

“Would rather be a jackal” :
Criticism of Vaiśeṣika’s concept of liberation*

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1. Introduction

varam vndāvane ramye śṛgālatvaṃ vrajāmy aham |
*na tu vaiśeṣikīṃ muktīṃ pārthayāmi kadācana ||*¹

I would rather wander as a jackal in pleasant Vṛndā forest.

But I never desire liberation of Vaiśeṣika.²

According to Vedāntaīrtha, the couplet, which has a jackal and a forest as its motif, briefly describes a discussion regarding the controversy between the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika concerning the concept of liberation. As the source of this verse was not identified by Vedāntaīrtha, Winternitz,³ or Dasgupta,⁴ but a similar verse appears in the literatures of Vedāntins, Jains and Buddhists. Although the verse has several versions and reads differently according to the context, these verses commonly include the description, “would rather be a jackal.”

This paper analyzes the content of the variety of these “jackal verses.” It also clarifies the point of their criticism and investigates the concept of liberation described in these jackal verses quoted by Vedāntins, Buddhists, and Jains.

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¹ Vedāntaīrtha 1905: 251.

² Translated by present author.

³ Winternitz found a similar verse in the *Sarvasiddhāntasaṃgraha*.

SSS, VI.41 (Naiyāyikapakṣa):

varam vṛndāvane ramye śṛgālatvaṃ vṛṇomy aham |
vaiśeṣikouktamokṣāt tu sukhaleśavivarjitāt |

“I would rather choose to be a jackal in pleasant Vṛndā forest than liberation with least pleasure as taught by the Vaiśeṣikas.”

See Winternitz 1920: 463.

⁴ Dasgupta did not identify the quotation by Vedāntaīrtha. According to Dasgupta, there is no evidence to support the opinion of the Vaiśeṣika. See Dasgupta 1922: 305.

2. Basic Structure of the “Jackal” Verse

The *śṛgāla* (also written as *sṛgāla*) or *kroṣṭṛ*, often translated as “jackal,” has been regarded as one of the unclean animals in the brahmanical tradition, which we can see from statements in the literature.

Manusmṛti V.164; IX.30:

vyabhicārāt tu bhartuḥ strī loke prāpnoti nindyatām |
sṛgālayoniṃ cāpnoti pāparogaiś ca pīḍyate ||

By being unfaithful to her husband, on the other hand, a woman becomes disgraced in the world, takes birth in a jackal’s womb, and is afflicted with evil diseases.⁵

Atharvavedapariśiṣṭa XLI.3.4:

saṃdhyākāle hy ajapantaḥ śvasūkarasṛgālakukkuṭasarpayoniṣu varśasahasrāṇi jāyante.

Those who do not pray in the evening are to be born in the womb of dogs, boars, jackals, hens, or serpents for thousands of years.

Some may recall the dialogue between the sage Kāśyapa and a jackal in the *Mahābhārata*. A Jackal, an incarnation of Indra, speaks to Kāśyapa who has lost control due to anger, about how wisdom is the foundation of being human. Through the mouth of the jackal, Indra expresses the following:

Mahābhārata XII.173.45-47:

aham āsaṃ paṇḍitako haituko vedanindakāḥ |
ānvīkṣikīm tarkavidyām anurakto nirarthikām ||
hetuvādān pravādītā vaktā samsatsu hetumat |
ākroṣṭā cābhivaktā ca brahmayajneṣu vai dvijān ||
nāstikāḥ sarvaśaṅkī ca mūrkhāḥ paṇḍitamānikaḥ |
tasyeyaṃ phalanirvṛtṭiḥ sṛgālatvaṃ mama dvija ||

I used to be a learned skeptic who scorned the Vedas; I was devoted to logic and the science of debate, both of which are pointless. I formulated arguments based on reason and proffered rational statements in assemblies, abusing and denouncing brahmins over their sacrifices. The heretic doubts everything—he is a fool who fancies himself learned. As a result of his karma, brahmin, he will become a jackal just like me.⁶

⁵ Olivelle 2005: 147; 191.

⁶ Wayne 2009: 82-83. In MBh XII.173.46d, Wayne reads *brahmayajneṣu* instead of *brahmayajneṣu* in MBh^{CE}. Here we adopt the reading of MBh^{CE} and modify the translation accordingly.

Also in the Buddhist Pāli literature, there are many instances where the animal called *sigāla* (skt. *śṛgāla*) scavenges corpses in the charnel field.⁷ The idea of being reborn as animals such as jackals is, therefore, the most disagreeable consequence for people of ancient India, and that is why these animals are employed as a symbol that could deter people from immoral conduct. Thus, the description “to be a jackal” simply means one of the worst outcomes for human beings.

Another common element of these verses is the phrase “would rather.” The term *varam* or *api* in the verse enhances the impact of this statement when combined with the phrase “be a jackal.” The idea of being a jackal is already very disagreeable. Still, the other alternative must be equally bad or an even worse consequence than being a jackal. This rhetoric emphasizes the point that it is impossible even to imagine that one may prefer the other option. Now then, what is the other alternative, which is worse than the most disagreeable, which one cannot accept at any rate?

3. Concept of Liberation according to the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika

3.1 A jackal verse in Jaina literature

Another jackal verse quoted by Vedāntatīrtha⁸ is found in the *Tarkarahasyadīpikā*, a commentary of Guṇaratna (15c.) on the *Ṣaḍdarśanasamuccaya*.

Tarkarahasyadīpikā: p. 249:⁹

varam vṛndāvane vāsaḥ śṛgālais ca sahoṣitam |
na tu vaiśeṣikīm muktīm gautamo gantum icchati ||

A follower of Gotama (i.e., a Naiyāyika) would not like to attain such liberation as is taught by the Vaiśeṣikas.

He would prefer living in Vṛndā forest [though this might entail] living in company with [such creatures as] the jackals.

The topic of discussion is whether *siddhas*, who have attained liberation in the present context, become identical with pleasure or not. Guṇaratna introduces three opinions with regards to this point. One of them, the Vaiśeṣika, insists as follows:

TRD, P. 246:

⁷ Deleanu 2000: 112-116.

⁸ His 1914 article, titled “The Nature of Mokṣa in the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika Systems,” he signed Vanamāli Chakravartti, but he is identical with Vedāntatīrtha, as we know from his introductory statement: “In an article headed ‘Optimism in ancient *nyāya*,’ which I contributed to the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, December 1905, ...” See Vedāntatīrtha (Chakravartti) 1914: 93.

⁹ Cf. Vedāntatīrtha 1914: 94.

atra siddhānām sukhamayatve trayo vipratipadyante. tathā hi — ātmano muktau buddhyādyaiśeṣaḡocchedāt katham sukhamayatvam iti vaiśeṣikāḥ.

With regards to the point that *siddhas* (=the liberated) have pleasure, opinion is divided into three. For example, followers of the Vaiśeṣika say: how, then, is it possible that *siddhas* consist of pleasure, because in the state of liberation, there is destruction of all the properties of the Self such as *buddhi* etc?

If we suppose that liberation is destruction of everything and therefore one does not have the faculties of cognition, then a liberated person cannot experience anything, even happiness. Guṇaratna refutes this idea, quoting the jackal verse. In this jackal verse, he refers to *vaiśeṣikī(m) mukti*, which is characterized as the destruction of all the properties of the Self. This notion is what Naiyāyikas would not like to attain. Judging from the context, the Jaina author, Guṇaratna, knew the difference between the Vaiśeṣika and the Nyāya and clearly distinguishes these two positions in the discussion concerning liberation.

3.2 A jackal verse in Nyāya literature

Another similar verse is quoted in Udayana's (10c.) *Nyāyavārtikatātparyāṭikāparisuddhi* (hereafter NVTTP). This verse is quoted in the course of discussion between the Nyāya author and a proponent (*kecit*).

NVTTP, p. 28:

*iha kecid āhuḥ — duḥkhanivṛttiḥ puruṣārtha eva svarūpato na bhavati sopādhitvāt sukham duḥkhābhāve saty eva bhavatīti. sukhasāadhanāntaravad duḥkhābhāvo 'pi mṛgyate / na tu sa eva puruṣasya samīhita iti. tad uktam —
varam vṛndāvane 'raṇye kroṣṭṛtvam abhivāñchitum |
na tu vaiśeṣikīm muktīm gantum icchati ||¹⁰*

With regard to this, some people say, the cessation of pains is not all by itself the purpose of human beings, because it is restricted by conditions. [The condition is as follows:] Only when there is no pain, is their pleasure. The absence of pains is also sought like other means of pleasure. But this is not the only [means] that people seek.

It is stated as follows:

A follower of Gotama (i.e., a Naiyāyika) would rather be a jackal (kroṣṭṛ) in pleasant Vṛndā forest.

But he would not like to attain such liberation as is taught by the Vaiśeṣikas.

¹⁰ The same verse, though the source of which is unknown, is also quoted by Malliṣeṇa (13-14c) in the *Syādvādamañjarī*. See SVM, p. 46.

According to the discussion of the proponent (*kecit*),¹¹ the followers of Nyāya assume that the cessation of pains (*duḥkhanivṛtti*) is not the purpose itself, but one of the means to the attainment of pleasure, in other words, liberation, or we had better call it *apavarga* or *niḥśreyasa*, based on their terminology.¹² This idea might have been generally accepted as that of the Nyāya, since the *Nyāyasūtra*, for example, explains liberation in a similar way.¹³ In the opinion of the proponent, the cessation of pains cannot be regarded as the only way to liberation. In contrast, the followers of Vaiśeṣika believe that the means is an end in itself. The author may have known the difference between the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika regarding the concept of liberation. In this case, too, the difference is expressed in the form of a jackal verse.

3.3 A jackal verse in Buddhist literature

Another similar discussion occurs in the *Tattvaratnāvalī* (hereafter TRV) of a Buddhist, Advayavajra (11–12c.).

TRV, p. 3:

tad āhuḥ nāgārjunapādāḥ —
ajñānaṃ hi prajñānaṃ nidrādṛṣṭāntasādhitam |
indriyoparataṃ yadvaj jñānaṃ vaiśeṣikaṃ matam ||
bhagavataḥ pravacanam api —
varam jetavane ramye śṛgālatvaṃ vrajāmy aham |
na tu vaiśeṣikaṃ mokṣaṃ gotamāgantum¹⁴ arhati ||

Therefore, the revered teacher Nāgārjuna said:

It is established by the illustration of deep sleep that wisdom is without cognition, which means the knowledge when the sense faculties cease, so thinks the Vaiśeṣika.

There is also a word of the venerable [Buddha]:

I would rather be a jackal in pleasant Jeta forest.

Oh Gotama! But it is not worthy of having recourse to liberation taught by the Vaiśeṣikas.

Advayavajra quotes a slightly different version of the jackal verse as a voice of the Buddha. This is why he quoted Jeta forest instead of Vṛndā forest. Although there is no textual evidence of these two statements of Nāgārjuna and Buddha, Advayavajra gives a

¹¹ According to the footnote in the edition of NVTTP, this proponent is Bhāṭṭamīmāṃsaka. Cf. NVTTP, p. 28, fn.

¹² For further details of Nyāya’s two kinds of liberation expressed by the words *apavarga* and *niḥśreyasa*, see Slaje 1986.

¹³ NS I.1.22: *tadatyantavimokṣo ’pavargaḥ*.

¹⁴ Ui corrected the reading *gotamāgantum* to *gotvam āgantum*, which is a bit difficult if we compare this passage with other jackal verses. Here we cancel Ui’s emendation and read according to Shastri. See *Advayavajrasaṃgraha*, p. 16.

short commentary on Vaiśeṣika's concept of liberation. The Vaiśeṣika thinks that liberation, which is here described by terms such as “wisdom” (*prajñāna*) and “knowledge” (*jñāna*) is attained when all the sense faculties cease to function, like in a state of deep sleep, which is expressed by the term *ajñāna*. Since the Jaina author Guṇaratna and the Buddhist Advayavajra had parallel evaluations of Vaiśeṣika's liberation, we assume that the idea has been widely accepted as that of the Vaiśeṣika.

4. A Jackal Verse in Vedānta Literature

4.1 Padmapāda's quotation

A common characteristic of the three above-listed jackal verses is that they directly refer to the Vaiśeṣika. They have phrases such as *vaiśeṣikīm muktīm* (TRD, NVTTP) and *vaiśeṣikaṃ mokṣaṃ* (TRV) and briefly discuss Vaiśeṣika's concept of liberation. Here we have another type of jackal verse, in which there is no direct mention of the Vaiśeṣika.

One of the oldest sources of such jackal verses appears in Padmapāda's *Pañcapādikā* (8c.,¹⁵ hereafter PP), a sub-commentary to Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.

PP, pp. 221–2:

api vṛndāvane śūnye śṛgālatvaṃ sa icchati |
*na tu nirviṣayaṃ mokṣaṃ kadācid api gautama ||*¹⁶

O Gautama! One would rather be a jackal in deserted Vṛndā forest.

But he never longs for liberation that is the negation of the object of enjoyment.

This verse is introduced by Padmapāda, who argues against the opponent who states that the supreme satisfaction would be produced by the knowledge of *brahman* and that those with such knowledge do not have desires at all. Here, Padmapāda quotes the verse sung by hedonists (*rāgin*) who desire continuous enjoyment, non-satiation, and non-destruction of the object of enjoyment.¹⁷ The intention of the author is to show that there is a repulsion (=rise in dissatisfaction) from that very satisfaction, which is a general tendency in the human nature.

Although the verse looks quite similar to the one quoted by Vedāntatīrtha in his

¹⁵ A relative chronology based on the hypothetical date of Śaṅkara (AD 700–750). See Nakamura 1950: 119.

¹⁶ Another edition of PP reports a different version of this verse.

varam vṛndāvane 'raṇye śṛgālatvaṃ vṛjāmy aham |
na tu vaiśeṣikīm muktīm kadācid api gotama || PP(V), p. 53, fn.

This fact tells us that the verse was so popular that it could have been replaced by another version during oral transfer or textual transmission.

¹⁷ *aho kaṣṭhaṃ kim iti sṛṣṭir evaṃ na bahūva yat sarvadaiva bhoktuṃ sāmāthyam atṛptir bhogvānāṃ cākṣaya iti.* (PP, p. 221.) Oh, how bad the creation would be, if it would not be in a way that one can always have enjoyments, never be satisfied with, and the objects of enjoyment never decay.

article, the content of the argument is very different. The verse quoted in the PP records the discussion regarding the purpose of the knowledge of *brahman* and has nothing to do with the criticism of Vaiśeṣika’s concept of liberation.

4.2 A verse from *kecit* in the BSBhbh

In the *Śārīrakamīmāṃsābhāṣya* (hereafter BSBhbh), one of the commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra*, the author Bhāskara (9c.) borrows a phrase, *śṛgālatvaṃ vane varam* from *kecit*.

BSBhbh, p. 32:

niḥsambodho nirāsvādas tvatpakṣe mokṣaḥ syāc caitanyamātrāvaśeṣatvāt. vadanti kecid — “śṛgālatvaṃ vane varam”

In your position, the liberation would be without consciousness and tasteless, because there remains only the universal soul (*caitanya=brahman*).

[With regard to this,] Some people say, “would rather be a jackal in a forest.”

Here, the author records a discussion in which the proponent insists that the cognition of the empirical world (*bhedajñāna*) is just illusory and there remains only the universal soul. This argument, according to Bhāskara, would bring some difficulties. An unpleasant consequence, for example the interruption of the tradition, would follow. If our empirical world were just an illusion, how could we sustain our tradition?¹⁸ Another problem concerns the concept of liberation. If everything other than the universal soul (*brahman*) disappears like an illusion in the state of liberation, it would follow that the released person has nothing, not even the delight of being liberated.

The point of the criticism is whether there exists any consciousness in the state of liberation. According to Bhāskara, the view that liberation is without consciousness is ascribed to Auḍulomi, one of the oldest Vedāntins, whose works have been lost but whose name has been passed down in the *Brahmasūtra*.¹⁹

BSBhbh ad IV.4.6:²⁰

suṣuptavan niḥsambodho mokṣa ity auḍulomer abhiprāyaḥ sāṅkhyavaiśeṣikādīnām iva.

Like in the state of deep sleep, liberation is without consciousness (*niḥsambodha*).

This is the intention of Auḍulomi, as it is of the Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, and so on.

¹⁸ BSBhbh, p. 33: *yadi ca bhedajñānaṃ sarvātmanā nīvarata sampradāyavicchedaḥ syāt. asiddheś cāyaṃ hetur virodhād iti. manuvyāsayaññavalkyādīnām upadeśakartṛtvopalabdheḥ. śabdādi-bhedapratibhāse hi sampradāyopapattiḥ.*

¹⁹ Nakamura 1950: 21–4.

²⁰ BSBhbh(Dv), p. 243. Cf. Kato 2014: 292.

According to the author, this view is common to the Sāṅkhya and the Vaiśeṣika. Judging from the context, however, the proponent of the discussion here is presumed to be a Vedāntin who assumes that the cognition of the empirical world (*bhedajñāna*) is a synonym of the nescience (*avidyā*).²¹ This proponent might be Śaṅkara,²² since Bhāskara is well known as a critic of Śaṅkara²³ and indeed criticized Śaṅkara's concept of nescience.²⁴ It would require further investigation to discover to whom this idea belongs, but it is an interesting fact that an old Vedāntin Auḍulomi shared his concept of liberation with the Vaiśeṣika, which is characterized by Bhāskara as follows:

BSBhbh ad IV.4.7:²⁵

*atra vaiśeṣikāḥ prāhuḥ — sasambodho mokṣo nopapadyate sarvajñatvādiguṇayuktaḥ.*²⁶
duḥkhanivṛttimātraṃ mokṣaḥ. ānandādisabdās ca duḥkhanivṛttimātrālabinaḥ.
 [...] *śarīrendriyamanasāṃ nivṛttau vijñānotpattihetvabhāvān mukto niḥsañjñāḥ*
pāṣāṇakalpo 'vatiṣṭhate.

Here the Vaiśeṣikas say: liberation with consciousness, which is accompanied by qualities such as being omniscient, is not possible. Liberation is just the cessation of suffering. The words “happiness, etc.,” merely mean a cessation of suffering. [...] Since there exists nothing to cause knowledge to arise when the body, the faculty of sense and the mind cease to exist, there remains the liberated soul which has no consciousness and lies like a stone.

5. Concluding Remark

We have picked up examples of jackal verses widely spread across the philosophical literature. As seen above, these verses are usually quoted in the course of a discussion about the concept of liberation, and in most cases, they are employed in order to mock Vaiśeṣika's idea of liberation.

Although the verses quoted by two Vedāntins do not directly mention the concept of liberation of the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika, they introduce ideas quite similar to that of the Vaiśeṣika. In the first instance, Padmapāda defined liberation as *nirviṣaya(m) mokṣa*.

²¹ BSBhbh, p.32: *bhedajñānam avidyā bhavato 'bhipretā*.

²² Ingalls identifies this description as “Śaṅkara's concept of final release.” (Ingalls 1952: 8.)

²³ Cf. Kato 2008: 63–4.

²⁴ Cf. Kato 2012: 64–6.

²⁵ BSBhbh(Dv), p. 243. Cf. Kato 2014: 292.

²⁶ In Kato 2014, I interpreted the passage as “*sasambodho mokṣo nopapadyate. sarvajñatvādiguṇayukto duḥkhanivṛttimātraṃ mokṣaḥ* (Liberation with consciousness is not possible. Liberation, which is accompanied by qualities such as being omniscient, is simply the cessation of suffering),” which doesn't fit the context. Here I change the punctuation like “*sasambodho mokṣo nopapadyate sarvajñatvādiguṇayuktaḥ. duḥkhanivṛttimātraṃ mokṣaḥ*,” and change my translation accordingly.

He explains that the objects of enjoyment cease to exist at the stage of liberation, which is considered to be worse than being a jackal by a hedonist. The definition *nirviṣaya(m) mokṣa* appears also in another jackal verse quoted in the *Nyāyabhūṣaṇa* (hereafter Nbhū) of Bhāsarvajña (10c.).

Nbhū, p. 594.

*varam vṛndāvane rāmye śṛgālatvaṃ vṛṇomy aham |
na tu nirviṣayaṃ mokṣaṃ gautamo gantum icchati ||*

I would rather choose to be a jackal in pleasant Vṛndā forest.

But a follower of Gotama (*i.e.*, a Naiyāyika) never longs for liberation that is the negation of the object of enjoyment.

The verse summarizes the discussion between the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika, and the definition *nirviṣaya(m) mokṣa* might be ascribed to the Vaiśeṣika. A follower of the Nyāya does not accept the idea of the Vaiśeṣika, since the Naiyāyika thinks that liberation is complete cessation of all kinds of pain.²⁷

In the second instance, Bhāskara refers to the idea of tasteless liberation in the state of which one has no enjoyment. This concept of liberation is shared by the Vaiśeṣika. Although the target of criticism is different, Padmapāda, Bhāskara, and Bhāsarvajña share the point of criticism. They all do not accept the concept of liberation described by the terms *nirviṣaya*, *niḥsaṃbodha*, or *nirāsvāda*.

In this paper, I have collected instances of jackal verses and related passages and investigated the argument of the Nyāya against the Vaiśeṣika regarding the concept of liberation. These arguments, however, as Dasgupta has already pointed out,²⁸ have not yet been attested by textual evidence in their own literatures. In this regard, further study is required.

²⁷ Nbhū, p. 594.

²⁸ Dasgupta 1922: 305.

Texts and Abbreviations

Advayavajrasaṃgraha

Ed. with an Introduction by Haraprasad Shastri. Oriental Institute. Baroda, 1927.

BSBhbh

Śārīrakamīmāṃsābhāṣya (see Kato 2011).

BSBhbh(Dv)

Brahmasūtra with a Commentary by Bhāskarācārya. Ed. by V. P. Dvivedin. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series 20. Varanasi, ¹1915 (²1991).

MBh^{CE}

Mahābhārata. Ed. by V. Sukthankar et. al, 19 vols. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Poona, 1927-59.

Nbhū

Nyāyabhūṣaṇa. Ed. by Yogīndrānanda, Varanasi, 1968.

NVTTP

Nyāyavārttikatātparyāṅkāparīśuddhi. Ed. by Anantalal Thakur. Indian Council of Philosophical Research. New Delhi, 1996.

PP

Pañcapādikā. Ed. by S. Śrīrāma Śāstri and S. R. Krishnamurthi Śāstri. Government Oriental Manuscripts Library. Madras, 1958.

PP(V)

Pañcapādikā. Ed. by R.S.Bhagavatacharya. Vizianagram Sanskrit Series 3. 1891.

SSS

Sarvasiddhāntasaṃgraha. Critically Edited, Translated, and Annotated by Prem Sundar Bose. Calcutta, 1929.

SVM

Syādvādamañjarī of Malliṣeṇa with the *Anyagogyavaccheda-dvātriṃśikā* of Hemacandra. Ed. By A. B. Dhruva. Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series 83. Bombay, 1933.

TRD

Ṣaḍdarśanasamuccaya with the Commentary *Tarkarahasyādīpikā* of Guṇaratna Sūri. Ed. by Mahendra Kumār Jain. Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha Publication. Varanasi, 1969.

TRV

Tattvaratnāvalī, See Ui 1963.

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Id., *The First Two Chapters of Bhāskara’s Śārīrakamīmāṃsābhāṣya*, Dissertation vorgelegt der Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg.

Kato 2012

Id., “Bhāskara’s concept of *bhedābheda* and His Critique of *avidyā* (in Japanese).” *Studies in Indian Philosophy and Buddhism* 19, pp. 61–72.

Kato 2014

Id., “Bhāskara Mentioned in the *Prameyakalamārtaṇḍa*.” *Indian and Buddhist Studies in Honor of President Dr. Shouou (Kiyoaki) Okuda In Recognition of His Lifelong Scholarship*, pp. 286–298.

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「ジャッカルになった方がまし」

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本論文は、様々な哲学文献に広く引用される「ジャッカル」をモチーフとした詩句の例を取り上げ、解脱の概念に関する議論を調査した。

これらの詩句は解脱観についての議論の中でしばしば引用され、ほとんどの場合、ヴァイシェーシカ派の解脱を「ならばむしろジャッカルになった方がまし」といって揶揄する文脈で言及される。

本詩句を引用するジャイナ教文献『タルカラハスヤ・ディーピカー』では、苦しみが無いとは言え、無感覚で喜びもない状態であるとするヴァイシェーシカ派の解脱観とそれを望まないとするニヤーヤ派とを対比的に紹介する。仏教文献『タットヴァ・ラトナーヴァリー』では、この詩句をナーガールジュナが紹介する尊者(ブッダ)の言葉として紹介するが、批判の対象は同じくヴァイシェーシカ派の解脱観である。

ヴェーダーンタ派のパドマパーダやバースカラによって引用される詩句では、ニヤーヤ派やヴァイシェーシカ派に直接言及はしないものの、やはりヴァイシェーシカ派の無味な解脱をニヤーヤ派が嘲るという形式を保っている。

これらの詩句の引用者たちに共通する批判のポイントは、享受の対象をもたず無感覚で無味な解脱観を受け入れないという点にある。バースカラによれば、このような解脱観はサーンキヤ派やヴァイシェーシカ派に共通しており、ヴェーダーンタ派においてシャンカラに先行する註釈者として知られるアウドローミも同じ解脱観を共有しているという。

本論では、「ジャッカルになった方がまし」という一節を含む詩句の例をいくつか集め、その内容を整理した。ここで批判的となっているヴァイシェーシカの解脱観のソースやその詳細についてはなお精査が俟たれるが、これについては今後の課題としたい。