

According to all the schools of Indian philosophy, except the materialist Charvakas, our Summum Bonum is moksa. All the schools show the path for the realisation of moksa. That is why the whole Indian philosophy is often called as moksashastra, the science of liberation.

The Upanisads, ~~Srimad~~ Bhagvat Gita and the Brahma Sutras of Badarayana, (jointly called as Prasthanatrayi) are the works where the seeds of all the later developments of Indian thought can be found. So it is not possible to make a precise statement about the conception of liberation of these works. But this can be said that according to Prasthanatrayi the liberation on the negative side is the cessation of the circuit of rebirth and consequently the destruction of all kinds of pains and ,on the positive side it is to realise one's own self as non-different from Brahman.

The Upanisads are equally emphatic on Jivan mukti and Videha mukti. But about the social life of the liberated much is not said in the Upanisads. This aspect has been elaborated in Bhagvat Gita. Our ideal according to Srimad Bhagvat Gita is a Sthita-Prajna who does all his duties only for the sake of doing them. Maintenance of the world order is the only aim of the actions of a Sthitaprajna. The Brahmasutras of Badarayana discusses elaborately the different stages in the path of the soul of the liberated when it departs from this body and travels to the Brahmaloaka.

According to Jainism the soul is intrinsically pure but in this world is associated with the Karma, which according to it are atomic particles of matter.

This is the bondage of the soul. The liberation of it consists in being dissociated from all sorts of Karmas. The very nature of the soul according to Jainism is to move upwards like a flame of a lamp, so as soon as it is dissociated from the Karmas it moves upward and upward till it reaches Siddhashita the realm of the liberated, ^{and resides there for} ever, As long as the soul is associated with body, it is not possible to remain inactive. So there is no Jivanmukti according to Jainism.

According to Buddha the nirvana is the annihilation of all sorts of cravings (trsna). It is so rich that no language can describe it. But if we insist on positive description of it, at best we can say that it is a state of moral and spiritual perfection.

The Hinayana could not grasp the real teaching of Buddha because it ignored the two-fold distinctions of empirical truth and transcendental truth in the teachings of Buddha. According to Vaibhasika school there are two forms of existence, dharma savabhava and dharma-laksana, one representing the eternal nature and the other representing its momentary manifestation. The nirvana according to this school is the stoppage of these momentary manifestations and the destructions of passions and impurities. The Sautrantika school goes a step further and denies nirvana as an eternal existence . Nirvana according to it is the stoppage of all worldly elements (samskrta-dharmas) and consequent misery. The emphasis is on the negative stoppage of misery (Dukha- Nirodha Matra).

According to Mahayana Buddhism our bondage consists only in our imagination and nirvana is also a product of our imagination. Both are real only empirically. The transcendental truth is that bondage

and liberation both are like dreams , illusions etc. When we realise nirvana (this realisation is true phenominally only) it is also realised at the same time that we were never in bondage really. It is like the overcoming of the illusion which was only in our own imagination. Thus change according to Mahayana Buddhism in the realisation of ~~nirvan~~ nirvana is only epistemological, in our outlook only and not in the objective world.

The approach of Nyaya-Vaisesika and Purva-Mimamsa is purely realistic. Analysis of human experience shows them that no pleasure is unmixed. So they reject all sorts of experience in the state of liberation. The soul only exists devoid of consciousness and bliss.

The Sankhya- Yoga improves upon ~~Nay~~ Nyaya-Vaisesika and holds that the consciousness is not an adventitious quality of Purusha. It ^{is its} very essence. The bondage of Purusha lies in its wrong identification of itself with Prakrati or her evolutes. And when it realises that it is neither Prakrati nor any of her evolutes it is liberated. Thus bondage and liberation are real only empirically and not transcendently. Change in the realisation of Kaivalya is only epistemological, in our outlook only. The bliss according to Sankhya is a product of Sattva-Gun and Purush must be free from all the attachments with Prakrati and her evolutes so Sankhy does not grant bliss to Purusha in the state of liberation. ~~xxx~~

According to Shanker Brahma is the only ultimate reality, the world of multiplicity is false and the soul is absolutely non-different from Brahma. The soul does not know its true nature and wrongly

identifies itself with the limiting adjuncts of mind, body, etc. But when such wrong identification ceases it realises that it was since eternity non-different from Brahman. This is its liberation. Thus like Mahayana Buddhism for Shanker also the bondage is false ^u ~~nominal~~ noumenally. So the realisation of liberation for Shanker also means the change of our attitude towards ourselves and world. Thus bondage and liberation both are true only phenomenally.

According to Vaisnava Vedantins negatively liberation is the cessation of all kinds of sufferings and the circuit of rebirth and positively it is the enjoyment of the similarity with the Lord in Brahma-lok

The similarity of the liberated with the Lord is confined only to enjoyment and not relating to powers of creation ^{etc.} of the universe. The soul in the state of liberation is busy in worshipping the Lord and is the state of liberation is devoid of Bhakti the Vaisnava Vedantins are unanimous in rejecting it. For Madhva the consciousness of the difference of one's own self with Lord is an essential characteristics of the liberated. Madhva is the singular exception among the Vaisnava Vedantins in holding that there are gradations in the enjoyments of the soul. Plurality without difference has no meaning for him. So no two souls are alike as is held by other Vaisnava Vedantins. Chaitanya regards devotion to Lord even higher than moksa. It is according to him the fifth and the highest Purusartha. For Vallabha there are two paths of liberation- Pustimarga and Maryadamarga, the path of divine grace and the path of knowledge shown in the shastras. The liberated of Pustimarga shares in the Lila of the Lord but the liberated of the Maryadamarga merges into Lord. The liberation of Pustimarga is so rich that Vallabha thinks that the liberation attained by

by Maryadamarga is only sansaraxa in relation to liberation of Pustimarga.

Sri Aurobindo advocates supreme integral unity between the soul and God and yet retains the individuality for the soul. This is possible according to him by the logic of the infinite. Thus Aurobindo preserves the individuality of soul(like Vaishnava Vedantins) and advocates unity between the soul and God (like Shnaker). According to him matter, life and mind all will be transformed by the Logic of the infinite and preserved in the personality of Gnostic being. This transformation is transcendently real according to Shri Aurobindo. Thus the change from bondage to liberation is ontological and not merely epistemological as it is for Mahayana Buddhism and Shanker.

We think that only that can be called Real which is not contradicted in all the three times. On this criterion we can see that only Mahayana Buddhism and Shanker Vedanta can satisfactorily explain the bondage of the soul. If we believe in the absolute reality of bondage, it leads us to the absurd position that liberation can never be achieved, it is a pseudo concept. Because ^{if} the bondage is real it can never be negated and liberation cannot be realised without the negation of bondage.

Shankera and Mahayana Buddhism give us the highest conceptions of moksa(what can be higher than to know one's own self as absolutely non-different from Ultimate Reality?). Then comes the conceptions advocated by Shri Aurobindo, Vaishnava Vedantins, Jainism, Sankhya-yoga, Nyaya-Vaisesika and Hinayana Buddhism in the descending order.

Nyaya Vaisesika and Purva Mimansa view of liberation can not be accepted. It does not appeal to

reason that our summum bonum should be a stone like state. The criticism of the author of Syadvad manjari is also right that the phenomenal life is better than Nyaya-Vaisesika liberation; because, here we get happiness at least at intervals.

The Snakhya yoga view also cannot be accepted. The reason why Sankhya rejects the state of Kaivalya as a blissful one is that it confuses the bliss of the liberated with ordinary pleasure which is a product of Sattvaguna. The criticism of the author of Syadvadmanjari of Nyaya-Vaisesika liberation can well be levelled against Sankhya yoga Kaivalya. So this view is also not accepted ~~henceforth~~ to us.

The views of Vaisnava Vedantins and Sri Aurobindo cannot be accepted because they fail to give a satisfactory explanation of bondage. They also believe that bondage is absolutely real. But if the bondage is real, how can it be negated ? They cannot explain this. So we cannot accept these views also.

The conceptions of Shankera Vedanta & Mahayana Buddhism satisfactorily explain the bondage. The conceptions advocated by them is logically most convincing and the highest that thought can give. We therefore accept them.