

‘Nature’ and ‘Elementary Nature’ in Phenomenology and Sāṅkhya

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Abstract

Introduction This is a comparative study. It is in two parts: ‘nature’ and ‘elementary nature’. ‘Nature (of things)’ as in the Western tradition is identified here with ‘*prakṛti*’ in sāṅkhya. *Nature* Sāṅkhya is argued to be a post-epoche discourse. ‘Pure consciousness’ is then identified with ‘*buddhi*’ and what Husserl calls its ‘ground’, with ‘*pradhān*’. The ‘nature’ of the psychophysical reality is argued to be ‘pure consciousness’ while the ‘nature’ of ‘pure consciousness’ is argued to be its ‘ground’. Phenomenological reduction is interpreted as ‘*laya*’ of the psychophysical reality into its ‘nature’.

‘*Elementary nature*’ ‘Stuff’ and ‘form’ in phenomenology and the three ‘*guṇa*’ in sāṅkhya are interpreted as the ‘elementary natures’. Two criteria, one of ‘non-selfsufficiency’ and the other of ‘comprehensiveness’, for qualifying as ‘elementary nature’, are proposed. The former is shown to disqualify as ‘elementary nature’, what we get by ‘empirical intuition’. What Husserl describes as ‘pure essence’ satisfies, but it is argued to be but a kind, the ‘empirically instantiated’ kind of ‘pure essence’ and is identified with what sāṅkhya calls ‘*dr̥ṣṭasvalakṣaṇa*’ kind of ‘*sāmānya viṣaya*’. ‘Stuff’, is not ‘empirically instantiated’, but ‘empirically un-instantiated’ kind of ‘pure essence’ and is identified with what sāṅkhya calls ‘*a-dr̥ṣṭasvalakṣaṇa*’ kind of ‘*sāmānya viṣaya*’. It is characterised as non-selfsufficiency of ‘reciprocal’ kind, as against ‘form’, as one of ‘unilateral’ kind. The other criterion, that of ‘comprehensiveness’, is based upon ‘*satkāryavāda*’. It requires moods and the four Aristotelian causes of mental things to be traceable to the ‘elementary natures’ in the respective discipline. Sāṅkhya satisfies both these criteria but phenomenology is not found to fare as well; particularly, ‘sense-data’, which Husserl proposes as ‘stuff’, fails on the criterion of ‘non-selfsufficiency’.

Keywords *Kāraṇa* · Cause · *Prakṛti* · Nature · *Satkāryavāda* · *Triguṇa* · Stuff · Form · Non-selfsufficiency

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Introduction

The term ‘nature’ in the title is used in the sense of the sāṅkhya concept of ‘*prakṛti*’. Aristotle seems to use the term ‘nature’ as ‘nature of something’ also in the same sense. If X is ‘*prakṛti*’ of Y, then Y is said to be ‘*vikṛti*’ of X.

‘*Prakṛti*’, for sāṅkhya, is ‘*upādāna kāraṇa*’. Most Indian ‘*darśana*’ consider two kinds of ‘*kāraṇa*’, namely, ‘*upādāna kāraṇa*’ and ‘*nimitta kāraṇa*’ of a thing. For issues limited to ‘*prakṛti*’, sāṅkhya acknowledges ‘*upādāna*’, (Īśwarak ṇa, Sā khya Kārikā)¹ but not ‘*nimitta kāraṇa*’. This seems to be the reason why sāṅkhya is often seen to use the terms ‘*prakṛti*’ and ‘*kāraṇa*’ interchangeably. If X is ‘*kāraṇa*’ of Y, then Y is said to be the ‘*kārya*’ of X. The terms ‘*hetu*’ and ‘*hetumat*’ are used interchangeably with, respectively, ‘*kāraṇa*’ and ‘*kārya*’. The term ‘*kāraṇa*’ translates to ‘cause’, and as per Aristotle, ‘men do not think they know a thing till they have grasped the “why” of it (which is to grasp its primary cause).’ (Aristotle, *physics* 194b16–194b23).² Causes of things, according to him, are the principles as to why things come to be and pass away and change in whatever way they do. The term ‘cause’, as Aristotle uses here, may be taken to be equivalent to ‘*kāraṇa*’ in Indian philosophy. The term ‘caused’ may be seen to correspond to ‘*kārya*’. Aristotle also seems to take ‘nature’ as ‘nature of a thing’ as a kind of its ‘cause’ because, ‘Of things that exist’, he says, ‘some exist by nature, some from other causes’ (*physics*, 192b9–192b11). What Aristotle means by ‘nature as cause’ seems to correspond precisely to ‘*upādāna kāraṇa*’, while his concept of ‘art’, to ‘*nimitta kāraṇa*’. Given this, we can characterize what he calls things that exist ‘by nature’ as those that are caused only by ‘*upādāna kāraṇa*’ and things of ‘art’ as those that have ‘*nimitta kāraṇa*’ also. This paper will compare the theories of such ‘nature’ of the psychophysical world as in phenomenology and in sāṅkhya.

‘Stuff’ and ‘form’ in phenomenology and the three ‘*guṇa*’ in sāṅkhya have been brought under a common concept named here as ‘elementary nature’ of things.

This paper is divided correspondingly into two parts, the first titled simply as ‘nature’ and the second as ‘elementary nature’.

‘Nature’

Residue of Phenomenological Reduction and ‘*Buddhi*’

According to phenomenology, the ‘psychophysical universe of nature’ (Husserl 1913, *Ideas Pertaining to...Ideas*, P94,13§50,2,5)³ transcends consciousness (*Ideas*, P94,16§50,2,8). As per Husserl (*Ideas*, P93; §50,1,5),

Reality, the reality of the physical thing taken singly and the reality of the whole world,...is not in itself something absolute...; rather in the absolute sense it is

¹ Hereafter Īśwarak ṇa, Sā khya Kārikā will be represented by ‘*kārikā n*’ at the end, where ‘*n*’ is the serial number of the *kārikā*. For example, in this case - उपादानग्रहणात् (Upādānagrahaṇāt (*kārikā* 9)).

² Hereafter, Aristotle, *physics* will be represented by *physics*.

³ Hereafter Husserl 1913, *Ideas Pertaining to...* will be represented by ‘*Ideas*’. It is optionally followed by page number and followed optionally by line number in that page, followed by section number, and followed by paragraph number in that section and line number in that paragraph, for example, in the present case: (*Ideas*, P94,13§50,2,5)

nothing at all... it has the essentiality of something which of necessity is only intentional, only an object of consciousness, something presented in the manner peculiar to consciousness, something apparent as apparent.

As per Husserl (*Ideas*, P111; §59,1,3), not only the physical things but also the ‘the set of universal objects’ are ‘transcendent to pure consciousness in certain manner’. All objects are constituted and posited by consciousness as they are given to us. Husserl therefore wants to eliminate the transcendental psychophysical world from consideration and attend only to its consciousness. To that end, he prescribes, ‘[w]e parenthesize everything which that positing encompasses with respect to being’ (*Ideas*, P56,23; §32,3,1). He says (*Ideas*, P94; §50,2,13),

we put all those positings ‘out of action’, we do not ‘participate in them’; we direct our seizing and theoretically inquiring regard to pure consciousness in its own absolute being. That, then, is what is left as the sought for ‘phenomenological residuum’ ...we have excluded the whole world with all physical things, human beings, ourselves included.

He calls this as ‘phenomenological reduction’ (epoche), reduction of all these things to their consciousness. From an epistemological point of view, he calls it also as ‘transcendental epoche’ (*Ideas*, P60; §33,8,9).

Having effected such phenomenological reduction, Husserl asserts (*Ideas*, P59; §33,6,10), ‘consciousness has, in itself, a being of its own which in its own absolute essence, is not touched by the phenomenological exclusion. It, therefore, remains as the “phenomenological residuum”’. What ‘phenomenological’ reduction makes accessible, Husserl calls ‘pure consciousness’ (*Ideas*, P59; §33,7,) or ‘transcendentally pure consciousness’ (*Ideas*, P108; §56,1,2) or as the residue of ‘transcendental’ reduction, simply, as ‘transcendental consciousness’. He seems to call it also as ‘absolute consciousness’ as when he talks of ‘reduction of the natural world to *absolute consciousness*’ (*Ideas*, P110; §58,1,6). This reduction, he says, ‘yields *factual* concatenations of mental processes of consciousness’ (*Ideas*, P110; §58,1,7). The term ‘consciousness’, with any of all this variety of adjectives qualifying it, seems to denote but one and the same concept. We need not be misled into thinking that they refer to different concepts.

As for *sāṅkhya*, the author has shown elsewhere (Burte, D P, ‘Consciousness in Phenomenology and *Sāṅkhya*’)⁴ in *sāṅkhya*, the term ‘*vastu*’ corresponds to transcendent ‘true object’ as Husserl calls it and ‘*viśaya*’ corresponds to ‘intentional object’ as posited by its consciousness. *Sāṅkhya* concerns with ‘*viśaya*’, ‘*cittavṛtti*’, etc. but with no ‘*vastu*’. Thus, we can say that *sāṅkhya* already is in what Husserl calls ‘phenomenological attitude’ and the discourse of *sāṅkhya* is a post-epoche discourse. For *sāṅkhya*, ‘*cittavṛtti*’ ultimately are processes of ‘*buddhi*’ and it is finally ‘*buddhi*’ that experiences all ‘*viśaya*’.⁵ We, therefore, identify ‘pure consciousness’ in phenomenology precisely with ‘*buddhi*’, which is also called ‘*mahat*’.

⁴ Hence forth ‘Burte, D P, Consciousness in Phenomenology and *Sāṅkhya*’ will be represented by ‘Burte’.

⁵ सान्तःकरण बुद्धिः सर्वं विषयमवग्राहते। *Sāntaḥkaraṇā buddhiḥ sarvaṁ viśayam avagāhate.* (kārikā 2)

‘Ground’ of Pure Consciousness and ‘*Prādhāna*’

The transition to pure consciousness, Husserl says, ‘leads necessarily to the question about the *ground* for the this now-emerging factualness of the corresponding constitutive consciousness’ (*Ideas*, P111; §58,2,8). We may understand the term ‘constitutive consciousness’ in this quote also as descriptive of ‘pure consciousness’ itself. The ‘*ground* of pure consciousness’ is a least ambiguous description of a concept, which is important for us. We now look at the following quote from Husserl (*Ideas*, P105,29; §54,2,1) regarding this concept.

Certainly a consciousness without animated organism and ... also without psyche, a consciousness which is not personal, is imaginable. That is to say, a stream of consciousness in which intentional unities of experience, organism, psyche, and empirical ego-subjects did not become constituted, in which all of these experiential concepts, and therefore the concept of a mental process in the psychological sense, as a mental process of a person, an animate ego, would be without any basis and in any case, without any validity.... One must convince oneself... that in contrast to the empirical mental process there stands as a presupposition for the sense of that process, the absolute mental process.

It is quite clear from the description of the concept that the ‘ground of pure consciousness’ is pre-conscious; it is not conscious. It yet has no intentionality, and that is why it cannot be referred either as ‘consciousness’ or as ‘mental process’ with any adjective whatever. But unfortunately, the above quote talks of ‘a *stream of consciousness* in which intentional unities of experience.... did not become constituted’. In saying, ‘in contrast to empirical mental process there stands as a presupposition for the sense of that process, the *absolute mental process*’ the above quote, describing the *ground* as *presupposition* almost names it as ‘absolute mental process’. In difference to the right of the originator of a concept in naming it, we may refer to ‘ground of pure consciousness’, if at all, as ‘absolute mental process’, yet sans the meaning of the referring phrase. The meaning is misleading, and we must guard against slipping over it.

What *sā khyā* calls ‘*prādhāna*’ is ‘*prakṛti*’ of, that is, nature of ‘*buddhi*’, which we identified with ‘pure consciousness’. While ‘*prādhāna*’, thus is a ‘*prakṛti*’, there is no ‘*prakṛti*’, in turn, of which ‘*prādhāna*’ is a ‘*vikṛti*’. In other words, ‘*prādhāna*’ as ‘*prakṛti*’, is ultimate, that is, ‘*mūla*’. It, therefore, is described as ‘*mūla prakṛti*’ and also, as ‘*mūla kāraṇa*’.⁶ We now identify ‘*prādhāna*’ with the ‘ground of pure consciousness’, which Husserl almost names as ‘absolute mental process’ in phenomenology.

‘*Vikṛti*’ is a ‘manifest’, that is, ‘*vyakta*’, because it is a manifestation (of its ‘*prakṛti*’). Being no ‘*vikṛti*’, ‘*prādhāna*’, the ‘*mūla prakṛti*’, is no manifestation; it is ‘unmanifest’, that is, ‘*avyakta*’.

⁶ मूलप्रकृतिविकृतिः। Mūlaprakṛtiḥ avikṛtiḥ. (kārikā 3)

Satkāryavāda

As per the causal theory of sāṅkhya, ‘kārya’ is already existent (Vācaspatimiśra, Sāṅkhya Tattva Kaumudī)⁷ (that is, ‘sat’), if potentially, in its ‘kāraṇa’, which is why this theory is named as ‘satkāryavāda’. As per *satkāryavāda*, coming of something from its ‘potential’ being into its ‘actual’ being is its ‘āvirbhāva’ or ‘sarga’ while its going out of its ‘actual’ being back into its ‘potential’ being is its ‘tirobhava’ or ‘laya’. *Sarga* is *sarga* of *kārya* from its *kāraṇa*, and *laya* is *laya* of a *kārya* back into its *kāraṇa*.

Husserl says

consciousness in its ‘purity’ must be held to be a self-contained complex of being; a complex of absolute being into which nothing can enter and out of which nothing can slip. (Ideas p93,22; §49,7,5).

This, on the part of phenomenology, seems to be a clear commitment to *satkāryavāda*.

According to Aristotle, to grasp the ‘why’ of a thing ‘is to grasp its primary cause’ (*Physics*, 194b16–194b23). The ‘primary cause’, according to this sense, of the individual realities like physical things as well as the ‘universal’ objects may be taken as their constitutive consciousness. In that case, phenomenological reduction becomes reduction to primary cause, this ‘primary cause’ of the psychophysical world being its ‘consciousness’ or say ‘pure consciousness’. Therefore, the idea of phenomenological reduction may be said not to be different from the sāṅkhya concept of *laya* of the natural world into its cause, its nature, the ‘pure consciousness’.

Further, the constitutions of the concatenations of mental processes of consciousness can be said to be ‘caused’ by their ‘ground’, that is, ‘absolute mental process’. This ‘ground’ in sāṅkhya parlance also has to be recognized as the ‘kāraṇa’ or the ‘cause’ of pure consciousnesses. ‘Reducing’ the ‘pure consciousness’ to this ground, therefore, can be said to be its ‘laya’ in the ‘ground’, while constitutions in the ‘ground’, that is, that of ‘pure consciousness’, can be said to be its ‘sarga’ in its ‘ground’, that is, in ‘absolute mental process’.

Divine and Transcendent or Merely Unmanifest?

Husserl seems to be led to believe in the existence of an extra-worldly ‘divine’ being (*Ideas*, P111; §58,2,17), which he seems to take as this ‘ground’ of ‘pure consciousness’. The *ground* of ‘pure consciousness’, Husserl says, ‘does not have the sense of a physical-causal reason.’ (*Ideas*, P111; §58,2,13). But since, as we have seen, this ground manifests itself as pure consciousness, the same, we have to say, is the ‘cause’ and ‘nature’ of pure consciousness. If at all the ground of the manifest world of ‘pure consciousness’ can be taken to be ‘extra-worldly’ or ‘divine’, it can only be in the sense that unlike ‘pure consciousness’ it is unmanifest.

Further, about the being of the ‘ground’, that is, ‘absolute mental process’, Husserl says, ‘What concerns us here,... is that this being would obviously transcend not merely

⁷ Hereafter Īśvarak ṇa, Sā khya Tattva Kaumudī will be represented by ‘Kaumudī m’ at the end, where ‘m’ stands for the comment number in it. For example in this case - सत् कार्यम् कारणव्यापारात् प्रागतिि। Sat kāryam kāraṇavyāpārāt prak̄ itī. (Kaumudī 63, kārikā 9)

the world but “absolute” consciousness.’ (*Ideas*, P111; §58,2,16). In qualifying ‘absolute mental process’ as transcendent to ‘absolute consciousness’, Husserl is seen to declare a ‘cause’ to be *transcendent* to its ‘caused’, *prakṛti* as transcendent to its *vikṛti*, gold as transcendent to golden ornaments. This understanding goes against that of sāṅkhya. Sāṅkhya declares *vyakta* as well as *avayakta* is *aviveki*, that is, not isolable⁸ and just as *pradhāna*, even *mahat* etc., being the same (as *pradhāna* itself) by nature, cannot isolate from *pradhāna*.⁹

‘Elementary Nature’

After phenomenological reduction of the world of objects, phenomenology is left with its consciousness or the mental processes intentionally directed to it. Of mental processes, it recognizes two strata. It refers to one as ‘matter’, alternatively called ‘hyle’, ‘stuff’, ‘substrate’, etc. and the other as ‘form’. Sāṅkhya on its part introduces three ‘*guṇa*’. We may put ‘stuff’ and ‘form’ of phenomenology and the three ‘*guṇa*’ of sāṅkhya under the general heading of ‘elementary natures’ under their respective schemes.

There are two criteria, which we will argue, the ‘elementary natures’ under each of these schemes have to satisfy. In the two sub-parts of this part, these schemes of ‘elementary natures’ will be tested under them.

Criterion of ‘Non-selfsufficiency’

‘Selfsufficiency’ and ‘Non-selfsufficiency’

Husserl introduces (*Ideas*, P28,34; §15,1,1) a basic distinction between objects on the basis of whether they can or cannot, be thought of, on their own. He calls the former as ‘selfsufficient’ and the latter as ‘non-selfsufficient’. Husserl defines an absolutely selfsufficient essence as a ‘concretum’, a non-selfsufficient essence as an ‘abstractum’ and a ‘this-here’, the material essence of which is a concretum, as an individuum (*Ideas*, P29,25; §15,3).

Sāṅkhya, a post-epoche discourse, refers to objects only as ‘*viṣaya*’. For sāṅkhya, *viśeṣa viṣaya*,¹⁰ is one which can be experienced (that is, as pleasurable, painful or indifferent). Therefore, *viśeṣa viṣaya* is ‘selfsufficient essence’ and a ‘concretum’.

Selfsufficiencies Cannot Be Elementary

A concretum as the essence of an individual is an eidetic singularity (*Ideas*, P30,2; §15,5,1). In a concretum, according to Husserl (*Ideas*, P30,6; §15,6,1), other eidetic singularities, which ‘are necessarily “heterogeneous”’ are included discretely. What is

⁸ ... अविकि... व्यक्तं तथा प्रधानम्...। aviveki... vyaktam tathā pradhānam. (kārikā 11)

⁹ यथा प्रधानं न स्वतो विचिन्तियते एवममहदादयोऽपि न प्रधानात् विचिन्तियते तदात्मकत्वात् । Yathā pradhānam na svataḥ vivicyate evam mahadādayaḥ api na pradhānāt vivicyate tad-ātmakatvāt. (Kaumudī 90 on kārikā 11)

¹⁰ एते स्मृता वशिषाः शान्ता घोरश्च मूढश्च। Ete smṛtāḥ viśeṣāḥ śāntāḥ ghorāḥ ca mūḍhāḥ ca. (kārikā 38) ‘एते स्मृता वशिषाः’ कुतः ‘शान्ता घोरश्च मूढश्च’। ‘Ete smṛtāḥ viśeṣāḥ’ kutāḥ ‘śāntāḥ ghorāḥ ca mūḍhāḥ ca’. (Kaumudī 186, kārikā 38)

made up of a plurality of other things can, obviously, not be considered as ‘elementary’. All *vyakta* and *avyakta* entities¹¹ as per *sāṅkhya* also are *saṅghāta*,¹² which translates to ‘close union’ or ‘combination’. Therefore, they also cannot count as ‘elementary’. Therefore, whatever is a concretion or a *saṅghāta* cannot count as ‘elementary nature’. It is only what unites into a concretion and themselves are non-concrete, that is, abstract, we may say, can probably count as elementary.

Empirically Intuited and Empirically Instantiated Essences

We have identified (Burte) perception with *‘pratyakṣa pramāṇa vṛtti’* and, empirically intuited essence or say, ‘empirical essence’ of an individual object with *‘pratyakṣa’* or *‘drṣṭa’*. ‘Empirically’ intuited essences or say ‘empirical essences’ are self-sufficient essences and hence are concrete. They cannot count as ‘elementary nature’. Husserl says (*Ideas*, P10,6, §3,1,4), “Experiencing or intuition of something individual can be transmuted into ‘eidetic seeing’ (ideation)...What is seen when this occurs is the corresponding ‘pure essence’, or ‘eidos’”. Intuition of such essences, Husserl says (*Ideas*, P12,5; §3,7,1), has “as its basis a principle part of intuition of something individual.” It is the possibility of turning one’s regard to a ‘corresponding’ individual and forming a consciousness of something individual, we may note, which makes ‘intuition of essence’ possible. ‘Intuition of essence’ is thus based upon the previous empirical experience of some individual/s. Such previous empirical experience may be said to serve as a previous ‘example’ (*Ideas*, P12,11; §3,7,7), or say an ‘empirical instance’, of the ‘pure essence’. Such a ‘pure essence’ may, therefore, be qualified as the ‘previously empirically instantiated pure essence’, which translates to *‘drṣṭasvalakṣaṇa sāmānya’*, which, in *sākhya* is *‘viśaya’* of *‘pūrvavat’* kind of *‘anumāna’*. ‘Pure essence’ or ‘eidos’, as Husserl describes above may be identified with *‘drṣṭasvalakṣaṇa sāmānya’* and the corresponding ‘eidetic intuition’, with *‘pūrvavat anumāna’*. The ‘empirically instantiated pure essences’ do qualify as ‘pure forms’ and hence, as ‘elementary nature’ in the case of phenomenology.

The ‘Ultimate Substrate’ and ‘Reciprocal’ Non-self-sufficiencies

Empirical instances of these ‘pure forms’ again, however, remain concrete and self-sufficient. This leaves the issue of the other ‘elementary nature’, namely, the ‘ultimate substrate’ open.

Husserl says,

[C]ategorical objectivities can function as substrates of categorical formations, which, in turn, can do the same, etc. Conversely, every such formation refers back to ultimate substrates, to objects of a first or lowest level, i.e. to objects which are no longer syntactical-categorical formations, which no longer contain any of those ontological forms (*Ideas*, P24; §11,2,19).

¹¹ सुखदुःखमोहात्मकतयाऽव्यक्तादयः सर्वे संघाताः। Sukha-duḥkha-moha-ātmakatayā avyaktādayaḥ sarve saṅghātāḥ. (Kaumudī 120, kārikā 17).

¹² संहृत्यते-मिश्रीभवन्त-अनेके सुखदुःखमोहादयो यत्र असौ संघातः। Samhanyate-miśrībhavanti-aneke sukhaduḥkhamohādayaḥ atra asau saṅghataḥ. (Explanation on Kaumudī 120, kārikā 17).

It is only the ultimate substrate that can be and has to be ‘formless’ and thus ‘pure kind of nature’. At this stage, we may note that Husserl has mentioned not one but two kinds of non-self-sufficiencies, namely, the ‘unilateral’ and the ‘reciprocal’ (*Ideas*, P29,15; §15,2,7). We may characterize ‘empirically instantiated essences’ as ‘unilateral’ non-self-sufficiencies.

The other kind of non-self-sufficiency, which Husserl mentions, is noteworthy. This kind involves essences in plurality, which are ‘unthinkable without *each other*’ (*Ideas*, P28,34; §15,1,5) and hence are all non-self-sufficient together and w.r.t. each other. It is these essences that Husserl seems to refer as ‘reciprocally’ non-self-sufficient essences (*Ideas*, P29,15; §15,2,7). Husserl seems to illustrate ‘reciprocal non-self-sufficiency’ with ‘substrate and form’ (*Ideas*, P28; §15,1,4). ‘Substrate’ can be ‘pure kind of nature’ only as ‘reciprocal’ non-self-sufficiency.

Substrate as ‘reciprocal’ non-self-sufficiency, obviously, cannot have any empirical instance and hence has to be described as ‘uninstantiated non-self-sufficient’ essence, which may be identified with what sāṅkhya calls ‘*adr̥ṣṭasvalakṣaṇa*’ kind of ‘*sāmānya viśaya*’.

The ‘eidetic intuition’ of such ‘*viśaya*’ can be said to correspond to what sāṅkhya calls ‘*sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa*’ kind of ‘*anumāna*’.

‘*Guṇa*’ of Sāṅkhya

‘Pleasure’, ‘pain’ and ‘apathy’, according to sāṅkhya, are ‘mutually opposed’¹³ and hence ‘pure’ of each other. The observed variety in the world is caused by the possibility of their ever overcoming¹⁴ each other. Causes of ‘pleasure’, ‘pain’ and ‘apathy’ must be conceived exclusively to be what these causes, by nature, respectively are. Sāṅkhya proposes that the exclusive cause¹⁵ of pleasure is what is ‘*sukhātma*’, that is, ‘pleasure by nature’, which ‘*sattva*’ is meant to be, that of pain, what is ‘*duḥkhātma*’, that is, ‘pain by nature’, which ‘*rajas*’ is meant to be and that of apathy, what is ‘*mohātma*’, that is, ‘apathy by nature’, which ‘*tamas*’ is meant to be. Sāṅkhya, therefore, holds that just as golden ornaments are gold by nature, the objects in the world and the world as a whole are ‘pleasure’, ‘pain’ and ‘apathy’ by nature, that is, ‘*sukhduḥkhamohātma*’.¹⁶ Such natures, however, need not prevent ascriptions of concomitant functions¹⁷ and properties¹⁸ to *guṇa*. Sāṅkhya ascribes

¹³ अत्र च सुखदुःखमोहाः परस्परवरोधिनः। अत्र च सुखा-दुःखा-मोहाः परस्परविरोधिनः। (Kaumudī 107, kārikā 12)

¹⁴ तेषां च परस्परमभिध्वयाभिव्यक्तभावान्नातात्वम्। Teṣāṃ ca parasparam abhibhāvya-abhibhāvaka-bhāvāt nānātvam. (Kaumudī 107, kārikā 12)

¹⁵ तत्र यत् सुखहेतुः तत् सुखात्मकं सत्त्वम् यत् दुःखहेतुः तत् दुःखात्मकं रजः यन्मोहहेतुस्तन्मोहात्मकं तमः। Tatra yat sukhahetuḥ tat sukhātmakam sattvam yat duḥkhaheṭuḥ tat duḥkhātmakam rajah yat mohahetuḥ tat mohātmakam tamah. (Kaumudī 107, kārikā 1).

¹⁶ वमितं भावजातं सुखदुःखमोहात्मककारणत्वं तदन्वतित्वात्। यद्येनान्वीयते तत्कारणकं यथा सुवर्णान्वतिं सुवर्णकारणकम्। यथा चेदं तस्मात्तथेति Vimitam bhāvajātam Sukha-duḥkha-moha-ātmaka-kāraṇatvam tad-anvitatvāt. Yad yena anvīyate tad kāraṇakam yathā suvarṇa-anvitam suvarṇakāṇakam. Yathā ca idam tasmāt tathā iti. (Sarvadarśanasāśgraha, 365). प्रीत्यप्रीतविषादात्मकाः गुणाः। Prīti-aprīti-viśāda-ātmakāḥ guṇāḥ. (kārikā 12).

¹⁷ प्रकाशप्रवृत्तनियमार्थाः। Prakāśa-pravṛtti-niyama-arthāḥ. (kārikā 12)

¹⁸ कार्योद्गमने हेतुर्लाघवम् गौरवप्रतदिवन्द्वि...। एवं करणानां वृत्तपिटुत्वहेतुर्लाघवम्, गुरुत्वे हि मन्दानि स्युरति सत्त्वस्य प्रकाशकत्वमुक्तम्। Kārya-udgamane hetuḥ lāghavam gauravapratidvandvi. Evam karaṇānām vṛttipātutvam, gurutve hi mandāni syuḥ iti sattvasya prakāśakatvam uktam. (Kaumudī, 103 on kārikā 13).

them functions, respectively, of ‘illuminating’ (*prakāśa*), ‘propelling’ or ‘energizing’ (*pravṛtti*) and ‘controlling’ (*niyama*). It ascribes them also properties which suit their functions. ‘*Sattva*’ is described as ‘agile’, ‘nimble’ (*laghu*)¹⁹ ‘*rajas*’ as ‘full of movement’ (*calam*) and ‘*tamas*’ as ‘heavy’ (*guru*). ‘*Tamas*’ controls the functioning of the other two *guṇa* by this ‘heaviness’ of its. These three *guṇa* are simultaneously conflicting and cooperating.²⁰

As per sāṅkhya ‘*indriya*’ derive²¹ from ‘*sattva*’ and ‘*tanmātra*’, from ‘*tamas*’, while ‘*rajas*’ contributes to both. The ‘full of movement’ (*calam*) ‘*rajas*’ propels both, ‘*indriya*’ as well as ‘*tanmātra*’. It is to the ‘agile’ and ‘nimble’ (*laghu*) ‘*sattva*’ that ‘*indriya*’ owe their efficiency in performing their functions. ‘*Tamas*’ in ‘*tanmātra*’, however, controls not only the illumination due to ‘*sattva*’ of ‘*indriya*’ by ‘shrouding’ but controls also the motion due to ‘*rajas*’ in both ‘*indriya*’ as well as ‘*tanmātra*’.

The unmanifest ‘*mūla prakṛti*’ or ‘*pradhāna*’ according to the doctrine of *triguṇa* is nothing but the state of equilibrium²² among the three *guṇa*. It is when the equilibrium gets disturbed, that is, when *guṇa* predominate over each other, that the hierarchy of the manifest starts evolving.

Guṇa can neither be ‘empirically perceived’ nor be ‘empirically instantiated’. This precludes their being either empirical essences or ‘pure essences’ of the ‘empirically instantiated’ variety. Their kind has to be described as ‘empirically uninstantiated’ essences and identified with ‘*adr̥ṣtasvalakṣaṇa*’ kind of ‘*sāmānya viśaya*’ in sāṅkhya. *Guṇa* do not act alone, but act only along with each other and in pairs (*mithunavṛttayah ca guṇāḥ* | kārikā 12). Clearly, therefore, each of them is ‘unthinkable without’ others, and hence, they are ‘reciprocally non-selfsufficient’ essences. Thus, we can say that the three *guṇa* qualify as ‘elementary nature’.

Criticism of ‘Sense-Data’

Husserl analyses intentional mental processes into their ‘primary content’ and ‘their moments which bear in themselves the specific trait of intentionality’ (*Ideas* p172,13; §85,2). We can see ‘substrate’ and ‘form’, respectively, therein. Substrate is referred to also as ‘stuff’ or ‘hyle’. In order to serve as ‘elementary nature’, ‘stuff’ and ‘form’ have to be non-selfsufficiencies, that is, ‘stuff’, ‘formless’ and ‘form’, ‘stuffless’, also as insisted by Husserl (*Ideas* p173,4; §85,6,13). ‘Stuff’, particularly, has to be ‘reciprocal’ kind of non-selfsufficiency. Now Husserl makes a move. He projects ‘sensuous stuff’ or ‘hyletic data’, as ‘stuff’ or ‘hyle’ (*Ideas* p173,39; §85,7,44). Husserl says, ‘[t]o the “primary content” of mental processes belong certain “sensuous” mental processes, which are unitary with respect to their highest genus “sensation contents” such as colour-data, touch-data, tone-data and the like.’ (*Ideas* p172,5; §85,4,1). These data are also commonly called as ‘sense-

¹⁹ सत्त्वं लघु प्रकाशकमपिष्टमुपप्टम्भकं चलञ्च रजः। गुरु वरणकमेव तमः प्रदीपवच्चार्थतो वृत्तः॥ Sattvam laghu prakāśakam iṣṭam upaṣṭambhakam calam ca rajah. Guru varaṇakam eva tamaḥ pradīpavat ca arthataḥ vṛttiḥ. (kārikā 13).

²⁰ अन्योन्याभिवाशरयजननमथिनवृत्तयश्च गुणाः । Anyonya-abhibhava-āśraya-janana-mithuna-vṛttayah ca guṇāḥ. (kārikā 12)

²¹ सात्विकिः एकादशकः प्रवर्तते वैकृतादहंकारात्। भूतादेस्तन्मात्रः स तामससत्तैजसादुभयम्। Sātvika ekādaśakaḥ pravartate vaikṛtāt ahaṅkārat. Bhūtādeḥ tanmātraḥ saḥ tāmasaḥ tajasāt ubhayam. (kārikā 25)

²² सत्त्वरजस्तमसां साम्यावस्था प्रकृतिः । Sattva-rajas-tamasām sāmāya-avasthā prakṛtiḥ. (sāṅkhya sūtra 1.61).

data'. Thus, according to him, each sense-datum is 'unitary'. What is 'unitary' has to be an individual or its essence. We can say that a sense-datum is an instance of the genus 'sensation contents'. Now the genus 'sensation contents' become an instantiated pure essence, that is, 'unilateral' non-selfsufficiency and the instance, a 'selfsufficient' concretum. Neither 'sensation contents' as a genus nor 'sense-datum' as its instance is 'reciprocally non-selfsufficient', and hence, neither qualifies as any 'elementary nature'.

We note that in the use itself of the term 'sense-data', one acknowledges that 'sense-datum', its singular, is an individual, which as per Husserl is 'a this-here, the material essence of which is a concretum' (*Ideas*, P29,25; §15,3). In the 'primary component', Husserl himself also says, 'we find such *concrete* immanent data as components' (*Ideas* p172,13; §85,4,9). Now if sense-data were to be concreta, they cannot be 'formless' and hence cannot be 'ultimate substrate'. Thus, it seems that we do not have, from Husserl, satisfactory application of the concept of 'formless stuff' and of 'elementary nature' in 'sense-data'.

Now as Husserl says, sensuousness (and hence sense-data) has to be 'conveyed by the "senses"' (*Ideas* p173,20; §85,7,17). In that case, we have to consider corporeal senses (and then the corporeal body, etc.) as the cause of the sensuous. 'Sense-data' thus gets into circularity as to what causes what, and the issue of ultimacy remains undecided.

Criterion of 'Comprehensiveness'

Comprehensiveness

Aristotle considers 'causes, their character and number' (*Physics*, 194b16–194b23). He enumerates four senses of cause: (1) 'Material cause'—that out of which a thing comes to be and which persists and its genera (*Physics*, 194b27–194b29). (2) 'Formal cause'—the 'form' or the archetype, i.e. the statement of the essence, and its genera (*Physics*, 194b27–194b29). (3) 'Efficient cause'—the primary source of the change or coming to rest (*Physics*, 194b30–194b32). (4) 'Teleological cause'—the end or 'that for the sake of which' a thing is done (*Physics*, 194b33–195a2). Aristotle also proposes two kinds of natures, the 'material' and the 'formal'.

Aristotle says, 'what is actually, is produced from, what is potentially' (*physics* 217a11–217a26). This rule just like the principle of *satkāryavāda* requires the 'nature' of a thing and hence also the set of its 'elementary natures', to comprise the being of the thing along with all its attributes, if potentially. Applicability of this rule (and also *satkāryavāda*) has to be limited only to the things that exist by nature. We may call this requirement as the criterion of 'comprehensiveness'. 'Matter' and 'form' are the two 'elementary natures' of things according to Aristotle. He does demonstrate immanence of all the four causes to these two 'elementary natures', which may be taken also as the demonstration of satisfying the criterion of comprehensiveness.

The objects, phenomenology and sāṅkhya have to explain, exist by nature. Therefore, the criterion of comprehensiveness must require each of them to demonstrate immanence of all their Aristotelian causes in their respective set of 'elementary natures'. Moreover, the objects to be explained, being mental, inhere, in addition to the Aristotelian causes, consciousness as well as moods of pleasure, pain and apathy. The criterion of comprehensiveness, therefore, must require phenomenology as well as sāṅkhya to be able to trace not only the Aristotelian causes of their objects but also

moods and consciousness to the ‘elementary nature’ as per their respective theories. We will now examine their performance on the criterion of comprehensiveness.

Material Cause

Husserl’s ‘stuff’ is to be taken as the material kind of nature of mental processes. The same, for phenomenology, accounts for the ‘material cause’ of mental processes.

The three *guṇa* are the elementary natures as per sāṅkhya. All the three, as per sāṅkhya, are themselves holders of properties and hence are ‘*dravya*’, which seems to translate to ‘matter’. This is illustrated by the simile between golden ornaments being gold and the world being ‘*sukhaduḥkhamohātmaka*’, that is, being ‘pleasure’, ‘pain’ and ‘apathy’, by nature, as said earlier. Sāṅkhya, therefore, needs no separate essence to account for ‘material cause’.

Formal Cause

Husserl’s ‘form’ is to be taken as the ‘formal kind of nature’ of mental processes. The same accounts for their ‘formal cause’.

As for sā khya, *cittavṛtti* is ‘*vṛtti*’ of ‘*citta*’. *Citta*, by nature, comprises but the three *guṇa*. ‘*Vṛtti*’ may be identified with ‘form’ of a particular state or configuration of the three *guṇa*.

Efficient Cause

Husserl clubs what he calls ‘drive’ (*Ideas* p172,13; §85,4,9) with ‘stuff’. If we relate efficient cause in phenomenology with ‘drive’, we would be clubbing it with ‘stuff’. But if we relate it to the functions like animating, sense-bestowing synthesizing, etc., we would be ascribing it to ‘noesis’ and hence to ‘form’. Therefore, it is not clear whether it is in ‘stuff’ or in ‘form’ as natures that Husserl is inclined to locate the efficient cause.

Sā khya describes ‘*rajas*’ as what propels other *guṇa*. ‘*Tamas*’ controls them, in the sense that it tends to fade out the ‘illumination’ caused by ‘*sattva*’ and, like friction or viscosity, brings to rest the ‘motion’ caused by ‘*rajas*’. I, therefore, suggest that we may account for what Aristotle calls ‘principle of motion’ in ‘*rajas*’ and the ‘principle of stationariness’ in ‘*tamas*’.

Teleological Cause

We can say that it is only consciousness which is ‘that for the sake of which’ mental processes or *cittavṛtti* have their being. Both ‘form’ as well as ‘matter’, we can say, have to be appropriate for fulfilling this teleological cause just as, to quote Aristotle, our teeth come up such that ‘the front teeth sharp, fitted for tearing, the molars broad and useful for grinding down the food’ (*Physics*, 198b17–198b33).

It is intentionality, as per phenomenology, that affords consciousness. Husserl says, ‘Sensuous data present themselves as stuffs for intenitive formings or sense-bestowing...’ (*Ideas* p172; §85,6,7). He says ‘we find these sensuous moments overlaid

by a stratum which...“animates”, which “bestows sense”, etc. (*Ideas* p172,15; §85,4,11). Husserl introduces the term ‘noetic moment’ or ‘noesis’ (*Ideas* p171,11; §85,8,9) to mean the overlaying stratum, that is, ‘what forms stuff into intentive mental processes’. This indicates that phenomenology successfully traces consciousness as ‘intentionality’ to ‘form as nature’.

Consciousness is the teleological cause of *cittavṛtti*. *Citta* carries consciousness, which it does, thanks to a *vṛtti* it takes on. *Vṛtti*, as noted earlier, is the ‘form’ into which the three *guṇa*, the ‘elementary nature’ as per sāṅkhya, combine. *Citta* is thus appropriately said to be *buddhi*.²³ To illustrate, let us take the case of consciousness in *pramāṇa vṛtti*, which is the determination occurring in the *vṛtti*. This *vṛtti* is described as upsurge²⁴ of *sattva* simultaneous with subdual of *tamas* (both powered by *rajas*), etc. It is a description of but the ‘form’ into which the three *guṇa* combine. They, however, do so thanks only to their properties. The teleological cause of consciousness in *cittavṛtti* can thus be seen to be traceable to properties of three *guṇa*.

Moods

As for sāṅkhya, *sattva*, ‘*rajas*’ and ‘*tamas*’ themselves by nature, as said earlier, are moods, respectively, of pleasure, pain and apathy.

As for phenomenology, Husserl clubs ‘pleasures and pains’ with ‘stuff’ (*Ideas*, p172,11; §85,4,7). But on the other hand, he sees ‘mental processes of *liking or disliking*, ...’ as ones ‘which contain many... strata, noetic and, correspondingly, also the noematic ones’ [italics mine] (*Ideas*; p172,11; §95,1). Now ‘liking and disliking’ relate clearly to moods of ‘pleasure and pain’, and accounting for them in terms of noetic and noematic strata indicates that Husserl sees moods as something to be *imposed* by noesis. Therefore, Husserl can be taken to trace moods to some basic kind of nature, but to which precisely, that is, whether to ‘stuff’ or to ‘form’ is not clear.

Conclusion

The sense of the term ‘nature’ in the title is that of ‘*prakṛti*’ in sāṅkhya. In view of this, among other reasons, Aristotle’s concepts of ‘cause’ and ‘nature’ as ‘nature of things’ are identified with the sāṅkhya concept of ‘*kāraṇa*’ and ‘*prakṛti*’, respectively. Aristotle as well as Husserl are shown to be in agreement with the sāṅkhya principle of ‘*satkāryavāda*’. It is suggested that phenomenological reduction can be seen as an instance of ‘*laya*’ of the ‘caused’ into its ‘cause’. What Husserl calls ‘absolute mental processes’ has been identified with the unmanifest ‘*mūla prakṛti*’. ‘Pure consciousness’ has been identified with what sāṅkhya calls ‘*mahat*’ or ‘*buddhi*’ both as the immediate manifestation of the unmanifest and as the constitutive consciousness of the natural world.

‘Form’ and ‘stuff’ as the set of ‘elementary natures’ of phenomenology and the three ‘*guṇa*’ as that of sāṅkhya are examined on two criteria for qualifying as ‘elementary

²³ चित्तशब्देनान्तःकरणं बुद्धिमिपलक्षयति। Cittaśabdena antaḥkaraṇam buddhim upalakṣayati (*Tattvavaiśārādī* on *Yoga sūtra* 1)

²⁴ बुद्धेस्तमोऽभिधे सति यः सत्त्वमुदरेकः सोऽध्यवसाय इति वृत्तरिति ज्ञानमिति चाख्ययते। Buddhēḥ tamaḥ-abhibhave sati yaḥ sattvam-udrekaḥ saḥ adhyavasāyāḥ iti vṛtīḥ iti jñānam iti ca ākhyāyate (Kaumudī 30, kārikā 5)

natures'. One criterion relates to 'non-self-sufficiency' as prescribed by Husserl. It is particularly the 'reciprocal' kind of 'non-self-sufficiency' that is found to serve the purpose. Reciprocal non-self-sufficiency has been argued to be what sāṅkhya calls 'adr̥ṣṭasvalakṣaṇa' kind of 'sāmānya viṣaya'. 'Sense-data' which Husserl projects as 'material nature' is seen to fail on this criterion. The other criterion called the 'criterion of comprehensiveness' is as required by *satkāryavāda*. In regard to this criterion, Husserl is not found to be clear whether it is to 'form' or to 'stuff' that efficient cause and moods are to be traced. The three 'guṇa' of sāṅkhya, on the other hand, are shown to satisfy both, the criterion of 'reciprocal non-self-sufficiency' as well as that of 'comprehensiveness'.

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