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Early Sāṃkhya in the "Buddhacarita"

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INTRODUCTION

In the twelfth canto of the *Buddhacarita* (*B*)¹ Āśvaghoṣa describes the sage Arāḍa's metaphysical system,² and provides statements concerning the liberating knowledge that people achieve by working through it. Arāḍa's metaphysical system consists of twenty-five principles, the highest of which is distinct from the others. Liberating knowledge involves the highest principle "knowing" its separation from the other constituents, and the technique by which the highest principle realizes this knowledge is the cultivation of the powers of discrimination.

Arāḍa's metaphysical system bears striking resemblances to systems that appear in other texts from roughly the same era. For instance, it has such close affinities with metaphysical systems in Book Twelve of the *Mahābhārata* (*Mbh*), the *Mokṣadharma*,³ that the translator of the *Buddhacarita*, E. H. Johnston, suspects both works have a common authority, possibly a text of the little-known Vārṣaganya school.⁴ Additional similarities exist in certain passages of the *Bhagavadgītā* (*Bvg*),⁵ but the difficulties over dating the latter text make the question of influence between the two impossible to answer with certainty.⁶ Another similar metaphysical description is elaborated in the Indian medical text from the first century C.E., the *Caraka Saṃhitā* (*CS*),⁷ and various resemblances between Arāḍa's reputed system, as well as several differences, readily can be identified.⁸ Finally, several *Upaniṣads* (*U*), especially the *Katha Upaniṣad* and the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, contain descriptions of metaphysical systems that resemble Arāḍa's.⁹

Arāḍa's system, along with the systems that resemble it, often are referred to as forms of "early Sāṃkhya,"¹⁰ and therefore a prelude to Īśvarakṛṣṇa's classical Sāṃkhya¹¹ system of about the fifth century C.E.¹² Johnston, for instance, speaks in this manner. Franklin Edgerton, in contrast, argues that these so-called early Sāṃkhya systems within the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Mahābhārata* are but aspects of "Upaniṣadic Brahmanism," and do not represent doctrines of a distinctive school of thought.¹³ His view, however, cannot explain all relevant passages in the *Mahābhārata*, and therefore we must assume that an independent tradition of nontheism was developing during this era, and that it occasionally reveals itself in the texts.¹⁴ Nonetheless, Edgerton's argument has merit when we apply it to the *Buddhacarita*—the metaphysics of the twelfth canto "are set in a framework which espouses the old Upaniṣadic notions of *ātman* and *brahman*."¹⁵ So it is in the *Buddhacarita* that Arāḍa follows his description of the path of knowledge (*sāṃkhya*, although he does not use the term itself) with a description of "another

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method [of] the same *dharma*,” that is, yogic trances. The two descriptions do not disagree over metaphysics, just method.¹⁶ To refer, therefore, to the metaphysics of the twelfth canto of the *Buddhacarita* as “early Sāṃkhya” is not to imply that Arāḍa’s reputed system was among those that were beginning to distinguish themselves from orthodoxy. Our use of the term will be a heuristic one,¹⁷ used to facilitate our efforts in examining the metaphysics of the twelfth canto by both comparing them to the later classical Sāṃkhya system, and by contrasting them with the Buddhist criticisms that Aśvaghōṣa levels through Gautama (as the Bodhisattva and the Buddha). When helpful, references will be made to appropriate sections of Aśvaghōṣa’s story of Nanda’s conversion, the *Saundarananda* (S),¹⁸ as well as to passages from the *Mahābhārata*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Yoga-Sūtras* (YS)¹⁹ and the *Upaniṣads*.

AŚVAGHŌṢA’S RENDITION OF ARĀḌA’S SĀMĀKHYA SYSTEM

Within verses 17–42 of the twelfth canto of the *Buddhacarita*, Aśvaghōṣa presents Arāḍa’s early Sāṃkhya system, and in verses 69–82 offers the bodhisattva’s subsequent rejection of it. (Verses 43–63 present a means to salvation through trances [*dhyāna*-s] that actually have a closer affinity with Buddhist yogic states than with orthodox Indian ones, and verses 66–67 state the names of the previous great sages of what Arāḍa considers to be the joint Sāṃkhya-yoga tradition.)²⁰

Arāḍa’s system consists of twenty-five principles (*tattva*-s) in which a distinction exists between one *tattva*, *ātman*²¹ or knower of the field (*kṣetrajñā*),²² and the other twenty-four. The twenty-four are further divided into two groups: one group of eight called *prakṛti* (primary matter) and another group of sixteen derived from the former, called *vikāra* (secondary matter or “production” or “derivative” [*B* xii 17–20]). *Prakṛti* consists of the *avyakta* (unseen power), *buddhi* (intellect), *ahaṃkāra* (ego), and the five *bhūta*-s (elements). *Vikāra* consists of the five objects of the senses, the five senses, the hands and feet, the voice, the organs of generation and excretion, and *manas* (mind). The exact process by which either the eightfold *prakṛti* generates itself or *prakṛti* generates the sixteen secondary evolutes is never explained in this text.²³

Together these twenty-four *tattva*-s comprise the field (*kṣetra*). Matter, both primary and secondary, is called “the seen” and is “that which is born, grows old, suffers from disease and dies.” *Ātman*, in contrast, is described as possessing the opposite of these attributes (*B* xii, 22).²⁴ The *ātman* continues to transmigrate until it discriminates between itself (the unseen, intelligent, and unmanifest) and “the seen” (the unintelligent and the manifest [*B* xii, 29, 40–41]). A dualism is present here between the knower of the field and the field itself, and this dualism is to become more clearly pronounced in the classical school (*SK* XIX).

SVABHĀVA—(INHERENT) NATURE UNDERLYING THE EIGHTFOLD PRAKṚTI

A multifaceted unity known as *svabhāva* underlies the eightfold *prakṛti* and serves as its motive force for creation. Its features are identified in *B* xviii, 29–41

as part of a series of arguments in which the Buddha is refuting the theory that Nature (*svabhāva*)²⁵ is the Creator of the universe. In these verses *svabhāva* is described as single essence (31), all pervading (32), without attribute (34) or characteristics (35), a perpetual cause (that is, eternal [35]), productive (36), not perceptible, unmanifest (39) and inanimate, and without consciousness (*acetana*? [40]).²⁶

The crucial arguments offered to refute *svabhāva* center around “the rule that attributes of an effect must also be in the cause”. Āsvaghoṣa (via the Buddha) objects to the early Sāṃkhya *svabhāva* on the grounds that since it is without attribute (*guṇa* [34]) or characteristics (*viśeṣa*) it cannot be the cause of the world (or universe) whose physical constructions are pervaded by both.²⁷

We find the same features used to describe *svabhāva* in the *Buddhacarita* also being assigned to *avyakta*, the unmanifest, in *SK* X–XI.²⁸ of the classical school, with but one important difference. The *avyakta* of the classical scheme contains the three *guṇa*-s and through them it possesses both attributes and characteristics. It thereby differs from the early *svabhāva*, which has neither. Because of the *guṇa*-s, Āsvaghoṣa’s criticism of an (inherent) nature in Sāṃkhya as being without attribute(s) or characteristics and therefore unable to be the cause of a material world full of both, is effectively countered in the classical system (*SK* XII–XIII).²⁹ In fact *SK* XIV specifically says “the unmanifest (*avyakta*) is likewise established because of the *guṇa*-nature in the cause of the effect (or because the effect has the same qualities as the cause).” This theory of *guṇa* production in classical Sāṃkhya may have been influenced by the early notions of the inherent productivity of *svabhāva* (as we are about to explain).³⁰ In addition, the eightfold *prakṛti* in early Sāṃkhya may have evolved into the classical system’s vertical emanation pattern, involving the *karmendriya*-s (five organs of action), the *buddhīndriya*-s (five senses), *manas* (mind), and the *tanmātra*-s (the five subtle elements).³¹ In any case, before we can reconstruct the process by which the features of the early Sāṃkhya *svabhāva* become attributed to the *avyakta* of classical Sāṃkhya, we must unravel the complicated development of the *guṇa*-s. It is to this task that we now turn.

THE EARLY AVYAKTA (UNSEEN FORCE) AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUṆA-S

Nowhere in Āsvaghoṣa’s description of Arāḍa’s Sāṃkhya system are the three *guṇa*-s mentioned, despite the fact that Āsvaghoṣa knows of them (*B* vii 53, and n.) and even refutes them at *B* xxvi 10–14. There seem to be several reasons for their omission. To begin, the variety of descriptions attached to the term *guṇa*-s within the *Mahābhārata* verses of early Sāṃkhya indicates that their meaning is in a state of flux.³² Āsvaghoṣa, however, seems to use them in a form different still from those of the epic, since to him they seem to signify “the three *bhāva*-s” (states of being) closely identified with moral attributes.³³ It was these three *bhāva*-s in the capacity as moral attributes within *avyakta*, the unseen force, that determine for the latter the means or mechanism by which the individual is

bound to *saṃsāra*. Because the *guṇa*-s only are a facilitating force to *avyakta*, E. H. Johnston believes that Āśvaghoṣa feels no need to mention them in Arāḍa's Sāṃkhya description.³⁴

THE THREE EARLY SĀṂKHYA GUṆA-S AND THE BUDDHIST ROOTS OF GOOD AND EVIL

The *guṇa* development within Brahmanism closely parallels the development of the Buddhist notions of the three roots of good (*kuśalamūla*)³⁵ and the roots of evil (*akuśalamūla*),³⁶ and Āśvaghoṣa may take advantage of this correspondence. We see their parallelism, as does Āśvaghoṣa, by associating the three roots of good with the *guṇa sattva* and the three roots of evil with the *guṇa-s rajas* and *tamas*.³⁷ Through this association we can understand more fully the processes of salvation in the appropriate developmental stages of both Buddhism and early Sāṃkhya thought.³⁸

The three roots of evil are *rāga* (passion), *dveṣa* (hatred, enmity), and *moha* (ignorance, as delusion of mind),³⁹ but, in addition, Āśvaghoṣa occasionally uses the *guṇa* term *rajas* to cover the two Buddhist terms *rāga* and *dveṣa* (*B* vii, 53 and n.). These three roots of evil, along with the three roots of good, are the cause (*hetu*) by which *karman* is perpetuated. Interestingly, in the Pali Nikāyas, *nirvāṇa* is achieved with the disappearance of the three roots of evil,⁴⁰ a feat achieved in the *Saundarananda* by yoga techniques.⁴¹ Similarly, in this early stage of Sāṃkhya, liberation occurs when the *guṇa-s rajas* and *tamas* are destroyed by the increase of *sattva* (*B* xxvi 10–11). The destruction of ignorance (and the acquisition of knowledge) is complemented by an increase in good deeds and moral merit, and this destruction of ignorance is brought about “through learning, intelligence and effort” (*B* xxvi 11). Certainly ‘effort’ involves a meditational process (as it does in the *Saundarananda* text and Yoga).⁴²

Worth noting, however, are the differences between the Buddhist *hetu* and the *guṇa*-s, since Āśvaghoṣa criticizes the early Sāṃkhya salvational model as self-contradictory. Essentially he argues (*B* xxvi 10–14) that *sattva* can never destroy *rajas* and *tamas* because, by definition, all three are permanent.⁴³ Āśvaghoṣa, in contrast, accepts the standard notion of the *skandha*-s, which are impermanent by definition, and whose karmic causes can therefore be destroyed.⁴⁴

THE FIVE SKANDHA-S AND THE SĀṂKHYA TATTVA-S OF MATTER

Interestingly, the content of these *skandha*-s corresponds closely to the early Sāṃkhya analysis of the corporeal individual, omitting the *avyakta*.⁴⁵ The *skandha rupa* (physical form, body) is analogous to the elements and their evolutes, the objects of the senses; *vedanā* (sensation) equates with the senses; *saṃjñā* (ideation, perception, the naming faculty) with the Sāṃkhya *manas* (mind); *vijñāna* (consciousness) with the early *buddhi*; and *saṃskāra* (dispositions, formative forces, mental phenomena), insofar as it was thought to relate to the “integrating action of the personality, with *ahamkāra*”.⁴⁶ An additional

comparative point involves the influence of “the power of the act” in both systems, it being one of the three causes of transmigration in early Sāṃkhya (*B* xii 23) and also serving as the means by which the *skandha*-s are perpetuated (*S* xvii 19).

THE SĀṂKHYA CAUSES OF SAṂSĀRA AND THE FACTORS THROUGH WHICH THEY WORK

Returning again to Arāḍa’s Sāṃkhya description, the sage first gives the three causes of *saṃsāra* as being wrong knowledge (*ajñāna*), the power of the act (*karman*), and desire or craving (*trṣṇā* [*B* xii 23]). These three causes are comparable to the Buddhist cause (*hetu*) of transmigration: *moha* (ignorance, delusion), *rāga* (passion), and *dveṣa* (hatred, enmity). Within early Sāṃkhya, the three causes seem to function by eight factors (*B* xii 23–24) in a manner as follows:⁴⁷

Saṃsāra

<i>Three causes of saṃsāra</i>	Factors by which the three causes work
wrong knowledge (<i>ajñāna</i>)	1. misunderstanding (<i>vipratyaya</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 25]) 2. wrong attribution of personality (<i>ahamkāra</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 26]) 3. confusion of thought (<i>saṃdeha</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 27]) 4. wrong conjunction (<i>abhisamplava</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 28]) 5. lack of discrimination (<i>aviśeṣa</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 29])
power of the act (<i>karman</i>)	6. wrong means (<i>anupāya</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 30])
desire or craving (<i>trṣṇā</i>)	7. attachment (<i>saṅga</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 31]) 8. falling away (<i>abhyavapāta</i> [see <i>B</i> xii 32])

Arāḍa continues by explaining what he means by each of the eight factors by which the three causes of *saṃsāra* function (*B* xii 25–32). After having done so, however, he also attributes transmigration to a fivefold ignorance (*B* xii 33–37),⁴⁸ as well as to a person’s unjustified identification with corporeal individuality (*B* xii 38). It is unclear how these descriptions of the causes and the perpetuation of *saṃsāra* are related.⁴⁹ Interesting to note, however, is that the fivefold ignorance Arāḍa identifies—torpor (*tamas*), delusion (*moha*), great delusion (*mahāmoha*), darkness (*tāmisra*) and blind darkness (*andhatāmisra*)—become, in *Sāṃkhyakārikā* XLVIII, the five *viparyaya*-s (errors or misapprehensions).⁵⁰

A SUMMARY OF THE SĀMĀKHYA GUṆA DEVELOPMENT

To summarize the complicated development of the *guṇa*-s discussed earlier: the three *guṇa*-s in the early Sāṃkhya of Arāḍa are but *bhāva*-s, “states of being,” each having moral qualities through which the unseen *avyakta* attaches a person to *saṃsāra*. The moral actions associated with the three *guṇa*-s are divided into two kinds: those moral actions containing the *sattva guṇa*, propelling a person into higher rebirth (and eventual release); and those containing the *rajas* or *tamas guṇa*, perpetuating the cycle of existence. These moral qualities within *saṃsāra* have three causes, and these causes themselves seem to work by eight factors that variously relate to each of them. This twofold division of the three *guṇa*-s parallels the division and functions of the three Buddhist roots of good and evil. Liberation is achieved with the increase of *sattva*⁵¹ and the concomitant extinguishment of *rajas* and *tamas*, a process similarly described in parts of the *Mahābhārata* and *Yoga Sūtras* iii 55.

Āsvaghoṣa chokes not to mention the *guṇa*-s in Arāḍa’s early Sāṃkhya description apparently because he considers them to be merely the ‘mechanism’ through which *avyakta* attaches *saṃsāra* to the individual, and their description is not considered necessary once *avyakta* itself is mentioned.

Apparently the *guṇa*-s attain their classical, cosmological and psychological significance only when the term *prakṛti* begins to mean but the first of twenty-four material *tattva*-s, and loses its meaning as the inclusive title of the eight *tattva*-s found in the earlier speculation.⁵²

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SVABHĀVA IN RELATION TO THE CLASSICAL SĀMĀKHYA CONCEPTS OF PRAKṚTI, AVYAKTA, AND THE GUṆA-S

Having described in part the evolution of *prakṛti*, *avyakta*, and the *guṇa*-s, we now can connect the development of these three entities with that of *svabhāva*, described earlier. What occurs between the time of Āsvaghoṣa and Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s classical work is that the features of *svabhāva* as the motive force behind the eightfold *prakṛti* become posited as the features within the classical *avyakta*. In the process, the latter acquires a new meaning, different from the (older) notion of it being the ‘unseen force’ of the moral law. In classical Sāṃkhya it now means the “unmanifest force” in which lie at rest the manifold creative power (as *guṇaparīṇāma*) of the three *guṇa*-s. The moral qualities through which Arāḍa’s early *avyakta* worked are transferred from the *guṇa*-s of the earlier thought to the eightfold *bhāva*-s within the *buddhi* of classical thought.⁵³

While Īśvarakṛṣṇa rejects the idea that *svabhāva* is a creative principle, the concept may have influenced classical notions in two other areas. First, *svabhāva* as ‘the inherent nature of things’ becomes the term used in relation with suffering as the (apparent) linkage between *puruṣa* and manifest creation in *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* LV.⁵⁴ If there is a connection, though, between *svabhāva* in this later

sense and the earlier notion of nature underlying all *prakṛti*, it is simply that now suffering is what underlies all creation.

Second, there is a quite early notion of *svabhāva* described by Aśvaghoṣa in *Buddhacarita* ix 59–62 that may have influenced the classical notion of *guṇ-apariṇāma*, the ever-varying proportions of the interacting *guṇa*-s causing the manifestations of *prakṛti*. In this description, Śuddhodana's counsellor is stating to the Bodhisattva various philosophical disputes of the day in a vain attempt to convince the latter to return to his home. One of the materialistic or naturalistic philosophies described contains a doctrine in which the four elements (space being omitted from the usual list of five),⁵⁵ usually in mutual opposition, now "group themselves together" according to their own inherent nature (or according to natural development) and form the world. One is reminded of the classical notion of the *guṇa*-s, whose natures are dissimilar if not antagonistic, but that also interact to form the manifest universe. While indeed there is a similarity between these two ideas, no precise connection between the older *svabhāva* notion and the classical *guṇapariṇāma* theory can be drawn with certainty.⁵⁶

BUDDHI

Comparatively little is known about *buddhi* prior to the classical period. One of the few things the texts allow us to say is that the eightfold *buddhi* of classical Sāṃkhya is not known in Arāḍa's system. Furthermore, it also seems true that in some earlier Sāṃkhya systems *buddhi* should be translated as "consciousness" (*cetanā*) or "intellect" (*vijñāna*), and these meanings contrast to its characterization within the classical school as simply "ascertainment" or "determination" (*adyavasāya* [SK XXIII]). This devaluation of *buddhi* probably occurs concomitant with the developing idea of the transcendence of *puruṣa*, the latter itself being considered conscious as opposed to those emanations within material creation (*prakṛti* in her *vyakta* or generating form) which are unconscious. To fit within this classical dualism, the conception of *buddhi* has to be appropriately modified, and its *adyavasāya* designation resulted. However, while this general outline of the modification of *buddhi* concept holds true for the *Mahābhārata*, Arāḍa's references to *buddhi* are too vague to allow placing Arāḍa's use within this scheme.⁵⁷

AHAMKĀRA AND ĀTMAN

While the function of *ahamkāra* in Arāḍa's Sāṃkhya is difficult to determine, its very appearance within it is important to note with regard to the development of classical Sāṃkhya thought. It translates as 'ego' or 'I' and is the cause of the corporeal individual's activity. In part its purpose in early Sāṃkhya is to subsume the functions of two other principles, *mahat ātman* (Great Self) and *jīva ātman* (individualized self or soul), both of which, in various texts, had animated the body and connected it with the transmigrating soul.⁵⁸ In the *Buddhacarita*, an

association involving transmigration seems to exist between the *ātman* and *ahamkāra*, as seen in one of the Bodhisattva's objections to Arāḍa's Sāṃkhya: "and as for this imagined abandonment of the ego principle (*ahamkāra*), as long as the soul (*ātman*) persists, there is no abandonment of that principle" (B xii, 76).⁵⁹

By the time of Īśvarakṛṣṇa's classical system, the *ātman* has disappeared and its transmigrating function is assumed by the subtle body (*liṅga*, *liṅgaśarīra*). In addition, *ahamkāra* assumes the individual aspects of *ātman*,⁶⁰ already having been associated previously with it (as in the *Buddhacarita*).

Buddhi, Ahamkāra, and Cosmological Speculation

Although early Sāṃkhya (as well as early Buddhism) emphasizes the investigation of the individual more than the cosmos, when the cosmos is considered it is usually done through mythological means.⁶¹ So we find in *Buddhacarita* xii 21 that Kapila (a famous Indian sage reputed to be the founder of Sāṃkhya) and his pupil (probably Āsuri) are symbolic of *buddhi*,⁶² Prajāpati symbolizes *ahamkāra*⁶³ and Prajāpati's sons represent the five elements.⁶⁴

Unrelated to this particular set of mythological figures is another set of cosmological speculations, also in the twelfth canto. In Arāḍa's description of the trances (*dhyāna*-s), each *arūpya* (attainment) is associated with certain divine spheres, and such associations probably are indicative of Yoga practices of this time.⁶⁵ It is worth noting that, in a similar view, there are cosmological associations between the three worlds and the three *guṇa*-s in *Sāṃkhyākarikā* LIV. The modest conclusion that we can deduce from this material is that in early Sāṃkhya, early Yoga, classical Sāṃkhya, and later Yoga there is the notion that liberation includes a journey through the cosmos, probably to reach a location beyond the control of cosmological fate.

ELEMENTS, GROSS ELEMENTS, SUBTLE ELEMENTS, AND OBJECTS OF THE SENSES

Two categories of principles (*tattva*-s) exist within Arāḍa's Sāṃkhya that are not found in the later Sāṃkhya scheme of the *Sāṃkhyākarikā*. Īśvarakṛṣṇa's system has not accepted either the five objects of the senses (B xii 19) or the five elements (B xii 18) within its list of twenty-four material evolutes, although both groups are easily mistaken for being in the classical system. Notions underlying Arāḍa's five elements (*bhūta*-s)—space (*ākāśa*), wind (*vāyu*), fire (*tejas*), water (*ap*) and earth (*prthivī*)—are less philosophically discriminative than those upon which the classical five gross elements—also space, wind, fire, water, earth—are based, but the agreement of the names themselves often obscures this fact. Nor do the gross elements have generative potential as do the earlier elements.

Similarly, the five objects of the senses within Arāḍa's description—*śabda* (sound), *rūpa* (form), *sparsa* (touch), *gandha* (smell), *rasa* (taste)—appear to be the same as the five classical subtle elements (*tanmātra*-s), but this appearance

falls away with the realization that the latter five of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* are both *subtle* potentials above the plane of gross corporeality, and also productive entities themselves. The early objects of the senses, in contrast, are not productive (that is, nothing further is emanated from them) and they exist within the material, perceptible creations of the world. It is true, however, that these four categories—the elements, the gross elements, the subtle elements, and the sense-objects—undergo a complicated transformation as the early Sāṃkhya is evolving toward Īśvarakṛṣṇa's work.

THE ELEMENTS

Beginning with the five elements found within the primary matter (*prakṛti*) of early Sāṃkhya, their productive capacity can be explained by the state of philosophical speculations during an era which made “no hard and fast distinction between animate and inanimate, between material and spiritual, or between substance and quality.”⁶⁶ These elements were “cosmic forces inhering in the substances from which they took their name,” and it was accepted that from them evolved mental and physical processes.⁶⁷ They all may have entered into the composition of the secondary evolutes,⁶⁸ but the *Buddhacarita* says nothing about the evolutionary process from the primary to the secondary groupings.

OBJECTS OF THE SENSES

Five of the evolutes within Arāḍa's nonproductive secondary matter are the objects of the senses, traditionally known as sound, form, touch, smell, and taste. These were the five basic qualities or attributes perceived by the senses. The lack of philosophical clarity, however, between substance and quality meant that the material objects of the world are classified according to the qualities (of sound, taste, and so on) that the senses perceive.⁶⁹ Each sense object may have been “the special and sole object of one of the organs of sense,” and also may have had an association with a particular element.⁷⁰

Refinements of thought in the Vaiśeṣika school could have stimulated Sāṃkhya into modifying several of its components. Vaiśeṣika established the relationship between the elements (earth, water, fire, air, and space) and their respective qualities (smell, taste, form, touch, and sound), and the latter group served as the objects of sense perception.⁷¹ These qualities existed only insofar as they inhered in the elements themselves, and this fact probably presented a problem for early Sāṃkhya thought. In the *Buddhacarita*'s Sāṃkhya system, the objects of the senses have a separate identity from the elements (*bhūta*-s), and Vaiśeṣika critics could have argued that individual elements exist only insofar as they were particularized by their inherent qualities. While early Sāṃkhya would not have accepted the premises of the Vaiśeṣika argument, it nonetheless could have been clear that Vaiśeṣika had made a philosophical advance by distinguishing between substances and their qualities. If the elements produced the objects

of the senses,⁷² then early Sāṃkhya would have been hard-pressed to explain how the generative elements produce nongenerative entities (the objects of the senses) that are nothing but their own qualities.⁷³

These Vaiśeṣika developments could have influenced classical Sāṃkhya's interpretations of both the elements and their sense objects.⁷⁴ In any case, the objects of the senses are removed from its cosmological scheme of twenty-four material entities, and the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* only makes passing reference to them as the objects of the organs of action (*SK* XXVIII and XXXIV). The elements, previously thought to have been productive, are reduced to unregenerative *tattva*-s found at the last stage of the emanation process. By eliminating the five sense objects, however, a vacancy of five *tattva*-s is created, and this vacancy is subsequently filled with a new fivefold designation, the *tanmātra*-s (subtle elements). Within Sāṃkhya speculation this new group appears for the first time in the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* and not only fills the numerical vacancy created by the expulsion of the five objects of sense, but also now has a creative potency that had been assigned previously to the elements. Its five individual members bear a resemblance to the names of the five sense objects, but no correspondence exists in the functioning of the two. The *tanmātra*-s are conceived as "extremely fine or subtle potentials" that combine to produce the corporeal world (For example, the *mahābhūta*-s).⁷⁵ While Vaiśeṣika distinguishes between substances and (among other things) the qualities and specificities (*viśeṣa*-s) which inhere in them, classical Sāṃkhya distinguishes between the nonspecific (*aviśeṣa*) subtle elements and the specific (*viśeṣa*) gross elements which are generated out of them.

SUMMARY: ELEMENTS OBJECTS OF THE SENSES, SUBTLE ELEMENTS, AND GROSS ELEMENTS

Having thus suggested a possible explanation for the appearance of the classical Sāṃkhya *tanmātra*-s, we can now understand the complex relationship between Arāḍa's elements and the objects of the senses and Īśvarakṛṣṇa's subtle elements and gross elements. The early Sāṃkhya elements are found within the eightfold creative *prakṛti*, the latter generating the sixteen constituents of secondary matter through its underlying inherent nature of *svabhāva*. At this stage of philosophical thought, no difference is made between substance and quality, so no scrutiny of the substantive nature or corporeality of the elemental concept has yet occurred, as will happen within the Vaiśeṣika school. In a manner which is not entirely clear, the five sense objects (along with the other eleven *tattva*-s of secondary matter) are generated from *prakṛti*, and each of the five seems to have particular relationships not only with the senses but also with individual elements.

This early Sāṃkhya scheme may have been affected by the Vaiśeṣika analysis of substance and quality. As a logical consequence of this analysis, the general acceptance of the elements as corporeal substances may have stimulated

Sāṃkhya to remove from them not only their status as primary *tattva*-s but also their previously assigned generative capacities. At the same time the five objects of the senses are no longer considered substantive entities but rather qualities or attributes of substantive entities that give them their specific characteristics.

The necessary adjustments are made within the classical system by eliminating the five sense objects and relegating the elements to the lowest position in the evolutionary process—a position indicative of their corporeal and gross substance. The five vacancies created by the exclusion of the sense objects are filled by the subtle elements, a new group within Sāṃkhya speculation that necessarily assumes the creative capabilities previously held by the elements and that allows them to serve as the generative source for the gross elements.

THE KNOWER OF THE FIELD (KṢETRAJÑĀ), PURUSA, AND ĀTMAN

The soul or Soul is regarded both as *ātman* (*B* xii 20 and 81), and the knower of the field (*kṣetrajñā* [*B* xii 20 and 80]), an association also common in the *Mahābhārata*.⁷⁶ In Arāḍa's system both terms have individual and cosmic significance,⁷⁷ but their exact meaning is unclear. One way to explain their difference is to regard *ātman* usually as the “cosmic soul” and *kṣetrajñā* as “that portion of the cosmic soul that is attached to the individual.”⁷⁸ The difficulty becomes, of course, understanding exactly what the relationship is between the individual and cosmic soul.

The best clue regarding the difference is given in *Buddhacarita* xii 80–81, in which the *ātman* (as soul) is understood to be unknowing (*ajñā*) and the knower of the field (*kṣetrajñā*) to be knowing (*jñā*). Presumably this knowing is in regard to the field of primary and secondary evolutes, and the soul's true separation from it.

Earlier, in *Buddhacarita* xii 65, there exists a description of the liberated knower of the field (*kṣetrajñā*) as “that supreme Absolute (*paramam brahma*), without attribute, everlasting, and immutable”. Two verses earlier, the term “self” (*ātman*) is used enigmatically: “But another, skilled in regard to the inner self, causes his self to cease by his self and since he sees there is nothing, he is declared to be one for whom nothing exists” (*B* xii 63). In this passage, the last of the ‘selves’ seems to be equated with the knower of the field in xii 64, and it is the latter who achieves liberation.

Several things need to be said about these three enigmatic verses (*B*. xii 63–65) in an attempt to clarify Arāḍa's use of *ātman* and *kṣetrajñā* in the early Sāṃkhya sections. To begin, it seems that the term *kṣetrajñā* is the name given to *ātman*, when, as it gains liberation, it ‘knows the field’ of creation. Prior to liberation, *ātman* is *ajñā*, unknowing (*B* xii 80–81).⁷⁹

Next, I take the three references to “self” in *Buddhacarita* xii 63 to mean that the cosmic, ‘knowing’ self associated with *Brahman* causes the individual's inmost psychological nature or essence, ‘the inner self’, to cease its notion of a

‘personality’ self. Finally, the supreme Absolute is not to be taken as a cosmic being but rather as a cosmic condition of *mokṣa*. Sen Gupta points out that had this term been understood as indicating a supreme God, the Bodhisattva certainly would have criticized the theory on these grounds.⁸⁰ Keeping all of this in mind, I reinterpret *Buddhacarita* xii 63 to mean, “But another, skilled in regard to the cosmic *ātman*, causes his unknowing self to cease by his *kṣetrajñā*. . . .”

Of significance for the later doctrine of the classical *puruṣa* is that the difference between *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajñā* explicitly foreshadows the classical dualism. Furthermore, the unknowing *ātman* and the knowing *kṣetrajñā* are reflected in the classical doctrines of the deluded *puruṣa* ‘apparently’ entangled in matter and the witnessing *puruṣa* conscious of its separate nature from it. The descriptions of the supreme Absolute in *Buddhacarita* xii 65 (“without attribute, everlasting and immutable”) resemble those of *puruṣa* in *Sāṃkhyakārikā* XIX (possessed of isolation or freedom, inactive, and indifferent). Finally, the similarity between the individual *kṣetrajñā* and the individual *puruṣa*-s is striking.

Of course there are significant differences between Arāḍa’s and Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s school. The classical scheme is much more insistent on the ontological separation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* than is the early separation between *kṣetrajñā* and *kṣetra*. One suspects that, to an adherent of classical Sāṃkhya, even the statement in *Buddhacarita* xii 64 that liberation occurs when the “knower of the field . . . escape[s] the body” would be considered to have unjustly compromised the absolute separation between the material and the nonmaterial principles.⁸¹ Furthermore, the term *ātman* does not appear in the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā*, its transmigrating and individualizing functions having been assumed by the subtle body and *ahamkāra*, respectively.

THE BODHISATTVA’S REJECTION OF ARĀḌA’S SĀṂKHYA SYSTEM

All of the Bodhisattva’s refutations of Arāḍa’s Sāṃkhya doctrines challenge, in some way, the existence of the soul (*ātman*). Within this overall framework, the Bodhisattva’s arguments can be divided into two categories: those describing the necessary continuation of *samsar*-ic potencies within an *ātman*; and those which criticize Arāḍa’s notion of knowledge. Regarding the continuation of *samsar*-ic potencies within an *ātman*, the Bodhisattva begins his refutation by saying that when the *kṣetrajñā* achieves his separation “from the primary and secondary constituents” (*B* xii, 70), the inactivity of the mind, and the longevity of the state itself create the “imagination” of it being an eternal condition (*B* xii, 74). However, the three causes (*hetu*-s) of *karman* and transmigration—the power of the act, ignorance, and desire—still “remain in a subtle state” within the soul (*B* xii, 74), since the latter contains the “causal conditions” in which they grow. Consequently, the soul itself is described as “a seed” for both further transmigration and further *karman* (*B* xii 70–71). Inevitably the soul will find “that it will again become bound from the continued existence of causal conditions” (*B* xii 71). Furthermore, the Bodhisattva asserts that the ego-principle (*ahamkāra*,

probably used in its animating and transmigrating sense described earlier) persists as long as does the soul (*B* xii, 76).⁸²

The next set of three arguments are those which are directed at the Sāṃkhya notion of knowledge, each of the three addressing a different meaning related to the word “knowledge” itself. The first argument locates “knowledge” as “reason,” and criticizes the Sāṃkhya liberation by saying that since the “activity of reason” is an attribute, a soul that possesses such an attribute necessarily becomes identified with it, just as a fire is identified with its attributes of outward appearance and heat. Liberation, therefore, has not been achieved (*B* xii 77–78).⁸³ What is at issue here is whether the knower of the field ever can separate permanently from its field, and the Bodhisattva is claiming that the *kṣetrajña* cannot.

The Bodhisattva continues along these lines by stating that the very nature of a *kṣetrajña*, a knower of the field, necessitates that there be a *kṣetra*, a field for it to know, and this necessity of an orientation to a field precludes the knower of the field from ever being released permanently from it (*B*. xii 79–80). The Bodhisattva has not accepted the claim Arāḍa made that the knower of the field obtains freedom from “the rushing torrent of birth and death” (*B*. xii 41) by “properly” discriminating the “mind, voice, intellect, and action” (*B*. xii 31)—that is, “that which lacks intelligence, the seen”—from “the intelligent . . . the unseen” (*B*. xii 40). The Bodhisattva responds that discrimination is not enough for a soul to gain permanent liberation, since its necessary orientation to the field of existence invariably draws it into the cycle of transmigration.⁸⁴

The final argument against Arāḍa’s liberation scheme is directed against the soul in its *ātman* or unknowing state. The Bodhisattva charges that the existence of the quality of unknowing need not be established through the existence of an *ātman* that lacks knowledge. As is the case with common things, like logs or walls, “the quality of not-knowing is well established” without them having an *ātman* (*B*. xii 81). When combined with the previous argument about the impossibility of a *kṣetrajña* ever gaining complete release from its field, the Bodhisattva seems to be saying that, if Arāḍa’s liberation system involves a change occurring from an unknowing to a knowing state, then neither state requires that an *ātman* exist for the change to occur.

Nonetheless, the conclusion reached through each of these arguments is that everything resembling a doctrine of a soul has to be abandoned before there will be assurance that liberation from matter will be permanent. Beyond knowledge of the field is the complete “abandonment of everything” (*B*. xii 82).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Aśvaghoṣa, through the character of Arāḍa, describes an early Sāṃkhya that on certain points has basic affinities with various other Sāṃkhya descriptions dating around the first centuries C.E. It is a Sāṃkhya of twenty-five principles, one principle standing rather separate from the twenty-four material *tattva*-s (prin-

ciples). This material group of twenty-four *tattva*-s is divided into primary and secondary forms. Primary matter, called *prakṛti*, is thought to be eightfold, and consists of *avyakta*, *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra*, and the five *bhūta*-s (elements). From these eight principles are produced the sixteen *tattva*-s of secondary matter, called *vikāra* (a production or derivative). (Unfortunately the text does not describe the specifics as to how this generation takes place.) These sixteen *tattva*-s include the usual five senses plus a sixth, *manas* (mind) (as was typical for this period of Indian thought), the five sense objects, and the hands and feet, the voice, and the organs of generation and excretion (elsewhere known as the *karmendriya*-s, the organs of action). All sixteen are considered to be uncreative and ungenerative.

Underlying the eightfold *prakṛti* is a principle called *svabhāva*, which is thought to be the (inherent) nature by which the eightfold *prakṛti* is creative and generative. By the time of the classical scheme, the notion of a nature (or an inherent nature) causing the creation of the universe has become posited in the *avyakta*, which as “unmanifest force” carried a different meaning than does the first *tattva* of early Sāṃkhya, *avyakta* as “unseen force.” This inherent nature that motivates generativity within classical Sāṃkhya does so through the three *guṇa*-s, and by having these three exist within *avyakta*, the latter obtains both attributes and characteristics, making it more plausible as the source of all creation. The basic scheme, however, of a horizontal emanation that exists in early Sāṃkhya’s eightfold *prakṛti* reappears in the classical system’s emanations from *ahaṁkāra* of the *karmendriya*-s, the *buddhīndriya*-s, *manas*, and the *tanmātra*-s.

While Aśvaghoṣa does not mention the three *guṇa*-s in canto xii, his omission simply may indicate that at this early stage they are not considered to be significant in the process of creation. The *guṇa*-s are conceived to be the three *bhāva*-s, states of being, having the moral qualities through which *avyakta* (unseen force) attaches a person to *saṃsāra*. The *guṇa*-s, as moral qualities in this text, are divided into two groups: those qualities and actions of the *sattva guṇa* that lead to higher rebirths (and eventual release); and those qualities and actions of the *rajas* and *tamas guṇa*-s that lead to lower births. In this twofold division one can see concepts similar to the Buddhist roots of good (= *sattva*) and evil (= *rajas* and *tamas*) which also determine a person’s condition of rebirth.

The cause or causes of *saṃsāra* are unclear, since Arāḍa gives three different causal schemes, and the schemes themselves cannot be linked together. First, he claims the causes of *saṃsāra* to be wrong knowledge (*ajñāna*), power of the act (*karman*), and desire or craving (*trṣṇā*), and these three causes themselves function by eight factors. Next, he attributes transmigration to a fivefold ignorance, and immediately follows by saying that a person “wanders in the cycle of transmigration” because of his false identification with corporeal individuality.

Early Sāṃkhya salvation is thought of as the increase of *sattva* with an accompanying extinguishment of *rajas* and *tamas*. The Buddha criticizes this

Sāṃkhya notion of release by saying that if all three *guṇa*-s were permanent entities, then *sattva* could not destroy the other two, which thereby makes release impossible to achieve. Buddhism avoids the difficulty of permanent but non-liberating entities by describing the individual as being composed of five impermanent *skandha*-s, but one notes with interest that, with the exception of *avyakta*, the early Sāṃkhya primary and secondary emanations can be correlated with them.

Having mentioned briefly the evolution of early *avyakta* into the classical *tattva*-s of the same name but different internal forces, we can say little about two of the remaining seven *tattva*-s of the early period, *buddhi* and *aḥamkāra*. From the *Mahābhārata* we know that *buddhi* may have been thought to be consciousness (*cetanā*) or intellect (*viññāna*), conceptualizations that have to be modified within the classical system so as to maintain the unconscious nature of *prakṛti* and her evolutes.

Aḥamkāra (ego) probably has some association with attaching an animating principle to an individualized transmigrating soul. In the classical period it fully subsumes the individual aspects of *ātman*, while the transmigrating aspects of the latter are posited within the subtle body. Finally, *aḥamkāra* and *buddhi* in Arāḍa's system probably has applicability more to notions concerning the individual than to the cosmos, since when the cosmos is referred to it is done only through mythological figures. Within the classical system their cosmological significance is expanded.

Concerning the remaining five of the eight early *tattva*-s of *prakṛti*—the five elements—a considerable amount can be said. In the classical system they are not creative principles, and their closest approximation is the five uncreative principles lowest in the emanation process, the *mahabhūta*-s. Their demotion to ungenerative *tattva*-s might have occurred under the same influence that also might have caused the disappearance of the five sense objects in the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* emanation scheme: the critical examination of the difference between substance and qualities undertaken in the Vaiśeṣika school. The pressures that could have been felt as a result of this examination could have affected not only the new interpretation of the elements as mere substances within Īśvarakṛṣṇa's system, but also the removal from the emanation scheme of the five sense objects as a consequence of their new status as nothing but qualities or attributes of the organs of action (*karmendriya*-s). In the numerical places of the early elements are posited the five subtle elements (*tanmātra*-s), and this replacement allows classical Sāṃkhya to both maintain the tradition of twenty-five *tattva*-s and provide the *mahabhūta*-s with a generative source.

While the distinction within Arāḍa's system between *kṣetrajña* and *ātman* is not clearly delineated, it appears that the latter is the term applied to the former when *ātman* is still within the influence of *saṃsāra*. The distinction that is made between *kṣetrajña* (knower of the field) and *kṣetra* (the field of matter) is a precursor to the classical dualism between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*.

The Bodhisattva's rejection of Arāḍa's Sāṃkhya notion of liberation concentrates on the difficulties with the postulation of a soul. The first set of refutations address the question of the subtle *samsar*-ic potencies of the three *hetu*-s and *ahamkāra* within a *kṣetrājñā*. The next set of refutations criticize various notions of knowledge. One attack is against the notion of a liberating knowledge that is either one of "reasoning" or of "knowing the field of matter," since both qualify the eternal nature of the liberated state due to their necessary external orientation to an entity. The other attack implies that a state of unknowing exists independently of an *ātman*, just as the state of salvific knowing exists independently of *kṣetrājñā*. In the final analysis, only the complete abandonment of everything ensures complete and eternal liberation.

NOTES

1. E. H. Johnston, *The Buddhacarita: or, The Acts of the Buddha* Part I, Sanskrit Text; Part II translation, cantos I-XIV. (1936; reprint Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972). All English renditions of these cantos, as well as references to the introductory remarks (indicated by Roman numerals), are from Part II. Translation of cantos XV-XXVIII are from the Tibetan, *Acta Orientalia*, XV.

2. Arāḍa (Pali, Ālāra Kālāma) was, according to tradition, one of Gautama's teachers after the Bodhisattva's renunciation. Of the various sketchy accounts of his teachings, only the *Buddhacarita* indicates that his doctrines resembled Sāṃkhya-yoga. Even then, the *dhyāna*-s to which Arāḍa refers were Buddhist, not orthodox Yoga, in nature. See G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, I (London: Luzac and Co., 1960), p. 297; also Indumate Karunartne, "Ālāra Kālāma," *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. G. P. Malalasekera, Fascicule A-ACA (n.p.: Government of Ceylon, n.d.), p. 378; Biswanath Bhattacharya, *Aśvaghōṣa: A Critical Study* (West Bengal: Santiniketan, 1976), pp. 403-409.

3. The term "sāṃkhya" itself appears in *Mokṣadharmā* 12.228.27, 28, 36: 12.232.1 (in reference to 12.231.5); 12.289.4-5; and 12.290.59-60. So cites Franklin Edgerton in *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 36, n. 2. Elsewhere appear references to "the path of knowledge" and descriptions of emanation systems that are Sāṃkhya in nature.

4. *B* pp. lvi-lvii; 172, n. 33. Gerald Larson, however, says Johnston's claim that the common source was the Vārṣaganya school is based upon weak evidence. For Larson's detailed discussion see his *Classical Sāṃkhya* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1969), pp. 109, 151-155.

5. Edgerton, *ibid.*, indicates that the term "sāṃkhya" appears in the *Bhagavadgītā* at ii.39, iii.3 v.4-5. References to the system, however, appear elsewhere in the text, even though the term itself is not used. See Franklin Edgerton, *The Bhagavad Gītā* (1944; reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. 196-198; R. C. Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-Gītā* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 139-141 203. An interesting interpretation of Sāṃkhya in the *Bhagavadgītā* is David White's "Proto-Sāṃkhya and Advaita Vedānta in the Bhagavadgītā," *Philosophy East and West* 29, no. 4 (October, 1979): 501-507.

6. Johnston believes that the older parts of the *Bhagavadgītā* could have been in existence in Aśvaghōṣa's day, having dated the poet's works from "between 50 B.C. and 100 A.D., with a preference for the first century A.D." (*B.*, p. xvii). Bhattacharya, *Aśvaghōṣa*, p. 19, places the poet "about 100 A.D."

7. Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 242. Dasgupta dates the *Caraka Saṃhitā* at 70 A.D. S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, I (1922; reprint, London: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 213.

8. For a critique of the Sāṃkhya system within the *Caraka Saṃhitā*, see Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 213-217.

9. For a brief but informative discussion of the most obvious instances of *Sāṃkhya* metaphysics in the *Upaniṣads*, see Robert Ernest Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (2d ed. 1931; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 8–9. The term “*sāṃkhya-yoga*” appears in *Śvet. U.* 6.13.

10. On the meaning of the word “*Sāṃkhya*” Edgerton says “it is the rationalizing, reflective, speculative philosophical method . . . [the] ‘reason-method’”. It seems a natural term to describe the method of gaining salvation by ‘knowledge’” (*Beginnings*, p. 36).

11. All quotes from classical *Sāṃkhya* are taken from Larson’s translation of the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* (SK).

12. Eliade dates the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* as being not later than the 5th century C.E. Dasgupta, however, dates it to about 200 C.E. Larson says that the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* was translated into Chinese between 557–569 C.E., so we can presume that the original existed before then. See Mircea Eliade, *Patanjali and Yoga*, trans. Charles Lam Markham (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), p. 16; Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, p. 212; and Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 4.

13. Franklin Edgerton, “The Meaning of Sāṃkhya and Yoga,” *American Journal of Philosophy* 45, no. 1 (1924): 32, see pp. 36ff; also *Beginnings*, pp. 36–39.

14. See Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, pp. 128–139, esp. pp. 133–136.

15. Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 133.

16. The *dhyaṇa*-s which Arāḍa describes are ones that, with a single exception, a Buddhist monk achieves. On the claim that the *Sāṃkhya* and the Yoga of the *Buddhacarita* do not represent distinctive schools but are two aspects of the same school, see Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 130. On the relationship between orthodox Yoga and Buddhist *dhyaṇa*-s, including the ones described by Arāḍa, see: Malalasekara, *Dictionary*, p. 297; Louis de la Vallée Poussin, “Le Bouddhisme et le Yoga de Patanjali,” *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* (1936–1937), pp. 228–230.

17. Johnston divides early *Sāṃkhya* into three chronological periods—an atheistic stage, a theistic stage, and another atheistic stage. Larson, in contrast, prefers to avoid a chronological scheme, and instead wishes “simply to point to the various strands or traditions of speculation and to show how they come together in the later texts of the period” (p. 139). For the purposes of this article, we have adopted an approach similar to Larson’s. See: E. H. Johnston, *Early Sāṃkhya* (1937; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), pp. 80–87.

18. E. H. Johnston, *The Saundarananda: or, Nanda the Fair* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932).

19. All references to the *Yoga Sūtras* will be taken from: James Haughton Woods, *The Yoga System of Patanjali*, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 17 (1914; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972).

20. The sages listed by Arāḍa are similarly cited in the *Mahābhārata* as being *Sāṃkhya* teachers. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao, “The *Buddhacarita* and the *Sāṃkhya* of Arāḍa Kālāma,” *Adyar Library Bulletin* 28 (1964): 232.

21. On the development of the term ‘*ātman*’ in the *Upaniṣads*, see Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads*, pp. 23–32.

22. For a discussion of the development of this term within the context of the *Upaniṣads*, the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Bhagavadgītā*, see Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, pp. 333–335. The earliest use of the term is *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.16, where it appears to be “an alternate word for the *puruṣa* of the *Sāṃkhya* system” (p. 333). For its appearance in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Pañcarātra* system, see Johnston, *Early*, pp. 44–45.

23. In Edgerton’s translation of *Mbh.* 12.298, the generation of a twenty-four principle material nature, similar to Arāḍa’s, is described. Beginning with the *avyakta*, each of the *tattva*-s of *prakṛti* emanate out of the previous one, and the objects of the sense emanate out of the elements. The rest of the process is jumbled. See *Beginnings*, pp. 323–324.

24. Compare SK XIX.

25. As a consequence of the Tibetan and Chinese words used for “nature,” there is some linguistic difficulty determining whether the original Sanskrit word was *prakṛti* or *svabhāva*, but the context of the argument leads Johnston to decide firmly upon the latter. See *Early*, pp. 70–71; also *Bvg.* v.14.

26. Johnston, *B*, p. lvix; *Early*, pp. 70–71.

27. Johnston, *Early*, p. 70. Put differently, the debate here is over the construction of causal chains of existence within early Indian speculation. Karl H. Potter points out that these chains were areas of contention between the different schools. See his *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1963), pp. 106–111.

28. *SK X*: “The manifest (*vyakta*) is caused, finite, nonpervasive, active supported emergent, composite, dependent. The unmanifest (*avyakta*) is the opposite.” *SK XI*: (Both) the manifest and unmanifest are (characterized by the) three *guṇa*-s (qualities or ‘strands’); undiscriminating, objective; general; nonconscious; productive; the *puruṣa* is the opposite of them, although similar (to the *avyakta* as characterized in vs. X).

29. Johnston, *Early*, p. 71. This is not to say, though, that the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* belief in the *guṇa*-s’ functions is in any way a response to Aśvaghoṣa.

30. Johnston, *Early*, p. 69. Compare *B*, p. lvii, however, where he refers to the classical *guṇa*-s as “subjects without qualities.”

31. Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, pp. 113, 174; J. A. B. van Buitenen, “Studies in Samkhya, II,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 77 (1957): 22–23; see *SK XXV*.

32. Johnston, *B*, p. lviii. He cites the meanings of *guṇa* in the epic verses as: (a) “‘quality’ generally,” (b) “objects of the senses,” (c) “anything evolved, which is described as a *guṇa* of that from which it is evolved,” (d) “qualities which serve to distinguish the varieties of the three *guṇas* of *prakṛti*,” and (e) “the *guṇas* themselves” [as they are known in the classical scheme].

33. Johnston, *B* lviii. Johnston’s interpretation of the early *Sāṃkhya guṇa*-s in the *Mahābhārata* as having solely moral functions is challenged by Van Buitenen, who claims instead that the *guṇa*-s had cosmic, evolutionary meaning. See J. A. B. van Buitenen, “Studies in Samkhya, I” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 76 (1956): 153, 155–156. Larson, however, correctly synthesizes van Buitenen’s and Johnston’s views (see pp. 116–120). We can still accept, therefore, Johnston’s discussion, at least as it applies to the *Buddhacarita*.

34. Johnston, *B*, p. lix.

35. Although Aśvaghoṣa never mentions the three roots of good per se, Johnston infers term from *B* ii, 56; xii, 68; and *S*, v, 17, where *hetu* works for good and not evil. See Johnston, *B*, p. xlii.

36. On this parallel, see Johnston, *Early*, pp. 36–37. Edgerton, in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, cites (s.v.) one of the *Akuṣalamūla* slightly differently from Johnston; ‘replacing’ *rāga* with its synonym, *lobha* (desire, longing for greed). Consequently, the three roots of good (*kuṣalamūla*) that Edgerton cites (s.v.) are *alobha* (non-desire), *adveṣa* (non-enmity), and *amoha* (non-delusion of mind, non-ignorance). Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, 2 vols. (1953, reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970). On the relationship between *rajas* and *rāga* see J. A. B. van Buitenen, “Studies in Sāṃkhya, III,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 77 (1957): 93.

37. Johnston, *B*, pp. 101–102, n. 53. On the concept of *rajas* and *tamas* as a collective entity, see van Buitenen, “Studies in Samkhya, III,” p. 100.

38. Johnston, *B*, pp. xli–xlii.

39. Johnston points out that “within the *Sāṃkhya* range of ideas,” the meaning of *moha* “bears resemblance to the delusion of *puruṣa*, by which, when in contact with *prakṛti*, imagines, though it is really a separate entity, it is identical with it.” “Some *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* Conceptions of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1930): 860.

40. Johnston, *B*, p. xlii. He claims that this is not true in the later *Abhidharma*. For *Nikāya* examples of the calming or suppressing of one’s lower nature or passions, and the refinement of one’s good nature, see *Samyutta Nikāya* 1, 5, 8; xlvii, III, II, V; XLVII, III, v, vii, and so on.

41. Johnston, *B*, pp. xlii–xliii. For the choice of the meditational subject best designed to overcome a person’s most active evil, see *S*, xvi, 53–67.

42. See *Early*, pp. 35–36. On the complementary roles of *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, see Edgerton, *Beginnings*, p. 38; and “Meaning.” On the opposition between *sattva* and *rāga*, see *B* vii 53. For a discussion on the belief that the purification of *sattva* is tantamount to release, see van Buitenen, “Studies in Sāṃkhya, III,” pp. 98–99.

43. This argument could not have been used against Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *Sāṃkhya*, however, since “neither *sattva* as an independent principle nor *sattva* as emancipation for the individual are doctrines held by classical *Sāṃkhya*. We can conjecture that, with the radical otherness of *puruṣa* in

Īśvarakṛṣṇa's atheistic work, *sattva* could at best play only a major role in the process of emancipation, but could not be emancipation itself. The necessary adjustment is made by making the means of emancipation be an acquisition of knowledge through a *bhāva* composed of *sattva*; i.e., the *bhāva jñāna*... while still insisting that emancipation lie beyond anything to be found in *prakṛti*, where *sattva* and the other *guṇa*-s existed." Stephen A. Kent, "Valentinian Gnosticism and Classical Sāṃkhya: A Thematic and Structural Study" (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Microfilm service, 1978), p. 43 (M. A. thesis). On the role of *sattva* in classical Sāṃkhya's liberation scheme, see Stephen A. Kent, "Valentinian Gnosticism and Classical Sāṃkhya: A Thematic and Structural Comparison," *Philosophy East and West* 30, no. 2 (April, 1980): 251–252.

44. Johnston, *B*, pp. xli-xlii; see Potter, *Presuppositions*, pp. 102, 103, 112–113.

45. Johnston, *Early*, p. 21.

46. *Ibid.*

47. See Johnston, *B*, p. 170, n. 24.

48. On Arāḍa's equating the fivefold ignorance to the five *doṣa*-s (faults), see Johnston, *B*, p. 172, n. 34; Johnston, "Some," pp. 862, 873; compare *YS* ii.3.

49. See Johnston, *B*, p. lx.

50. Larson, p. 111. For a valuable discussion of the *rajas*-ic and *tamas*-ic elements within the fivefold ignorance and the relationship between the fivefold ignorance and the *rajas/tamas* grouping, see van Buitenen, "Studies in Sāṃkhya, III," pp. 100–101.

51. See Johnston, *Early*, p. 35.

52. Johnston, *B*, p. lviii. The use of the term "*prakṛti*" in classical Sāṃkhya can be confusing, since it often appears as the general title for 'matter'. When the creation process is in progress, however, '*prakṛti*' means but the 'starting point' from which the *guṇa*-s activate, and it is in this sense that the term is used here.

53. Johnston, *Early*, pp. 69, 71–72. On p. 72 he also states that Arāḍa's Sāṃkhya is the final developmental stage before the important association of *avyakta* with *prakṛti* (for example, the classical notion) was made. Furthermore, he says that the *svabhāva* theory could only have been held by *anīśvara* (atheistic) Sāṃkhya schools that did not accept an Īśvara as being the creative force of the world. In theistic, Īśvara systems, such as the *Śvet. U.*, "the Īśvara himself has the function of creation and the necessity for a principle of *svabhāva*, separate from *prakṛti* and setting it in motion does not arise, and accordingly the use of the term in such systems is not frequent."

54. *SK* LV: "the *puruṣa*, which is conscious, attains there the suffering made by decay and death; until deliverance of the subtle body; therefore, suffering is of the nature of things (*svabhāva*)." Johnston, in contrast, claims that the (apparent?) connection between *puruṣa* and the manifest world is explained in the *Yoga Sūtras* as being accidental (*naimittika*). See Johnston, *B*, p. lx; and Vācaspatiśrī's explanation of *YS* ii.17 in Woods, *The Yoga System*, p. 142.

55. *B* ix. 59–62 only mentions the elements fire and water, but the process by which they coalesce is still clear. In *Early*, p. 67, Johnston identifies the group holding this materialistic view as the *bhūtacintakas* of the *Mahābhārata* (12. 224.50, see 12. 229. 2ff) and who are better known as the *Kvabhāvavādins*.

56. Johnston, *Early*, p. 67. On p. 69 he also claims that the classical *guṇaparīṇāma* theory might be borrowed "from the Yoga form of Sāṃkhya," a reference to the Bhāṣya on *YS* iii.13 (in Woods, *The Yoga System*, p. 213).

57. Johnston, *Early*, p. 60, see p. 72; *B*, p. lix-lx. Also see van Buitenen, "Studies in Sāṃkhya, III," pp. 100–102, 106.

58. Johnston, *Early*, p. 83. For a brief history of the development of the *jīva ātman* concept, see Kent, *Valentinian*... *Study*, pp. 34–37, 53–55. Another probable function of *ahamkāra* was to generate the *bhūta*-s; see van Buitenen, "Studies in Sāṃkhya, II," p. 23.

59. Also see *B* ix., 64, which is a description of the Sāṃkhya doctrine: "there are others who assert that the coming into being and the passing away from being is solely on account of the soul."

60. See Kent, *Valentinian*... *Study*, pp. 34–37.

61. Or so claims Johnston, *B*, p. lvii.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 169, n. 21. Concerning the place of Kapila and Āsuri within the Sāṃkhya system, see Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 149 and *SK* LXIX–LXX.

63. More precisely, Prajāpati symbolizes "the *bhūtāman*, here taken as equivalent to *ahamkāra*."

Johnston, *B*, p. 169, n. 21. For the five *Mahābhārata* references equating Prajāpati with *ahamkāra*, see Johnston, *Early*, p. 17.

64. Johnston, *B*, p. 170, n. 21. Although the emanation process is unclear, one wonders whether the reference to Prajāpati and his sons should be taken as an indication that the five elements generate out of *ahamkāra*. Johnston, "Some," p. 864 claims that this was the common emanation pattern found in the *Mahābhārata*, as mentioned above in n.23.

65. Johnston, *B*, p. lxi. See also *YS* iii. 26, and the accompanying Comments and Explanations.

66. Johnston, "Some," p. 869.

67. Ibid. Johnston even claims that "spiritual functions" can also evolve from them. I do not know what he means by this, since, as I see it, all of the secondary *tattva*-s are material in nature. In some way, however, Johnston's claim may be related to the Yoga practice of meditation on the elements. See Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series 76 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), p. 195; and Johnston's reference to "yogic absorption in the elements" in "Some," p. 869.

68. Johnston claims this in "Some," p. 870, although admitting that the evidence is scanty to support it. While never explaining fully the process by which the eightfold *prakṛti*, through *svabhāva*, creates the secondary evolutes, he does offer a few remarks concerning how secondary matter was thought to have related to the elements: "Originally each member of the [*śabda*] group was considered a *guṇa* [attribute] of one of the elements only . . . but the later theory . . . gives one element the qualities of all five, the next four, and so on to the last of one only." Ibid., pp. 867–868.

69. Johnston, "Some," p. 870.

70. Ibid., p. 867. The relationship between the five elements, the objects of the senses and the senses is very unclear.

71. See, for instance, Karl H. Potter, ed., *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology: The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977), pp. 86–87; 112–119; 161–162; Erich Frauwallner, *History of Indian Philosophy*, trans. V. M. Bedekar 2 vols., (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), 2: 14.

73. I borrow this basic argument from Frauwallner I, pp. 272–274; see also Johnston, "Some," p. 871.

74. On the intermediary stage between Arāḍa's system and the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, in which the eight-fold and sixteen-fold division falls into disfavor in the *Mahābhārata*, see Johnston, "Some," pp. 870–871.

75. Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya* p. 205; see Dasgupta, p. 251.

76. See Edgerton, *Beginnings*, p. 41, and n. 2.

77. Sen Gupta, p. 121; Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 122.

78. Johnston, *Early*, pp. 54–55, based upon *Mahābhārata* passages; accepted by Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, p. 123. This is confused, though, when Johnston (*B*, p. lx) says that Āśvaghoṣa regards the soul "as an individual, not a universal." On the one hand, he fails to specify whether he is addressing Āśvaghoṣa's notion of *ātman* or *kṣetrajñā*. On the other hand, he fails to clarify what he means by "universal" (especially in relation to the *Mahābhārata* notions of *ātman* as "cosmic" soul).

79. See Edgerton, "Meaning," pp. 22–29.

80. Sen Gupta, p. 122.

81. *SK* LXII: "Nothing, therefore, is bound, nothing released, likewise not anything transmigrates. (Only) *prakṛti* in its various forms transmigrates, is bound, and is released."

82. For a general discussion of the Buddhist attempt to explain "how bondage came about and how freedom is to be gained," see Potter, *Presuppositions*, pp. 113, 131. In their causal scheme the Buddhists avoid postulating anything, like the *ātman*, that is permanent, and thereby attempt to prevent the problem of subtle but lingering *karm*-ic seeds.

83. For a critique concerning the setting forth of Truth or "Knowledge" within the classical *Sāṃkhya* scheme, see Potter, *Presuppositions*, pp. 216–217. Although it pertains to the classical school, Potter's discussion is relevant here.

84. Commenting on *B* xii. 79 (p. 180), Johnston says, "the argument apparently is that the fact that the *kṣetrajñā* is called *śarīrin* [having a body] shows that it did not exist before there was a body for it to inhabit (the bond therefore being *anādi* [having no beginning, existing from eternity]).