

## CHAPTER III

### Prakṛti and its Evolution

For the Sāṃkhya dualist Prakṛti or Pradhāna is the ultimate material cause of the world<sup>1</sup>. As a matter of fact, this world is the modification of this primordial substance. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers the world does not come into existence either from inanimate atoms or from a conscious substance. Atoms cannot be the material cause of *manas*, since it is unconscious and admits of modifications. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers, the primary cause of the world is a material principle which is more subtle than the atoms. This material principle is Prakṛti, otherwise described as the unmanifested. Sāṃkhya believes that Prakṛti is eternal which manifests itself in the form of the world. Since the world remains unmanifested in Prakṛti it is called *Avyakta*, or non-manifest. Prakṛti is described as the primordial cause which means that there is nothing in which it remains unmanifested.<sup>2</sup>

In the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* one does not find a very explicit definition of Prakṛti. It has been said there that the unmanifested cause is ever inclined to manifest itself in effects and hence by nature Prakṛti is prone to transformation.

*"Kāraṇamasti avyaktam; Pravartatetriguṇataḥ Samudiyācca"*<sup>3</sup>

Hence according to *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* Prakṛti may be described as '*Triguṇātmaka*' i.e. of the nature of the three *guṇa*-s taken

together. Vācaspati Mīśra in his commentary *Tattvakaumudī* has described Prakṛti in the following verse: "*Prakāroti iti Prakṛtiḥ Pradhānam (Tattvakaumudī on Sāṃkhya Kārikā) Sattvarajostamsām Sāmyāvasthā.*" On the basis of this verse it may be said that the state of equilibrium of the three *guṇa*-s - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* is Prakṛti. The term "Equilibrium" (*Sāmyāvasthā*) means the state in which the three *guṇa*-s are of the same plane, i.e. no *guṇa* either predominates or is subdued. When the three *guṇa*-s do not remain of the same plane i.e. when one of them predominates and other subdued there is *Vikṛti* which infact signals the beginning of creation. The things which enter into a state of *Vikṛti* must have a state which may be described as a state of *avikṛti* *vikṛti* or a state of equilibrium. The point is that any change in the normal condition of the thing is called *vikṛti*. Nothing can have a state of *vikṛti* which does not have a normal state or a state of *avikṛti*. This is why Prakṛti has been described as '*Avikṛti*' in *Sāṃkhya kārikā* – '*Mūla Prakṛtir Avikṛtiḥ (Sāṃkhya Kārikā - 3)*

But the question is: Is the above definition satisfactory? It is held by the Sāṃkhya philosopher that all effects ranging from *mahat* to *pañcamahābhūta* or five elemental substances are the transformation of Prakṛti. Since Prakṛti is subject to transformation, it will no longer be in a state of equilibrium. If again it is not in a state of equilibrium, it cannot be called Prakṛti and it can not be described as eternal. But Prakṛti is taken to be eternal in Sāṃkhya philosophy. There can not be a state in which Prakṛti should loose its state of equilibrium and becomes virtually non-existent. Under

this circumstance, the definition of Prakṛti becomes inconsistent with what is upheld in Sāṃkhya philosophy. This situation is saved by saying that the word '*Sāmyāvasthā*' occurring in the definition of Prakṛti has been used as an adjective of the three *guṇa*-s. It would mean that the three *guṇa*-s which are qualified by being in a state of equilibrium is Prakṛti. Although the term appears to be an adjective or *viśeṣana* it is really an *upalakṣaṇa* i.e. semi-definition.<sup>4</sup>

If Prakṛti is taken as equilibrium of the three *guṇa*-s which is in the form of the situation of non-effect, it may be redefined in the following way: *Akāryam guṇatrayam Prakṛti*,<sup>5</sup> i.e., Prakṛti is nothing but the combination of three *guṇa*-s and an uncaused one, it is to be admitted that the three uncaused *guṇa*-s are the roots of the material world. This view has been endorsed by Vijñānabhikṣu also who has defined Prakṛti as follows: '*Akāryovasthopalakṣitam guṇasāmānyam Prakṛtiḥ (Sāṃkhya – pravacana-bhāṣya on Sāṃkhya-sūtra* 1/61). That is, quality in general is Prakṛti which is indicated by its uncaused nature. This has been taken as a secondary characteristic of Prakṛti.<sup>6</sup> He opines that the *guṇa*-s like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are actually Prakṛti – the equilibrium of them is its property alone. Vijñānabhikṣu has forwarded a general definition of Prakṛti also which is as follows: '*Tatra Prakṛtittvam sāksāt – paramparayākhilanikāropādatvam*' (*Sāṃkhyasāra*, 3<sup>rd</sup> pariccheda, earlier portion).

Prakṛti is the material cause of all transformed objects through direct and indirect relation. This definition is given in

accordance with the derivative meaning of the term Prakṛti. The primordial Prakṛti is the material cause of *Mahattattva* etc through direct relation. If it is said that Prakṛti alone is the material cause of *mahat* etc, it would lead to over coverage (*ativyāpti*) of the definition of Prakṛti. *Mahat* etc becomes material cause of *aharṅkāra* etc. through direct relationship. If it is admitted, it would lead to the acceptance of the plurality of Prakṛti, which goes against the Sāṃkhya presupposition. Because the Sāṃkhya has already admitted the singularity of Prakṛti as found in the *Kārikā* no.10. In this verse Prakṛti has been admitted as *Avyakta* and having opposite qualities of the *Vyakta*. As *Vyakta* is many in number, while Prakṛti is one. In order to accommodate such idea, the term '*paramparā*' has been inserted in the definition.<sup>7</sup>

Following the definition of Vijñānabhikṣu *Sāṃkhyatattvapradīpaḥ* defines Prakṛti as the material cause of the world '*Jagadupādānakāraṇam Prakṛtiḥ*' (*Sāṃkhyatattvapradīpaḥ, Sāṃkhyasamgraha*, p. 141)

It is the secondary characteristic of Prakṛti just as Vijñānabhikṣu's definition, which is nothing but an echo of Īśvarakṛṣṇa's definition, which runs as follows. *Avikṛti Sati Mūlaprakṛtitvaṃ Prakṛtitvaṃ*. That is, the primordial Prakṛti having no transformation is real Prakṛti. To Vācaspati the material cause of other *tattvas* is called Prakṛti. As *Mahat* etc. becomes the cause of other *tattvas* like *aharṅkāra* etc., each and every *tattva* can be designated as Prakṛti. The Prakṛti is the form of *Mahat* etc. is

primordial, which cannot be transformed. Hence it cannot be originated from other *tattvas*. It is said in the *Yuktidīpikā* that as *Mahat* etc are the roots of all Prakṛti, the *Prakṛtitattva* itself is in the form of non-transformed situation. For this reason the term '*Mūla Prakṛti*' has been inserted in the definition of Prakṛti.<sup>8</sup>

In connection with the definition of Prakṛti given by Īśvarakṛṣṇa, another question can be raised. The question pertains to the need for including the word 'Prakṛti' in the definition. The reason is that as we find in the entire Sāṃkhya and Yoga literature Prakṛti has not been considered as a *tattva* in addition to the three *guṇa*-s. It has been said by the author of Sāṃkhya that Prakṛti is of the nature of three *guṇa*-s and not anything distinct of that. Vijñānabhikṣu has intended to establish with arguments that Prakṛti is not a state of equilibrium of the three *guṇa*-s. That Prakṛti is not different or distinct from the *guṇa*-s is clearly stated by Gouḍapāda and Māṭhara, Gouḍapāda says –

*"Anye guṇāḥ anyat Pradhānam evaṃ vivekatvām na yāte"*  
(Gauḍabhāṣya, *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* - 11) and Māṭhara says '*Idm Pradhānam amī guṇā iti na sakyate Pṛthak Kartum.*'"

(Māṭharavṛtti on *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* - 11)

This non-difference between Prakṛti and there *guṇa*-s has been explained very clearly by Maxmuller. He says that *sattva*, *rajas*

and *tamas* are not certain accidental properties of Prakṛti; rather they are essentially the very nature of Prakṛti. Just as different rivers converge to form a single stream without completely losing their individual peculiarities, similarly the three *guṇa*-s assemble together and form Prakṛti without losing their individual properties. The different rivers after convergence retain their individual colour etc. In a similar way even after the three *guṇa*-s assemble together to compose Prakṛti their individual characters are not destroyed.<sup>9</sup>

The Sāṃkhya philosophers have endorsed only three *guṇa*-s namely *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The reason behind the admission of only three *guṇa*-s is that they can explain adequately the diversity of the world. Prakṛti transforms itself into different effects on account of its different arrangements. Besides every manifest object displays certain features which result in the feelings of pleasure, pain and stupefaction. It is cleared that *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are opposed to each other. Consequently they cannot reside in the same locus. For this reason a triplicity of loci has been admitted *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are the three loci in which the three feelings pleasure, pain etc. reside.

Īśvarakṛṣṇa in the twelfth *Kārikā* speaks about the necessity of the three *guṇa*-s *Prakāśa* as manifestation, *Pravṛtṭvi* or mobility and *Niyama* or veiling are said to be the three things which require the three *guṇa*-s. *sattva* is light (*laghu*) , manifesting (*prakāśaka*) *rajas* is mobile or restless (*cañcala*) and *tamas* is heavy (*guru*) and veiling agency (*Āvaraka*). Although the three *guṇa*-s are opposed to

each other, they come together when an effect is produced. Vācaspatimiśra tells us that fire, wick and oil are opposed to each other. If oil is poured on the flame of lamp fire will be extinguished. Fire destroys oil and wick but these things collectively are responsible work and manifest external objects. But fire, oil and wick are not opposed to each other as the three *guṇa*-s. Fire may be opposed to wick and oil, but wick and oil are not mutually opposed or destructive. It seems that the example is not quiet similar to what they are intended to exemplify. This is what Vācaspati has mentioned in another example. *Vāyu (wind)*, bile and phlegm are mutually opposed. Yet they work together for the maintenance of human organism. Similarly, the three *guṇa*-s may be opposed to each other. Yet they co-operate and collectively produce effect. Here we find that the example and the thing exemplified are not dissimilar.<sup>10</sup>

It has been said in the *Yuktidīpikā* that although fire and water are mutually opposed to each other. Yet they help looking through their cooperation. Similarly, the three *guṇa*-s are mutually opposite in character; yet they work in mutual co-operation.<sup>11</sup>

In the twelvth *Kārikā*, Īśvarakṛṣṇa says that the three *guṇa*-s *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are of the nature of pleasure, pain and stupefaction. Pleasure, pain and stupefaction are opposed to each other. The Sāṅkhya philosophers intend to prove that everything which composes the world is of the nature of pleasure, pain and dullness. For example the same lady who is a wife of a man is the

cause of the pleasure in the man who is her husband. She is the cause of pain in the second wife. The same lady evolves a feeling of dullness in a person who could not get her inspite of his desire. Thus, the same woman would be the cause of pleasure, pain and dullness. Since the effect exists in the cause of pain, the cause of pleasure, pain and dullness, must be in the woman as she produces such effects as pleasure, pain and dullness. The three *guṇa*-s corresponding to pleasure, etc are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* respectively. This example shows that every material entity is composed of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.<sup>12</sup> In the *Bhāmati*<sup>13</sup> it has been contended that things like sandal-paste produces different feelings in different seasons. It produces the feeling of pleasure in summer, but it produces the reverse of it in winter. If the explanation of Sāṃkhya philosopher is closely considered we find that such misgiving does not arise. What effect a thing produces depends on the auxiliary cause or *Sahakāri Kāraṇa*. This explains the production of different effect by the same object, the sandle-paste has the capability of producing all the three feelings, but a certain feeling is manifested depending upon the presence of a certain *Sahakāri Kāraṇa*. The thorn produces pleasure in a camel, but camel hood being absent in a man this feeling is not generated in him.

It has been said by Sāṃkhya philosopher that in all objects only one of the three *guṇa*-s predominates; and the other two *guṇa*-s are subordinated. They, being subordinated, become merged into the predominating one and produce the effect.



The three constituents simultaneously influence each other. In like manner, the constituents like earth, ether etc. simultaneously influence their actions like perseverance etc. while originating effect. At the stage of equilibrium the constituents remain in the forms of energy and hence their attributes like manifestation etc. remain indeterminate. On account of this they cannot influence the possessor of the attributes (*dharmi*).<sup>14</sup>

According to Sāṃkhya – Yoga, the three *guṇa*-s are eternal. It has been said in the *Yoga-bhyāṣya* 'Guṇāstu sarvadharmānupātino na Pratyastomayante nopajāyente' [*Yogabhāṣya, Yoga sūtra, 2/19*]. These causal agents or *guṇa*-s get transformed into effects. So, their essence or nature remains the same. Thus in Sāṃkhya *yoga* philosophy the constancy of the transformed is admitted. These *guṇa*-s are so subtle that in Sāṃkhya system they have been described as *Śakti* or power when in the state of equilibrium the three *guṇa*-s get separated, they remain as power. We find in *Yukti-dīpikā* that these *guṇa*-s in their original state cannot be perceived'; we can perceive only the effects of the *guṇa*-s.<sup>15</sup>

It has been said in Sāṃkhya philosophy that the three *guṇa*-s transform themselves into the world for the enjoyment and liberation of Puruṣa. Transformation or *Pariṇāma* is of two kinds – *Sadrśa Pariṇāma* or transformation into similar kind and *visadrśa pariṇāma* or transformation into dissimilar kind. Nothing actually is created when there is transformation into similar kind. But in such a

situation the state of equilibrium is not destroyed. In fact, creation takes place when there is destruction or disturbance of the state of equilibrium in which case the three *guṇa*-s or Prakṛti transforms itself into something dissimilar to it. As a result, Prakṛti is transformed into *mahat*, *mahat* to *Ahaṁkāra*, *Ahaṁkāra* to eleven sense organs and five *tanmātras*. In the opinion of the Sāṁkhya philosophers Prakṛti can not be perceived. But this non-perception is no proof of the non-existence of Prakṛti. As a matter of fact, it is held by the Sāṁkhya philosophers that the existence of Prakṛti is proved by inference:- "*Kāryataḥ tadupalabdheḥ*" which means that Prakṛti is inferred or proved by its effect. This kind of inference is called '*Kāryahetukānumāna*'. From *mahat* to the five *mahābhūtas* everything is of a nature of effect of which a cause is Prakṛti.

In the fifteenth *Kārikā*, Īśvarakṛṣṇa presents the following arguments for proving the existence of Prakṛti – "*Bhedānām parimāṇāt, Samanvayāt, śaktiḥ pravṛttesca Kāraṇa-bibhāgād avibhāgād vaiśvarūpasya.*" (*Kārikā* – 15)

If we analyse the above argument we find that the author has mentioned five *hetus* for the existence of Prakṛti - (i) *Bhedānām Parimāṇāt*; (ii) *Śaktiḥ Pravṛttveḥ*; (iii) *Samanvayāt*; (4) *Kāraṇakāryabibhāgāt*; (v) *Vaiśvarūpasya abibhāgāt*.

Commentator Vācaspati Mīśra has established the *hetus* in his own order. He first analyses the fourth and fifth *hetus*.

(i) *Kāraṇakāryabibhāgāt* - The effect comes to be separated from the cause. This means that the effect pre exists in the cause. That what is usually unknown as effectuation is simply the manifestation of what was already latent in the causal substance. The commentators illustrate the point by suggesting that the limbs of the tortoise remain concealed in the body; when they come out they appear to be different from the body of the animal. The gold ornaments similarly come to appear to be different from the lump of gold from which it is produced. Similarly, earth appears to be different from the *tanmātra* in which it was previously contained in an unmanifested form. If we proceed in this direction, we find that Prakṛti must be supposed to be the ultimate causal substance in which all manifested things are contained in an unmanifested form.

(2) Īśvarakṛṣṇa argues that all effects after destruction goes back to their causal substance, the earthen pot after destruction goes back to the lump of clay. Similarly, earth etc after dissolution enter into *tanmātras* which in relation to earth may be called unmanifested. In a similar way, the *tanmātras* dissolve into *ahamkāra* which gets unmanifested in *mahat*. *Mahat* remains in an unmanifested form in Prakṛti.

The suggestion is that the effect is both identical and different from the causal substance. The first two marks or *hetus* therefore necessarily prove the existence of Prakṛti as the unmanifest. The third argument for the existence of Prakṛti refers to

the capacity or potency (*Śakti*) which enables a causal substance to produce a definite effect. It is found that oil is extracted from the oil seed and never from grains of sand. This shows that there must be some causal connection between oilseed and oil. Oil seed must have the *śakti* or capacity or potency to produce oil which is absent in grains of sand. Oil is produced in the presence of this capacity; it is not produced in the absence of the same. This power or capacity which is located in the cause is the unmanifested condition of the effect. The Sāṃkhya philosophers therefore conclude that all categories of the reals must remain in this cause in the form of a capacity or potency. The ultimate locus of such capacity is Prakṛti.

The fourth argument is actually a reply to a possible objection. It may be objected that one can very well speak of the *mahat* as the ultimate material stuff. This would mean that the postulation of Prakṛti as the ultimate material substance is unnecessary.

It has been argued that anything which is of limited magnitude can not be the ultimate cause. The five elements, *tanmātras*, *ahamkāra* and *mahat* are all of limited magnitude. This would mean that the ultimate causal substance must be of unlimited magnitude and this is what is known as Prakṛti. The last argument proving Prakṛti says that every category of substance from the five elements to *mahat* are identical in character. They are identical in the sense that all of them are of the nature of pleasure, pain and dullness. Hence, they must have come from a substance which is of

such a character. We find in our ordinary experience that different earthen things agree in that they are all earthen. This proves that they have been produced from earth. Similarly every category of things admitted by Sāṃkhya philosophers must proceed from an ultimate substance which must be of the nature of the pleasure, pain and dullness - the properties which all things have in common. Such a substance is Prakṛti.

The Sāṃkhya thinkers have forwarded a few more metaphors to explain the triple characters of the *guṇa*-s existing in Prakṛti. The first is metaphor of the constituent of human being, which are called *dhātu*. The three elements *Vāyu* (air), *pitta* (bile) and *Kapha* (phlegm) are called *dhātus* by virtue of the fact that they protect our body, as per the principle *Śarīradhāraṇāt ete dhātavaḥ ucyante*. Human body consists of three elements, which protect our body. If there is an excess of any element among these three, there will be disbalance in the equilibrium. It leads an individual to the realm of sickness as these disturbance fails to protect our body. The disturbance caused by these gives rise to some type of bodily problem. In the same way the excess of bile or cough creates similar problem. This is due to the disbalance of the said factors. The sound and harmonised factors give rise to a sound body. In like manner, the three constituents of Prakṛti, if harmonised, can involve themselves in creation.<sup>16</sup> The state of equilibrium is the true essence of Prakṛti.

For the Sāṃkhya philosophers, Prakṛti is the ultimate cause of universe. The universe lies unmanifested in Prakṛti before creation.

Prakṛti gets transformed into the world. It is held that the world is created or manifested through the contact of Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Since Prakṛti is unconscious, it cannot by itself manifest the world which lies latent in it. Puruṣa alone, again, can not be a cause of creation of the world because Puruṣa is inactive, though conscious. The Sāṃkhya philosophers consequently hold that creation takes place through the combined effort of Prakṛti which is unconscious but active and Puruṣa which is conscious but inactive.

Acārya Vijñānabhikṣu gives us another account of the process of creation. Prakṛti and Puruṣa being ubiquitous and eternal, their transformation through their relation must also be eternal. The Sāṃkhya philosophers hold that creation or transformation requires the relation between Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Such a relation between these two fundamental reals is conceived after the relation between the lame and blind. It has been said that Prakṛti displays itself to Puruṣa for its own sake. It seems that Prakṛti needs Puruṣa for its own interest. The relation that takes place is said to be the reason of the enjoyment of Puruṣa. It is also true that Puruṣa requires Prakṛti for its liberation. So it is on account of Puruṣa's need that it gets related to Prakṛti which ultimately makes the creation or manifestation of the world possible. This is contained in the following lines of *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*.<sup>21</sup>

*"Puruṣasya darśanārtham kaivalyārthamtathā Pradhānasya  
Paṅgvadhavad - ubhayor - api saṃyogastatkṛtaḥ sargaḥ".<sup>(17)</sup>*

It may be asked that since Prakṛti is unconscious or inert how could it be responsible for creation; unconscious substance does not endeavour to create. Even if it is granted that unconscious substance creates of its own, the question is how one can explain discipline in effectuation. This world is not indisciplined. How can Prakṛti which is unconscious be the agent of creation?

In the *Brahmasūtra* (2/2/1) the following aphorism raises the same suspicion "*Racanānupapatteśca na anumānam*" It means that Prakṛti being unconscious the creation of this world is not possible. If we look at the construction of the world, which is so complex and designful, we can easily guess that powerful God must be responsible for its creation. Just as the conscious charioteer controls the movement of the chariot similarly, God dominates over Prakṛti and controls its movement.

But the Sāṃkhya philosophers argue that no conscious agent like God is necessary to postulate for accounting for the manifestation of the world. Even something unconscious may be inclined to give rise to an effect. We find that one reason is followed by another reason automatically, that is, without the intervention of any other causal factor. Further, we find that milk flows from udder of the cow for the nourishment of the younger one although milk is unconscious. Similarly, though Prakṛti is unconscious, it may act for the liberation of Puruṣa. Īśvarakṛṣṇa in *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* (57) writes:

*"Vatsavivṛddhinimittam kṣīrasya yathāpravṛttirajñasya  
Puruṣavimokṣanimittam tathā pravṛttiṁ Pradhānasya".*

So it is found that Prakṛti transforms itself into the world without the help or intervention of God. Only the proximity of Puruṣa is needed for the destruction of the equilibrium of Prakṛti which causes its transformation. Puruṣa is devoid of all qualities, inactive, pure consciousness. Nevertheless its bare proximity is enough to destroy the state of equilibrium of Prakṛti which causes transformation of Prakṛti. Just as the magnet, though inactive attracts iron filling towards it and makes it mobile, similarly, the proximity of Puruṣa, and the inactive Prakṛti manifests itself. The author of *Sāṃkhya Sūtra* therefore says that "*Tatsannidhānādadhīṣṭhāṛtvaṁ maṇivat.*" (1/96).

Sāṃkhya philosophy in its original form maintains that God is not in any way connected with the transformation and manifestation of Prakṛti. As a matter of fact God does not find a place in Sāṃkhya metaphysics. But Vijñānabhikṣu and some other systems of Indian philosophy do not describe it as metaphysics without God. Maharṣi Kapila does not actually deny the existence of God. What he says is that the existence of God is not provable – *Īśvarāsiddiḥ Pramāṇābhāvāt.*"

It may be suspected that if Kapila is not an atheist then why should he remain silent about the existence of God and prepares his aphorism regarding the impossibility of Gods' existence. In reply to



the misgiving Vijñānabhikṣu says that Sāṃkhya philosophy intends to suggest ways of liberation (*Mokṣasādhana*). It is consistent with suggesting the path to be taken by individuals to attain salvation. Naturally there is no reason why the existence of God should be discussed. It has been said by Vijñānabhikṣu again that atheism cannot be entertained by an honest philosopher. One can refer to the *Gītā* which says that atheism is the doctrine of the *asura* and the *piśāca* or demons. Consequently, Sāṃkhya philosopher cannot afford to be atheistic.

It is doubtful if this explanation of Vijñānabhikṣu can be supported. Sāṃkhya philosophers admit that this world must have been created by an appropriate cause. But this cause is not the Brahman of Vedānta nor is it the God of the Naiyāyikas. For the Vedāntins, Brahman is also the efficient cause of the world apart from its being the material cause of the world. But this Brahman is not subject to transformation (*Apariṇāmī*). Hence, from the Sāṃkhya point of view Brahman can not be the cause of the world. Brahman being eternal and immutable is not subject to change. Hence, Brahman can not be transformed into the world. Those who believe in the existence of God consider Him to be the efficient cause of the universe. This efficient cause is eternal and immutable. If this is true then God will not be subject to change and can not be active either. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers the primary cause is eternal, nevertheless subject to transformation. This eternal substance Prakṛti would transform itself into the world.

It has been held that Prakṛti is unconscious and for this reason it can not produce anything without the help of a conscious substance. It is seen that every unconscious thing produces its effect with the help of a conscious agent. The axe for example is unconscious and so it requires the cooperation of the conscious carpenter for felling trees. So it is very much unlikely that unconscious Prakṛti should create this world without the assistance of a conscious principle. This conscious principle is God.

The Sāṃkhya philosophers concede this position because in their opinion God not being the source of action cannot be the principle governing the transformation of Prakṛti. It is not unreasonable to think that God is to be conceived as being the guiding force of Prakṛti. It should be somewhat active. The other difficulty is that God is concrete or self-sufficient. Why should 'He' be the guiding force behind Prakṛti's transformation? What can be the motive for God's intervention? It can not be said that it is from the motive of removing the suffering of others that God superordinates. This hypothesis would not be quite cogent.

Sāṃkhya philosophers mentioned that Prakṛti is the primordial cause of the origin of the universe. Although Prakṛti is unconscious. It is somehow motivated for the enjoyment and liberation of Puruṣa.

Yoga philosophers, however, maintain a different position. God finds a place in a yoga system. It is held that Prakṛti being

unconscious, it cannot satisfy willfully the interest of Puruṣa. Creation and destruction is the result of the will of God. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers Puruṣa and Prakṛti are distinct although creation is possible only by the conjunction of the two. Yoga philosophy holds that the ever liberated, omniscient Puruṣa or God is responsible for the conjunction of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. If this conjunction is supposed to take place independently of intervention of a third principle, creation would have no end. In the yoga system that disjunction or disassociation of Puruṣa, a Prakṛti is determined by the will of God.<sup>18</sup>

In the state of dissolution (*Pralaya*) the state of equilibrium was destroyed and Prakṛti begins to get transformed into worldly things. Initially *rajas* become active and it activates the other *guṇa*-s. In this way, all these *guṇa*-s get transformed into dissimilar things. Of the three *guṇa*-s one dominates over the other two and thus the world is manifested. It has been held by the Sāṃkhya philosophers that Prakṛti transforms itself into this world. But the world is not the result of direct transformation of Prakṛti. The name of the direct evolute of Prakṛti is *Mahat*. *Mahat* gradually transforms itself into the other evolutes like *Ahaṃkāra*, five *Tanmātras* etc.

So the Sāṃkhya philosophers believe in successive development or evolution of Prakṛti. Although Prakṛti is all pervading it is subtle because it is devoid of parts. The gross world comes from the subtle Prakṛti. Since Prakṛti is subtle, it can manifest itself into the gross world only in stages. When a very small seed

develops into a huge tree we find that it passes through stages. The seed in the first place is transformed into a sprout under the influence of certain auxiliary conditions. It keeps developing continuously till it takes the shape of a huge tree. Everywhere transformation is a gradual process. The effect does not exist in the cause in full form. Hence the Sāṃkhya philosophers have reasons to say that the first evolute of Prakṛti is not the world. These philosophers speak of four successive stages through which evolution passes and leads to the appearance of the gross world.

We have said *Mahat* is the first evolute of Prakṛti which comes into existence as a result of the proximity of Prakṛti with the conscious Puruṣa. Of the three *guṇa*-s *rajas* is active and it must be the chief reason of the transformation of Prakṛti. *Rajas* destroys the original state of equilibrium of Prakṛti and encourages *sattva* to transform itself into the second evolutes.

It is held by Sāṃkhya philosophers that creation or evolution is of two kinds – collective (*samaṣṭi*) and individual (*vyāṣṭi*). Firstly, the world is collectively created and then appears the individuals. Then our difference between these two kinds of creation is that *sattva* predominates in collective creation and the other two *guṇa*-s predominate in the creation of individuals.

The distinguishing feature of *mahat* is *abhimāna* which is otherwise known as *ahaṃkāra*. It is responsible for our knowledge of ourselves as agent and enjoyers. In Sāṃkhya philosophy three

kinds of *ahamkāra* has been recognised. The *ahamkāra* in which *sattva* predominates is called *sāttvika* or *vaikārika ahamkāra*. The *ahamkāra* in which *rajas* predominates is called *taijasa* or *rajas ahamkāra*. Finally, the kind of *ahamkāra* in which *tamas* predominates is called *tāmasika ahamkāra*. In the opinion of Vācaspati Miśra the eleven sense organs proceed from *Sāttvika ahamkāra*. Apart from it the eleven *tanmātras* are created. It only accompanies the *sāttvika* and *tāmasika ahamkāra*. But according to Vijñānabhikṣu five *Karmendriyas* and five *Jñānendriyas* come from *tāmasika ahamkāra*. There is enough influence of *rajas* in the ten organs. But the eleventh sense-organ, viz, *manas* is predominantly *sāttvika*. This is why Vijñānabhikṣu said that only mind comes from *sāttvika ahamkāra*.

The third evolute of Prakṛti is sense-organ and *tanmātra*. This is a transformation of ego or *Ahamkāra* just as both curd and whey come from the same milk. Similarly, from the same *ahamkāra* we have both *indriya* and *tanmātra*. *Indriya* or sense-organs are transparent and of the nature of *Prakāśa* or manifestation. *Tanmātra* is opaque and is not of manifesting nature. Although both *indriya* and *tanmātra* proceed from the same *ahamkāra* nevertheless their characters are different. This difference is only natural. The Sāṃkhya philosophers believed that the sense-organs are not perceptible. Their existence is inferential.

In Sāṃkhya philosophy, mind has been described as '*Ubhaya Indriya*'. The reason is that both *Karmendriya* and *Jñānendriya* are

incapable of performing their functions without the help of their mind. That is why they said, '*ubhayatmakam Mahat*'. Although on Sāṃkhya philosophy the mind is inert or unconscious, it has not been conceived as atomic or eternal like Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers mind is not without parts. It is a composite substance (*sāvayava*) and is subject for origin and destruction. The Nyāya-vaiśeṣika philosophers hold the five *Karmendriyas* do not owe their origin in *ahamkāra*. It comes from the *mahābhūtas*. Mind is often described as *antaḥkaraṇa*. Sāṃkhya philosophers mention two types of *Karaṇas* – *Antaḥkaraṇa* and *Vahikaraṇa*. The term '*Karaṇa*' stands for the main instruments of an action. If such instrumental cause comes from without it is called *Vāhya karaṇa*. On the other hand, the cause that operates from within is called *Antaḥkaraṇa Vāhyakaraṇa* is ten in number of which five are *Karmendriyas* and five *Jñānendriyas*. Three kinds of *antaḥkaraṇa* have been mentioned – *manas*, *ahamkāra* and *buddhi*. Thus, we have thirteen *Karaṇas* in all. For the Vedāntins there are four *antaḥkaraṇa* - *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahamkāra* and *citta*.

So far as, *tanmātras* are concerned, it is said that they are not perceptible; they can only be inferred. But it is possible for the yogīns to have a knowledge of the *tanmātras*. From *śabda tanmātra ākāśa* is created. The same *tanmātra* connected with *sparsā tanmātra* produces *Vāyu* or air. With the addition of *rūpa tanmātra* fire is created. *Rasa tanmātra* in conjunction with the other three creates water. Finally, *gandha tanmātra* conjoined with the four *tanmātras* beginning with *śabda* produces *Prithivī* or earth.

The evolution of things from Prakṛti may be viewed as two types of transformation. The transformation of Prakṛti into Buddhi, *Ahaṅkāra* and eleven sense organs is known as *Pratyaya* or *buddhisarga*. Secondly, the transformation of *tanmātras* and *mahābhūtas* is called *Bhautikasarga*. The five elements or *Pañcabhūtas* is ordinarily perceptible. From these five elements are created pleasure, pain and stupefaction of individual human beings. This is why they are called *viśesa*. *Viśesa* has been divided by Sāṃkhya philosophers into three classes - *Mahābhūta*, *sthūlaśarīra* or gross body and *sūkṣaśarīra* or subtle body. The five elements or *Pañcabhūtas* are the material elements out of which the gross body is created. The subtle body is composed of *buddhi*, *Ahaṅkāra*, eleven sense organs and *Pañcatanmātras*. The component elements of the subtle body namely, the mind, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra* etc. can not exist apart from the subtle body. For this reason the gross body is supposed to be the locus of the the subtle body. According to Vijñānabhikṣu, the subtle body moves from one gross body to another; for this movement the reality of an *adhiṣṭhāna śarīra* has been admitted.

From what is said above it has been found that the total number of reals of *tattva* is twenty-five. The primary material substance or *Mūlaprakṛti* has no origin or destruction. Īśvarakṛṣṇa in *Sāṃkhya kārikā* has devoted the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Kārikā* to the discussion of twenty-five reals. He says in *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* - 3.

*“MulaPrakṛti avikṛtir mahadādyāḥ Prakṛtivilkṛtayah sapta  
Śodaśakas tu vikāro, na Prakṛtir na prakṛtirna vikṛtiḥ Puruṣaḥ”*





According to Sāṃkhya philosophers Prakṛti is never destroyed, it is eternal. This hypothesis is somehow in agreement with western scientist. Herbert Spencer said that the primary element of the world is not subject to origin and destruction. They only get transformed. For the scientist matter is indestructible. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers also reals are not destroyed. They only get transformed. The Sāṃkhya holds that nothing comes out of nothing. That which is unreal does not produce anything, only the unmanifest become manifested. For the Sāṃkhya philosophers, the world did not appear at a particular point of time nor did it end at another point of time. Creation and destruction are eternal physical process.<sup>19</sup>

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