Abstract

One important area of philosophy is 'Man and Morals' and one important topic of a philosophical theory of morals is duty or morally right action. All conscious human actions are goal oriented. Moral actions are no exception, though there is great controversy as to what that goal is. In classical Indian culture there is a theory, — the theory of human needs or *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ). Here '*puruṣārtha*' (पुरुषार्थ) does not mean just any human need. *Puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) is only such need which is consistent with *dharma* (धर्म). *Dharma* (धर्म) is the foundation of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ). The standard doctrine of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) includes four (or three) broad kinds of human needs. But philosophical theory of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) is different. It has only one *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) though it can be conceptualized positively or negatively. We have found very comprehensive discussion on the subject of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) in the philosophical and religious literature of classical India. Analytical and detailed discussions on *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) are found in the source books of Sāṃkhya, Vedānta, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy etc. It is also found in the source of these source books namely Vedic literature which includes not only *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣadas* but also *ītihāsa-s* and *Purāṇa-s*. Subsequently this subject has been more or less ignored by the working scholars of philosophy. We have tried here to restore the position which the subject of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) deserves.

Our present work consists of six chapters. We start our discussion with an important question without solving which we cannot even start our present research work in philosophy. The question is: whether the theory of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) can be regarded as a part or branch of philosophy.

Such doubt does not stop us from discussing this subject rather it shows that we can discuss it in philosophy. For in Indian philosophy nothing can be discussed if there is no doubt or dispute about it. If, however, the dispute is already solved we cannot take it up for philosophical discussion. In our introduction we have shown why it is doubted by some people whether *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) is or can be a subject for philosophical investigation. After discussion we concluded that the discussion of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) forms a part of the branch of philosophy called theory or morals or values. Actually the four fold scheme of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) covers the moral value of *dharma* (धर्म) on the one hand and spiritual value of *mokṣa* (मोक्ष) on the other.

The **first chapter** discusses in detail and have shown the close relationship between *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) and *darśana* (दर्शन). Though philosophy, as we understand it in the west, may not be interested in the discussion of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ), yet it is a central topic of *darśana* (दर्शन). It defines the goal and character of *darśana* (दर्शन). As a matter of fact we find rigorous and analytical discussion of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) in *darśana* (दर्शन). This will be evident from our discussion in the chapter four.

The **second chapter** deals with another important question. Granted that *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) is a topic of philosophical discussion, the next question is: Is the doctrine of threefold or fourfold *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) a philosophical doctrine? We have shown that it is not. Rather it is better viewed as a familiar or popular view of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) or FVP. We have stated reasons in support of our stand. In connection with our discussion in this chapter we have discussed also the meaning of the word '*puruṣārtha*' (पुरुषार्थ) on the one hand and the definition and nature

of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) on the other. In other words, we have adopted here both the logic of the word approach and the logic of the thing approach.

There are many scholars in modern times who have discussed the theme of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ), but most all of them never make it clear in their writings whether they distinguish FVP which admits three or four *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) and the philosophical theory of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) or PTP according to which the number of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) is just one. We have also mentioned that the source of FVP and PTP are different and what these sources are. What is more important is that we have shown FVP is full of anomalies. Having shown the anomalies and inconsistencies in it we made various attempts to systematize FVP as far as possible so that FVP turns out consistent and free from anomalies. But ultimately we failed. Some anomalies remained and FVP remained unacceptable from the philosophical point of view. It is no wonder that the philosophers advanced a different theory of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) which we call here PTP.

Actually, in the previous chapter we could not discuss each one of the *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) one admits according to FVP individually. In the **third chapter** we have discussed the same *puruṣārtha-s* (पुरुषार्थ) individually and in greater detail. Still we did not discuss in this chapter the *bhakti puruṣārtha* (भक्ति पुरुषार्थ). For in it we have discussed individually only those *puruṣārtha-s* (पुरुषार्थ) that are included in the list of *puruṣārtha-s* (पुरुषार्थ) associated with FVP. This list does not include *bhakti puruṣārtha* (भक्ति पुरुषार्थ). So, we have devoted a separate chapter for *bhakti puruṣārtha* (भक्ति पुरुषार्थ).

After discussing both generally and individually in the previous two chapters the four *puruṣārtha-s* (पुरुषार्थ) associated with FVP we passed

on to the philosophical theory of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) or PTP in the **fourth chapter.** Different systems of Indian philosophy have offered their own different versions of PTP. All these versions agree that the number of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) is one and this is the *parama puruṣārtha* (परम पुरुषार्थ). But these versions or who offer them differ about the exact nature of that one single *parama puruṣārtha* (परम पुरुषार्थ). The philosophical literature and writings on this subject is vast. It is almost impossible to discuss all that have been said there. We have discussed in the fourth chapter only two forms or versions of PTP — the Nyāya PTP and the Vedānta (Advaita) PTP. The basic difference is this — according to the Nyāya PTP the *parama puruṣārtha* (परम पुरुषार्थ) or *mokṣa* (मोक्ष) is a *negative* state; it is a state of complete and absolute absence of pain and suffering. According to the Vedanta PTP *mokṣa* (मोक्ष) is a *positive* state of best and highest happiness or bliss. Each school offers in support of its view many arguments and quotes many passages from philosophical and Vedic literature. We have critically presented and examined these two versions and finally found that the Nyāya version of PTP is more satisfactory from the philosophical point of view. This is at least an important result which we achieved after a long and laborious investigation. We hope that all will agree that this is a significant achievement; it is not just a repetition of past achievement or work.

In the **fifth chapter** we have concentrated on *bhakti puruṣārtha* (भक्ति पुरुषार्थ). Here we have first stated the reasons why we did not include the discussion of *bhakti puruṣārtha* (भक्ति पुरुषार्थ) in some previous chapter. Particularly the Vaiṣṇava sects have emphasized on the importance of *bhakti* (भक्ति). We have discussed mainly the view of the GauḍioVaiṣṇava sect or *sampradāya*. We have noted the distinction they draw between *sādhya bhakti* (साध्य भक्ति) and *sādhan bhakti* (साधन भक्ति). We also

discussed such critical points as whether they are right when they say that Śaṃkarācārya as well as Madhusūdana Svaraswatī turned to the path of *bhakti* (भक्ति) after failing to reach the fulfillment through the path of *jñana* (ज्ञान) of the (Advaita) Vedānta. Referring to some textual evidences we have shown that their claim or observation is not correct.

We realized that our discussion of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) as a topic of philosophical research will remain incomplete if we do not include the discussion of *puruṣārtha sādhana* (पुरुषार्थ साधन). For as Gangeśopādhyāy has shown nothing is *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) if it does not have a *sādhana* (साधन), through which it can be realized. So far the *puruṣārtha sādhana* (पुरुषार्थ साधन) is a part of the conception of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ). So, we devoted a separate chapter, the **sixth chapter**, for the discussion of *puruṣārtha sādhana* (पुरुषार्थ साधन). Here we have discussed the great controversy between *samuccayavāda* (समुच्चयवाद) and *asamuccayavāda* (असमुच्चयवाद). There is vast literature in this subject and the discussions there are quite technical and intricate. We have also discussed the related themes of *jīvanmukti* (जीवन्मुक्ति) and *videhamukti* (विदेहमुक्ति). Some admit both the forms of *mukti* (मुक्ति) but others disagree.

In the last and **concluding chapter** we have summarized the discussions and stated the final outcome of our investigation. We have also incorporated here some important points which we have omitted in our previous chapters. More importantly we have considered here some objections which have been raised against the India's vision and culture on account of their belief in *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ). For example, it has been said by some critics that India's ideology of *mokṣa* (मोक्ष) led to the rise of a world negating attitude which prevented India's social growth and development. The related objection is that their concern for *mokṣa* (मोक्ष)

turned the Indians a selfish people. For *mokṣa* (मोक्ष) is individual's own personal fulfillment. The quest for *mokṣa* (मोक्ष) does not allow individuals to think and act for others benefit or for the benefit of mankind. It has been shown, that if we deeply understand the idea of *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) with reference to its proper philosophical and social context then we will realize that these objections are unfounded.

Thus we have shown that the distinctive conception of philosophy in India makes *puruṣārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) a natural subject matter of it. Indian philosophy in the sense of *darśana* (दर्शन) has a great practical bearing. Here one does not do philosophy simply to get intellectual pleasure or theoretical understanding. In India men do philosophy to be clear about the true nature of the self for that will lead man to life's highest fulfillment.