanding, *Puruṣa* does not differentiate between *māyā* and *Prakṛti* (Nath 134). In the expression of king Parīkṣīt:

My Lord Viṣṇu and mother Lakṣmī, goddess of fortune, you are the proprietors of the entire creation. Indeed, you are the cause of the creation. Mother Lakṣmī is extremely difficult to understand because she is so powerful that the jurisdiction of her power is difficult to overcome. Mother Lakṣmī is represented in the material world as the

external energy, but actually she is always the internal energy of the Lord. (6.19:11)

Note. Appendix³

Above mentioned example confirms that the creation of this universe is the effect of *māyā*. Brahmā creates *Prakṛti* with the help of *māyā*. Elaborating this argument, we state that *māyā* is one of the roots for the creation of *Prakṛti* in the *Bhāgavata*.

In the text, *Prakṛti* assumes the functions of both cause and effects at the beginning of creation. In this regard, Kapila notes his mother Devhuti: "The unmanifested eternal combination of the three modes in the cause of the manifest state and is called *pradhāna*. It is called *Prakṛti* when in the manifested stage of existence" (3.26:10) *Note. Appendix⁴*. The examination of this notion traces that *Prakṛti* is the combination of the three modes of Nature. This discussion heads to the analysis of the development of *Prakṛti*. In this connection, Śrīdhara Swāmī writes ahead: "*Prakṛti* is the ground of the apparent manifestation of the world" (qtd. in Nath 138). In this regard, the doctrine of *Prakṛti* resembles the doctrine of *Sāṃkhya*. The above logical expression on the base of *Prakṛti* indicates that the supreme personality of Godhead is the guiding principle of *Prakṛti*. It is the cosmic principle of the creation. Thus, no one nullifies the functions of *Prakṛti* in the context of creation of the universe.

Reflection of *Puruṣa* in the *Bhāgavata*

Puruṣa is one of the philosophical discussions of *Sāṃkhya* system after *Prakṛti* in the *Bhāgavata*. The text reflects the concept of *Puruṣa* in detail in terms of its relation to *Prakṛti*. Supporting this argument, Nath argues that "The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* holds *Puruṣa* as the self or soul which exists beyond *Prakṛti*" (124). The interpreter appreciates the fact that the literature of *Bhāgavata* manifests *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* as the prime factors of the creation of the universe. In this context, Sage Sūta states the *Puruṣa* incarnation of the Lord:

In the beginning of the creation, the Lord first expanded Himself in the universal form of the *Puruṣa* incarnation and manifested all the ingredients for the material creation. And thus at first there was the creation of the sixteen principles of material action. This was for the purpose of creating the material universe. (3.3:1) *Note. Appendix⁵*

On the basis of this relation, one can argue that there are three *Puruṣa* features in the text: *Kāraṇodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu, *Garbhodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu and *Kṣīrodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu (Prabhupāda 142). These three *Puruṣa* features have different tasks. *Kṣīrodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu generates innumerable universes; *Garbhodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu enters in each and every universe and *Kāraṇodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu is observed in every material object (qtd. in Prabhupāda 144). Thus, these three *Puruṣa* features trace multiple functions.

The word *Puruṣa* is used in the *Bhāgavata* because he creates the *purā*s (cities) in the bodies of animals, men, birds and celestial beings. Providing the ground for interpretation, Nārada Muni argues:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead had created many residential places like the bodies of human beings, animals, birds, saints and demigods. In all of these innumerable bodily forms, the Lord resides with the living being as *Paramātmā*. Thus He is known as the *puruṣāvatāra*. (7.14:37) *Note. Appendix*⁶

To support the idea of *Puruṣa*, one can say that God is situated in the heart of all creatures so that the creatures are part and parcel of the divine being. This notion is supported by C. L. Gosvāmī and the critic remarks that the *Puruṣa* dwells in the bodies of all creatures (722). The *Puruṣa* feature of *Kāraṇodakaśāyī* Viṣṇu remains with the *Jivas* to enable them for the enjoyment of the material life.

The *Puruṣa* is the absolute consciousness and uniformly abiding as the inner self of the creatures. The *Bhāgavata* discusses *Puruṣa* as the attributeless entity which pervades in the heart of all beings. In the view of Brahmā, *Puruṣa* "is pure, being free from all contaminations of material tinges. He is the Absolute Truth and the embodiment of full and perfect knowledge. He is all-pervading, without beginning or end, and without rival" (2.6:40) *Note. Appendix*⁷. This logical expression traces that the *Puruṣa* is the base for the existence of all creatures on this earth. Moving ahead in this line of thought, Debroy explores that the supreme *Puruṣa* is the protector of all flora and fauna in the *Bhāgavata* (108). This discussion has made considerable impact that the *Puruṣa* creates all other beings and remains silently in them for their existence.

The *Bhāgavata* states that *Puruṣa* is not subjected to change and he identifies himself with *Prakṛti*. It is crucial to remember that *Jivas* are appended to the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* and the *Puruṣa* is the doer. According to sage Kapila:

Material consciousness is the cause of one's conditional life, in which conditions are enforced upon the living entity by the material energy. Although the spirit soul does not do anything and is transcendental to such activities, he is thus affected by conditional life. (3.26:7) *Note. Appendix*⁸

Concerning such argument, modern readers contradict this notion in relation to the *Puruṣa* feature of the conditional existence of the living entity. In the theistic mode, the readers come to know that the *Bhāgavata* points out this unborn *Puruṣa* creates, protects and destroys the entire universe (Nath 128). On the basis of this relation, primordial *Puruṣa* is identical with God.

The *Puruṣa* has pure nature and it is regarded as absolutely formless with pure consciousness. In this regard, the expression of *Hiraṇyakaśipu* is meaningful:

Let me offer my respectful obeisance unto the Supreme, who in his unlimited, unmanifested form has expanded the cosmic manifestation, the form of the totality of the universe. He possesses external and internal energies and the mixed energy called the marginal potency, which consists of all the living entities. (7.3:34) *Note. Appendix*⁹

Keeping the same idea in mind, the researcher focuses that the *Puruṣa* is endowed with unlimited potencies. His external potency manifests the material world; the internal potency manifests the spiritual world and the marginal potency reflects the living entities (Prabhupāda 164). In this connection, the *Puruṣa* has both material and the spiritual energies.

Above mentioned discussion confirms that the *Puruṣa* is all- pervading and the principal cause of the world. The ultimate teaching of the *Bhāgavata* is that the *Puruṣa* is reflected in all individual selves. On the base of this notion, one points out that the *Puruṣa* is the ultimate illuminator, and he has reflection in the diverse bodies in different ways as the qualities of the *guṇas*. It can be concluded that the *Puruṣa* has multiple forms and names as the need of time and situation in the *Bhāgavata*. Thus, the *Puruṣa* is soul, consciousness and free from the three *guṇas*.

Conclusion

The base of analysis relating to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* in the *Bhāgavata* is the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. The above discussion heads to the analysis of *Sāṃkhya* as a dualistic system which advocates the dualism of *Prakṛti* with *Puruṣa*. *Prakṛti* is the ultimate ground out of which there is the evolution of the world. The *Sāṃkhya* philosophy intensifies that the world has been explained by the reference of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. These two components are the basis of the cosmic evolution. The text agrees that ignorance is the cause of bondage whereas knowledge is the cause of liberation. *Prakṛti* becomes active from the observation of *Puruṣa* and *Puruṣa* is released by the knowledge of self.

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Appendix

1. मनोबुद्धिरहङ्कारश्चित्तमित्यन्तरात्मकम्।
चतुर्धालक्ष्यतेभेदोवृत्त्यालक्षणरूपया॥ १४॥ (3.26:14)
2. एषसाङ्ख्यविधिःप्रोक्तःसंशयग्रन्थिभेदनः।
प्रतिलोमानुलोमाभ्यांपरावरदृशामया॥ 1९॥ (11.24:19)
3. युवांतुविश्वस्यविभूजगतःकारणंपरम्।
इयंहिप्रकृतिःसूक्ष्मामायाशक्तिर्दुरत्यया॥ ११॥ (6.19:11)
4. यत्तत्त्रिगुणमव्यक्तंनित्यंसदसदात्मकम्।
प्रधानंप्रकृतिंप्राहुरविशेषंविशेषवत्॥ १०॥ (3.26:10)
5. ततःसआगत्यपुरंस्वपित्रो-श्चिकीर्षयाशंबलदेवसंयुतः।
निपात्यतुङ्गाद्रिपुयूथनाथंहतंव्यकर्षद्व्यसुमोजसोर्व्याम्॥ १॥ (3.3:1)
6. पुराण्यनेनसृष्टानिनृतिर्यगृषिदेवताः।
शेतेजीवेनरूपेणपुरेषुपुरुषोह्यसौ॥ ३७॥ (7.14:37)
7. ऋषेविदन्तिमुनयःप्रशान्तात्मेन्द्रियाशयाः।
यदातदेवासत्तर्कैस्तिरोधीयेतविप्लुतम्॥ ४०॥ (2.6:40)
8. सर्वभूतसमत्वेननिर्वैरेणाप्रसङ्गतः।
ब्रह्मचर्येणमौनेनस्वधर्मेणबलीयसा॥ ७॥ (3.26:7)
9. अनन्ताव्यक्तरूपेणयेनेदमखिलंततम्।
चिदचिच्छक्तियुक्तायतस्मैभगवतेनमः॥ ३४॥ (7.3:34)