

**Zeitschrift:** Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie  
**Herausgeber:** Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft  
**Band:** 53 (1999)  
**Heft:** 3  
  
**Artikel:** Refutation as commentary : medieval jain arguments against Smkhya  
**Autor:** Granoff, Phyllis  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-147469>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 04.07.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## REFUTATION AS COMMENTARY: MEDIEVAL JAIN ARGUMENTS AGAINST SĀṂKHYA

Phyllis Granoff, Hamilton

Medieval Jain, Buddhist and Nyāya arguments against the Sāṁkhya show a remarkable consistency that defies sectarian boundaries.<sup>1</sup> Their arguments focus on several issues that they clearly saw as defining of Sāṁkhya tenets and that were at the same time contrary to their own beliefs. These are the Sāṁkhya doctrine of *satkāryavāda*, the belief that the product exists in the cause, from which it is then made manifest; the *pradhānavāda*, the belief that the world derives from a single material cause that is triplicate in nature, and the description of the intellect or *buddhi* and states of pleasure and pain as insentient. Vedānta refutations of Sāṁkhya, for example the

1 For this study I have examined the following texts:

Siddhasena Divākara, *Sanmatitarka* with commentary of Abhayadeva, ed. SUKHALĀLA, SAMGHA VĪ and BEDARADĀSDOŚI, reprinted, Kyōto: Rinsen Book Company, 1984 (abbr. STT).

Prabhācandra, *Nyāyakumudacandra*, ed. Mahendra KUMAR NYAYACHARYA, Manik Chandra Digambara Jaina Granthamālā 39, Bombay, 1915 (abbr. NKC).

*Prameyakamalamārtaṇḍa*, ed. Mahendra KUMAR SHASTRI, Bombay: Nirṇaya Sagara Press, 1941 (abbr. PK).

Vidyānanda, *Āptaparīkṣā*, ed. Darabārīlāl JAIN, Virasevāmandira Granthamālā, vol. 8, 1949 (abbr. AP).

*Satyāśāsanaparīkṣā*, ed. Gokul Chandra JAIN, Jñānapīṭha Mūrtidevī Jaina Granthamālā, Sanskrit Grantha no. 30, Calcutta: Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha, 1964 (abbr. SSP).

Mallavādin, *Dvādaśāranayacakra*, ed. Muni JAMBŪVIJAYA, Bhavnagar: Jain Ātmānanda Sabhā, 1966 (abbr. DA).

*A Collection of Jaina Philosophical Tracts*, ed. Nagin J. SHAH, Ahmedabad: L.D Institute, vol. 41, 1973.

Malliṣeṇasūri, *Syādvādamāñjarī*, ed. Jagadīścandra JAIN, Bāyā: Śrīmad Rājacandra Āśrama, 1970 (abbr. SVM).

Haribhadra, *Śāstravārttāsamuccaya*, with commentary of Yaśovijaya, Bombay: Kumārapālavihāra, 1979.

Bhāvasena, *Viśvatattvaparakāśa*, ed. Vidyādhara JOHARĀPŪRAKAR, Sholapur: Jaina Saṁskṛti Saṁrakṣak Samgha, 1964.

The edition of the Buddhist *Tattvasaṁgraha* that I have used is edited by Swami Dwarikadas SHASTRI in the Bauddha Bharati Series, vol.1, Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 1968 (abbr. TS).

arguments of Śaṅkara in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, by necessity had to take a different approach, since the Vedāntins and Sāṃkhyaś shared two of these three critical doctrines: the *satkāryavāda* and the doctrine that the *buddhi* is insentient and that states like pain and pleasure are material, having the inner organ or the *antaḥkaraṇa* as their locus.<sup>2</sup> Vedānta refutations concentrated on refuting the *pradhānavāda* and arguing that there was no scriptural support in the Upaniṣads for this Sāṃkhya doctrine. Of the Jain texts, the *Āptaparīkṣā*, the *Śāstravārttāsamuccaya* and the *Dvādaśāranayacakra* deviate somewhat from the general line of arguments pursued by most of the other later texts. The *Āptaparīkṣā* attempts to refute the notion that Kapila is a trustworthy author of sacred doctrine; in doing so it attacks directly the practical side of Sāṃkhya, which it sees as identical to the meditation system of the *Yoga Sūtra*. The *Dvādaśāranayacakra* goes into far more detail than any of the other Jain texts, and focusses on areas not of particular interest to other texts, for example, on how exactly the three *guṇas* function in consort to produce the world. Other Jain texts stick more broadly to a refutation of the larger Sāṃkhya categories like the *pradhāna* itself, presumably assuming that once the notion that there is this material first cause is done away with, precisely how it functions becomes immaterial. For its part the *Śāstravārttāsamuccaya* seems more interested in Sāṃkhya notions of the soul and release than it does in causality.

The Sāṃkhya that medieval philosophers refute is generally the Sāṃkhya of the *Kārikā* and its earlier commentaries. Although Malliṣeṇa in the *Syādvādamāñjarī*, which was completed in 1293 A.D., explicitly names Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvakaumudī* along with the *Gauḍapādabhāṣya*, even a cursory review of the Jain texts that refute Sāṃkhya shows that the interpretation of the Sāṃkhya that these authors cite belongs by and large to the earliest commentaries. At this stage of my investigation I would also suggest that the Jain texts show little or no awareness of the often unique arguments of the *Yuktidīpikā*, which might lead to the further speculation that the *Yuktidīpikā* was not a text whose theories were hotly debated outside Sāṃkhya circles.

While this is definitely the general impression one is left with from reading the Jain texts, it is not always easy to determine precisely exactly what Sāṃkhya commentaries the Jain texts are in fact citing and refuting.

2 For a detailed discussion of this doctrine from the Vedānta standpoint see Śaṅkara's *Upadeśasāhasrī*, I.15.13 and II.1.35.

For example, Jains as we shall see spent considerable effort in refuting *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 9. They all seem to have the same interpretation of the verse, an interpretation that they share with the Buddhist *Tattvasaṃgraha*. The interpretation of the first three terms, and probably the fourth, presents no particular problem; the commentaries with the exception of Vācaspati and the *Yuktidīpikā* agree on these three terms.<sup>3</sup> The *Yuktidīpikā* in particular deviates from the other interpretations considerably, but the Jain texts I have examined show absolutely no awareness of its arguments for much of the verse. The problem becomes more complicated, however, when we come to the last term, *kāraṇabhāvāt*. The Jain texts (and the Buddhist *Tattvasaṃgraha*, which I argue below is their source) agree that the argument is something like this: The product must exist, since we speak of a cause and causality is a relationship. A non-existent entity cannot be one term of a relationship. We do not see hare's horns entering into any kind of relationship with anything. Therefore the product must exist in order for us to speak of something being a "cause" at all.<sup>4</sup> The early commentaries all have a different interpretation. They take this to mean that the product must exist since the product and the cause have the same nature. As V1 explains, we get rice from rice and *kodrava* grain from *kodrava*. The other commentaries agree with this general reading, although they may have other examples. The question then arises: where did the Jains and the Buddhists get their interpretation of this last term in the verse? Surprisingly, it is close to what is offered by the *Yuktidīpikā*. The obvious hesitation in attributing it to the *Yuktidīpikā* is that it would seem unusual indeed if the Jains had ignored the *Yuktidīpikā* interpretations of the other terms in the verse and had chosen to rely on the text for the reading of only this one term of the verse. It seems more likely that they derive their interpretation from some text that we no longer have at our disposal today.<sup>5</sup>

3 The *Vṛtti* and *Saptativṛtti* are edited by Esther SOLOMON, Ahmedabad: Gujarat University, 1973. The *Gauḍapādabhāṣya* that I have used is edited by T. G. MAINKAR, Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1964.

4 See the NKC 352-353; PKM 287; Abhayadeva 282-283; TS 23 on verse 8.

5 As I shall argue below, the Jains who offer what I call the standardized refutation borrowed heavily from the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and *Pañjikā*. That they did so in the case of their interpretation of this verse is absolutely without doubt. While the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and its commentary seem closest to Paramārtha at this point, the mystery of the interpretation of reason 5 remains unsolved. On the Paramārtha commentary and

There remains, then, considerable detective work to be done on this question.

In contrast to the slight attention they pay to a later text like the *Kaumudī*, the Jain sources do often cite verses attributed to early authors. Thus Haribhadra, Malliṣeṇa and Bhāvasena all cite a verse attributed to Āsuri on how the process of knowledge is explained in Sāṃkhya.<sup>6</sup> Another early verse that is frequently cited also concerns Sāṃkhya epistemology. This verse, attributed to Vindhyavāsin by Malliṣeṇa and Yaśovijaya, explains how the soul, which remains unchanged, causes the mind, which is insentient, to take on the reflection of the soul.<sup>7</sup>

Given the remarkable consistency that medieval Jain and Buddhist refutations of Sāṃkhya in particular display, it seems natural to ask whether direct borrowing is anywhere in evidence and what the original source of their arguments might have been. Scholars have noted the similarity of Prabhācandra's arguments against the *satkāryavāda* to those in the Buddhist *Tattvasaṃgraha* and the *Pañjikā*.<sup>8</sup> The commentary of Abhayadeva to the

---

the interrelationship of all the commentaries see Esther SOLOMON, *The Commentaries of the Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, Ahmedabad: Gujarat University, 1974, pp. 25-27.

- <sup>6</sup> SVM p. 138 reproduces the verse as follows:

*vivikte dṛkpariṇatau buddhau bhogo 'sya kathyate /  
pratibimbodayaḥ svacche yathā candramaso 'mbhasi.*

Bhāvasena also has this reading.

Haribhadra ( 3.29) offers:

*vibhaktedṛkpariṇatau buddhau bhogo 'sya kathyate /  
pratibimbodayaḥ svacche yathā candramaso 'mbhasi.*

As Yaśovijaya explains, this means that enjoyment for the soul is explained as the reflection of the soul in the *buddhi*, which has taken on the transformation just described. That transformation, the reflection of the soul in the *buddhi*, is different from the soul which remains unchanged in the process.

The *Vyomavatī*, cited by Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI in his *Origins and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1975, p. 187, has a still different reading of the first term: *viviktadṛkpariṇatau*.

- <sup>7</sup> Haribhadra 2.28:

*puruṣo 'vikṛtātmāiva svanirbhāsam acetanam /  
manah karoti sāṇidhyād upādhiḥ sphaṭikam yathā*

The verse is also attributed to Vindhyavāsin by Guṇaratna Sūri in his *Ṣaddarśana Samuccaya*, cited by Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1975, p. 145.

- <sup>8</sup> See the excellent notes to the NKC and PKM.



*Sanmatitarka* of Siddhasena (11th century A.D.) leaves no doubt that the original source of at least some of the Jain arguments was indeed the Buddhist *Tattvasamgraha* and its *Pañjikā*. The *Sanmatitarka* deals with the Jain doctrine of *nayas*, or partial viewpoints. It allows one partial viewpoint to supplant another. Thus in this text Sāṃkhya is classified as an example of the *aśuddha dravya naya*, the “impure viewpoint that reduces everything to eternal substance”.<sup>9</sup> The Vedānta is considered to be the “pure” statement of this viewpoint. Abhayadeva allows someone who holds to the *paryāya naya*, the “viewpoint that reduces everything to changing states” to speak against the Sāṃkhya doctrine. The paradigmatic exponent of the pure doctrine of changing states is the Buddhist. Abhayadeva thus allows the Buddhist to speak against the Sāṃkhya. He quotes directly from the *Tattvasamgraha* and then takes entire passages from the *Pañjikā*, including quotes from Buddhist texts like the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in support of the refutations of Sāṃkhya. There is no question that Abhayadeva has taken his arguments directly from the Buddhist text. By employing the device of allowing one party in error to refute another party in error, Abhayadeva avoids any charge of undue influence. Later Jain refutations would seem to follow in Abhayadeva’s footsteps in making free use of Buddhist arguments, although they do not share the framework of Abhayadeva’s text. Eventually the arguments come to be presented as if they were genuinely Jain arguments. The *Tattvasamgraha* is dated in the 8th century A.D., well before many of the Jain sources I have used for this study, except perhaps Mallavādin, Vidyānandi and Haribhadra. Vidyānandi belongs to the 9th century; Prabhācandra and Abhayadeva were roughly contemporary, while Bhāvasena is much later, having flourished in the 13th century. Prabhācandra’s two texts, the NKC and PK are close indeed to Abhayadeva and the *Tattvasamgraha*. Malliṣeṇa mentions the NKC by name (p. 134) and we may assume that the lineage of transmission of the arguments from the *Tattvasamgraha* ran through Abhayadeva and Prabhācandra to these later authors. Haribhadra, Vidyānandi and Mallavādin precede what I would call this period of standardization of the Jain arguments against the Sāṃkhya in which the influence of Buddhist arguments is undeniable.

The earlier Jain refutations, for example, Haribhadra in the *Śāstra-vārtāsamuccaya*, do not focus as intensively as the later texts on the *satkāryavāda*. Thus Haribhadra spends more time on Sāṃkhya epistemo-

<sup>9</sup> Abhayadeva’s refutation begins on p. 280.

logy and the Sāṃkhya denial of the soul as an agent than he does on overall theories of causality; he also spends considerable effort refuting the Sāṃkhya statements about release and bondage. While the later Jain refutations focus on *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 9 and 15, the *kārikās* that establish the *satkāryavāda* and the existence of the *pradhāna* as the sole cause of the world, Haribhadra does not quote either of these two *kārikās*, although his late commentator Yaśovijaya quotes both in his discussion of 3.18. Instead Haribhadra quotes the verses attributed to Āsuri and Vindhyavāsin cited earlier, and a verse that is unattributed but concerns the debate about whether it is necessary to renounce the world in order to achieve release. This verse is also quoted by Vidyānandi in the *Satyaśāsanaparīkṣā*, p. 31.<sup>10</sup> This recalls of course the debate in the *Gītā* and in the *Mahābhārata Śānti parvan*, for example 2.308, the discussion between Janaka and Sulabhā. It is rash to judge on the basis of such scant evidence, but it would seem that the intense concentration in Jain texts on the *satkāryavāda* as a general doctrine typifying the Sāṃkhya is taken from Buddhist arguments. Jains at first may well have been more concerned with Sāṃkhya discussions of the nature of the soul and the nature of bondage and release. It is worth noting in this connection that one of the texts I examined that is relatively early, the *Satyaśāsanaparīkṣā* of Vidyānandi, seems to know a Sāṃkhya that is slightly different from the Sāṃkhya of the *Kārikā*; it speaks of a *nirīśvara* Sāṃkhya of twenty-six *tattvas*, which adds the category *paramātmān* to the normal 25 and a Sāṃkhya of 27 categories where the existence of *īśvara* is accepted. This Sāṃkhya is closer to some of the Sāṃkhya doctrines in the *Mahābhārata*, for example in 12.306.

What I have called the “standardized” Jain refutations of Sāṃkhya still have much to tell us about how Sāṃkhya was understood as a system of philosophy and what were considered to be problem areas of Sāṃkhya doctrine. Despite their obvious dependence on a single source and what might be considered a resulting lack of originality, they are thus not entirely without interest. I focus here on only one complex issue, and that is the nature of *buddhi* in the Sāṃkhya system. Is *buddhi* a cosmic principle

<sup>10</sup> 2. 37:

*pañcaviṃśatitattvajñō yatra tatrāśrame rataḥ /  
jaṭī muṇḍī śikhī vāpi mucyate nātra saṃśayaḥ //*

The individual who knows the twenty-five categories, no matter what stage of life he finds himself in, whether he wears matted locks, or has a shaved head or wears the householder’s tuft, is released. Of this there is no doubt.

or more precisely is it only a cosmic principle? How are we to interpret the definition of *buddhi* in *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 23 as definitive knowledge (*adhyavasāya*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and righteousness (*dharma*) among other things, terms which seem to be more related to the individual and to the process of knowledge than to any cosmic creation?<sup>11</sup>

Jain authors often quote what they take to be a Sāṃkhya maxim, *ā sargād ekā buddhiḥ*, “A single *buddhi* endures from the creation to the dissolution of the universe.” Abhayadeva quotes this maxim, p. 300, which also occurs in the *Tattvasaṃgraha Pañjikā* on verse 27 (p. 37). The context, which is the same in Abhayadeva and his source, the *Pañjikā*, is particularly interesting, because it shows that at least for the sake of argument an opponent of the Sāṃkhya could use this confusion or ambiguity in Sāṃkhya doctrine for his own arguments. The discussion at this point is on the *satkāryavāda*. The Jain (Buddhist) asks the Sāṃkhya what function debate or logical argument could serve in a doctrine where the desired result, knowledge, already exists. After all, knowledge is a product and all products according to the Sāṃkhya exist in their causes. Abhayadeva then allows the Sāṃkhya to argue that even if knowledge exists it is not manifest. The discussion then turns to a dissection of what this manifestation or *abhivyakti* could possibly be. Among the possibilities given is that *abhivyakti*, the manifestation of a thing, is simply the arising of knowledge of that thing. Applying this to the specific case at hand, then, the manifestation of the knowledge, which is to be the result of a proof, would be another knowledge that has that knowledge as its object. The refutation of this is that in the Sāṃkhya doctrine this is impossible, since knowledge is given as a synonym for *buddhi* and according to the Sāṃkhya *buddhi* is one and lasts from creation to dissolution of the universe. In other words, according to the Sāṃkhya, at least so the Buddhist and Jain here argue, *buddhi* is a cosmic and not a psychological principle.

The Sāṃkhya is permitted to argue at this point that individual knowledge of various objects in the world is not to be confused with *buddhi*, the cosmological category. Individual knowledge is to be equated

<sup>11</sup> For a summary of some of the problems of Western scholars on this issue, see the article by Rodney PARROTT, “The Problem of the Sāṃkhya Tattvas as Both Cosmic and Psychological Phenomena”, in : *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 14, 1986, pp. 55-77. The difficulty with PARROTT’s interpretation is that there is no indication in any of the commentaries that a two-fold prespective is employed.



with the *manas*. *Manas* is included in the inner organ, the *antaḥkaraṇa* according to the various glosses on *kārikā* 33. The answer to this is not entirely satisfactory; here the Buddhist and Jain summarily dismiss the Sāṃkhya with a statement that the terms “*manas*” and “*buddhi*” are synonymous in common parlance. They might also have argued that the Sāṃkhya lists *manas* among the *indriyas*, which might preclude its definition as knowledge, the product of the working of the sense organs. In support of Abhayadeva, one could say that although the Sāṃkhya gives a definition of *manas* in *kārikā* 27 which is different from the definition of *buddhi*, verses like those cited earlier from Āsuri and Vindhyavāsin, do use the terms synonymously.

While this passage thus may not represent Sāṃkhya doctrine entirely accurately, it does tell us that historically there were problems in Sāṃkhya when it came down to defining what exactly the term *buddhi* meant. Abhayadeva gives his own definitions, and clearly wants to understand *buddhi* as an epistemological or psychological and not a cosmic category. He says *buddhiś ca ghata pata ity adhyavasāyalakṣaṇam* (p. 280). In part his argument hinges on the insistence that in the Sāṃkhya system such a definition is impossible; object knowledge like the knowledge of a pot or a cloth is transient; it would be impossible to say of such a knowledge that it lasts from the creation of the world to its dissolution! Later Jain authors would similarly play on the ambiguity of the categories *buddhi* and *aḥamkāra*; thus one author argues that these cannot be evolutes of *prakṛti* since they are defined as forms of cognition and thus must belong to the soul.<sup>12</sup>

Applying Sāṃkhya cosmological processes or categories to actual entities in the observed world was a frequent strategy of Jain arguments against the Sāṃkhya. Haribhadra, for example, takes the Sāṃkhya insistence that the world is without a conscious agent of creation and that creation proceeds from matter, from *prakṛti*, alone, to mean that the Sāṃkhyas believed that the same general rule had to be true as well of the acts of creation we observe on a daily basis in our lives. He therefore attributes to the Sāṃkhya the view that even such things as pots are simply produced by a natural process out of clay without any effort required of the

<sup>12</sup> The anonymous *Pañcadarśanakhaṇḍana*, ed. Nagin SHAH, *Collection of Jain Philosophical Tracts*, L. D. Series 41, Ahmedabad, L. D. Institute of Indology, 1973, p. 18.

potter (3.20). Haribhadra dismisses this by insisting that we see that pots are not produced without potters; this leads him then into an assertion that it is not the potter's body that is required (keeping the process strictly material), but the potter as a conscious agent. It is worth noting that this odd viewpoint here attributed to the Sāṃkhya, namely that a pot is produced by some natural process not requiring the activity of the potter, is attributed to the Ājīvikas in the Jain *upāṅga*, the *Uvāsagadasāo*, chapter 7. There we hear of Saddālaputta, the faithful disciple of Makkhali Gosala, and himself a potter. He is disabused of his notion that pots come into being without any human effort, through some natural process, when the question is turned to their means of destruction. Mahāvīra asks him if human agency is not required to create or destroy the pots, then surely he could not blame someone who came and smashed them! For good measure, just in case Saddālaputta doesn't care too much about his pots, Mahāvīra adds that the same might apply to a man who abducted Saddālaputta's wife and made a good time of it; that act too would have to be without any human agency or responsibility!<sup>13</sup>

The argument that the potter would be useless in the creation of a pot, turned against the Sāṃkhya by Haribhadra, suggests that it was not difficult for an opponent to exploit a basic ambiguity in the Sāṃkhya system, namely the question of how what is described in the *kārikās* as the creation of the elements can be related to ordinary acts of creation observed every day and how terms used as cosmic principles relate to the same terms as they are more commonly applied to individual psychological realities. Just how persistent the problem could be can be inferred from a casual remark that Vācaspati Miśra makes on *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 39; he assumes that the verse refers in the first term to subtle bodies, while the second term clearly refers to gross bodies; so far he seems on solid ground. When he goes to gloss the last term, *prabhūtais* he says that this refers to the gross elements and moreover that it includes normal ordinary objects like pots. Somehow Vācaspati needs to bring Sāṃkhya creation down to the ordinary objects of our world. Other commentaries interpret the term more in keeping with the context of the verse.

One Jain text suggests further that adherents to the Sāṃkhya did seek to resolve some of these problems. The *Nyāyakumudacandra* describes a process of creation that in its greater detail from what we find in the

<sup>13</sup> Edited P. L. VAIDYA, Poona, 1930, p. 51.

*Sāṃkhya Kārikā* seems to be grappling with some of these issues (NKC, p. 351). Prabhācandra describes as the Sāṃkhya position that from *prakṛti* comes *mahān*, which is one, all-pervading and endures from creation to dissolution of the universe. This *mahān* cannot be known directly by any of us. The different individual forms of knowledge that we all have, which he calls *pratiprāṇi vibhinnā buddhivṛttayah*, by contrast can be directly known by us. These individual forms of knowledge are said to come from the one cosmic *mahān*. We are then told that the situation is the same with the *ahamkāra*:

*tataś cāhamkāras tathāvidho jalaṇidhir iva pratiprāṇi vibhinnaiḥ taiḥ sthūlo  
'ham surūpo 'ham ityādyahamkāra viśeṣaiḥ prasaratī.*

And the *ahamkāra* is similar; it may be likened to the ocean with its waves, as from it come the many different individual notions of egoity, for example, 'I am fat' or 'I am handsome.'

The text then continues to describe the Sāṃkhya creation down to the *mahābhūtas* or great elements. But what is interesting is that it does not stop here. It labels this creation as the *tattvaśrṣṭi*, "the creation of the cosmic principles". It then describes another creation, which begins with the appearance of Brahmā and then a *buddhi* for Brahmā that comes from *mahattattva* and is vast in its extent (it is of one hundred *yojanas*). From the *ahamkāratattva* then comes an *ahamkāra* for Brahmā and sense organs. The *tanmātras* next give rise to subtle elements that will form the subtle body, while the gross elements give rise to a gross body, which in this case appears instantaneously, without the necessity of embryonic growth. The same process, we are told, holds for the creation of the Manus. For other creatures, we learn, the subtle body lasts from creation to dissolution of the world, but their gross bodies come about in different ways, for example, from the union of a mother and father in the case of humans and some other creatures. (NKC, p. 352). Unfortunately the refutation of this passage does not deal with specifics but argues generally that given the Sāṃkhya understanding of *prakṛti* and the process of creation it is impossible to understand how creation would ever get started or why it would not always be taking place. The text also asks if these evolutes are different from *prakṛti* or identical to it. It then proceeds to a refutation of the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* and *kārikā* 9 (NKC, p. 356). What it never argues is that the

description of creation presented is in any way contrary to received Sāṃkhya doctrine.

It is not at all clear to me what Prabhācandra's source for this description is. CHAKRAVARTI has pointed out that the *Yuktidīpikā* makes room for creation from Brahmā or from some superhuman being described by the unusual term *māhātmyaśarīra*. The *Yuktidīpikā* passage in question, on *kārikā* 46, does not indicate the relationship between this level of creation and the creation described in the *kārikās*; it does not seem to be the source of the NKC passage I am discussing.<sup>14</sup> The *Yuktidīpikā* on *kārikā* 52 also envisions a process of creation that includes the creation of Kapila and Hiraṇyagarbha, and other extraordinary beings before the creation of ordinary creatures. But there is no discussion of the mechanics of the creation. Such passages, tantalizing as they are, do make clear, however, that there was considerable speculation in Sāṃkhya circles about the mechanics of creation and its different levels, particularly in the light of purāṇic theories of creation.<sup>15</sup>

The NKC passage is extremely interesting for several other reasons. It attempts to distinguish between a cosmic *buddhi* or *ahamkāra* and these terms as they apply to the knowing individual. It also attempts to describe a

<sup>14</sup> CHAKRAVARTI, *Yuktidīpikā on kārikā* 46, pp. 222-223.

<sup>15</sup> In this connection it is interesting to note the variant readings for *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 56. Earlier commentaries read *mahadādiviśeṣabhūtaparyantaḥ* to describe creation from *prakṛti*. Gauḍapāda makes clear that this is simply the chain *mahad, ahamkāra, tanmātrāṇi, ekādaśendriyāṇi* (ed. T. G. MAINKAR, Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1964, p. 145). A similar interpretation may be found in the *Sāṃkhyasaptatīvr̥tti* (ed. Esther SOLOMON, Ahmedabad: Gujarat University, 1973, p. 70). The *Mātharavṛtti* has the same reading but takes the term to include gross bodies and objects of the sense organs (ed. Viṣṇu Prasād ŚARMĀ, Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1970, p. 111).

I take this difference to imply a lack of agreement among commentators as to what exactly were the limits of the creation theory; was it meant to explain the creation of the building blocks of the world or of the various objects we know in our ordinary perceptions. When we come to the *Yuktidīpikā* we have an interesting variant on the reading of the verse itself; instead of *mahadādiviśeṣabhūtaparyantaḥ* we now have *tattvabhūtabhāvākhyāḥ* which is glossed as three levels of creation, the first referring to the chain starting with *mahad*, the next to the creation of Brahmā and other beings and the third to the creation of *dharma* and other things (ed. Albrecht WEZLER and Shujun MOTEGI, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 1998, p. 261).

This shows, I think, a growing concern with bringing Sāṃkhya into line with purāṇic theories and is closest to the NKC of all the commentaries.



relationship between the macrocosmic and microcosmic, arguing here by analogy, likening the macrocosmic to the ocean and the microcosmic to the waves. There is no sense that the waves are false here; the emphasis seems to be on their transient existence and their appearance from their ocean source. Another interesting feature about this description is the second stage of creation. It is acknowledged that the creation described in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* cannot possibly be the creation of the visible world as we know it. There is a brief anonymous Jain text, the *Pañcadarśanakhaṇḍana*, which suggests that Sāṃkhya opponents could ask this question about the process of creation described in the *Kārikā*: was this meant to describe the creation of the individual creatures in the world or of something else? The text allows the Sāṃkhya to say that it describes just what it says it does: the process of creation from *prakṛti* to the gross elements, the *mahābhūtas*. The Jain reply is that this is unacceptable, since the Sāṃkhyas hold that the world itself is eternal, by the maxim *na kadācid anīdṛśaṃ jagat*. It might be worth noting that to make this maxim, often cited with reference to the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, apply to normative Sāṃkhya, one would have to assume that the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* implies the eternal existence of the evolutes of *prakṛti*.<sup>16</sup> The next possibility the text offers is that the creation is meant to describe the creation of the various beings we see, humans, animals and so on. The answer to that is that we know that the bodies of humans and other animals come from particular causes such as the union of sperm and female sexual fluid. There is thus no room for the creation that the Sāṃkhya describes.<sup>17</sup> This refutation plays on the same ambiguity we have been observing: is the Sāṃkhya talking about some cosmic process or something more concrete and on a microcosmic level?

The other point of interest in the passage is its reliance on purāṇic cosmological notions, for example, in its statement that the second creation begins with the appearance of Brahmā. Probably one of the more intriguing questions about the Sāṃkhya theories of creation is their relationship to the

<sup>16</sup> During the conference, J. BRONKHORST raised the possibility that this is a reference to the aberrant doctrines of Mādhava, who denied the cycles of creation and destruction. There is no evidence in the text to support such a supposition, but it remains a possible explanation for this otherwise curious statement. On Mādhava see Erich FRAUWALLNER, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*, vol. 1, Salzburg: Otto Müller Verlag, 1953, p. 407 ff.

<sup>17</sup> In NAGIN SHAH, *Jaina Philosophical Tracts*, pp. 18-19.



many different cosmologies in the epic and the Purāṇas.<sup>18</sup> The purāṇic cosmologies and most of those in the *Mahābhārata* are theistic. It has been surmised that the Sāṃkhya was also theistic in its inception and that perhaps under the influence of Buddhism it repudiated theism and developed its unique doctrine of creation.<sup>19</sup> Whatever the case may be, the Sāṃkhya of the NKC makes a place for the purāṇic theistic creation. It also appears to be actively engaged with problems that Jain and Buddhist opponents were quick to point out and that centered around reconciling macrocosmic and microcosmic at various points in the doctrine. The NKC further offers us a picture of a Sāṃkhya that in its engagement with these issues was by no means a static system, something we might have wrongly supposed to be the case from reading the other refutations, which have a reassuring sameness to them. The Sāṃkhya of the NKC seems to look ahead to some of the very much later discussions in the *Sāṃkhya Sūtra* and *Sāṃkhya Pravacanabhāṣya*, where considerable effort is made to integrate the theistic purāṇic cosmologies and the Sāṃkhya. Thus we see in II.13-15 a discussion in which the individual *buddhis* of the gods like Hiranyagarbha are considered to be parts or *aṃśas* of *mahattattva*. Knowledge is described as a product of *mahattattva* (14).<sup>20</sup> The same themes are taken up in the late *Sāṃkhya Tattvavivecana*, which cites the *Sāṃkhya Sūtra* as its authority.<sup>21</sup> This text also states explicitly that things like *adharma* and ignorance are the result of further changes or *pariṇāmas* of the *mahattattva*. Future research is required to trace the lines of these developments in late Sāṃkhya texts and to look in greater detail for hints of the beginnings of such doctrines in the commentaries to the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* itself.

<sup>18</sup> An excellent survey of these is given by Dr. Śrī Kṛṣṇamaṇi TRIPĀṬHI, *Purāṇetihāsayoḥ Sāṃkhyayogadarśanavimarśaḥ*, Sarasvatī Adhyayanamālā 24, Varanasi: Sampūrṇānanda Sanskrit Viśvavidyālaya, 1979.

<sup>19</sup> For a statement of this theory see TRIPĀṬHI, p. 248.

<sup>20</sup> Edited Richard GARBE, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. II, Cambridge, Mass. 1943.

<sup>21</sup> *Sāṃkhya saṃgraha*, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, no 246, Benaras 1918, p. 6-7.

